The discursive construction of a Family Literacy, Language and Numeracy programme: an exploration of practitioners' narratives-in-interaction

by

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the discursive practices of two Family Literacy, Language and Numeracy practitioners teaching a family literacy programme together. Drawing on positioning analysis and linguistic ethnography, I am exploring how the practitioners use narratives-in-interaction to position themselves, each other, the parents with whom they work, and the programme on which they teach.

This research reveals how both dominant and locally constructed discourses are invoked, reworked and embedded within the practitioners' narrative allusions, with such discourses often becoming naturalised through their repeated citation. Analyses of the interactional and lexical content of narratives-in-interaction facilitate this study's twin-focus on the social identification of the narrated, and the narrators' emergent identity construction.

Investigating the discourses that circulate about parents uncovers how the telling of narratives not only impacts on the ways in which the parents are socially identified in discursive terms, but suggests that this may affect how the parents are dealt with in more practical ways by the practitioners. Through the sharing and co-construction of small stories, the practitioners make claims in relation to their own identities, particularly in terms of their working relationship with one another and the roles they undertake in concert and in counterpoint to each other.

DEDICATION

I dedicate this thesis to my husband Ian. He has offered selfless support, kindness and patience throughout the duration of my PhD. I will be forever grateful.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

There have been a number of undulations in the road to completing my PhD, and, at times, the road seemed so long I thought it would never come to an end. Many people have offered me support and encouragement along the way.

Firstly I owe a debt of gratitude to the participants who took part in this study. Without them this thesis would not have been possible. I am particularly grateful to the two practitioners who gave their time so willingly.

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EXTRACTS

EXTRACTS (CONTINUED)

ABBREVIATIONS

BSA	Basic Skills Agency
DCSF	Department for Children, Schools and Families
DfES	Department for Education and Skills
DIUS	Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills
ECM	*Every Child Matters*
ESOL	English for Speakers of Other Languages
EYFS	Early Years Foundation Stage
FLIF	Family Learning Impact Funding
FLLN	Family literacy, language and numeracy
IALS	International Adult Literacy Survey
ILP	Individual Learning Plan
LLN	Literacy, language and numeracy
LSC	Learning and Skills Council
NIACE	National Institute of Adult Continuing Education
SFA	Skills Funding Agency
SfL	*Skills for Life*
WFL	Wider family learning

TRANSCRIPTION CONVENTIONS

[…]	part of transcription omitted from extract
[ ]	contextual information
( )	information about the interaction
{ }	overlapping talk
/	speaker interruption
…	pause
***	unable to transcribe
italic	indicates speaker emphasis
P1 – P8	parents are numbered from P1-P8

In order to make the transcripts easily readable, written punctuation has been added.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1   Introduction

My research is concerned with the positionality of two family literacy, language and numeracy (FLLN) practitioners who co-deliver a family literacy programme together. I am investigating how they position themselves, each other, the parents with whom they work, and the programme on which they teach, using the narratives-in-interaction that they tell as a lens to reveal how they discursively construct their working practices. I am looking at the circulating and iterative nature of discourse both in terms of how locally produced discourses are enacted and the ways in which meta-narratives are indexed in the small stories related by the practitioners.

However, before presenting detailed analyses of the practitioners' narratives-in-interaction it is necessary to situate my research in its field of study. Therefore, the first section of this chapter describes the rationale for FLLN programmes, provides an overview of how they are usually organised, and how they are linked to a number of government policy initiatives. The second section of the chapter explains how I came to be interested in FLLN. The third section outlines the research questions that my research seeks to answer. The scope and limitations of my study are addressed in the following section. The final section signposts the structure of the thesis.

1.2 Family literacy, language and numeracy programmes

FLLN is one of the Government's family programmes initiatives. The key principle that underpins family programmes is that 'children and adults learn together' (DfES, 2004: 6). Family programmes are divided into two strands – wider family learning (WFL) and FLLN (DfES, 2004; LSC, 2009a; SFA, 2010, 2011). WFL programmes have two main aims: 'to develop the skills or knowledge of the adult and the child' and 'to help parents/carers to be able to support their children's learning and development more actively and with greater confidence, and to be able to understand why that support is important' (DfES, 2004: 6). FLLN programmes have a narrower focus; their aim is to:

- improve the literacy, language and numeracy skills of parents;
- improve parents' ability to help their children learn; and
- improve children's acquisition of literacy, language and numeracy.
  (LSC, 2008: 4)

FLLN has its roots in the Basic Skills Agency's (BSA) model of family learning that was established in October 1993 through the implementation of Family Literacy Demonstration Programmes. The programme was designed with the express intention of parents and children working together to 'prevent the recurring intergenerational cycle of low attainment" (Brooks et al., 1996: 1) as 'family literacy offers a rare opportunity for effective learning between the generations' (Campaign for Learning, 2000: 8). Programmes were also expected to recruit those families most difficult to reach, namely 'underachieving parents and their children' (Ofsted, 2000: 14). These two tenets of FLLN provision – intergenerational learning and targeting 'learners with a literacy, language or numeracy need' (SFA, 2011: 6) have

remained central and compulsory components of FLLN programmes since the development and delivery of the Demonstration Programmes in 1993[1] (see BSA, 2004; DfES, 2004; LSC, 2009a; Mallows, 2008; SFA, 2010, 2011).

1.2.1 The structure of FLLN programmes

The BSA model, drawing on the Kenan model developed in the US (see Compton-Lilly et al., 2012; Hannon, 2000; Mallows, 2008; Pahl, 2008b) includes two separate sessions for parents and children respectively. These run concurrently, then a joint session for parents and children takes place (see Figure 1). The aim is that adult literacy, language and numeracy (LLN) tutors and early years/primary school teachers work together to plan and deliver the literacy and numeracy programmes, linking teaching content to the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and National Literacy and Numeracy strategies. When the Adult Core Curricula (for literacy and numeracy) were introduced in 2002, adult and joint sessions also needed to be mapped to these criteria. The adult LLN tutors work with the parents in the parents-only session, and, at the same time, the early years/primary school teachers lead the children's session. The aim is that both tutors and teachers come together with the children and parents for the joint session (see Figure 1).

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[1] The exception is 'Keeping up with the Children', which is designed solely for parents.

Figure 1: BSA model of delivery: FLLN programmes

Session 1 (runs concurrently with Session 2) Participants: parents Practitioner: adult LLN tutor	**Session 2** (runs concurrently with Session 1) Participants: children Practitioner: early years/primary teacher

Session 3

Participants: parents and children (joint session)

Practitioners: adult LLN tutor and early years/primary teacher
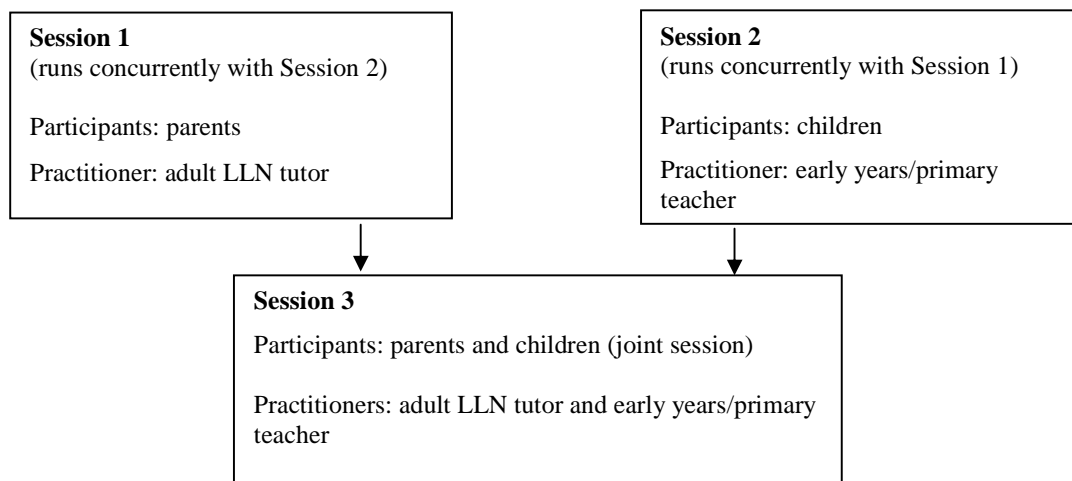
In Swain et al.'s (2009) evaluation they list 'key success factors for local authorities, schools and practitioners' (p.13). One of the factors identified was that practitioners started 'from where the parents and children were in terms of their understandings of literacy and their literacy skills; and parents-only sessions linked directly to the school curriculum and included information for parents on how, as well as what, children are taught in school' (p.14). Therefore, it would appear that it is necessary for adult LLN tutors to be knowledgeable about the school curriculum as well as having experience of adult literacy teaching, and its related curriculum. It was also identified as important that 'there was built in and paid time for planning between adult literacy tutors and early years teachers' (p.14). However, 'varying perceptions of the primary purpose of family literacy activity' (p.12) was identified as one of the barriers to successful family literacy provision.

From a school perspective, family learning is a way of building stronger links between home and school, which can contribute to the progress of pupils who might otherwise fall behind. Adult literacy teachers however, are working to build on parents' motivation to help their children as a springboard from which to develop adult skills. They work within school environments which are not always able to allow the time and space needed to facilitate adult learning. These differing perceptions of the primary purpose of the activity can contribute to tensions where space and time are limited. (Swain et al., 2009: 12)

When the BSA model of FLLN was first introduced, there did not seem to be a conception that any possible tensions between tutors and teachers would arise from their working together. However, I recognised that this could be the case in practice, as my interest in wanting to research FLLN was sparked specifically by my experience of being a FLLN practitioner, working as the adult LLN tutor in partnership with the early years/ primary teacher, in a school environment (see section 1.3).

1.2.2   Policy initiatives and FLLN

Since the inception of family literacy programmes in 1993, these programmes have been regarded as not only successful, but far-reaching in terms of meeting policy targets. Besides their 'basic' aim of developing the LLN skills of parents and their children it is proposed that other benefits will result for families attending these programmes.

Acquiring new skills puts adults in the market for jobs they would previously have been unable to do, or points them in the direction of other learning opportunities that could give them new qualifications. Either way, the effect is to add to the skills in the national workforce. Children reach levels of educational achievement beyond those they

would otherwise have been expected to reach. Households that had previously been socially excluded become socially included. (DfES, 2004: 13)

Thus, according to the DfES (2004), FLLN programmes are viewed as enabling parents to access a wider range of employment opportunities, be more likely to continue in education, and therefore gain qualifications. Attending FLLN programmes is viewed as not just benefiting individuals and their families, but also communities in which such families live, for FLLN funding is directed on the 'most-deprived LEAs in England; the less-deprived LEAs receive a proportionally smaller allocation ' (DfES, 2004: 21). Thus, in 2004, FLLN was viewed as an integral part of the social inclusion and widening participation policy agendas, in addition to the Skills Strategy (see BSA, 2004; DfES, 2003). This continues to be the case (see Mallows, 2008; SFA, 2010; Swain et al., 2009). Family literacy programmes were also seen as complementing the 'National Primary Strategy for KS1/KS2 [Key Stage 1/Key Stage 2], the Foundation Stage curriculum and the recent policy to encourage a 'joining up' of services for families and children published in the Green Paper 'Every Child Matters'' (BSA, 2004: 6). Lamb et al. (2007) point out that family learning programmes contribute to the school improvement, quality, and extended services agendas and contribute to many Public Service Agreement (PSA) targets. Family learning programmes are also integral to the government's parenting agenda (see DfES, 2007; Lamb et al., 2007; Swain et al., 2009).

In 2008 Family Learning Impact Funding (FLIF) was introduced. The rationale behind this was that the funding would be used as a way of complementing family learning programmes 'to meet national and local priorities; to increase the number of hard to reach families engaged

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in learning, including families at risk; and to support progression and qualification achievement' (Swain et al., 2009: 6). According to the LSC this additional funding for family learning programmes had to ensure that:

> programmes contribute to DCSF [Department for Children, Schools and Families] and DIUS [Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills] priorities set out in the Children's Plan, the Skills for Life Strategy and 2020 World Class Skills ambition as well as the Cabinet Office's Families at Risk initiative and cross government initiatives including tackling problems associated with guns, gangs and knives. (LSC, 2008: 23)

Coinciding with the launch of FLIF, the National Institute of Adult Continuing Education (NIACE) were commissioned by the LSC 'to review methods of measuring progression from Family Literacy, Language and Numeracy (FLLN) and within FLLN and to devise resources and make recommendations for improving the monitoring of progression' (Lamb et al., 2008: 5). Lamb et al. (2008: 10) point out that 'inspection reports show that use and analysis of data is a common area of weakness for family learning providers, with lack of systematic use of data, weak monitoring and ineffective recording of progression routes all being identified as areas for improvement'. Lamb et al. (2008: 14) go on to report how successful family programmes have been:

> It is not an over-estimation to say that family learning programmes change lives: adults gain a multitude of skills, gain in confidence, take up new opportunities. Children progress, aspirations are raised and the gap between the lowest and the highest achievers is narrowed. Interaction and communication in families is improved, parents and carers learn how to support their children's learning. Many small steps of learning have a significant impact. (Lamb et al., 2008: 14)

However, they argue that 'the challenge for practitioners is to prove it and change the anecdotal evidence base into a systematic and effective sampling of progression over a longer period in order that the true benefits can be highlighted' (Lamb et al., 2008: 14). This is the context within which the FLLN practitioners who are the focus of this study are operating.

1.3   My interest in FLLN

It is common for research to be stimulated by previous experience in temporary or permanent jobs (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007; Rampton, 2007) and to reflect the personal interests of the researcher (Denscombe, 2002), which, in turn, are shaped by a person's particular life history (Tusting & Maybin, 2007). My background is in teaching adult LLN, working for further education (FE) colleges, in local authority adult literacy provision, and as an adult literacy teacher educator. My interest in FLLN draws on my experience as a FLLN practitioner.

I became interested in FLLN in 2000 when I was asked whether I would like to teach on family literacy programmes. As someone who had experience working with adult learners, I was asked to be the adult LLN tutor, working together with the early years/primary school teacher, to deliver FLLN programmes. In the same academic year that I became involved in the delivery of FLLN programmes the *Skills for Life* (SfL) strategy was launched (March 2001). I mention it here because SfL had a profound effect on LLN provision (see Chapter 2) and on my role as an adult LLN tutor, and by extension as a FLLN practitioner.

Although I recognise that I have been part of the SfL strategy, albeit because I was co-opted into it due to already being an LLN tutor, I believe that when I worked within this construct I brought my own experience, knowledge, understandings and values to my teaching of adult literacy. I brought my experience of working within a variety of adult learning environments in which adult literacy teaching had been underpinned by a view of adult education as being predicated upon 'creating free space for reflection and discourse and a reduction of the power differential between educator and learner' (Mezirow, 1996: 171). However, despite this background, I never really considered that I was working within a deficit model of LLN learning and learners until I became an adult literacy teacher educator and for the first time found myself party to what Colley et al. (2007: 183) call a 'wider community of practice' that had not been available to me 'in the conventionally isolated pockets of a college of FE'.

I started to read more about parental involvement programmes, of which FLLN is one, and how they are criticised for engendering a deficit model of parenting (Clegg and NcNulty, 2002; Edwards and Warin, 1999; Gewirtz, 2001; Hughes and MacNaughton, 2000). I also read about family learning programmes providing a means of recasting existing lines between parents and teachers, and school and community (Cook, 2005; Lochrie, 2005; Pahl & Kelly 2005; West, 2005), and the personal benefits recognised by parents from their participation in FLLN (Brassett-Grundy, 2002; Horne and Haggart, 2004; NFER, 2002). Such reading led me to question the construction of parents within both FLLN policy and practice.

I also began to re-examine the differences in practice between myself and the early years and primary teachers with whom I worked, and the significance of the school context in which I

was located. I started to realise how we had different priorities and how this seemed inevitable due to the different traditions in which our practices were located. However, I was also mindful that I did not want to regard teachers as a homogeneous grouping nor regard adult LLN tutors as all having similar backgrounds to myself. Just as I bring my personal history to FLLN so do other FLLN practitioners.

This questioning of the positioning of practitioners, and the policies which underpin FLLN, led me to want to research the situated language practices and the seemingly unproblematic relationship involved in joint teaching, which is central to the BSA's model of FLLN, a model in which I had been involved. The issue for me was focussing on the specific questions that I wanted my research to answer.

1.4 Research questions

It is acknowledged that research questions that are formulated at the initial stages of the design process may not be those that are finally decided upon. In fact, 'it is highly likely that […] research questions will be initially underdeveloped and tentative', being clarified and changed during the research process (Robson, 2002: 165). Campbell et al. (1982, cited in Robson, 2002: 55) view the process for selecting research questions 'as often non-linear and involving considerable uncertainty and intuition'.

When I first decided on my research questions I was mindful that they would undergo subsequent changes and that such alterations are an inherent part of an interpretative,

qualitative research design. Initially my research questions were not written drawing on any specific theoretical or analytical concepts (see Appendix 1 for a list of the original research questions). However, over time I rephrased them to reflect this study's emphasis on positioning as a key analytical framework and its focus on one specific FLLN programme.

The research questions I seek to answer in this study are:

1. To what extent do the FLLN practitioners' backgrounds and experience, as indexed in their narrative tellings, influence their current practice?
2. How do the practitioners construct the FLLN programme they are delivering together, and the policy that underpins it?
3. What do the narratives related by the FLLN practitioners reveal about the nature of their working relationship and the roles they each enact within it?
4. How are the parents positioned in the small stories told by the FLLN practitioners in this study?

In order to answer these questions I am focussing on the small stories - the 'everyday, ephemeral narratives arising from talk-in-interaction' (Watson, 2007: 374), which the practitioners tell, as a window into their co-constructed social world. These narratives have been gathered by undertaking an ethnographic study of their joint working practices. By this I mean not only observing their teaching together, but by investigating the liminal, in-between spaces that occur before and after teaching takes place, when the practitioners are in

conversation with each other[2]. It is in these spaces that the practitioners often relate anecdotes and small stories that reference themselves, each other and the parents attending the FLLN programme which they are co-delivering. My observational data is complemented by individual and ethnographic interviews (see Chapter 3) during which the practitioners also engage in narrative tellings.

The approach I am using to answer my research questions draws on the frameworks of ethnography, linguistic ethnography and positioning. It is argued that ethnography is an approach that inherently foregrounds the importance of language (see Chapter 2). However, linguistic ethnography is viewed as 'open to the recognition of new affinities' (Rampton, 2007: 585), regarded as being able to keep 'the door open to wider interpretive approaches from within anthropology, applied linguistics and sociology' (Creese, 2008: 229). This is one of the reasons that I am also drawing on the relatively new field of linguistic ethnography as a framework for my research. It signals that the findings of my research have been reached through an analysis that 'attempts to combine close detail of local action and interaction as embedded in a wider social world' (Creese, 2008: 233). These three frameworks are discussed in detail in Chapter 2.

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[2] Turner (1969) developed the construct of 'liminality' in his work on ritual rites of passage. In line with other authors (Baynham & Simpson, 2010; Bhabha, 1994; Sturdy et al., 2006) I am drawing on this construct to characterise 'in-between-ness'. In my case the 'in-between-ness' of the physical and temporal space in which the practitioners' conversations take place in relation to the defined space in which their teaching occurs.

1.5   Scope and limitations

This study is concerned with a single iteration of a FLLN family literacy programme, which lasted for 15 weeks, co-delivered by two practitioners. Heath and Street (2008: 60) argue that the 'rhythm of the ethnographer's life and that of the individual or group under study must ground data collection'. Thus although this ethnographic study does not take place over an extended period of time, the bounded nature of the data collection is time-limited in relation to the rhythm of the FLLN programme under investigation. Hence, this means that this study is only able to provide a specific snapshot of FLLN provision, doing so by following a single programme in its entirety. However, it does offer a detailed study of the socially-situated language practices of the practitioners during this period, revealing how the practitioners' discursive practices, particularly in relation to the narratives-in-interaction related by them both, index not only their personal and professional backgrounds, as well as emergent locally-produced discourses, but also wider social discourses which are invoked, reworked and embedded within their narratives.

This research does not claim to reflect the practice of all FLLN practitioners but it does seek to reveal the circulating and iterative nature of discourse, and how a detailed analysis of practitioners' language practices can provide a nuanced understanding of how colleagues create and maintain their working relationship, how they construct those with whom they work (both practitioners and parents) and how this impacts on their practice.

1.6   Organisation of the thesis

This chapter has introduced and provided some contextual background in relation to FLLN programmes and my interest in them. Chapter 2 presents a review of the literature pertaining to my research – both in terms of the theoretical frameworks underpinning it and the empirical research which informs and influences my study. Matters relating to methodology are located in Chapter 3. Details of my research design, the methods used and how the data sets have been analysed are found in this chapter. Chapters 4-6 are the data analysis chapters. Chapter 4 presents a detailed analysis of the way in which the parents who attend FLLN programmes are constructed by the FLLN practitioners who teach them. Chapter 5 draws on the narrative tellings that are related about one parent in particular to demonstrate how the practitioners' narratives-in-interaction about this specific parent are recycled and reworked over the duration of the programme, revealing not only how the parent is socially identified within these small stories, but how in their telling the practitioners' own identity positions are revealed. Chapter 6 explores how the practitioners position themselves and each other by dint of the narratives-in-interaction that they share during their conversations, in their individual interviews, and within their teaching sessions with the parents. Chapter 6 also explores how these narratives operate to discursively construct the practitioners' working practices. The final chapter, Chapter 7, contains a summary of findings, points to how this research contributes to knowledge, and offers final reflections.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1   Introduction

This chapter provides a detailed review of the literature that informs and underpins my

research. The first part of the chapter is concerned with the theoretical frameworks that this

study draws upon: ethnography, linguistic ethnography and positioning. The empirical

research that informs this study constitutes the second part of the chapter. It is divided into

three sections: literature on constructions of parenting, adult literacy, and family literacy.

My chosen theoretical frameworks lend themselves to research that can be regarded as both

qualitative and interpretive in nature. I have chosen them because of their ability to help in

understanding the 'multiple social constructions of meaning and knowledge' (Robson, 2002:

27) and to explore the multiple perspectives that are revealed in and through discourse. As

such I regard these frameworks as suitable for enabling me to investigate, explore and explain

the mutually shaping nature of language and the social world. Ethnography is the first of these

frameworks, and is reviewed in the following section.

2.2   Ethnography

Ethnography has its origins in anthropology (Blommaert, 2009; Hammersley, 2006; Heath &

Street, 2008). At its core is the presence of an observer for a prolonged period of time in a

single or a small number of settings (Blommaert, 2006; Delamont, 2002; Hammersley &

Atkinson, 2007). Although participant observation is a central tenet of ethnography it is also regarded as an approach that can incorporate the use of a variety of research methods in addition to observation, including interviews, diaries, and the collection of documents (Hamilton, 1999; Hammersley, 2006; Jaffe, 2006; Owen et al., 2005; Papen, 2005; Walford, 2009). Although traditionally ethnography involved 'actually living in the communities of the people being studied, more or less round the clock, participating in their activities to one degree or another as well as interviewing them, collecting genealogies, drawing maps of the locale, collecting artefacts and so on' (Hammersley, 2006: 4), ethnographers in the social sciences tend to 'focus on what happens in a particular work locale or social institution when it is in operation' (Hammersley, 2006: 4). Heath and Street (2008: 60) point out that ethnographic data collection must be grounded in the 'rhythm of the ethnographer's life and that of the individual or group under study'. My research follows the 'natural' cycle of a FLLN programme, undertaking weekly observations of an iteration of FLLN over the 15-week duration of the course.

Troman (2006) argues that ethnography has become one of the major methods of researching educational settings. Ethnographies have been undertaken in a wide variety of educational settings, including, for example, in primary schools, where it has been used to explore the complexities of teacher identity (Troman et al., 2007; Troman & Raggl, 2008), the relationship between home and schooled literacy practices (Gregory et al., 2004; Maybin, 2007; Pahl, 2003, 2007a, 2007b; Pahl & Kelly, 2005), and how children use talk to construct knowledge and identity (Maybin, 2006). In secondary schools in the UK ethnographic research has included research into citizenship, difference and marginality (Gordon, 1996;

Gordon et al., 2005), the language-crossing of adolescents (Rampton, 1995, 2006) and the ways subject teachers and English as an additional language teachers collaborate in order to support bilingual learners (Creese, 2005, 2006). In the US teacher and student identity in middle schools has been investigated using ethnographic methods (see, for example, Juzwick & Ives, 2010; Wortham, 2004a, 2005, 2008a).

In adult and further education settings, ethnographic research studies include those undertaken to understand what it is like to be a teacher in further education (Jephcote & Salisbury, 2009; Jephcote et al., 2008), to study the effects of the new media in classrooms, for both teachers and students (Barbour, 2010), and the use and development of bilingual literacies among Welsh-speaking students (Martin-Jones, 2007; Martin-Jones et al., 2009). Researchers are drawing attention to the ways in which education policy becomes realised in local practices by their studies into individual learning plans (ILPs) in further education (Burgess, 2008; Hamilton, 2009) and the impact of paperwork demands in both adult education and early years settings (Tusting, 2009, 2012a). Those researchers investigating researching literacy/literacies as social practice, located in specific contexts, foreground ethnographic methods as being particularly appropriate for such work (for example, Barton & Hamilton, 1998; Baynham, 2004; Burgess, 2010)

Many of the studies that are pertinent to my research have collected data using ethnographic methods, but, moreover, they have employed what Maybin (2006: 13) refers to as an 'ethnographically informed lens'. These studies advocate ethnographically informed research as opposed to research which simply espouses the incorporation of a variety of methods.

Blommaert (2006: 6) argues that ethnography is often perceived as no more than 'a method for collecting particular types of data and thus as something that can be added, like the use of a computer, to different scientific procedures and programs'. As a result of this ethnography has been reduced to a synonym for description and resulted in ethnography being represented by a narrow definition of fieldwork, but it is more than this. Blommaert (2006, 2007, 2009) regards fieldwork as a theorised mode of action, 'a 'full' intellectual program far richer than just a matter of description' (Blommaert, 2006: 7). Drawing on the work of Hymes, Blommaert (2006, 2009) argues that ethnography is 'descriptive theory'; theoretical because it provides description in specific methodologically and epistemologically grounded ways. As such fieldwork yields ethnographic data and such data are fundamentally different from data collected through most other approaches. This is because of ethnography's roots in anthropology.

Ethnographic research is recognised as a way of capturing the complexities of social situations (Blommaert, 2006, 2007; Delamont, 2002; Jeffrey & Troman, 2004: LeCompte, 2002). Greene (1999, cited in Owen et al., 2005), when discussing evaluations, argues that no single representation is complete but that some are less complete than others. He argues that what is normally missed out are 'the emotional and moral ethical strands of human experience, its complexity and contextuality, the layered meanings of interpretation, compelling connections to lived experience' (Owen et al., 2005: 340). Ethnography enables the researcher to explore the lived experiences of the participants (Barton & Hamilton, 1998; Troman, 2006), allowing for a description of 'the sometimes chaotic, contradictory, polymorph character of human behaviour in concrete settings' (Blommaert, 2007: 682).

Applying an 'ethnographically informed lens' enables the researcher to work alongside research participants, enabling the researcher to garner the participants' perceptions and perspectives whilst trying to ensure an equitable relationship between researcher and participants. Ethnography emphasises the importance of understanding things from the point of view of participants (Denscombe, 2002; Rampton, 2006) and encourages the collection of a wide range of perspectives and experiences to assist in the analysis of the complexity of situational life (Jeffrey & Troman, 2004).

The reflexive positioning of the researcher is central to ethnographically informed research, understanding that the researcher's 'self' is part of ethnography (Blommaert, 2006, 2009; Heath & Street, 2008; Papen, 2005; Rogers, 2003; Tusting & Maybin, 2007) with researchers needing to give an account of how their personal involvement shapes all aspects of the research process (Gewirtz & Cribb, 2006) as researcher effects cannot be eliminated but need to be understood and explained (Delamont, 2002; Luttrell, 2000; Rampton, 2007). My research supports this position as I know that my experience and understanding of FLLN, and of adult literacy in general, inevitably shapes my research. I realise that just as the 'taken for granted' values and assumptions of those that I am researching need to be unpicked and analysed so I need to be self-conscious about my preconceptions, assumptions and values and to make these reflections public. Reflexivity is not a one-off part of the design process, but it is essential that it permeates throughout all aspects of the research process (Delamont, 2002), as, in reflexive ethnography, the ethnographer is 'acutely sensitive to the interrelationship(s) between herself and the focus of the research' (Delamont, 2009).

Blommaert's (2006, 2009) view of ethnography situates language as central to any

ethnographic enterprise. For him 'language is context, it is the architecture of social behaviour

itself, and thus part of social structure and social relations' (Blommaert, 2006: 9). It is the

centrality of language, according to Blommaert's (2006, 2009) interpretation of ethnography,

which is one of the reasons ethnography is so appropriate for my research into the socially

situated language practices of FLLN practitioners. According to Gee (2000: 190), 'situations

(contexts) do not just exist. Situations are rarely static or uniform, they are actively created,

sustained, negotiated, resisted, and transformed moment-by-moment through ongoing *work*'.

Gee (2000: 190) proposes that 'it is the nature of this work that should […] become crucial to

the New Literacy Studies'. My research explores the narratives-in-interaction that FLLN

practitioners enact and co-construct in their ongoing conversations with each other, and the

indexicality of such narratives. In undertaking research of this kind I am contributing to the

body of work that investigates the 'work' that language performs in interactional exchanges,

as revealed in the data collected through ethnographic fieldwork (see Warriner, 2008). Indeed

it is the prominence that I place on analysing the language practices of my research

participants that leads me to locate my research within the field of linguistic ethnography.

2.3   Linguistic ethnography

Linguistic ethnography is a relatively new field that seeks to combine the traditions of

linguistics and ethnography (Creese, 2008; Rampton, 2006, 2007, 2009; Rampton et al., 2004;

Tusting & Maybin, 2007). It has been shaped by North American research within linguistic

anthropology traditions of ethnography of communication, interactional sociolinguistics and

micro-ethnography. Linguistic ethnography also draws on UK fields of sociolinguistic and applied linguistic research (see Creese (2008) and Rampton (2007) for a detailed discussion of the US and UK roots of linguistic ethnography). According to Rampton et al. (2004: 2), the underlying principle directing the development of linguistic ethnography as an emerging field is the 'close analysis of situated language use' as this 'can provide both fundamental and distinctive insights into the mechanisms and dynamics of social and cultural production in everyday life'.

The linking together of 'linguistic' and 'ethnography' signifies 'a particular epistemological view of language in social context' (Creese, 2008: 229), reflecting a growing interest among British sociolinguists of combining linguistic analysis with ethnography 'in order to probe the interrelationship between language and social life in more depth' (Tusting & Maybin, 2007: 576). Rampton (2007) emphasises the importance of the order of the wording of 'linguistic ethnography' as it situates this new field within a specific methodology – ethnography. At the same time, the term 'linguistic ethnography' 'specifies the linguistics of discourse and text as the primary resource for our efforts to contribute in a distinctive way to the broader enterprise of social science' (Rampton, 2007: 600).

Rampton (2007, 2009) and Tusting and Maybin (2007) identify Hymes as extremely influential in the development of linguistic ethnography in the UK, referring to Hymes as 'a kind of "virtual mentor"' (Rampton, 2009: 363), his work providing an 'unflinching mutual interrogation between linguistics and ethnography' (p.365). Whilst Blommaert (2006, 2007, 2009) recognises the significant role Hymes has played in the development of ethnography,

linking together language and ethnography, something that Rampton (2007, 2009) reflects

upon as being significant to the development of linguistic ethnography, Blommaert (2006,

2009) argues that Hymes's influence on ethnography has enabled ethnography already to

include a perspective on language, therefore the field of linguistic ethnography needs to

recognise the particular history of ethnography, and build on this history.

> Central to any understanding of ethnography are its roots in anthropology.
> These anthropological roots provide a specific theoretical direction to
> ethnography, one that situates language deeply and inextricably in social life
> and offers a particular and distinct ontology and epistemology to
> ethnography. Ethnography contains, thus, a theoretical perspective on
> language which differs from that of many other branches of the study of
> language. (Blommaert, 2009: 263)

However, Blommaert's view of ethnography does not seek to limit the development of

linguistic ethnography as ethnography is an 'open and experimental site in which people

explore and try different ways of analysing language in society' (2007: 687). Blommaert's

emphasis is on ensuring that those who embark on a linguistic ethnography project do so in

the knowledge that they are building on a body of work that has endeavored to use

ethnographic approaches to language to determine the functions of language-in-use.

Rampton (2007) describes linguistic ethnography as a 'site of encounter where a number of

established lines of research interact', a site which is 'open to the recognition of new

affinities' (p.585). It is an approach which 'lives in the regions' (p.594), reflecting its

development as an interdisciplinary endeavour, drawing on a range of social theory

(Rampton, 2007; Tusting & Maybin, 2007), including post-structuralist ideas (Creese, 2008)

and social constructionism (Tusting & Maybin, 2007). That linguistic ethnography is 'open to the recognition of new affinities' greatly appeals to me, particularly in the context of being a site where 'established lines of research interact', an approach that keeps 'the door open to wider interpretive approaches from within anthropology, applied linguistics and sociology' (Creese, 2008: 229). This enables me to contribute to an emerging field by combining different, but what I consider to be complementary approaches to create a distinct research design, but not just for the sake of it but because this synthesis of approaches works in combination to answer my research questions.

Ethnography and linguistic ethnography would seem to be obvious complementary approaches. What I am doing is to combine these with positioning analysis, an approach to analysing interaction originally developed in the field of discursive psychology (see the following section for an overview of positioning analysis). In common with linguistic ethnography, discursive psychology approaches focus on situated activity, concentrating particularly on 'language performance, on everyday language use, and the action orientation of language' (Wetherell, 2007: 663). Therefore linguistic ethnography enables a combination of approaches, as long as one bears in mind the need for the combined approaches to be able to recognise and accommodate the Hymesian view of language that informs ethnography and linguistic ethnography, and acknowledges ethnography's anthropological roots.

Wetherell (2007: 661) argues that 'the study of language and culture are not sufficient in themselves' as 'psychological assumptions and presuppositions are unavoidable when language production is studied in its contexts of use'. She puts forward the proposition that

linguistic ethnography would benefit from dialogue with discursive psychology. My study aims to contribute to the emergent dialogue between discursive psychology, more particularly positioning analysis, and linguistic ethnography. In this way I hope to contribute to what Rampton (2006: 407) refers to as 'cross-disciplinary relevance', work that extends knowledge by 'synthesising topics, concepts, authors and/or methods from different (sub-) disciplinary areas'. However, I am aware that it is not enough for such work to be 'novel/original' as it also needs to be 'careful, logical, accurate, accountable/explicit, sceptical, comparative and generally well-informed, resting on combinations of data, analysis, inferencing and theorisation that seem solid and properly constructed' (Rampton, 2006: 407).

As I have alluded to above, one of the reasons for my choice of linguistic ethnography is the recognition that linguistic ethnography has a particular history and related emphases, which resonate with my own ontological and epistemological understandings. I do not have a background or grounding in anthropology but have come to linguistic ethnography because of my interest in literacy, language-in-interaction and discourse analysis.

My interests dovetail with a number of those UK influences that are regarded as shaping linguistic ethnography. (See Rampton et al. (2004) and Creese (2008) for a description of the five fields of socio and applied linguistic research that can be viewed as informing the development of linguistic ethnography.) These interests include firstly, work within New Literacy Studies that differentiates between a view of literacy as the acquisition of a neutral set of skills and regarding literacy as social practice, contested in relations of power (Street, 1997, 2003). The second area of research is that which regards the classroom as cultural

context, particularly research that focuses on the classroom as a site of interaction (Creese, 2005; Maybin, 2006). For me this is a cultural context that is not only about the interactions between teachers and students, but in the case of my study, between practitioners themselves, within the classroom and in the liminal inbetween-space of just before and after the teaching itself takes place. Street (2003) states that:

> the ways in which teachers or facilitators and their students interact is already a social practice that affects the nature of the literacy being learned and the ideas about literacy held by the participants, especially the new learners and their position in relations of power. (Street, 2003: 78)

I would extend this argument to interpret the interactions between the practitioners in my study as social practice, co-constructing and signifying the social world of which they are part through the socially situated language they use.

It is argued that the combination of 'linguistics' and 'ethnography' has the potential to 'tie ethnography down' and 'open linguistics up' (Creese, 2008; Rampton et al., 2004; Rampton, 2007). In this way ethnography is viewed as benefitting from the analytical frameworks provided by linguistics, whilst at the same time, linguistics benefits from the reflexive sensitivity required in ethnography (Creese, 2008). As a consequence of this a linguistic ethnography analysis 'attempts to combine close detail of local action and interaction as embedded in a wider social world' (Creese, 2008: 233). Using discourse analytic tools enables an 'inside' researcher to gain analytical distance. This is specifically appropriate in my study. However, a careful decision had to be made in relation to my choice of discourse analytic tools.

2.4   Positioning

As I have already stated I am interested in the situated language practices of FLLN
practitioners. The decision to draw on ethnography and linguistic ethnography provided me
with a way to explore the social practice of FLLN practitioners as evidenced through their
interactions. However, I was looking for a complementary theoretical approach that would
enable me to unpick the language practices that I was so keen to explore. I had been
introduced to positioning theory by a colleague some time previously, but at that point did not
investigate it too much further. However, after subsequent discussion about positioning theory
with a fellow student and after re-reading Davies and Harré's article, 'Positioning: the
discursive production of selves' (1990, reprinted in 1999, 2000), I decided to delve further
into the concept of 'positioning' and began to read extensively around the subject.

There are two main instantiations of 'positioning': 'positioning theory' and 'positioning
analysis'. Both forms of 'positioning' were initially developed within the field of discursive
psychology.

Positioning theory aims at understanding the dynamics of social episodes as 'its starting point
is the idea that the constant flow of everyday life in which we all take part, is fragmented
through discourse into distinct episodes that constitute the basic elements of both our
biographies and the social world' (Harré & van Langenhove, 1999: 4). Such episodes are co-
constructed by participants in conversation. Positioning theory recognises the constitutive

force of discourse whilst at the same time recognising that people are able to exercise choice in relation to discursive practices (Davies & Harré, 1999; Linehan & McCarthy, 2000).

Davies and Harré (1999) stress that every conversation is the discussion of a topic and the telling of one or more personal stories. They put forward the proposition that people organise conversations in order to display two modes of organisation: the *logic* of the topic; and the *storylines*, which are embedded in the fragments of the participants' autobiographies. According to Davies and Harré, positions are identified in part by extracting autobiographical aspects of conversations. By doing this it becomes possible to find out how each participant in the conversation views themselves and other participants by the positions they take up, in what story and how they then become positioned during conversation for, 'in telling a fragment of his or her autobiography a speaker assigns parts and characters in the episodes described, both to themselves and to others, including those taking part in the conversation' (Davies & Harré, 1999: 38).

Positioning theory offers an analytic framework for looking at such 'fragments', a framework in which the structure of conversations is viewed as consisting of three aspects: story lines, positions and speech (and other) acts (see Barnes, 2004; Davies & Harré, 1999: Harré & Moghaddam, 2003).

The main proponent of 'positioning's' other branch, 'positioning analysis' is Michael Bamberg. Drawing on Davies and Harré's (1990) work on positioning theory, Bamberg developed 'a sequence of analytic steps that reveal the positions that emerge in talk activities'

(Bamberg, 2000: 755), which is known as 'positioning analysis'. According to Bamberg (2000) positioning analysis compensates for positioning theory's overemphasis 'on the fact that language in and of itself positions the speaker' (Bamberg, 2000: 755). Although, as already mentioned, positioning theory is also mindful of the agentive and subjective nature of language (Davies & Harré, 1990; Harré & van Langenhove, 1999; Linehan & McCarthy, 1999). A mindfulness that Bamberg and colleagues (De Fina et al., 2006) also recognise when they state that scholars who have developed positioning theory (a list including Davies & Harré, 1990 and Harré & van Langenhove, 1999, as well as Bamberg himself) investigate agency as bi-directional.

> On the one hand, historical, sociocultural forces in the form of dominant discourses or master narratives position speakers in their situated practices and construct who they are without their agentive involvement. On the other hand, speakers position themselves as constructive and interactive agents and choose the means by which they construct their identities vis-à-vis other as well as vis-à-vis dominant discourses and master narratives. (De Fina et al., 2006: 7)

Both positioning theory and positioning analysis are concerned with the situated language practices displayed in and through interaction. Both approaches recognise that when people hold a conversation they bring to it their own lived history, 'the history of one who has been in multiple positions and engaged in different forms of discourse' (Davies & Harré, 1999: 37). They bring with them their accumulated knowledge and understandings in relation to themselves and the social world of which they are part. Bamberg (2000) draws attention to the idea that any shared history (or shared inter-subjectivities) between co-conversationalists needs to be indexed within the interaction itself, in order to become 'shared objects of

attention' (Bamberg, 2000: 754). For 'the fact that we usually know what we (and others) are talking about lies in the indexical function of language, and can be analysed by attending to how indexicality is achieved in talk' (Bamberg, 2000: 754).

Wortham and Gadsden (2006: 321) talk about how narrators incorpororate 'evaluative indexicals' into their narratives. Hence, narrators reveal their stance in relation to what they are talking about. Du Bois (2007:141) proposes that stance is realised 'by a linguistic act which is at the same time a social act'. Furthermore, 'the act of taking a stance necessarily invokes an evaluation at one level or another, whether by assertion or inference' (p.141). Therefore, as Baynham (2011: 70) argues, 'stance is intimately connected to positioning and alignment'. For, as Du Bois (2007: 130) asserts, 'stance has the power to assign value to objects of interest, to position social actors with respect to those objects, to calibrate alignment between stancetakers, and to invoke presupposed systems of sociocultural value'.

As noted earlier, positioning theory emphasises the importance of anecdotes or 'fragments of autobiography'. Indeed, anecdotes are referred to as becoming fragments of autobiography once they are shared with others (Davies & Harré, 1999: 37-38). Bamberg's (2004a, 2004b, 2004c, 2006a; Bamberg & Georgakopoulou, 2008) approach to positioning shares positioning theory's focus on the importance of the stories we tell and how we tell them. Georgakopoulou (2006a: 239) argues that part of 'legitimating 'neglected' stories involves naming them, finding appropriate ways of referring to them as opposed to defining them in negative or othering terms, for example, a-typical, non-canonical, etc.'. This is the rationale behind

Bamberg's labelling of such stories as 'small stories'; an expression that has also been taken

up and developed by Georgakopoulou (2006a, 2006b, 2007).

'Small stories' are so named for two specific reasons; firstly as a descriptive term, as small

stories are usually very short and are told in interaction (Bamberg, 2006b). In this light

Georgakopoulou (2006b) defines small stories as:

> an umbrella-term that covers a gamut of under-represented narrative
> activities, such as tellings of ongoing events, future or hypothetical
> events, shared (known) events, but also allusions to tellings, deferrals
> of tellings, and refusals to tell. (Georgakopoulou, 2006b: 123)

Such tellings are viewed as small when compared to prototypical narratives represented by

interview narratives, where interviewees tell 'personal, past experience stories of non-shared

events' (Georgakopoulou, 2006b: 123). Small stories are the 'everyday, ephemeral narratives

arising from talk-in-interaction' (Watson, 2007: 374).

'Small stories' can also been seen as such on a metaphorical level:

> the term [small stories] locates a level and even an aesthetic for the identification
> and analysis of narrative: the smallness of talk, where fleeting moments of
> narrative orientation to the world (Hymes, 1996) can be easily missed out on by
> an analytical lens which only looks out for fully-fledged stories.
> (Georgakopoulou, 2006b: 123)

In short, the term 'small stories' captures the 'fragmented qualities' of small stories and

'serves as an allusion and an antidote to the modernist concept of grand narratives'

(Georgakopoulou, 2006a: 239). Baynham (2010: 471) points out, in his review of Georgakopoulou's (2007) monograph, that Georgakopoulou is taking 'a post-Labovian stance on narrative analysis'. He argues that 'in contrast to the traditional account of narrative as self-revelation', Georgakopoulou's data shows how 'identity construction can be dialogic and relational, interactionally achieved' (p. 472). This is precisely the reason why I am drawn to 'small story' rather than more traditional narrative analysis, as I am engaging in research that seeks to demonstrate how identity construction and identification are emergent in nature. Therefore, for the purposes of this study, I am focusing on narrative as it is defined within small story research.

However, I think it is important at this juncture to point out that fleeting moments of narrative orientation to the world are also evident in interview narratives. Although the tellings invoked in interview narratives may be of non-shared events (although this is not always the case) any interview is dialogic, co-constructed and shared between interviewee and interviewer. (The co-construction of interviews is discussed in Chapter 3.) Thus such prototypical interview narratives are as much examples of narratives-in-interaction and narratives as social practice as those represented in small stories. Indeed Georgakopoulou (2006a) regards the term narratives-in-interaction as a more neutral concept for exploring narrative as 'not only is the term an accurate description of the contexts of occurrences of such stories but, on a less literal level, it also emphases their dialogical qualities, their occasioning in ongoing social interaction' (Georgakopoulou, 2006a: 239). At the core of her argument is that those researchers who work with narrative, particularly those who study biographical narratives need to review how they analyse narrative and also start to look at narratives from the

perspective of narratives-in-interaction. This dialogical view of narratives within interviews is shared by Baynham (2011). He describes the research interview as a 'dynamically co-constructed speech genre rather than as a neutral locus for gathering data' (Baynham, 2011: 63). Drawing on Georgakopoulou's and Bamberg's construct of '"small narrative"', he found that 'there was a pervasive deployment of narrative' within the research interviews undertaken as part of his study about English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) classrooms (Baynham, 2011: 63).

In Baynham's (2011) analysis of the narratives related by ESOL teachers he identifies five types of narrative – personal, generic/iterative, hypothetical or future narrative, narrative as example or exemplum, and negated narrative. Personal narratives relate to tellings concerning the 'current/recent past or more distant past' (Baynham, 2011: 64). 'Generic/iterative' narratives are those that recount what is 'typically or repeatedly the case' (Baynham, 2011: 64), in contrast with 'canonical' narratives in which a 'sequence of events occurred once and once only to a determinate set of participants' (Baynham, 2005: 16). Baynham (2011: 64) identifies narratives that tell of what might be said or done as 'hypothetical or future' narratives. In his research Baynham also identified narratives that are 'told to illustrate a point'. A narrative of this type is termed 'narrative as example or exemplum' (Baynham, 2011: 67). Baynham's (2011: 64) fifth type of narrative is 'negated narrative' - those narratives of 'what was not said and did not happen'. These narrative types reflect and augment Georgakopoulou's (2006a, 2006b) definition of what constitutes small stories or narratives-in-interaction.

What positioning analysis offers my research is an analytic framework that is a remarkable fit with my research questions and the theoretical and methodological frameworks of ethnography and linguistic ethnography that underpin and inform my study. I was always concerned with the positionality of FLLN practitioners when working in a collaborative partnership: positionality of themselves, positionality vis-à-vis each other, the parents whom they teach, and the larger structures and discourses in which they operate. Positioning analysis offers me a way to analyse such positionings, by looking at the narratives-in-interaction within my research data, whilst being true to ethnography as an endeavour that uses language to determine the functions of language-in-use (Blommaert, 2007), at the same time maintaining an ethnographic viewpoint of narrative which necessitates narratives being analysed as referencing the past as well as the future (Heath & Street, 2008). Thus positioning analysis is a discursive analytical approach that recognises and accommodates the Hymesian view of language evident within ethnography and linguistic ethnography. I am combining positioning analysis with ethnography and linguistic ethnography with the understanding that ethnography is open to 'wider interpretive approaches' (Creese, 2008: 229), and positioning analysis is one such interpretive approach.

Bamberg and Georgakopoulou (2008: 380) argue that their model of positioning 'succeeds in navigating between the two extreme ends of fine-grained micro-analysis and macro accounts', allowing for the exploration of self, *firstly* 'at the level of the talked-about', as a character within the story that is being told, and *secondly* 'at the level of tellership in the here-and-now of a storytelling situation'. Both of these levels feed into the *third* level, which references 'the global situatedness within which selves are already positioned: with more or less implicit and

indirect referencing and orientation to social positions and discourses above and beyond the here-and-now' (Bamberg & Georgakopoulou, 2008: 380). This third level enables the investigation of what B. Davies (2008: 179) refers to as 'citational speech', the 'unoriginal repetition of the conventional normative order'. B. Davies believes that 'the ordinary everyday world is sedimented in repeated citations of the way the world is (and, it is believed, ought to be)' (Davies, B., 2008: 173). She argues that this aspect of positioning was overlooked in her original article with Harré (Davies & Harré, 1990). In my opinion positioning analysis offers a way of exploring sedimented speech and understanding how it is indexed in interactions.

Positioning analysis is usually represented as three interrelated yet separable levels of analysis (Bamberg, 2004a, 2004b, 2006a; Barkhuizen, 2010; Korobov, 2004; Watson, 2007). Barkhuizen (2010) puts this succinctly when he states that positioning analysis requires the analyst to firstly examine the content and characters in the story, secondly to analyse the interactive performance of the story, and thirdly examine the positions that are agentively taken by the narrator vis-à-vis normative discourses. Thus content, form and context are considered and the storyteller's interactive engagement in the story's construction is central to the positioning analysis process (Barkhuizen, 2010).

Watson (2007), in her research into the construction of the professional identities of teachers, found one of the short-comings of positioning analysis was that it was difficult to incorporate into the analysis the ways in which the student teachers in her study socially identified the pupils who they taught. Wortham (2004b) differentiates between 'positioning' and

'thickening'. He defines 'positioning as an event of identification, in which a recognizable category of identity gets explicitly or implicitly applied to an individual in an event that takes place across seconds, minutes, or hours' (p.166). Drawing on Holland and Lave (2001), he describes 'thickening as the increasing presupposability of an individual's identity over ontogenetic time, as the individual and others come increasingly to think of and position him or her as a recognizable kind of person' (Wortham, 2004b: 166). Wortham (2004b) proposes that 'individuals routinely get positioned in unexpected, sometimes non-normative ways. But identities often thicken, such that we can unproblematically treat particular individuals as certain types of people' (p.166). He provides the example of students who have been together for an academic year. During this time local identities emerge that position students in recognisable ways as teachers and students draw on institutional resources, habitual classroom roles and the curriculum, along with other resources that are available to them. This process of social identification obviously occurs in a variety of settings, and 'the processes and resources from many timescales generally contribute to the social identification of an individual' (Wortham, 2004b: 167) (see Wortham 2004b; 2005, for discussion of the different timescales involved in the process of identification). Wortham (2004b: 167) argues that 'different configurations of resources contribute to the thickening of social identity in different cases'.

One of the criticisms of positioning analysis is that its primary purpose is 'not with temporal spread but with the here and now performance of identity' (Watson, 2007: 384). In the analysis that Watson presents she argues that she is going some way to addressing this because the analysis she is presenting is actually 'embedded in a series of interviews that took

place over the course of a year' (Watson, 2007: 384). Bamberg (2004c: 4) acknowledges that 'investigations that conduct several 'takes' […] can lay out revisions in our sense-making and re-storying capabilities in much more detail and with greater effectiveness'. The way I am drawing on and interpreting positioning analysis incorporates looking for traces of storylines across what Wortham (2004b) refers to as an intermediate timescale. Thus, in common with Wortham (2004b) I am emphasising the importance of attending to the intermediate timescale processes that demonstrate how categories and identities can be developed over a months-long period. I am tracing the thickening or 'solidifying' (see Wortham, 2003a) of social identification 'through the contingent process of emerging intertextual links across events' (Wortham, 2005: 98), which, in the case of this study, takes place over months. This enables me to attend to 'how processes and resources from various timescales interconnect (Wortham, 2004b: 167), which Wortham stipulates is necessary for an 'adequate analysis of social identification' (p.167), as it is important that 'analysts must attend not only to the moment of utterance, but also to some later moment when subsequent context has helped the meaning of the utterance solidify' (Wortham, 2003a: 17). I agree with Wortham (2008a: 295) that in order to understand how people 'develop durable identities […] we must understand how the objectification of identity occurs both within and across events, and how these different types of objectification interrelate'. Wortham (2008b: 99) also points out the interelationship between the 'emergent meaning of signs in use, socially circulating ideologies and broader social structures'. He proposes that 'local models' of identity that emerge over a period of time 'both draw on and transform more widely circulating models' (Wortham, 2008b: 102).

Therefore, in keeping with Wortham I am examining how locally produced and wider ideological discourses circulate and contribute to the social identification of individuals. Positioning analysis provides me with the scope to do this.

I have outlined the rationale for combining ethnography, linguistic ethnography and positioning analysis as theoretical and methodological frameworks for the analysis of situated language use, and how such approaches provide the tools to answer my research questions. The following sections review the empirical research that my study builds upon. The first of these provides an overview of the literature on constructions of parenting, with a particular emphasis on the discourses that enframe working-class parenting practices and parents' involvement in their children's schooling.

2.5   Constructions of parenting

Commentators agree that embedded within policy discourse about parenting is an oppositional view of working-class and middle-class parenting practices (Gewirtz, 2001; Gillies, 2005a, 2005b; Reay, 1998; Vincent et al., 2010). There is also a recognition that policy discourse that refers to parenting practices should actually be read as a commentary on mothering practices (see, for example, Gillies, 2006; Reay, 1998, 2004; Standing, 1999; Vincent & Ball, 2007; Vincent et al., 2010).

Reay (2004: 76) points out that enshrined within educational policies is an increasing expectation that parents will be 'co-educators alongside their children's teachers'. As such,

she argues that within contemporary education policy it is evident that 'leaving children's education to the school' has come to be a sign of 'very bad parenting' (p. 76). In Reay's (1998; 2004) research into mothers' involvement in their children's schooling she found that 'mothers' personal histories and their educational experiences influence their involvement in their children's schooling, particularly their effectiveness in dealing with teachers' (Reay, 2004: 77). Many of the middle-class mothers in her study had done well at school and 'this educational success translated into self-confidence and a sense of entitlement in relation to parental involvement' (Reay, 2004: 77). Reay (2004) argues that, as a consequence of their greater cultural capital, middle-class mothers are more adept at articulating their viewpoint to teachers, in contrast to working-class mothers who are 'much more hesitant and apologetic and far more likely to disqualify and, at times, contradict themselves when talking to teachers' (p.77). Tett (2001) argues that although working-class parents strongly support their children's education they do not tend to have a strong relationship with the school as they recognise that they are unable to influence school practices due to cultural differences between themselves and the teachers. Reay (2004) relates the relative cultural capital of these two groups to the roles they perceive themselves to have in relation to schooling. Reay (2004: 77) found that working-class mothers perceived their role as a supportive one, as 'nearly all the working-class mothers talked in terms of 'supporting the school' and 'backing the teacher up'', whereas middle-class mothers viewed their role as more compensatory in nature.

One of Reay's (1998; 2004) findings was that working-class mothers resisted being constructed as their children's teachers. Other commentators have also found this to be the case (see Crozier, 1997; Vincent et al., 2010). Reay (2004: 79) proposes that the mothers'

'own negative experiences of schooling, feelings that they lacked educational competencies and knowledge, and a related lack of confidence about tackling educational work in the home' all contribute to the mothers' resistance towards taking on a teaching role. Similarly Gillies (2006: 287-288) notes that 'for middle class mothers helping their children complete homework sheets or discussing their latest set reading book could represent a cosy, intimate point of connection. For working class mothers it was more likely to represent a site of conflict, uncertainty and vulnerability'.

However, not assuming a teaching role does not correlate with being disinterested in their children's education (Crozier, 1997; Reay 1998; 2004; Vincent et al., 2008, 2010), although, as Vincent et al., (2010: 132) argue 'working-class mothering practices are vulnerable to being understood as deficient' as they do not fit in with the dominant professional discourses surrounding child development; discourses which normalise middle-class parenting practices. Reay (1998) argues that although working-class parents are involved in supporting their children's education, working-class mothers engage in less effective practices in terms of parental involvement, as they do not have the level of resources or power of their middle-class counterparts, and are therefore not able to directly influence their children's schooling. In Standing's (1999) study into parental involvement in relation to lone mothers, she found that 'lone mothers' parental involvement becomes conceptualised by the schools as inadequate' (p. 491).

In her study into the effects of social class on interactions inside the home Lareau (2002, 748-749) found that the working-class and poor parents believe that 'as long as they provide love,

food, and safety, their children will grow and thrive'. Gillies (2006: 287) argues that working-class parents articulated their children's school success based on different values and priorities to middle-class parents as 'rather than emphasising intelligence and academic attainment, the attributes most likely to be proudly described by working class parents were children's ability to stay out of trouble, get on with others, and work hard'. The working-class parents in Gillies' (2006: 287) study experienced 'very little of the sense of power taken for granted by the middle class sample and as a result detachment and lack of control over their children's education were commonly voiced', whereas middle-class parents 'were likely to view education as a crucial foundation for future success and one which must be secured at any cost'. This resonates with the findings of Bodovski (2010) and Harris and Goodall (2008). Bodovski (2010: 153) found that 'parents from different socioeconomic backgrounds assess their place in the social structure and consciously or unconsciously socialize their children according to the opportunities they perceive to be available to them', whereas Harris and Goodall (2008: 280) propose that 'parents' expectations set the context within which young people develop, shape their own expectations and aspirations'. The mothers in Vincent et al.'s (2010) study, again are interested in their children's educational development, but not in 'middle-class' terms, and as such, are what Vincent et al. (2010: 132) describe as being 'potentially at risk of being positioned by education and social welfare professionals in terms of not being 'there' in a manner that would ensure the child's optimum intellectual development'. This supports Lawler's (2005: 435) assertion that working-class women 'are always at risk of being judged as wanting by middle-class observers'.

Vincent et al. (2010) draw attention to the pressure that being a 'good' mother puts on mothers regardless of their social class. Drawing on the concept of 'sensitive' mothering, coined by Walkerdine and Lucey (1989, cited in Vincent et al., 2010: 132), they highlight that parenting practices which focus on 'constructing developmental and learning opportunities for the child from everyday routines, is highly dependent on middle-class resources and priorities' (p. 132). Hays (1996, cited in Braun et al., 2008: 545) describes the 'dominant discourses around mothering as 'intensive mothering''. Braun et al. summarise what 'intensive mothering' means.

> Intensive mothering requires the mother to take on complete responsibility for all aspects of children's cognitive, social, emotional and physical development. It requires a centring of children and their needs in family life, accompanied by a considerable degree of maternal self-sacrifice. Intensive mothering is conducted against a growing background of advice manuals, childrearing 'experts' and media comment. (Braun et al., 2008: 545)

Thus such mothering practices come to predominate, evolve and solidify into the dominant, normalised discourse of what is expected of a 'good' mother. This discourse comes to be regarded as normal and desirable (Gillies, 2006; Lawler, 2005), and 'what all mothers *should* do' (Vincent et al., 2010: 132). Gillies (2005b: 849) acknowledges that such a discourse exacts its own price on middle-class parents as 'complex and often painful pressures face middle-class parents and their children as a result of this meritocratic ideal'. However, despite the pressures faced by middle-class mothers it is generally working-class mothers who are positioned as deficient in the parenting skills required 'to equip their children with the right skills for social improvement' (Gillies, 2006: 283).

Commentators such as Gewirtz (2001) and Gillies (2005a, 2005b, 2006) point out that consideration is not given to why the practices of working-class parents do not reflect those of their middle-class counterparts. Moreover, the socio-economic circumstances of working-class parents and how these impact on mothering remain largely ignored in policy discourse (Duncan, 2005; Gewirtz, 2001; Gillies, 2005a). Instead what is put into place to rectify the perceived problem of working-class parenting practices are 'a raft of policy initiatives designed to 'support' parents in the essential practice of raising children' (Gillies, 2005b: 839). This 'support' becomes realised as 'parenting classes'. 'Parenting 'support' initiatives are promoted as being relevant to all parents regardless of their circumstances, but this concern to regulate childrearing practices is for the most part directed at those families defined as socially excluded' (Gillies, 2005b: 839). Gillies (2005b: 840) argues that, as a consequence, class is 'obscured by its re-framing in terms of an included majority of reasonable, rational, moral citizens who seek the best for their children, and an excluded minority who are disconnected from mainstream values and aspirations'. Accordingly, parenting practices are isolated from their 'situated, interpersonal context' and presented as 'methods which must be taught for the public good' (Gillies 2005b: 840). Tett (2001: 192-193) concurs with this position, stating that 'parent education and family literacy programmes are almost always aimed at poor and working-class mothers as a kind of prophylactic against the potential failure of schools'.

There is no doubt that FLLN programmes can be viewed as one of the raft of policy initiatives that are aimed at 'supporting' parents. However, before discussing the literature on family literacy, the next section outlines the literature in relation to adult literacy.

2.6   Adult literacy

This section is divided into two parts. The first focuses on the current model of adult literacy education, embedded within the policy discourse of *Skills for Life* (SfL). Research in the field of New Literacy Studies is outlined in the second part.

2.6.1   *Skills for Life*

The current phase of adult literacy education in England was instigated by the launch of the SfL Strategy in 2001. This was the first time that there had been a fully funded national strategy in relation to adult literacy (Hamilton, 2010, 2012). It was formulated from the recommendations made in the review of adult literacy, language and numeracy undertaken in 1999, chaired by Sir Claus Moser (Moser, 1999). This review was initiated by the government in response to the findings of the International Adult Literacy Survey (IALS) (OECD, 1997). The survey raised concerns about the UK's standards of literacy as the UK was ranked below most other European countries.

Criticisms of the SfL policy have been made by many commentators since its implementation. Firstly, the policy is criticised in terms of bringing into question the rationale that underpins it (see Hamilton, 2001; Hamilton & Barton, 2000 for a discussion of the methodology used in IALS). Secondly, criticisms have also been made in relation to the model of literacy promoted by SfL as it is based on the premise that literacy is a neutral set of skills (O'Grady & Atkin, 2006; Oughton, 2007; Papen, 2005; Taylor, 2008a). For many

literacy scholars there is an inherent tension between recognising that the SfL policy heralded a shift of adult literacy and numeracy funding to the mainstream from the margins, opening up opportunities for the concerted development of adult literacy provision, whilst, at the same time, realising that the discourse of adult literacy within SfL, is clearly rooted in such a deficit model of literacy (see, for example, Appleby & Bathmaker, 2006; Bathmaker, 2007; Burgess, 2010; Papen, 2005). Regarding literacy as de-contextualised skills acquisition is viewed as in direct opposition to much of the research into literacy by those scholars working under the auspices of New Literacy Studies, who regard literacy as a social practice (Barton, 2001; Baynham & Prinsloo, 2001; Burgess, 2010; Hamilton, 2009; Pahl & Kelly, 2005), as literacy practices are 'always embedded in socially constructed epistemological principles (Street, 2008: 4) and thus are 'shaped by both institutionalised and informal relations of power' (Baynham & Prinsloo, 2001: 83).

That literacy learners are constructed in deficit terms, as having problems that need to be rectified (Burgess, 2010; O'Grady & Atkin, 2006; Oughton, 2007; Papen, 2005; Taylor, 2008b), is another criticism made about SfL, for as Street (2008: 3) asserts 'in policy circles, […] dominant voices still tend to characterise local people as illiterate […] while on the ground ethnographic and literacy-sensitive observation indicates a rich variety of practices'. However, this negative construction of adult literacy learners marks a continuation of what is often regarded as the traditional construct of literacy learners (Appleby & Bathmaker, 2006; Crowther & Tett, 2011; O'Grady & Atkin, 2006; Tett & Maclachlan, 2008). As a consequence of learners internalising this deficit discourse, they may already have very negative senses of themselves as learners, resulting in it taking a considerable amount of time

for them to reengage in learning (Crowther et al., 2010; Tett & Maclachlan, 2007). The

relationships that learners form with their tutors is central to a successful learning experience

(Crowther et al., 2010; Tett & Maclachlan, 2007: Ivanič et al., 2006).

The fourth criticism leveled at SfL is that practitioners as well as learners are constructed in

deficit terms. Commentators point out that the SfL policy serves to reduce the agency of

practitioners (Burgess, 2008, 2010; Hamilton, 2009; Hamilton & Hillier, 2007; Oughton,

2007). Burgess (2008), Chilton (2007) and Hamilton (2009) have all discussed Individual

Learning Plans (ILPs) as an example of accountability and governmentality. Hamilton (2009:

221) argues that ILPs shape teaching and learning relationships, positioning practitioners

'uncomfortably as active mediators between student experience and the policy discourse'.

Chilton (2007) concurs, proposing that ILPs act as technologies of surveillance for both

practitioners and learners. In Taylor's (2008a: 311) analysis of the adult literacy curriculum,

she argues that 'the pedagogic discourse of the curriculum as a resource or instructional text

has now been firmly embedded within the wider regulative discourse government by a skills

and competence-based view of literacy'. Monerville (2004, cited in Taylor, 2008a: 311) states

that, due to the introduction of the core curriculum 'individualist teaching became limited as

certain beliefs and values reflected in the document began to influence the teaching culture

and direct cultural change'. This resonates with Hamilton and Hillier's (2007: 584) argument

that certain core ideas of the SfL policy 'appear to have been non-negotiable and practitioners

have largely been required to simply implement them'. Stronach et al. (2002), in their

research into the nature of contemporary professional identity argue that a professional can be

framed as implementer of policy. However, for the professional self, implementing policy

involves a series of contradictions and dilemmas (Stronach et al., 2002), for rather than

implementing policies, policies are filtered through existing professional ideologies and

perspectives (Shain & Gleeson, 1999), being both resisted and mediated (Simkins & Lumby,

2002). Therefore adult literacy practitioners may be required to simply implement policy, but

the actual implementation is always more complex in reality. Kim (2003: 119) highlights the

complexity of teaching literacy in practice, arguing that even when teachers are convinced by

the insights of New Literacy Studies practitioners are left with the decision as to 'whether and

how to teach dominant literacies without becoming complicit in the reproduction of power'.

However, on another note, despite the implementation of the SfL initiative, with its related

recruitment of new practitioners, it continues to be the case that teaching in adult literacy

education is a gendered practice, as practitioners are predominantly women (Luttrell, 1996),

and usually middle-class (Lucas et al., 2004; Tett & Maclachlan, 2008).

A further criticism of SfL is its 'strong emphasis on qualification outcomes rather than other

evidence of progress' (Bathmaker, 2007: 298). Bathmaker argues that relying on qualification

outcomes as a measure of progress narrows the definition of what adult literacy actually is,

therefore resulting in the alignment of progress in adult literacy with economic

competitiveness. Bathmaker contrasts the methods used for measuring and evaluating adult

literacy in Scotland, where Tett and colleagues have developed a social capital index as a way

of measuring progress (see Tett et al., 2006; Tett & Maclachlan, 2007)[3]. Furthermore,

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[3] Scotland can also be differentiated from England in that it has adopted the social practices approach to adult literacy (Scottish Executive, 2005). However, Crowther and Tett (2011: 139) argue that since 2007 the social practice model of adult literacy is being replaced by a 'more functional, economic agenda', which is

Bathmaker (2007: 308) argues that 'there is no direct evidence that achievement of a certified outcome actually represent progress by an individual learner from a previous level of skill to another, rather than certification of where that learner already was'. This finding is supported by other commentators (Appleby & Bathmaker, 2006; Hamilton & Hillier, 2007).

This section has provided a critique of SfL. The following section outlines the range of research undertaken by New Literacy Studies' scholars, who define literacy in terms of social practices, as opposed to the autonomous model of literacy found within SfL.

2.6.2   New Literacy Studies

Barton (2001: 93) argues that New Literacy Studies 'grew out of a dissatisfaction with conceptions of reading and writing which were prevalent in education in all areas, from early childhood reading to adult literacy programmes'. What characterises New Literacy Studies is firstly 'the turn away from a priori specification of categories of people, such as 'literates' and 'illiterates'' and 'the attachment of 'typical' outcomes to the membership of such static categories', and, secondly, the turn towards 'the theorisation of everyday social practice, based on the premise that literacy practices are always and already embedded in particular social forms of activity' (Baynham & Prinsloo, 2001: 83). Barton (2001: 98) suggests that a strength of this approach is that it can 'combine a very strong empirical tradition with frameworks from social theory'. He proposes that the hallmark of much Literacy Studies

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'underpinned by an autonomous model of literacy characteristic of adult literacy provision elsewhere in the United Kingdom'.

research has been their 'detailed investigations of particular situations' (p.94), what Reder and Davila (2005: 172) refer to as a move towards 'a careful consideration of concrete, local uses of literacy'. Early studies that exemplify this turn towards the study of the local include the works of Barton and Hamilton (1998), Barton et al. (2000), Baynham (1995), Crowther et al. (2001) Heath (1983) and Street (1984). In 2001 Baynham & Prinsloo identified the current topics within New Literacy Studies as community-based literacy practices, home-school literacy practices, literacy and schooling, academic literacy practices, workplace literacy practices, and literacy practices and policy discourses on literacy (p.85). They also identified cross-cutting themes in literacy research – the impact of new technologies and media, what counts as knowledge, and the interactions of the global and local in shaping literacy practices. (For detailed listings of New Literacy Studies research until 2001 see Barton (2001) and Baynham & Prinsloo (2001)). However, at this point New Literacy research was being criticised for concentrating on the situated social practice of literacy without paying due attention to those external forces that influence and shape local practices (see Brandt & Clinton, 2002).

Brandt and Clinton (2002) suggest that there has been a disconnect between the local and global and that this needs repairing. They agree that local literacy practices should always be the site of study but suggest that, in studying the local 'we can ask what is localising and what is globalising about what is going on' as 'what appears to be a local event also can be understood as a far-flung tendril in a much more elaborate vine' (p.347). In response to Brandt and Clinton, Street (2003) proposes that New Literacy Studies is able to accommodate the intersection of local and global encounters around literacy, referring to them as hybrid

literacy practices. Baynham (2004: 289) posits that 'the dominant, universalising literacies can be seen on closer inspection, as profoundly local'. Reder and Davila (2005: 176) argue that '"local" and "global" (or distant, remote) contexts do not exist in contrast to one another, but as constituents of a larger whole'. They propose that 'in building theories based on close examination and analysis of local practices, NLS has not dealt systematically with identifying what makes a context "local"' (Reder & Davila, 2005: 180).

Warriner (2011: 534) states that one of the foci of current research on literacy as a social practice is influenced by Brandt and Clinton's (amongst others) view that 'looking beyond the particulars of local contexts illuminates the specific nature of situated social practice'. There has also been a turn towards examining the role of space and time in relation to literacy practices (Baynham & Simpson, 2010; Burgess, 2010; Pahl, 2007a; Sheehy, 2009; Warriner, 2011). Multimodality (Jewitt, 2008; Kress, 2000; Marsh, 2003; Pahl & Rowsell, 2006; Tusting, 2008), multiliteracies (Cope & Kalantzis, 2000; Kalantzis & Cope, 2008; Giampapa, 2010; Moayeri; 2010; Pahl, 2008a) and digital literacies (see Mills, 2010 for a detailed literature review of the 'digital turn') continue to be at the forefront of current literacy research.

Warriner (2011) points out that literacy scholars are returning to research questions of schooling, a direction suggested by Baynham (2004). However, this does not preclude continuing to research outside of educational settings. The research presented in 'Literacies and Sites of Learning', a special issue of *Language and Education*, is testament to an ongoing tradition of investigating literacy practices in a range of sites (informal learning about health

care (Papen, 2012); learning in online spaces (Barton, 2012; Gillen et al., 2012)), whilst also continuing to investigate those practices within educational institutions (accountability literacies in an early years centre and adult education college (Tusting, 2012a)).

What this research also illustrates is how the work of New Literacy Studies scholars engages with a variety of theoretical and analytical models. In this issue, Tusting, for example, draws on ideas about situated learning and the commodification of education, Papen uses theories of adult learning to frame her research, whilst Gillen et al. draw on theories of distributed cognition. Barton's study builds on the literature of adults' informal learning, situated learning and socio-cultural theories of learning. Previous studies have used, for example, deliberative policy analysis as an analytical framework (Hamilton & Hillier, 2007). Hamilton (2010) has applied the philosophical ideas of actor network theory to a policy analysis of SfL. Hamilton's (2009) and Burgess' (2008) respective research into the use of ILPs contributes to the debate about local and global literacies, as foregrounded by Brandt and Clinton (2002). Burgess (2008) explores how the ILP as an artifact mediates across timescales, mediating between policy and practice, whilst Hamilton (2009) demonstrates how texts, in this case ILPs, play a central role in projects of social ordering.

The above examples provide a limited snapshot of the range of literacies being investigated and the variety of approaches that are being integrated into research that foregrounds literacy as social practice (see Tusting, 2012b for an overview of recent research by the Lancaster Literacy Research Centre).The range and breadth of studies being undertaken confirms Warriner's (2011: 537) statement that 'literacy studies scholarship has become a field of

inquiry that intersects with a number of other intellectual pursuits, including the pursuits of applied linguistics but also those of the social sciences more generally'. Thus 'literacy studies scholarship remains both a conceptual undertaking and a systematic examination of empirical data (Warriner, 2011: 537)

The next section reviews literature in the field of family literacy.

2.7   Family literacy

'Family literacy' is a contested term.

> 'Family literacy' connotes different things for different people; for some, it means intervention programs usually aimed at low-literate or marginalized families while for others, it encapsulates the myriad ways that literacy is practiced and promoted with the context of the family. (Anderson et al., 2010: 33)

This dichotomy is recognised by many commentators (Auerbach, 1995; Cairney, 2002; Compton-Lilly et al., 2012; Crawford & Zygouris-Coe, 2006; Hannon, 2000; Heydon & Reilly, 2007; Nutbrown & Hannon, 2003). Gadsden (2008: 163) draws attention to this disjuncture. She states that, on one hand, family literacy is conceptualised as 'research that emphasizes multiple literacies, sociocultural contexts, and social change in understanding families' learning'. Such research can be viewed as drawing and building on the work of New Literacy Studies, as it regards family literacy as a range of practices that are socially situated (see Heath, 1983; Mui & Anderson, 2008; Pahl, 2004, 2007a; Rogers, 2003). On the other

hand, family literacy reflects 'the policy push for instructional programming for parents and children that assumes universality of interests, needs, and backgrounds of learners' (Gadsden, 2008: 163). This instantiation of family literacy, in which government-funded family literacy programmes are foregrounded, has been criticised on a number of levels. However, family literacy programmes are not a homogeneous group.

Auerbach (1995) proposes that family literacy programmes can be broadly categorised into three approaches: the intervention prevention approach, the multiple literacies approach and the social change approach. She argues, from a US perspective, that although family literacy programmes have adopted an antideficit stance in order to gain legitimacy within the field 'a significant tendency within the current generation of family literacy approaches, may, in fact, represent a neodeficit ideology and that the discourse of strengths may, wittingly or unwittingly, serve the function of legitimating that ideology' (p.644). Furthermore, 'antideficit rhetoric has become so pervasive that it masks fundamental underlying differences in values, goals, ideological orientations, and pedagogical approaches' (p.644).

According to Auerbach (1995) inherent within the intervention prevention approach is a deficit perspective. She argues that in this model 'since literacy problems are seen to originate in families, the remedy must be located there' (p.644). Certain parents are charged with being unable to 'promote positive literacy attitudes and interactions in the home' (p.644) and, as such, intervention prevention programmes are regarded as the best way of ensuring that 'patterns of undereducation and illiteracy will be prevented from passing from generation to generation' (p.645). Although she is speaking about the US, those family literacy programmes

in the UK that follow the BSA model of family literacy have been developed from this intergenerational US model (see Pahl, 2008b: 18) and, it is argued, continue to perpetuate a deficit view of particular types of families (Gilbert & Appleby, 2005; Hannon, 2000; Pitt, 2002; Rocha-Schmid, 2010). Hannon (2000) coins the term 'restricted' to denote those programmes that target certain families and require parents to receive support for their perceived literacy deficits. He argues that making the 'adult education' strand of family literacy programmes compulsory may reduce take-up and participation (Hannon, 2006). Many family literacy scholars also highlight that it is actually 'mothers' who are targeted by family literacy programmes rather than 'parents' (Auerbach, 1995; Pitt, 2002, Smythe, 2006; Smythe & Isserlis, 2002, cited in Anderson et al., 2007; Tett, 2001). Nichols et al. (2009) found that representations of parenting in commercial and government texts in relation to early childhood literacy usually depicted mothers. Similarly, research into how family literacy is portrayed on the internet revealed that the prevailing image is of a mother reading a book to her young child (Anderson et al., 2007; Anderson et al., 2008)

One of the underlying principles that informs the intervention prevention approach is that parents who are considered to be undereducated do not support the literacy development of their children (Auerbach, 1995). This is refuted by family literacy scholars (Auerbach, 1995: Hannon, 2000). In fact much research in naturalistic settings (see Heath, 1983; Mui & Anderson, 2008; Pahl, 2007a; Purcell-Gates, 1996; Marsh & Thompson, 2001; Rogers, 2003) has commented on the rich and diverse range of literacy practices that children and parents engage in at home. However, the issue lies with the privileging of schooled literacy practices

without due recognition being given to home literacy practices in which families engage (see Cairney, 2002; Hope, 2011; Marsh, 2003; Tett, 2001).

As Tett (2001: 195) points out 'most parent education and family literacy programmes assume that the school's perspective is 'correct' and need only be supported by parents to be successful so they have little impact on school-community connections'. However, Tett found, in her research into parent education and family literacy programmes, in a family literacy programme being run by an adult education practitioner in which the adult educator embraced a 'parent-centred, dialogic approach' (p.188) to working with the parents, this encouraged parents to problematise schooled literacy practices and to identify and value their own literacy practices, and how these are already supporting their children's development at home. In common with Auerbach (1995) Tett identifies the underpinning values and purposes of those organisations running family literacy programmes 'can lead to different outcomes particularly in relation to the conceptualisation of the role of 'parent' (p.188).

The outcome that Tett (2001) outlines above is not one that is traditionally associated with the intervention prevention approach. Indeed it has more in common with what Auerbach (1995) refers to as the multiple literacies approach to family literacy. According to Auerbach, the starting point for this approach is that it identifies a mismatch between 'culturally variable home literacy practices and school literacies' (p.651) and 'sees the solution as investigating and validating students' multiple literacies and cultural resources in order to inform schooling' (p.651). Advocates of this approach include Moll et al. (1992) who developed the concept of 'funds of knowledge'. Family literacy scholars recognise that the concept of 'funds

of knowledge' is useful in the development of family literacy programmes, particularly in relation to the intersection between home and school literacy practices (Bird et al., 2005; Cairney, 2002; Gadsden, 2008; Hope, 2011; Pahl & Kelly, 2005; Pahl & Rowsell, 2011; Rowsell & Pahl, 2007; Taylor, 1993). Moll et al. (1992) argue that those families who are consistently positioned as deficient in social and education policy discourses in reality hold 'funds of knowledge' – 'ample cultural and cognitive resources with great, potential utility for classroom interaction' (p.134). They propose that if teachers are better informed about the 'funds of knowledge' of their learners then, by 'capitalizing on household and other community resources' (p.132) they can organise teaching more effectively to incorporate and recognise those 'knowledges' that learners bring to the classroom. Gadsden (2008) argues that families' uses and knowledge of technology and digital modalities also need further exploration within the context of family literacy. Work of this nature is already being undertaken by those who are researching the digital literacy practices of young children in home and school settings (Hill, 2010; McTavish, 2009; Marsh, 2003, 2004; Marsh & Thompson, 2001; O'Hara, 2011). Findings indicate that children are engaging in a wide range of digital literacy practices at home, which are not utilised within schooled literacy practices.

Bird et al. (2005) argue that family literacy practitioners are at their 'most effective when they understand and validate home and community literacy practices, and make connections with what is happening in school' (p.58). Drawing on 'funds of knowledge' (Moll et al., 1992) and 'third space' theory (Moje et al., 2004) Bird et al. (2005) propose that it is the role of practitioners to mediate between the two spaces of home and school in order to create a 'third space', a space in which new hybrid literacies are produced, a liminal space

which is at the threshold of home and school (see also Pahl & Kelly, 2005). Cook (2005: 89) proposes that a first step toward achieving this 'may well be simply to make parents aware of the value of what they and their children already do, and its relevance to school learning'.

The third approach for family literacy programmes that Auerbach (1995) identifies is the social change approach. This approach is informed by the work of Freire. It incorporates the principles of the multiple literacies approach but additionally emphasises issues of power as well as culture.

> The central assumption of this *social change* perspective is that problems of marginalized people originate in a complex interaction of political, social, and economic factors in the broader society rather than in family inadequacies or differences between home and school cultures; it is the conditions created by institutional and structural forces which shape access to literacy acquisition. (Auerbach, 1995: 654)

Gadsden (1995, cited in Auerbach, 1995: 656) states that 'when participants are part of the decision-making process of a program that is intended 'to help them', the program becomes more effective and the effect more durable'. Gadsden (2008) describes two ways of viewing the social change approach. Firstly, instead of placing responsibility for change with individuals it is 'placed back in the arms of the public, while recognising the role that private spheres (such as families and communities) can play in effecting such change' (p.171). On the other hand, she suggests that

> parents and other family members should be involved in the planning and strategizing of programs, increasing opportunities for them to identify,

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grapple with, and respond to pressing social problems affecting them, the
education of their children, and the goals of their families and communities.
(Gadsden, 2008:171)

Delgado-Gaitan (1991) and Reyes and Torres (2007) provide examples of this approach. In
Delgado-Gaitan's research with Mexican-American families, she compared the decision-
making processes inherent with three programmes. She concludes that the group formed by
the parents themselves gave them greater voice within the school, as it was built on the
premise that 'the families affected by the school programs are the most capable of making
choices and decisions toward resolution of conflicts' (p.42). The locus of power and control
was with the parents themselves. This supports Auerbach's view that what differentiates the
social change approach is its underlying principle that 'families and communities have the
right to determine for themselves the direction of family literacy and school involvement
efforts, rather than assuming that outsiders know what is best for them' (p.658). In this
approach empowerment is seen as a process, in which critical reflection is a central element
(Delgado-Gaitan, 1991; Reyes & Torres, 2007). A number of family literacy scholars
conceptualise family literacy programmes in relation to social justice and social change (see
Compton-Lilly et al., 2012: 51 for a comprehensive list).

It is clear that the varying assumptions, values and goals underpin different approaches to
family literacy programmes. The family literacy programme that is the focus of this study
follows the BSA model, is funded under the SfL policy initiative, and can be argued is based
on a deficit model of parenting, and thus mothering. However, as Pahl (2008c: 145) points
out, 'there is a difference between the discourses and epistemologies associated with FLLN,

with the subsequent academic debates, and the actual practice mediated by skilled practitioners in positive and empowering contexts'. Furthermore, it should be recognised 'that for many parents and children, family literacy, language and numeracy programmes provide a positive space, where their diverse and multiple literacies and numeracies are recognised and heard and where practitioners continue to be innovative in their work' (Pahl, 2008c: 143).

2.8   Conclusion

This chapter has provided a comprehensive overview of the empirical literature which informs my research and on which it is building, that is, literature concerning constructions of parenting, adult literacy and family literacy. In this chapter I have also reviewed the literatures relating to the theoretical and methodological frameworks that I am drawing on in my research. In undertaking this review I have attempted to demonstrate that each of these three frameworks - ethnography, linguistic ethnography and positioning – despite being discrete entities, also have the potential to be interlinked. I have tried to show this by highlighting the connective threads that together form the multi-stranded approach which undergirds my research. In her discussion of discourse analysis in educational research, Warriner (2008: 210) points out that 'current works in progress reflect the ways that educational researchers draw upon different theoretical and methodological approaches to discourse analysis as well as the ways that once seemingly distinct approaches might be combined to very good ends'. I think that my research is contributing to this debate.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

Chapter 2 provided a detailed review of the literature relating to my field of study, discussing the theoretical frameworks and empirical research that underpin, support and influence my research. The main purpose of this chapter is to provide the details of my research design, the rationale for my choice of methods and to describe how I have implemented them. This chapter also outlines how the data collected has been analysed and discusses the inherent and emerging ethical implications of undertaking my research study.

The aim of my study is to find out how FLLN practitioners conceptualise FLLN, how they position themselves and are positioned in the discourse of FLLN, and how FLLN practitioners actually work together. Understanding the role of language and its capacity for positioning is central to this aim as 'discourse is a practice not just of representing the world, but of signifying the world, constituting and constructing the world in meaning' (Fairclough, 1992: 64).

The research questions I seek to answer in this study are:

1. To what extent do the FLLN practitioners' backgrounds and experience, as indexed in their narrative tellings, influence their current practice?

2. How do the practitioners construct the FLLN programme they are delivering together, and the policy that underpins it?

3. What do the narratives related by the FLLN practitioners reveal about the nature of their working relationship and the roles they each enact within it?

4. How are the parents positioned in the small stories told by the FLLN practitioners in this study?

Thus my research design needs to be capable of revealing the relationship between language and the social world. This chapter details the methods I am using to achieve this. It is divided into ten sections. The first four sections (*research design, research setting, research participants* and *gaining consent*) provide contextual information about my research study. The following three sections (*participant observation, interviews* and *document collection*) provide the reasons for my choice of data collection methods, a description of these methods, the process of their implementation and an evaluation of their effectiveness. The subsequent section provides an overview of my approach to data analysis. Ethical considerations are discussed next. Concluding comments are in the final section.

3.2   Research Design

As previously discussed (see Chapter 2) the methodological and theoretical frameworks of ethnography, linguistic ethnography and positioning analysis that I have chosen to address my research questions can be regarded as qualitative and interpretive in nature.

Denscombe (2002) outlines six purposes for undertaking research, one of which is exploratory. The purpose of such research is primarily to describe 'how things *are*, rather than how they will be or how they should be, or even why they are as they are' (Denscombe, 2002: 27). However, I want to describe how FLLN practitioners *are* by exploring the situatedness of their language practices and, at the same time, also gain an insight into 'why they are as they are'.

So what methods provide the best fit when wanting to explore how and why things are as they are?

The research methods that I have used can be categorised as *observation*, *interviews* and *document collection*. However, before I go on to describe each of these categories in detail it is necessary to outline the *research setting*, the *research participants* and the process undertaken for *gaining consent.* The first of these is the *research setting*.

3.3   Research setting

In choosing a research setting there are a number of considerations that need to be taken into account. Gaining access to people, places and events is crucial to successful ethnographic research (Denscombe, 2007).

> Access is not negotiated once and then settled; access to formal organisations can take enormous amounts of time to achieve; and access negotiations that are not properly recorded are wasted.
> (Delamont, 2002: 95)

In the planning stages of my study I had considered two constructions of FLLN that would be my preference to study. Firstly when an early years teacher and adult literacy tutor are working together for the first time, and secondly in a setting where practitioners are used to working collaboratively and generally are viewed as having an effective and successful working relationship. In both constructions I had assumed that the setting would be a primary school. Denscombe (2002) reminds us that exploratory research that uses qualitative data does not readily lend itself to the expectation that the researcher should be willing and able to be absolutely precise about the direction and scope of the investigation at the outset. I would add that the researcher should also be prepared to be flexible about the research setting as well.

My study does not fit neatly into my expectations or experience of FLLN programmes. Firstly the FLLN programme is taking place in a community location, which is not affiliated to any particular school. It is much more common for FLLN programmes to be run in schools (see Mallows, 2008). However, in this case the parents and children involved in the FLLN programme have been offered the chance to take part in FLLN because of their connection to a particular branch of a national charity. So the parents' commonality is not related to their children attending or being due to attend the same school, which is usually the case, but the parents' connection with the charity and the perceived need for the support that can be afforded to them through attending FLLN provision.

In the specific setting I am investigating the 'early years teacher' role is being undertaken by one of the charity's organisers – but she has also previously worked as an early years teacher. As I would expect the 'adult literacy tutor' is employed by the adult and community division

of the local authority, within its family learning department. However, her background is of working in early years provision rather than in a tradition of working within adult literacy.

Hammersley and Atkinson (2007) point out that the role of pragmatism should not be underestimated in choosing a research setting. The changing nature of the research setting - from my initial proposition to the actual reality I investigated - reflects this need to be flexible and pragmatic about choosing a setting. I had already taken the pragmatic decision to undertake my study in a local authority area for which I have worked as a FLLN practitioner and have an existing relationship with the Family Learning Manager. Rogers (2003) speaks of using her 'insider connections' to gain approval for research she undertook into family literacy practices.

Bearing in mind the significance of pragmatism, I did not feel that using existing contacts would be detrimental to my study but I needed to be mindful of the impact that having the Family Learning Manager as a 'sponsor' may have, particularly in relation to the practitioners taking part in this study. Delamont (2002) points out that it is important to think about preconceptions and foreshadowed problems before data collection begins, and to record such thoughts. I was correct in thinking that my relationship with the Family Learning Manager would accelerate the access process and also impact on my positioning in relation to the FLLN practitioners themselves.

Negotiating access is an ongoing process, but it is not just about the practical elements of access but also involves ethical considerations (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007). One of the

difficulties about negotiating access is that it is unlikely at the outset that the researcher can state the precise nature of the access required (Denscombe, 2007). Gatekeepers, and to some degree sponsors, understandably want to know what the research is about, what it involves, and be well enough informed that they are able to make strategic decisions about whether they want their organisation involved in the study. What gatekeepers are told is the focus of the research at the beginning of the study may alter as the research progresses and develops. Thus negotiating access really is an ongoing process and what Hammersley and Atkinson (2007) refer to as a 'balancing act' between ethical and strategic considerations.

As discussed earlier, I had already made the decision to use my contacts as a way of accessing an appropriate research setting. Now let us look in more detail at the nature of the research setting itself.

The FLLN programme that was the focus of my research ran over a 15 week period for two hours (9.30am - 11.30am), one day per week. Eight parents were enrolled on the programme. Seven parents each brought one child and one parent brought two children. In total there were nine children. The programme was planned and run by two practitioners. Each practitioner worked for a different organisation but they came together to deliver this FLLN programme. Practitioner One worked for a local branch of a family support charity[4] whereas Practitioner Two worked for the adult and community department of the local authority. The programme

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[4] I am not naming the family support charity as I do not want to compromise the anonymity of participants, particularly as this study focuses on a small number of participants.

was held at a community location[5], which was the workplace of neither Practitioner One nor Practitioner Two, and was not a venue that either Practitioner One or Practitioner Two had worked at before working together to deliver FLLN programmes.

Each week the teaching was organised into two distinct parts – 'parents-only' teaching and 'joint' teaching. (Figure 2 demonstrates the timing of the teaching elements of the research setting, as well as providing an overview of the FLLN programme's 'phases'. These are 'phases' that I have identified during the research process as both the 'practical' elements of the programme - i.e. 'parents-only' teaching session, crèche session and 'joint' teaching session - and the liminal inbetween spaces – i.e. pre-teaching discussion, greeting parents, saying good-bye to parents, and de-briefing and planning discussion.)

Parents started arriving with their children from about 9.15am - 9.20am and went directly to the crèche to settle their children in before coming upstairs to their classroom. Both practitioners were usually in the classroom before the parents started arriving but would go down to greet the parents either before the parents' arrivals or when they heard the first parent and child enter the building. (It is very easy to hear parents arrive due to the small size of the building.)

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[5] The description of the community location is deliberately vague in order to reduce the possibility of identifying the setting, and therefore the participants in the research.

Figure 2: Overview of FLLN programme phases, locations and timescales

Location   **Phases**

Location											
Parents' classroom	Pre-teaching discussion		'Parents-only' teaching session								De-briefing and planning
Vestibule		Greeting parents							Saying good-bye to parents		
Crèche			Crèche session			'Joint' teaching session					

Time	9.00	9.15	9.30	9.45	10.00	10.15	10.30	10.45	11.00	11.15	11.30 onwards
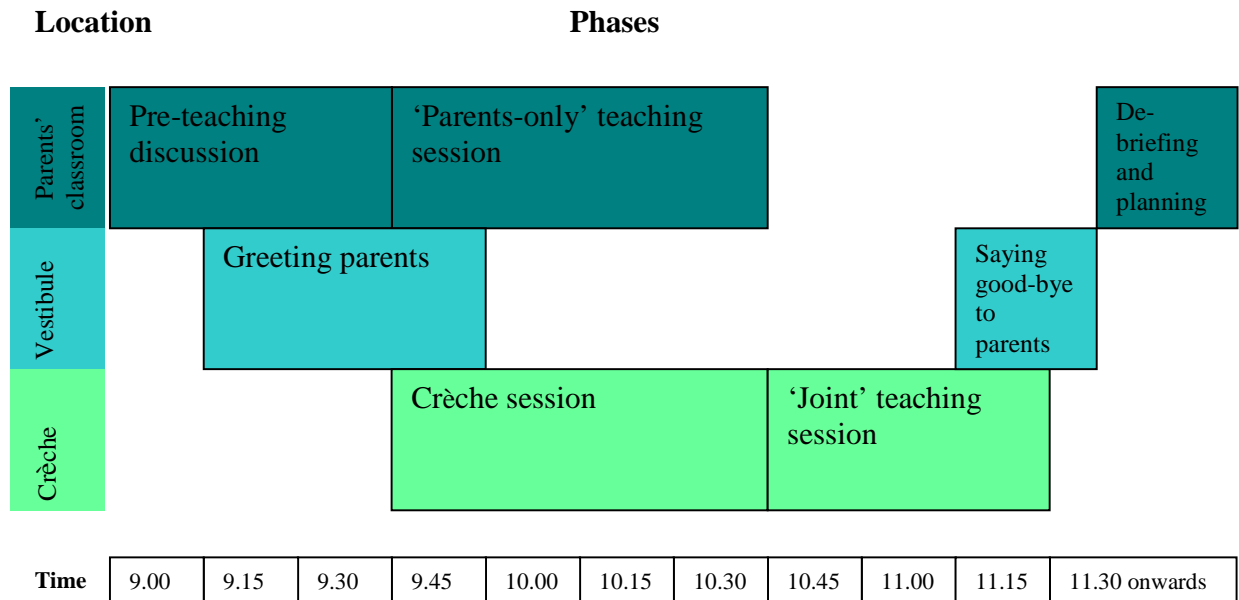
For approximately the first hour and a quarter the children attended a crèche which was situated in the room directly below the parents' classroom. During the same period of time the parents worked in the classroom upstairs with the practitioners. I was also present in the classroom with the parents and practitioners. This part of the session is often referred to as 'parents-only' teaching. The second part of the teaching is referred to as the 'joint' part of the programme. This is when the parents and practitioners join their children in the crèche (and the crèche workers). At this point parents are encouraged to put into practice some of the ideas that have been discussed in the 'parents-only' session and there is usually an activity that the children and parents can do together, which has been proposed by the practitioners in the previous 'parents-only' session. Practitioners usually finish the 'joint' teaching by leading the parents and children in singing one or more songs, depending on the time. I was present in

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the 'joint' teaching session. During the song part of the session, parents would gradually leave, depending on what time their taxis arrived to take them home. Practitioner One usually started checking for the arrival of taxis from about 11.15, by looking through the crèche window. Then she went into the vestibule area to enable the safe departure of the parents and children (as there were double-doors and a security lock). Usually the families had left by 11.30 but on occasion taxis were late.

Although Figure 2 presents timings in a linear fashion, and even though I have tried to demonstrate how 'phases' tend to overlap, the timings are more indicative than actual. In reality over a 15-week period not everything runs in exactly the same manner, despite initial plans to do so. Moreover, certain behaviours become routinised that were not and are not consciously planned. The routine of greeting parents in the vestibule develops as a consequence of the design of the building, as well as wanting to make the parents welcome as they arrive. This recurring pattern of activity, the ritualistic nature of recurrent behaviour is what I am trying to indicate through referring to 'phases' of the programme, and dividing these phases into practical elements and the inbetween-space of just before and after teaching takes place – the messy reality of the liminal spaces that exist around the teaching sessions. However, it is important to recognise that just because such 'phases' have become routinised does not mean that they are always the same, for even if events look completely the same they are not, because they are different events, occurring at different times (Blommaert, 2006). This is an aspect of routines that always needs to be taken into account.

Behaviour becomes routine that marks certain parts of the session and these parts of the

session are often linked to the different physical spaces within the building itself. Therefore

the building's dynamics can actually come into play. When one is aware of the lack of sound

insulation between the floors of the building, the relative positions of the classroom being

directly above the crèche gain significance. The sound of children crying in the crèche

percolating up into the classroom on a more or less constant basis acted as a recurring

stimulus for discussion within the 'parents-only' classroom. This clearly demonstrates that the

physical design of the space is an inherent part of the research setting, and in this case,

influenced the content and context in which participants operated during the research itself.

I have provided an overview of the research setting, identifying the 'phases' of the FLLN

programme being researched, the locations in which these 'phases' take place and their

related indicative timescales. I have also tried to take into account the impact of the physical

design of the building as a contributory element to the research setting. The following section

focuses on those involved in my research - the research participants.

3.4   Research participants

As referred to previously the particular FLLN provision I am researching is taking place in a

community location. The programme is run in partnership between the adult and community

division of the local authority and the local branch of a national charity for supporting

parents. Broadly speaking, the research participants include two FLLN practitioners, eight

parents attending the programme and their nine children. Both practitioners are white women

who have previously worked for substantial amounts of time (20 and 19 years respectively) in early years/primary provision. That they are women is to be expected as the majority of teachers are female in early years/primary provision (Mills et al., 2004; Skelton, 2002) and actually also within adult literacy provision (Lucas et al., 2004; Luttrell, 1996; Tett & Maclachlan, 2008). This is the second FLLN programme they have run together. The first one was in the previous term (September – December 2007), which five out of the eight parents also attended.

Parents become participants in the programme through the intervention of Practitioner One. She invites those parents that have already been referred to her organisation for support that she thinks would benefit from attending FLLN provision. Therefore, the FLLN programme that is the focus of this research is provided specifically with these parents in mind, and provided solely for them. Although crèche workers were integral to the smooth-running of FLLN sessions, as they ran the crèche sessions with the children, I had made a conscious decision not to make them 'active' participants in my study as they were concerned with the children, and the primary focus of my study was on the language practices of the practitioners; their positionings in relationship to each other, the parents with whom they work, and the broader discourses in which they operate.

Figure 3 uses the FLLN programme 'phases' outlined earlier, as a framework in which to locate the participants in the study. I include myself (as researcher) in the 'phases' in which I am present. However, it is interesting to note that, on occasion, there was an additional adult in the 'parents-only' teaching session (see Table 1).

Figure 3: Participants per phase

Pre-teaching discussion 1-2 practitioners 1 researcher	**'Parents-only' teaching** Up to 8 parents 1-2 practitioners 1 researcher Sometimes additional adult	**De-briefing and planning discussion** 1-2 practitioners 1 researcher
Greeting parents Up to 8 parents Up to 9 children 1-2 practitioners Sometimes 1 researcher	**Saying good-bye to parents** Up to 8 parents Up to 9 children 1-2 practitioners Sometimes 1 researcher	
Creche session Up to 9 children 2-3 crèche workers	**Joint teaching session** Up to 8 parents Up to 9 children 2-3 crèche workers 1-2 practitioners 1 researcher	

▇ = parents' classroom
▇ = vestibule
▇ = crèche

Table 1 provides an overview of those who were present in the 'parents-only' teaching sessions, other than the parents. This table serves to highlight both the times when additional adults were present and also to mark practitioner absences.

Table 1: Non-parent attendance in 'parents-only' teaching sessions

	Practitioner 1	Practitioner 2	Researcher	Additional adult
Week 1	✓	✓	✓	
Week 2	✓	(on course)	✓	
Week 3	✓ (in crèche)	✓	✓	

	Practitioner 1	**Practitioner 2**	**Researcher**	**Additional adult**
Week 4	✓	✓	✓	Speaker (manicure demonstration)
Half –term holiday				
Week 5	(on holiday)	✓	✓	
Week 6	(on holiday)	✓	✓	University tutor
Week 7	✓	(on course)	✓	
Week 8	✓	✓	✓	Outreach worker
Week 9	✓	✓	✓	
Week 10	✓	✓	✓	
Week 11	✓	✓	✓	University tutor
Week 12	✓	✓	✓	
Week 13	✓	✓	✓	
Week 14	✓	✓	✓	
Week 15	✓	✓ (just for beginning –leaves to undertake teaching) observation)	✓	

Practitioner Two was undertaking a qualification at the same time as participating in this research, which required her teaching to be observed. Therefore on two separate occasions (Week 6 and Week 11) her university tutor was also present in the 'parents-only' teaching session. In Weeks 2 and 7 Practitioner Two was absent as she was attending the taught element of her course, which, at these times, clashed with the timing of the FLLN programme. On the final week of the programme (Week 15) Practitioner Two had to leave early as she needed to undertake a teaching observation on another member of teaching staff. Practitioner Two needed to do this in order for the other member of staff to be able to complete her qualification.

A speaker was organised for Week 4 (part of the qualification that the parents were working towards necessitated listening to a talk and reporting back on it. The practitioners decided to organise a manicure demonstration as this would meet the requirements of the qualification's performance criteria as well as provide a treat for the parents). In Week 8, the outreach worker from a Children's Centre attended for part of the 'parents-only' session, as she was thinking of running a similar FLLN programme at her Centre, and wanted to have a better understanding of what this would entail.

In Week 3, Practitioner One was required to work in the crèche as the crèche was short-staffed. If she had not have done so FLLN would not have been able to run that day as the crèche staff-child ratio would not have met health and safety requirements. On Weeks 5 and 6 Practitioner One was on holiday.

By the end of the 15 weeks I realised that I was the only 'non-parent' who had been able to attend every session.

3.5   Gaining consent

Before implementing my research design it was necessary to gain consent from all those involved. Although my study focuses on FLLN practitioners, in order to access FLLN practitioners during teaching it was necessary to gain permission from all those present - namely the parents as well as the practitioners.

Participants need to be informed about what is involved if they choose to participate as gaining their informed consent and their trust is vital to successful completion of the study. Gaining consent is an ethical consideration of working with participants, but Hammersley and Atkinson (2007: 210) argue that ethnographic researchers 'rarely tell *all* the people they are studying *everything* about the research'. Apparently all researchers fall on a continuum between being completely covert and completely open, and within the same piece of research the degree of openness may vary across the different people in the field (Roth, 1962, cited in Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007). Before my study began it was clear to me that I wanted to be 'open' but I was also aware that such an aspiration can be affected by pragmatic considerations in the field. On reflection, I do not think I was completely open as my research evolved and developed during fieldwork, I think this has to do not only with varying degrees of openness with different people, but also about the temporal nature of research of an ethnographic nature that develops over time. Sometimes it is not possible to be completely open as this implies that you are always self-aware as a researcher, and although I like to think that I am aware of the potential impact I have on the research I am undertaking, sometimes research goes in a different direction to that which you initially intended and different issues arise that you, as a researcher, have not fully anticipated.

As mentioned earlier I was aware that using an existing contact, the Family Learning Manager, would be a benefit in terms of accelerating the access process and I also realised it would impact on my positioning in relation to the FLLN practitioners themselves. During fieldwork I began to wonder how much my relationship with the Family Learning Manager

had influenced not only access but also the consent I had gained from the particular practitioners with whom I was researching.

The Family Learning Manager asked specific tutors if they would be prepared to take part, one of whom agreed. The tutor who agreed to take part was also already known to me. I did not want her to agree without my talking to her about it, so she would be more fully informed about what was involved. We had a conversation via telephone, and then met together to have a more detailed discussion about it. I explained the purpose of the study and the data collection methods I aimed to employ. She agreed to take part and to speak to the other FLLN practitioner with whom she would be teaching. Both FLLN practitioners met together, discussed the study and then informed me that they were willing to take part. When I met up with them both, at the first teaching session, at the end of the session we had a discussion between the three of us about the study, as I had not spoken directly to the 'early years teacher' (Practitioner One) previously. Following the discussion I asked them both to complete consent forms (Appendix 2).

During an individual interview with the 'adult literacy tutor' (Practitioner Two) it seemed an opportune moment to ask her whether my relationship with her manager had influenced her decision to consent to take part in the study[6]. I was already mindful of this because of a comment that Practitioner One had made to me, which I noted in my research diary nearly a month earlier (see Extract 3.1).

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[6] Individual interviews were held with each practitioner. These interviews took place during the fieldwork phase of the study.

Extract 3.1

Practitioner One made an interesting comment when we were discussing the transcription while we were in the crèche […] she referred to Practitioner Two being worried because I was a friend of the family learning manager, inferring that she [Practitioner Two] was concerned that I was checking up on her. This has really made me think that I want to pursue this issue further and need to ask her whether she felt as though she had to be part of this study because of my relationship with her manager. It's great for me that she's agreed – but I need to take into account that it may have been under some duress.

(Research Diary, 31 January 2008)

The exchanges below (see Extract 3.2 and 3.3) follow after Practitioner Two expresses her

initial anxiety about being observed by me and a discussion about my friendship with the

Family Learning Manager. It is clear from both these extracts that although Practitioner Two

consented to being involved in the research, and could have refused to participate, she did feel

some pressure to take part.

Extract 3.2

1	Researcher	No. And also it makes … my other thought about that did it make, did it
2		force you to think 'I've got to have researcher coming because she is a
3		friend of Family Learning Manager's'?
4	Practitioner Two	… It probably made it harder for me to say no, but then I struggle to say
5		no to Family Learning Manager anyway. … Do you know what I mean?

Extract 3.3

1	Practitioner Two	When I agreed to it I thought … 'I wouldn't choose to have researcher
2		sitting in my session for 15 weeks, *but* it's useful to you'. And I think
3		this comes back to 'well, if that's what she needs, for her doctorate' …
4		That's the sort of person I am. If I can help somebody or, you know, ok,
5		it wouldn't be my choice but, well, whatever, if she's got to do it and see
6		somebody, she might as well see me. They're a nice group. Practitioner
7		One didn't mind. And that's it.

(De-briefing and Planning Discussion, 28 February 2008)

Undoubtedly Practitioner Two was also driven to participate because she genuinely wanted to be helpful. However, having this conversation with her made me feel quite uneasy about how she came to consent to the study, but, at the same time, I was also very grateful that she had agreed to participate. When I had discussed the research with her, prior to the commencement of fieldwork, I had reiterated that she did not have to take part, but I was also aware that having the 'sponsorship' of the Family Learning Manager would potentially both facilitate and problematise access and consent in the field.

Robson (2002) reveals that ethical dilemmas lurk in any research involving people and as Denscombe (2002: 178) makes clear, the personal integrity of the researcher is paramount in the research process as 'researchers are expected to be independent, objective and honest in the way they conduct and report the research', and in my mind, how they treat participants. As well as gaining consent from participants, it is the ethical responsibility of the researcher that no harm befalls participants due to their taking place in the research, that participants' privacy is respected and that researchers do not exploit those involved in their study (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007). With a limited number of participants (two) forming the focus of my study, I have been extremely mindful throughout undertaking the research, and in the process of writing it up, to be ethically responsible about how I represent the two practitioners (and the parents). This is a continual process and links to concerns about maintaining confidentiality and what should be regarded as 'off the record'.

Although the focus of my study was FLLN practitioners, I also needed to gain the consent of the parents they were teaching. At the outset both practitioners were concerned that the

parents would be anxious about taking part, particularly if I wanted to audio-record the teaching session.

In order to relieve any perceived anxiety of the parents I decided to prepare an information sheet and a consent form (see Appendix 3) that emphasised my interest in FLLN practitioners as opposed to the parents and I presented this during the first session. I explained about the research by going through the information sheet and made it clear that a parent could withdraw at any time. During my explanation Practitioner One– who knows all the parents - 'notices that there is some concern re parents' details being shared. She tells them that this study is completely separate from the records she keeps and that I'm not privy to the details' (from Fieldnotes, 17 January 2008). I reinforced that I was not interested in them as individuals but as a 'group' of parents taking part in FLLN and explained to them that, with their permission, I would be taking fieldnotes and audio-recording the teaching session. Parents were given the opportunity to ask questions and were informed that they could take time to consider whether they wanted to take part, but all signed their consent forms straightaway.

Having gained consent from participants the next stage was to operationalise my research design using the methods I had identified as appropriate for answering my research questions – *participant observation*, *interviews* and *document collection*.

3.6   Participant Observation

Blommaert (2006: 4) comments that 'people are not cultural or linguistic catalogues, and most of what we see as their cultural and social behaviour is performed without reflecting on it and without an active awareness that this is actually something they *do'*. As often people do not have an active awareness about what they are actually doing, Blommaert argues that therefore they do not have an opinion about it, nor is it something that 'can be comfortably put in words when you ask about it' (2006: 4-5). In fact, in his view, asking is very often the worst way of trying to find out (I will revisit this point when discussing interviews). This links to B. Davies' (2008: 179) notion of the citational nature of speech, where the ordinary everyday world is sedimented in and by the 'unoriginal repetition of the conventional normative order'; what she also refers to as 'unreflected ordinariness'. Thus people do not reflect on what they do, they just do it, therefore the most appropriate way to capture this is through observation.

As previously discussed, there is an assumption that participant observation of some kind will be involved when undertaking an ethnographic study. I have four research questions, two of which are 'what do the narratives related by the FLLN practitioners reveal about the nature of their working relationship and the roles they each enact within it?' and 'how are the parents positioned in the small stories told by the FLLN practitioners in this study?'. Both of these questions can best be addressed through the direct observation of the socially situated language practices that are an integral part of FLLN in practice, for 'participant observation can produce data which are better able than is the case with other methods to reflect the detail,

the subtleties, the complexity and the interconnectedness of the social world it investigates' (Denscombe, 2007: 217). However, it is important to bear in mind that when I talk of 'FLLN in practice' I am not only referring to the teaching practice of the FLLN practitioners concerned, but also of their practice of pre-teaching and post-teaching discussions; the spaces that surround their teaching.

When I was first designing this research study I had thought that the remaining two of my research questions ('to what extent do the FLLN practitioners' backgrounds and experience, as indexed in their narrative tellings, influence their current practice?' and 'how do the practitioners construct the FLLN programme they are delivering together, and the policy that underpins it?') were going to be best answered through interviewing the focal research participants. Without doubt I think interview data does add an important strand to my investigation, and strongly contributes to answering these questions, but at the same time, during the process of developing my research design and more particularly during the ongoing process of initial analysis of data during the fieldwork stage of my investigation, it started to become clearer to me that the socially situated language practices revealed through the interactional data I was collecting through observation, was able to greatly contribute to answering these questions as well as the other two questions to which I had originally thought observation would provide the answers. I think that although I had intellectually grasped how important observation was for revealing the complexities of social situations, it was only after I had started to look at the data I was gathering that I grasped at a more practical level how much can be and is revealed from the discursive positionings that are taken up, accepted and resisted between co-conversationalists, from the narratives-in-interaction that are co-

constructed in conversation. For as Davies and Harré (1999: 37) put it 'in speaking and acting from a position people are bringing to the particular situation their history as they themselves conceive it, that is, the history of one who has been in multiple positions and engaged in different forms of discourse'.

Participant observation can be realised in a number of ways. Denscombe (2007) and Robson (2002) offer three and four models respectively. Denscombe describes three approaches to participant observation as 'total participation', 'participation in the normal setting' and 'participation as observer'. Robson (2002) divides participant observation into the 'complete participant', the 'participant-as-observer', the 'marginal participant', and the 'observer-as-participant'.

'Total participation' (Denscombe, 2007) and the 'complete participant' (Robson, 2002) are comparable as both models involve keeping the researcher's role secret, and are therefore not possibilities when undertaking an ethical research study and wanting to gain informed consent from research participants. 'Participation in the normal setting' is similar in some ways to 'total participation' but in the former case the researcher's role is known to particular 'gatekeepers' although not revealed to those in the research setting. In the 'marginal participant' approach the researcher's role as researcher is not known to the research participants but the researcher is accepted as another participant in an activity, although in a largely passive role, for example, as a member of an audience or a passenger in a bus (Robson, 2002). However, this role can be sometimes indistinguishable from the 'complete participant'.

In the 'observer-as-participant' (Robson, 2002) model the researcher's status is know to participants but the researcher does not take part in any activity being observed. Robson argues, and I agree with him, that it is questionable whether this is possible, as once a researcher's role is known, then the researcher cannot help but be part of the activity being undertaken, even if purely viewed as a researcher.

In the cases of 'participant-as-observer' (Robson, 2002), and 'participation as observer' (Denscombe, 2007) both are open at the outset about the role of the researcher. The researcher is there to observe the research setting. According to Robson, the dual role of participant and observer means that as well as observation taking place by participating in activities, the researcher is also able to ask research participants to explain various aspects of what is going on. However, one effect of adopting this approach may be that participants, particularly key informants, 'are led to more analytical reflection about processes and other aspects of the group's functioning' (Robson, 2002: 317). Thus this approach can be viewed as influencing the research setting under investigation.

I do believe that by being present in the research setting, and by questioning and drawing practitioners' attention to their practices, I definitely contributed to the practitioners starting to reflect on and analyse what they were doing, which I do not think was always a comfortable process, for either them or me. On more than one occasion Practitioner Two referred to being 'psycho-analysed', having 'to answer these deep and meaningful questions that I wouldn't even normally think about' (De-briefing and Planning Discussion, 20 March 2008). However, at the same time, when I was getting really worried about how the research study was

developing, and that it was too burdensome on the main research participants, Practitioner Two commented that she enjoyed and actually looked forward to being 'psycho-analysed'. This occasion served to remind me that research with people is never simple, and that people's opinions change, develop over the time and are often contradictory in nature – and it does not make them less valid for being so.

When I started fieldwork I was very mindful of researcher effect and the impact I could have if I started to participate in activities and put forward my opinion, particularly in the teaching phase of my observation. Therefore I attempted to stand back slightly to try and limit the effect I was having - although I always tried to contribute to one iterative element integral to the process I was observing; making the tea and coffee at the beginning of the teaching session. I did this because it was a way of signalling that I was taking part in the session, offered me the opportunity to speak to everyone in a sociable way, and at the same time, it delimited the scope of my participation. Therefore I think that my approach to participant observation was more commensurate with Denscombe's (2007: 218) definition of 'participation as observer', which he describes as 'taking the form of 'shadowing' a person or group through normal life, witnessing first hand and in intimate detail the culture/events of interest'. However, as an observer, even as an observer who thought they were trying to limit the effect of their presence, 'you never belong 'naturally' or 'normally' to the field you investigate, you are always a foreign body which causes ripples on the surface of smooth routinised processes' (Blommaert, 2006: 27).

Although I initially thought that I was able somehow to define the scope of my participation in the research setting, and to an extent I *was* able to manage this, I became more aware during the research process that just because I thought of myself in a particular way, and was trying to project myself as a 'researcher' this did not consistently correlate with how I was viewed by other research participants. Heath and Street (2008: 31) argue that although 'much is said about *participant observation* as a key means of collecting data as an ethnographer, the truth is only rarely can we shed features of ourselves to be a "real" participant'. I was never able to shed the features (nor did I consider it necessary or possible) of being a FLLN practitioner, being already known to Practitioner Two, and a friend of the Family Learning Manager. I was fully aware that these features would influence my study right from the outset. However, what I had not anticipated was that the practitioners and, as time went on, the parents started to call on me more, or recognise me more as what I would term a 'practitioner participant', although I had tried to make it clear to all participants that I was, in this setting, a researcher, with experience of FLLN, who was trying to observe what 'normally' happens in FLLN practice – even though I knew my presence inevitably changed the shape of what I was observing. However, I wanted to be seen as a researcher, but just as the practitioners with whom I was researching have a context beyond the here-and-now of the research setting, I too have a history that I bring with me, and, at times, reference (intentionally and unintentionally) through my social interactions and am recognised in certain ways because of this. As Butler (1997: 5) points out, 'one 'exists' not only by virtue of being recognised, but in a prior sense, by being *recognisable*'. I was 'recognisable' (and making myself 'recognisable') as a researcher, FLLN practitioner, teacher educator and as a

friend of the Family Learning Manager. For different participants I was 'recognisable' in a variety of different combinations.

It is important to remember that research underpinned by an ethnographic perspective utilises the researcher herself as the main research instrument (Blommaert, 2006, 2009; Delamont, 2002; Heath & Street, 2008; Tusting & Maybin, 2007; Van Praet, 2006), in combination with other practical tools that are used to collect data within participant observation. Therefore as alluded to earlier, research of this kind requires a constant reflexive positioning of the researcher and the researcher-researched relationship, and recognition that researchers are not a detached 'research' entity but embody and represent a gendered, aged, and socially and historically positioned individual.

The aim of my study was to capture a range of different types of interactions between FLLN practitioners – both within the 'parents-only' teaching session and in the spaces before and after teaching takes place. Although I have identified seven phases that constitute each week's FLLN session (see Figure 2), I have not always been present during each phase, and in the case of the crèche session I have never been present, as I was in the 'parents-only' session which ran concurrently. Therefore I had to make some conscious decisions at the outset about the phases on which I was going to focus.

There were three distinct phases that I saw as pivotal. Firstly, there was the *pre-teaching discussion* in which both practitioners discussed the upcoming session, anything they thought each other should know, and generally catch up with each other. At this stage they would also

prepare the room for the ensuing 'parents-only' teaching session. The second phase was the *'parents-only' teaching session*. Again a phase in which both practitioners were present, in which I could observe their interactions with each other and with the parents (and with myself). The third phase that I chose to concentrate on was the *de-briefing and planning discussion* that took place between the practitioners after all the other participants had left. Within these three phases I used audio recording, fieldnotes and a research diary to record the socially situated language practices of participants as well as my ongoing and developing thoughts and interpretations. Table 2 provides an overview of the data collection tools that were used within each phase, the nature of ongoing analysis and the method used for feeding back to participants.

Table 2: Focal phases of participant observation

Phase	Data collection tools	Ongoing analysis	Feedback to participants
Pre-teaching discussion	• Audio-recording • Fieldnotes (written during and after discussion but before teaching session) • Research diary (written out-of-field)	Writing up fieldnotes – using fieldnotes and audio-recordings	
'Parents-only' teaching session	• Audio-recording • Fieldnotes (taken during session) • Research diary (written out-of-field)		'Activities and discussions' sheet [7] given to all participants for 'member checking' on a weekly basis
De-briefing and planning discussion	• Audio-recording • Research diary (written out-of-field)	Transcribing audio recording	Transcriptions returned to practitioners for 'member checking' on a weekly basis

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[7] For an example of an 'activities and discussions' sheet see Appendix 4.

By taking fieldnotes and audio-recording the social situation which I was exploring, I was able to create a record of the socially situated language practices of which narratives-in-interaction were an inherent part. I would not be able to garner this information through the use of any other methods of data collection (particularly as video recording was not an available option). In order to find the situated meanings of language-in-use it is necessary to understand that situated meanings do not reside in individual minds but are negotiated in and through social interaction (Bamberg, 2000; Gee, 2002; Gee & Green, 1998) and that there is a reciprocal relationship between user and context as language-in-use reveals how participants in interaction actually position themselves (Blommaert, 2007; Jurasaite-Harbison & Rex, 2005). For just as language is a social practice (Baynham, 1995; Baynham & Prinsloo, 2001; Freebody, 2001; Papen, 2005: Street, 2003), 'narrative tellings function as social practices' (De Fina & Georgakopolou, 2008: 385) whilst being located in 'networks of practices which they are part of, represent and reflect on' (p.384).

By writing up my fieldnotes and through keeping a research diary I was able to add my reflections and interpretations, and, keep an ongoing record of my thoughts, feelings and reactions as the research process unfolded. Thus through the collection of and reflection on my data I have been able to create 'an archive of research', documenting my 'journey through knowledge' (Blommaert, 2006: 12), for as Blommaert (2006) points out fieldwork is not simply the collection of data. It is a learning process in which the process is the product - the whole process of gathering and moulding knowledge is part of knowledge.

I have painted a broad-brush picture of how I have interpreted participant observation in this research study. The following discussion outlines in more detail how the data collection methods chosen have been implemented. Figure 4 provides a diagrammatic outline of the weekly observational cycle, demonstrating how the data collection methods of writing *fieldnotes*, *audio recording*, keeping a *research diary* and supplementing these with '*head notes*' is integrated into my research design. I will now discuss each of these methods in turn.

Figure 4: Weekly observation cycle
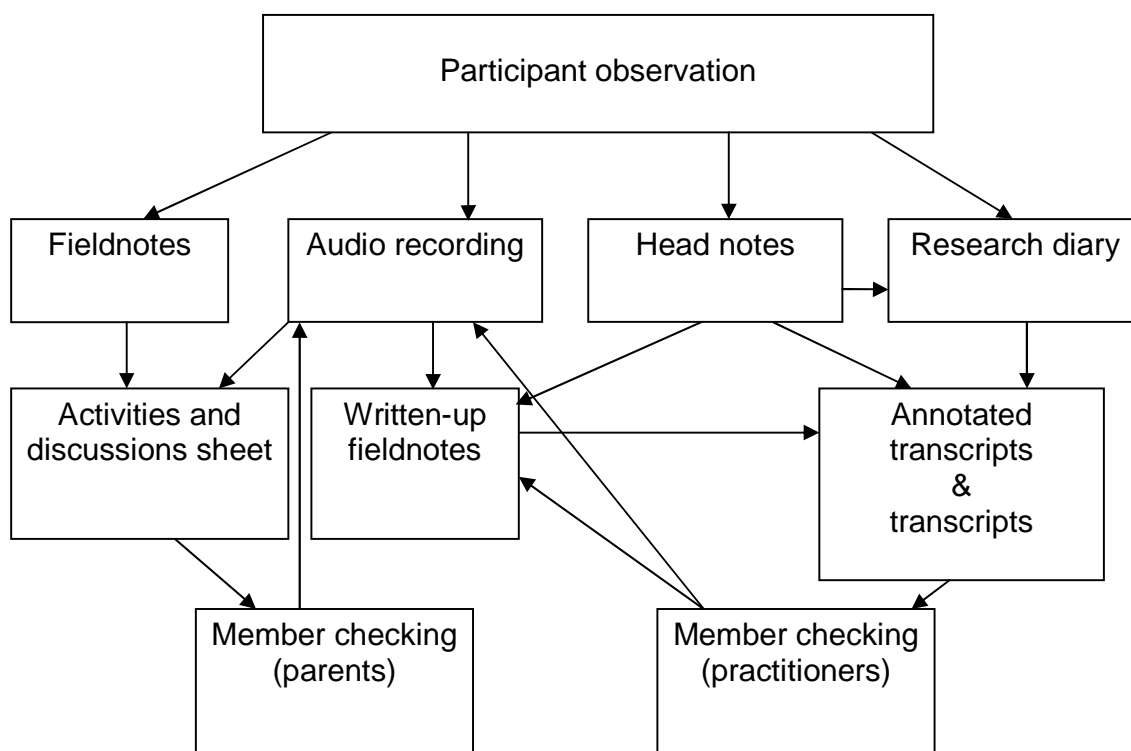
3.6.1 Fieldnotes

Delamont (2002) writes that ethnographers need to do hurried private writing, which is unsuitable for outsiders to read. This is how I would describe the fieldnotes that I took during teaching sessions but with the additional proviso that the writing of the fieldnotes was very public. However, during the first teaching session I did not write fieldnotes 'in the field' but straightaway afterwards, as I just wanted participants to feel comfortable with my being there. It was during the second week that I started to take fieldnotes. I told the participants that I was practising taking them – which was true.

Hammersley and Atkinson (2007) describe the writing of fieldnotes whilst still in the field as ideal. On the other hand Denscombe (2007) argues that generally fieldnotes need to be taken outside the field itself as taking notes disrupts the naturalness of the setting and discloses the researcher's role as observer. However, I aimed to be open about my role and, as my attendance was purely predicated on undertaking research, it seemed wholly appropriate to take notes in the field. Having said this I was operating in a context in which the conduct of note taking is 'broadly congruent with the social setting under scrutiny (Hammersley and Atkinson, 2007: 143).

The first time that I practised taking fieldnotes I thought that I would not have to take many notes as the audio recorder would be able to provide an accurate record of the situation and my fieldnotes would act to supplement the audio-recording. However, what I realised when I started to write up my notes was that I was not providing enough contextual detail and I was

over-relying on the information I thought would be made available through the audio-recording. I then made a conscious decision to try to note down elements of the social situation that I knew would be forgotten if not recorded. I also sketched out the layout of the room and the contents of the table that participants sat around. I noted the positions that parents, practitioners and myself took up in each session, and tried to replicate my sketch in my typed up fieldnotes (see Appendix 5 for an example).

Although I had understood that the activity of observation and simultaneous taking of fieldnotes was an intensive and tiring process, what I had underestimated is the relentless nature and the perseverance required for the regular writing-up of fieldnotes. Ideally every period of observation should result in processed notes (Hammersley and Atkinson, 2007) and I recognise that one of the strengths of ethnography, and therefore participant observation, is that analysis is an integral part of research. Therefore, on a regular weekly basis I produced a 'written-up' version of my fieldnotes. In fact for the second and third weeks of my study I produced three varieties of fieldnotes. Firstly fieldnotes written in the field. Secondly I would write these up in an A4 fieldwork journal to which I would add analytical comments. The third version was a word-processed version which combined written up fieldnotes, initial analytical comments and further reflections. I would differentiate subsequent reflections from initial comments by colour-coding them. However, I soon realised that I could not maintain this workload, and that a couple of hours between taking fieldnotes and starting to write them up was not going to result in major adverse effects to my data, and it would save major adverse effects to me. Reassuringly, as Walford (2009: 125) points out, 'even the most

disciplined ethnographers sometimes fail to live up to their own standards'. My written up fieldnotes were then written straight on to the computer.

Fieldnotes are 'indeterminate, subject to reading, rereading, coding, recording, interpreting, reinterpreting' (Delamont, 2002: 64). They are not a 'closed, completed, final text' (Atkinson et al., 1999: 462). Indeed they are 'partial and incomplete' (Creese et al., 2008), subject to rewriting, as they need to be 'worked-up, expanded on, and developed' (Hammersley and Atkinson, 2007: 143), which is one of the aspects of using fieldnotes that makes it so time-consuming and labour-intensive, but yet such an ideal way of providing a 'thick description' of social situations.

3.6.2   Audio recording

Practitioners and parents gave permission for audio-recording to take place during the teaching session. Practitioners also agreed that the pre-teaching and de-briefing and planning discussions could be audio-recorded.

During the first session I did not record any phase of the participant observation. but I did take the opportunity to show them the audio recorder I would be using. At the second session I had intended to audio-record the two discussions between practitioners (pre-teaching and de-briefing and planning discussions) but this did not take place as only one practitioner was present. I had not planned to audio-record the teaching session as I had told the parents that I would start recording in a couple of week's time. However, I decided to put the audio-

recorder in the middle of the large table around which the parents sat to get them used to the idea of the recorder being 'naturally' there.

I also audio-recorded the practitioners' pre-teaching, and de-briefing and planning discussions. I intended to transcribe the de-briefing and planning discussion and return the transcript to practitioners for 'member checking' (see Robson, 2002) so that practitioners would have the opportunity to confirm its validity, and to enable practitioners to see that we are working alongside each other and working in a way that values their perceptions and contributions. From this perspective research becomes dialogic rather than monologic, a partnership rather than research as an instrument of oppression (see Avis, 1997, for discussion about the potentially oppressive nature of research). My aim was for my research to be open, use interactive methods and be dialogic in approach.

For the first seven weeks I consistently transcribed the de-briefing and planning discussion and returned this to both practitioners on the week following their discussion for member checking. This had not been as successful as I had envisioned, for although I produced the transcript on a weekly basis there was a resultant two-week time delay in their ability to read the transcript. This is assuming that they had time to read it and the sustained interest in wanting to read it every week. As a result of this lack of engagement I decided, after discussion with one of my supervisors, to change my approach to enabling member checking and to implement an approach that also provided me with an opportunity to follow up comments requiring further clarification or explanation.

I still returned transcripts to practitioners on a weekly basis but now highlighted three or four sections of interaction which warranted further explanation or clarification, and prepared a question in relation to each of these highlighted sections (see Appendices 6 and 7 for respective examples). These questions were really an aide-memoire to remind me why I wanted to pursue particular issues or comments with the practitioners. Barton and Hamilton (1998) incorporated a 'collaborative ethnography stage' into their research by returning extracts from transcripts and analyses to each participant. This was done approximately a year after initial data collection. I wanted to be still 'in the field' when returning transcripts as I want practitioners' explanations and interpretations to feed into the analysis.

Cameron et al., (1992) discuss the issue of feedback and sharing knowledge with research participants. They suggest that 'there are different sorts of knowledge to be shared and different ways of sharing' (Cameron et al., 1992: 26). Returning transcripts to practitioners was the way I chose to feedback to practitioners but I decided to produce a weekly 'activities and discussions' sheet for the parents (see Appendix 4 for an example). As previously mentioned I considered the practitioners to be the primary focus of my research but I wanted the parents to be aware of the type of, what could be regarded as mundane, information I was recording in my fieldnotes. I wanted the parents to see that I was not recording personal information about them as individuals but was more interested in capturing what happened in the 'parents-only' teaching session in terms of the curricular activities and the range of issues and incidental topics that were being addressed. The result of using this approach was two-fold.

On the one hand this was a way of member checking (see Robson, 2002) with parents and a way of researching 'with' them. They were able to see a 'product' of audio-recording (and my taking fieldnotes) and see practical evidence that their anonymity was being maintained. This approach did not commit parents to extra work outside their attendance at the sessions nor take away time from the teaching session itself. At the beginning of each 'parents-only' teaching session, after showing the 'activities and discussions' sheet to the practitioners, I placed copies around the table, ready for when parents arrived. Parents tended to read it while they had a cup of tea or coffee, before the session proper began. I encouraged parents to comment on its validity and not to see it as an 'accurate' representation of the previous week's session.

3.6.3   Research diary

I started to keep a research diary[8] from the time I realised that it would be a good idea to maintain a central record of what I was doing and thinking in relation to my study. Once I started to negotiate access to my research setting I became aware that events were unfolding that were affecting my research design, the subsequent decisions I was making and my overall thinking about the research I was undertaking. I continued to keep a research diary throughout the time I was undertaking fieldwork.

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[8] The term 'research diary' refers to the journal I kept during the research process. It is not to be confused with the practice of participants being asked to maintain research diaries.

Keeping a research diary is an ideal way of providing a mechanism for the ongoing recording of both the seemingly peripheral aspects that impact on undertaking research whilst at the same time providing a forum in which any major obstacles can also be noted. Recording the 'ups and downs', successes and failures acts to supplement and reinforce the unfolding process of the research itself. Recording one's feelings and thoughts about this unfolding process is integral to ethnographic research design. Therefore research diaries serve two important functions. Firstly as a means of recording the practicalities of the research process and secondly as a medium in which the reflections of the researcher can be recorded whilst in the midst of undertaking fieldwork.

Hammersley and Atkinson (2007: 151) conceptualise these two forms of research diary entry in terms of 'the personal and emotional on the one hand, and the intellectual on the other'. They believe that private responses recorded within research diaries (and fieldnotes) 'should be transformed, by reflection and analysis, into potential public knowledge' and that 'the fieldwork journal [in my case, research diary] is the vehicle for this kind of transformation.' On the other hand, the research diary provides a 'running account of the conduct of the research' (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007: 151).

As noted earlier in this section I wrote up my fieldnotes and added analytical comments to them after each observation session. Hammersley and Atkinson (2007: 151) refer to the construction of 'analytic notes and memos' as constituting 'precisely the sort of internal dialogue, or thinking aloud, that is the essence of reflexive ethnography'. I incorporated my 'internal dialogue' into two separate documents – my fieldnotes and my research diary. I

decided to keep a diary in addition to my fieldnotes to ensure that I was not omitting

anything. My thinking was that if I did not record it at the time, it would be lost, and although

on re-reading it may be the case that not all diary entries are equally pertinent, if they did not

exist, I would not be in a position to make that decision.

Blommaert (2006) states that undertaking ethnographic research is a learning process that

develops throughout the duration of the research. Such a learning process needs to be

documented. The writing of a research diary provides a rich data source which can and should

be drawn upon to support analyses, clarify and exemplify interpretative accounts, providing a

strand of the material which enables the 'thick description' for which ethnographies are

renowned.

3.6.4   Head notes

Head notes inform the writing up of fieldnotes, the research diary and transcriptions (see

Figure 4 for a diagrammatical representation of the locus of head notes in the weekly

observation cycle). In Barton and Hamilton's (1998: 68) research on local literacies they

collected four types of data: 'transcripts; diary and field notes; documents; and head notes'.

They stress the significant role that head notes play as 'memories and prior knowledge as well

as written notes form the basis of the analysis and the write up; they are crucial in integrating

and making sense of the data' (p.68). Hammersley and Atkinson (2007: 147) argue that

fieldnotes in themselves cannot provide 'a comprehensive record of the research setting' as

'the ethnographer acquires a great deal more tacit knowledge than is ever contained in the

written record'. Therefore it becomes necessary to use head notes to 'fill in and recontextualise recorded events and utterances' (p.147). Every time I wrote up my fieldnotes I was aware that I was using my head notes to fill in information and understandings that I had not included in my initial fieldnotes.

In Condell's (2008) account of her experiences of writing up fieldnotes she conceptualises head notes purely in terms of memory, and in this light, points out their fragility. However, even if one considers head notes exclusively in terms of memory then often memories that seem lost return, particularly when we start to make connections between the collected data. However, I believe that head notes got beyond immediate memories and encompass the tacit knowledge (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007) and prior knowledge (Barton & Hamilton, 1998) that the researcher brings to the research situation. As such my head notes not only colour my decision on choice of research setting but are also implicated in the way I choose to convert my audio recordings into transcripts.

It can be argued that head notes include 'the memories and interpretations which remain in our head and which never reach the written form' (Barton & Hamilton, 1998: 68, citing Sanjek, 1990). However, I would propose that memories, and more specifically interpretations, eventually reach the written form, whether directly by transforming head notes into reflections in the research diary or analytical comments in written up fieldnotes, or by a more circuitous route. One such route would be the manner in which transcripts are represented, for transcripts are 'partial representations' (Green et al., 1997: 173). Transcription is discussed further in the data analysis section.

This section has discussed participant observation and outlined how it has been interpreted and actioned in this study. The data collection methods of fieldnotes, audio recordings, keeping a research diary and the significance of head notes have been discussed in turn. The constant thread of the reflexive positioning of the researcher interweaves throughout this discussion.

Participant observation is one aspect of the three-pronged approach I have identified as being the most appropriate for enabling me to answer my research questions – the other two being *interviews* and *document collection*. The following section describes the interviews undertaken as part of this study, and the approach to interviewing that informs their use.

3.7   Interviews

Realising that interviews combine content, form and context is central to understanding interviews not only as sites for the transfer of knowledge in relation to interview content, but the manner in which knowledge is transferred, managed, acknowledged and accepted opens up interviews to be viewed (and analysed) as practical sites of social interaction. Indeed 'interactional, interpretive activity is a hallmark of all interviews' (Holstein and Gubrium, 2004: 140). Although I regard all interviews as sites in which narratives-in-interaction takes place there is a clear distinction between the two types of interview that I undertook for this study. These can be divided into *semi-structured interviews* and *ethnographic interviews*. I will discuss the implementation and implication of both these approaches in turn.

3.7.1   Semi-structured interviews

Semi-structured interviews are often regarded as prototypical research interviews. I undertook two individual semi-structured interviews for this research: one with each practitioner. Both of these interviews took place at pre-arranged times at the practitioners' respective workplaces. Each interview was audio recorded. The durations for each of the interviews were: Practitioner One 43 minutes and Practitioner Two 57 minutes. Interviews were semi-structured in nature as I had prepared questions beforehand but was more than happy for digressions to take place. I wanted to let the interview flow, bearing in mind that 'interviews are conversations' (Blommaert, 2006: 39).

However, although interviews are conversations, they are particular kinds of conversation (Blommaert, 2006; Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007). They are ordered in nature (Blommaert, 2006) and are never simply conversations as the interviewer has a research agenda and therefore must keep some control over the interview itself (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007). As a researcher, one consciously wants the interview to flow as though it were a 'natural conversation' but no matter how much you are trying to portray and promote a relaxed atmosphere an interview is never 'natural'. The researcher is trying to elicit responses and the interviewee is aware of this and the asymmetrical nature of the relationship is evident, regardless of how much the researcher thinks they are, or tries to, promote equity during the research interview. This can be compounded by interviewees' previously held views and experiences of the interviewer-interviewee relationship. Blommaert (2006) highlights that many interviews in the public domain are more interrogation than interview, and as such this

tends to colour people's perceptions of interviews, leading them to think of interviews 'as slightly threatening, formal and abnormal speech situations' (p.39).

When one reflects on the form and format of semi-structured interviews it is not hard to think of them as 'abnormal speech situations'. C.A. Davies (2008: 106) describes semi-structured interviews as 'formally bracketed, and set off in time and space as something different from usual social interaction between ethnographer and informant, in contrast to unstructured interviews which often just happen'. This formal bracketing of time and space in conjunction with the presence of an interview schedule cannot help but promote a different type of interaction between researcher and participant. However, it is the responsibility of the researcher to ensure that an 'ordered conversation' (Blommaert, 2006: 39) takes place rather than an interrogation.

Although I had prepared questions for the semi-structured interviews, I had formulated the questions to be open-ended and to encourage personal responses (see Appendix 8). I valued the illustrations that participants chose to share through the narratives-in-interaction that were scattered throughout their interview narratives, for, after all, anecdotes 'contain all the stuff we are after' (Blommaert, 2006: 47), as they are the 'raw diamonds' of research interviews (Blommaert, 2006: 46). However, I was not forthcoming in sharing such anecdotes. I felt restrained by the formality of the interview situations I had co-created with the interviewees. I thought that I would be potentially influencing the responses of the interviewees if I volunteered too much information, if I interjected too much of myself into the interviews. I was very conscious of this when undertaking the interviews. By trying to avoid contributions

of this type I thought I was minimising interviewer effect. Obviously I could not alter my sex, age, and ethnic origin. These attributes, including accent and occupational status are 'all aspects of our 'self' which, for practical purposes, cannot be changed' (Denscombe, 2007: 184). These elements of interviewer effect I could not affect so I was very mindful of taking steps to reduce the impact of elements that I was able to control. However, in retrospect, I think this just stilted my ability to engage in a more conversational approach to interviews. I think this was particularly the case in relation to the semi-structured interviews I undertook, as I really wanted to make sure that I was viewed as neutral, not judging, but just listening to the responses volunteered by the other interview participants, attempting to keep myself 'firmly hidden beneath a cloak of cordiality and receptiveness to the words of the interviewee' (Denscombe, 2007: 185).

I tried to make all the right noises, comments and gestures to demonstrate that I was listening attentively but, at the same time, I realised that I was withholding comments that I would normally make if I were having a conversation that was not couched in terms of an interview, and was not going to be 'on record' as such. I was engaging in a dialogic process, and the interviews, without doubt, were co-constructed between interviewer and interviewees, but not in a way with which I was comfortable. Denscombe (2007: 184-185) argues that researchers can become 'fully involved' in the interview process 'as a person with feelings, with experiences and with knowledge that can be shared with the interviewee', if the aim of their research is specifically to help or empower those with whom they are researching. He warns that this style of interviewing is regarded as 'unconventional'. However, on reflection, the reason why I think I felt such discomfort was because I felt disingenuous. I was expecting

participants to be honest and forthright, and share their opinions and thoughts openly, whereas I was not participating in the same manner. I always felt I was holding back because I was so anxious about being regarded as critical. However, the irony of this is that it contributed to making the semi-structured interviews less conversation-like and more like a traditional interview.

Blommaert (2006) proposes that just looking at transcripts as opposed to reading them can reveal textual patterns. Looking at the semi-structured interview transcripts reveals the asymmetrical nature of the interview itself and the type of turns I engaged in. My turns tend to be very short in relation to the responses elicited from interviewees. There is a lot of back-channelling, and 'interesting' comments. However, when I am asked what I consider to be a question that requires an opinion my responses are guarded, whereas if I am asked a question that I think requires a factual answer I am much more forthcoming. However, even when providing minimal responses, one is always responding. For 'any interview situation – no matter how formalised, restricted, or standardised – relies upon interaction between participants who are constantly engaged in interpretive practice' (Holstein & Gubrium, 2004: 155). Thus 'interpretive practice' works both ways – for the interviewer and interviewee.

According to Holstein and Gubrium (2004: 152) an active view of interviewing 'turns us to the narrative positions, resources, orientations, and precedents that are brought into play in the process'. This interpretation of the interviewing process aligns itself neatly with positioning analysis' regard for any interaction being co-constructed and multi-dimensional in nature (Bamberg, 2000; De Fina et al, 2006; Georgakopolou, 2006b), an interpretation that extends

as much to prototypical interview narratives as it does to what may be considered as naturally-occurring conversations. De Fina and Georgakopolou (2008) support a social interactional approach to narrative analysis, which does not draw a distinction between natural and elicited data. They regard such a distinction as 'fundamentally flawed' as a social interaction approach to narrative analysis should be 'committed to exploring how any setting in which narratives occur brings about, and is shaped by, different norms and histories of associations, participant frameworks and relations, etc.' (De Fina & Georgakopolou, 2008: 385). Wortham et al. (2011: 42) argue that 'interactional texts of interview events often include positioning by the interviewee that reveals habitual social actions'.

As already discussed, one of the defining aspects of semi-structured interviews is their bounded nature. The audio recording of interviews reinforces this structure. Extract 3.4 provides an example of this, as the audio recorder acts to demarcate the interview boundary at the end of the individual interview with Practitioner One.

Extract 3.4

1	Researcher	Brilliant. Is there anything that you want to add?
2	Practitioner One	I don't think so, thank you.
3		(both laugh)
4	Researcher	(laughing) Now
5	Practitioner One	/(laughing) Have I got the job?
6	Researcher	(laughing) Now pretend I've switched it off.
7		(both laugh)

(Individual Interview with Practitioner One, 11 February 2008)

When I ask her whether she wants to say anything more, she declines. After some shared laughter, Practitioner One asks 'Have I got the job?'. This is a telling comment with regard to the perceived formality of the interview situation in which she has been taking part. However, my comment of 'Now pretend I've switched it off', is just as revealing. Simultaneously it indexes the significance of the audio recorder marking a formal boundary of the interview, whilst also implying that the conversation becomes less restricted and more free-flowing once the recorder is switched off. This is particularly so in the case of Practitioner One as she consistently demonstrated a greater awareness of, and reaction to, the presence of the audio recorder.

When I organised the semi-structured interviews, and even when I undertook them, I was in agreement with Papen (2005: 64) that 'participant observation on its own can tell you relatively little about why things are done the way they are and why people act in the way you observe'. Interviews are required to find out what people think, how they interpret the literacy event in which they are involved and what assumptions and beliefs they bring to it (Papen, 2005), as interviews enable the researcher to explore participants' 'opinions, feelings, emotions and experience' (Denscombe, 2007: 174). However, although I agree that interviews are a way of collecting contextual information about practitioners that would not be so readily revealed by using another data collection method, I think such interviews *complement* but cannot *replace* participant observation. They are different approaches. As discussed earlier participant observation is able to offer a window into the socially situated language practices of the practitioners that cannot be revealed by formal interviews alone. Interviews capture a different social situation of which interviewees and interviewer are part.

However, formal interviews, such as the semi-structured ones undertaken for this study, tend to be conducted on a one-off basis, and, in addition to undertaking an observation of the practices of the practitioners, I was looking for an opportunity to utilise the relationship I was developing with my focal participants, the practitioners, to inform an ongoing discussion between us. This was why I chose to use *ethnographic interviews* as an ongoing approach to gathering data.

3.7.2   Ethnographic interviews

Being engaged in fieldwork affords the opportunity to not only observe the situation of which one is part, but also to ask questions about it whilst still being present. I wanted to be able to ask what I determine as '*naturally occurring questions*' – the type of questions that arise whilst engaging in conversation. I did not envision a problem with this. However, on the other hand, I wanted to take the opportunity, whilst in the field, to ask more exploratory, and indeed, more directive questions, questions that delved further into the practices of the practitioners. Barton and Hamilton (1998) used '*repeated interviews*' in their ethnographic study of local literacies, as they found that, over time, participants tended to be more open about their values, attitudes and practices. Although I regularly met with practitioners, as I saw them every week for the duration of the FLLN programme they were teaching, I felt that I needed to plan in time which would create an opportunity to share any comments and queries that I had.

The most suitable 'phase' of the FLLN programme in which to operationalise both 'naturally occurring questions' and 'repeated interviews' appeared to be during the 'de-briefing and planning discussion' phase (see section 3.3 for a description and overview of the FLLN programme's 'phases'). This was the time at which the teaching was completed and practitioners de-briefed about the session, discussing anything that needed to be done for the following session, and provided them with an opportunity to just chat together.

As mentioned above 'naturally occurring questions' would not appear to be difficult to integrate into conversation because they are part of the moment-by-moment interaction that co-conversationalists engage in whilst constructing 'normal' conversation. Initially, although I did ask such questions, at the same time, I was mindful that I did not want to interrupt any de-briefing discussions between the practitioners. However, by referring back to the de-briefing transcripts, as my relationships with the practitioners in the field developed I am aware that I started to contribute more readily to the de-briefing itself. I became part of this interaction. What required more planning was the initiation of 'repeated interviews'.

I had already decided to return transcripts of the de-briefing and planning discussions to the practitioners on a weekly basis, which I continued to do throughout the duration of the fieldwork. However, practitioners had not fully engaged with this approach to 'member checking', so it became clear that creating a space in which the transcripts could be discussed would not only enable member checking but also provide an opportunity in which exploratory and direct questioning could be instigated (this is also discussed in section 3.6.2.). I would highlight those aspects of the transcript that I wanted to discuss further, whilst still

transcribing and returning to practitioners the entire de-briefing and planning discussion, so

that they would retain a complete record of it. I discussed changing to this system with

Practitioner Two at the end of her semi-structured interview. She concurred that this would be

a more constructive way of approaching member checking, and I thought that this approach

would be an effective way to integrate questions, queries and comments into the ethnographic

process. However, although it became part of our normalised practice at the end of each

session, it was never 'natural'. Extract 3.5 provides a clear example of this.

Extract 3.5

1	Practitioner One	…Ok?
2	Researcher	My next point (laughing)
3	Practitioner One	(laughs)
4	Practitioner Two	Do you feel like this is an inquisition … Practitioner One?
5	Practitioner One	Yes
6	Practitioner Two	Do you?
7	Practitioner One	(laughing) I've never had to think about it all so much

Practitioner One and Practitioner Two continue to briefly discuss the freebies that Practitioner One buys for the parents each week.

8	Practitioner One	Next one. Come on now, I'm all excited. Can I get this one right?
9		(laughs)
10	Researcher	It's not a {right or a wrong}
11	Practitioner One	{(laughs) I know (laughs)}
12	Researcher	No cause I do feel that sometimes I know that it's like I'm asking stuff
13		and you think 'oh'
14	Practitioner One	(laughs) Oh no
15	Practitioner Two	I haven't heard from the Outreach Worker you know

(De-briefing and Planning Discussion, 20 March 2008)

Practitioner One, Practitioner Two and myself all contribute to how this episode is

constructed. Practitioner One has just responded to a question about the freebies that parents

receive every week, and, after a pause, rises her intonation when saying 'ok' as though checking with me whether her answer was acceptable. We may be speaking in a joking manner but this does not belie that there seems to be a slight edge to the discussion. In the second line I try to move the conversation on, and although I am laughing and Practitioner One is also laughing, Practitioner Two indexes that she recognises this as awkward laughter, by her asking of the question 'do you feel like this is an inquisition?'. Practitioner One's response of 'yes' seems to surprise Practitioner Two somewhat, which prompts Practitioner Two to further probe Practitioner One's 'yes' reply. Again Practitioner One's initial response is to laugh, and then she comments that she has 'never had to think about it all so much'.

This extract exemplifies how laughter is not necessarily a response to finding something funny, and humour is not always an inclusive interactional practice. Holmes (2000) argues that all utterances are multifunctional with almost every example of authentic discourse having several layers of meaning. She proposes that humorous utterances are no different, and therefore serve several functions at the same time. Therefore humour and laughter need to be an integral part of any interactional analysis. This extract also bears witness to the vulnerability of the researcher when undertaking research of this type, for as Luttrell (2000: 517) points out 'at its core, ethnographic research is creative, inventive, emotionally charged, and uneasy'.

Pahl (2003) refers to herself as having an ambiguous status when she was undertaking research in the area of family learning. She describes a continuous tension between her roles of 'teacher', 'friend', and 'researcher'. Gordon et al. (2005) argue that 'finding one's own

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space can be a daunting process' (p.116) as researchers have to 'create a balance between power and vulnerability' (p.115). These experiences resonate with my own experience in the field. I found I was engaging in a constant internal dialogue with myself in which I consistently reviewed and questioned my positioning in relation not only to the relationships I formed with the practitioners on an abstract level, but also how these were enacted through the interactions we engaged in during fieldwork. Part of my internal dialogue involved questioning whether I should make my own opinions more evident. Usually I avoided doing so, but on occasion I did find myself interjecting, and therefore affecting interactional exchanges between the practitioners. This made me very aware of the delicate balance between trust and rapport which is at the heart of ethnography (Richards, 2006) and also reminded me that any information gathered through interview (or observation) 'is affected by the positions of both ethnographer and informant within their own social worlds, as well as by their evolving personal relationship and understanding of one another's social worlds' (C. A. Davies, 2008: 89).

Hammersley and Atkinson (2007: 97) state that there are two ways of using interviewee accounts. Firstly as a way of informing us about the phenomena we are researching, and secondly to analyse them in terms of the 'perspectives they imply, the discursive strategies they employ, and even the psychosocial dynamics they suggest'. My view of interviews, whether they are semi-structured or ethnographic in nature, supports the stance that interviews serve as a medium in which information can be gathered, whilst simultaneously offering themselves as practical sites of social interaction in which knowledge and meaning is co-constructed between interviewer and interviewee.

Blommaert (2006) argues that asking is often the worst way of trying to find out something, as often people are not actively aware of what they are doing (see section 3.6). However, I do think there is a place for interviews, as regardless of whether one bears in mind that asking may not be the best way of finding out the answer, some sort of answer will always be forthcoming. Responses (or non-responses) always reveal something, and how the researcher responds to participants' responses is equally as telling, for in such responses 'fragments' of narrative are often co-constructed, revealing much of the 'how' of the interview, despite the 'what' being potentially somewhat lacking (Holstein & Gubrium, 2004).

3.8   Document collection

The collection of documents was an important element of this study, for although my research is concerned with socially-situated language practices, and more specifically narratives-in-interaction, as Barton and Hamilton (1998: 8) point out 'texts are crucial parts of literacy events, and the study of literacy is partly a study of texts and how they are produced and used'. By extension, situated language practices and narratives-in-interaction may also be mediated by texts. Therefore it becomes important to ensure that documentary evidence is collected within the research process as once the research setting is vacated there is no going back. Blommaert (2006: 53) advises researchers to 'take everything that closely or remotely looks of interest' as 'even if it doesn't tell you much on the spot, it can always become a very relevant bit of data later on'.

Barton (2001: 101) puts forward the proposition that 'research which sets out from face-to-face spoken language interaction has difficulty in addressing other aspects of social life which are mediated by texts'. He argues that Literacy Studies has broadened the notion of interaction by 'focusing on the importance of texts and examining the various roles texts have in interaction' (Barton, 2001: 99). Therefore it becomes vital to collect the texts that surround and inform interaction as they can reveal how FLLN is constructed not only through interaction but also to make known the actual constructions embedded in documentation and inscribed in documentation as 'our lives are infused with a process of inscription, producing written or printed traces or working from them' (Smith, 1999: 209, cited in Barton, 2001: 100).

It is clear from the interactions that take place within the classroom, and between practitioners in the liminal inbetween-space of just before and after teaching takes place that documentation does not sit in a separate space, boundaried off, but is an integral part of interactions that take place between practitioners, between practitioners and parents, and in my conversations with the practitioners. The interactions in which such references to texts are realised reveal not only the roles that texts have within these interactions but also the significance with which individual texts are regarded by those who are referring to them.

The texts that were used in the classroom by the practitioners and by the parents, and those documents referred to in the interactions between the practitioners in the liminal inbetween spaces before and after teaching took place were collected (see Figure 2 for a graphic representation of the 'phases' of the FLLN programme). I systematically gathered all

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documents that were produced and provided for parents, including forms, hand-outs, worksheets and activity sheets. Documents that were produced by practitioners, seemingly for their own use, for example the scheme of work, have also been collected. Individual Learning Programmes (ILPs) were collected as well. ILPs are of particular interest as both parents and practitioners are regarded as contributing to the completion of these documents. The full range of documents[9] have been categorised by use and are listed in Table 3.

Of the 72 texts that I collected during this study, 38 (53%) of them are identified as being used in relation to teaching (see Table 3). By this I mean that they are directly related to the teaching of the curriculum. Teaching texts are differentiated in terms of hand-outs, worksheets and activity sheets. Within this study a text is deemed to be a hand-out if it provides information about a topic being covered within the teaching sessions. Worksheets may present information but their main purpose is to instigate and direct an activity – which may be individually or collaboratively completed by parents. Activity sheets, on the other hand, are provided for and discussed with parents during the 'parents-only' teaching sessions and are aimed at stimulating or prescribing an activity to be undertaken between parents and their children – either within the 'joint' teaching sessions or suggested as activities that can be undertaken at home.

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[9] Each adult literacy tutor receives a FLLN Tutor File when they start to work for the local authority. This is an A4 ring binder, divided into sections, which provides a comprehensive guide to the structure of FLLN and includes the full range of documentation that practitioners may be required to complete. Although I have a copy of this file I have not incorporated its contents on a wholesale basis into this study. I have only included texts that are included in the Tutor File where practitioners have actually used them. See Appendix 9 for an overview of the Tutor File's contents.

Table 3: Documents collected – categorised by use

Document	No.	Teaching	Assessment	Administration	
				Providing information	Providing evidence
Letter to parents – offering a place	1			✓	
Family Learning leaflet	1			✓	
Register (parents)	1				✓
Register (children)	1				✓
Scheme of Work (parents) – draft and final versions	2				✓
Scheme of Work (children) – final version	1				✓
Tutor's Induction Checklist & Learner Confirmation	1				✓
Family Literacy course details sheet	1			✓	
Enrolment Form	1				✓
Equality and Diversity Statement	1			✓	✓
Learning Charter bookmark	1			✓	✓
Evidence for Accreditation – Demonstrating Speaking and Listening Skills – Record Sheets (2)	2		✓		
Worksheets (18) – locally produced (4); externally produced (14)	18	✓	✓		
Handouts (16) – locally produced (2); externally produced (11); realia (3)	16	✓			
Activity sheets (for parents to do with children) (4)	4	✓			
Accreditation evidence sheets (9)	9		✓		(✓) free writing
Individual Learning Plans	1				✓
Parenting Strategy Parent/Carer Consultation	1				
Photographic Consent Form	1				✓
Skills for Life Initial Assessment (2)	2				✓
Weekly sessions reminder (informing parents what has been covered each week)	1				✓
Information, Advice and Guidance Information	1			✓	✓
End of Course Review	1				✓
End of Course Evaluation Form	1				✓
Summary of Children's Evidence	1				✓
Tutor's Self-assessment Report	1				✓
Total	**72**				

Therefore, if 53% of the documents relate directly to teaching content then it remains that a substantial amount of documentation has a different usage. Tusting (2009: 15), in her research into paperwork and pressure in educational workplaces, argues that 'people engage in particular ways in specific settings, associated with complex histories and configurations of practice'. I would argue that for anyone working in a further education or adult and community education setting, it would not be surprising that much of the documentation that enframes practice is not directly related to teaching. However, at the same time, it could be argued that although such documentation is not directly related to teaching, conversely it does have an impact on teaching and the teachers themselves. Tusting (2009: 22) found that tutors working in an adult and community college 'were more likely to talk about experiencing active conflicts between the purposes of 'the job' and 'the paperwork''.

Stronach et al. (2002: 109), in their research into the professional identities of teachers and nurses, construct the professional as caught between an 'economy of performance' and 'ecologies of practice'. 'Economy of performance' refers to the 'attempt to express performances of 'quality', 'effectiveness' and 'outcomes' in a generally quantitative register whereby they can be normatively assessed and made public' (p.132). 'Ecologies of practice' are defined as the 'sorts of individual and collective experiences, beliefs and practices that professionals accumulate in learning and performing their roles' (p.132).

'Economies of performance' and 'ecologies of practice' are useful concepts to draw on when determining the purpose of the 72 texts used in this FLLN programme. In relation to these concepts I would define the teaching materials (handouts, worksheets and activity sheets) as

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congruent with the practitioners' 'ecologies of practice' (more specifically Practitioner Two's 'ecologies of practice' as she either selected or created these texts personally – not in collaboration with Practitioner One). However, the majority of the remainder of the texts relate to 'economies of performance'.

In addition to 'teaching' I have categorised the documents I collected into texts relating to 'assessment' and 'administration', with 'administration' sub-divided into those texts concerned with 'providing information' and those with 'providing evidence'. The category of 'assessment' refers to texts which have been designed to be used as evidence for the accreditation undertaken by the parents as part of FLLN. However, it needs to be acknowledged that the categorisation of documents is somewhat arbitrary, for example, I have designated ILPs as providing evidence for administrative purposes, whereas from a different perspective these could be viewed as an integral part of curriculum delivery. However, I am basing my document categorisation on the actual usages to which I have observed these texts being put.

This section has provided a detailed account of the methods that I have used to collect pertinent data to enable my research questions to be answered. I have also tried to demonstrate how these methods provide an excellent fit with my chosen theoretical and methodological frameworks. The following section outlines the approach I used to data analysis.

3.9   Data analysis

The datasets that have been analysed for this study are:

1. recordings and transcripts of the interactions between the practitioners that took place just before and after their teaching. These formed part of the participant observation phase of the research.

2. recordings and transcripts of the ethnographic interviews.

3. recordings and transcripts of the individual semi-structured interviews that were undertaken with each of the practitioners.

4. fieldnotes.

5. research diary.

I needed to formulate a way of investigating the above data which would enable me to answer my research questions. In terms of the interactional data[10] I needed to be able to identify all the 'fleeting moments of narrative orientation to the world' (Hymes, 1996, cited in Georgakopoulou, 2006b: 123), all the small stories that the practitioners tell, and in their telling position both the parents and themselves, whilst simultaneously invoking the circulating discourses of which these narrative orientations are part. At the same time I realised that I came to the data analysis phase of my research with head notes, what Green et al. (1997: 174) describe as 'knowledge gained from being in the situation', already in place. In addition I brought my own experience and understandings. I recognised that a combination

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[10] The term 'interactional data' is used to refer to the datasets listed 1-3 above.

of my 'head notes' and also my own subjectivities about FLLN could potentially colour my findings. However, wanting to ensure that my research rested on 'combinations of data, analysis, inferencing and theorization that seem solid and properly constructed' (Rampton, 2006: 407) it was important for me to bring a systematic and thorough approach to any form of analysis that was to underpin my findings.

The approach I brought to this was two-fold. In terms of investigating the interactional data for small stories about the parents (for Chapters 4-5), I decided to utilise a corpus linguistics program[11]. I regard this as complementing and enhancing the ethnographic methodology that underpins this research, as such it is important to understand that I am using corpus linguistics as a tool to investigate my data within an ethnographic framework. The corpora I am using in this study is 'purpose-built', created from the interactional data that I have collected, as opposed to corpora that are 'tailor-made and off-the-peg' (Mautner, 2009: 34). Kendall (2011) proposes that corpora that do not necessarily meet 'the "proper" definition maintained by corpus linguists' of being 'balanced, representative and machine-readable', can be usefully examined using corpus-based techniques, as 'the use of corpus analysis software tools themselves can shed useful light into even quite small datasets ' (p.364). Therefore, although my use of corpus-based techniques could be regarded as corpus linguistics in only its 'name-deep' form (Kendall, 2011: 364), I am contributing to an expanding body of work that recognises that corpus linguistics 'should be compatible with many other approaches without concerns about disciplinary traditions and boundaries getting in the way' (Mautner, 2009: 37). (See Kendall (2011) for a discussion of the growing relationship between corpus linguistics

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[11] The corpus linguistics program I used is AntConc, which is free to access via the internet.

and sociolinguistics and their theoretical differences; also see Baker et al., (2008) and Mautner (2009), for discussions about combining critical discourse analysis and corpus linguistics.)

Hardt-Mautner (1995: 8) argues that, although concordancer programs provide new ways of kick-starting analysis, enabling researchers to 'pursue even the most tentative leads', they do not replace detailed discourse analysis. It is clear that findings determined by the use of computer-assisted corpus analysis need to be complemented by qualitative textual analysis (Fairclough, 2003). I would agree with Fairclough and argue that in addition to corpus programs facilitating the following of 'tentative leads', they also allow the researcher another way in to investigating the patterns that have already been revealed by, in this case, a close analysis of interactional data. Using a corpus program also enabled me to follow leads in relation to the head notes that I brought with me into the field, and those that I developed whilst in the field (see section 4.2 for an example of this).

The integration of corpus linguistics as an approach in this study has provided me with a method of drilling down into the data itself, providing a way of accessing the construction of parents which is located in the moment-by-moment interactions between practitioners, and between practitioners and the researcher herself. Using this approach enabled me to engage in what I saw as the first step toward providing an in-depth and systematic analysis of those narrative orientations that 'can be easily missed out on by an analytical lens which only looks out for fully-fledged stories' (Georgakopoulou, 2006b: 123).

Using a corpus-based approach also enabled me to 'quantify discoursal phenomena' (Baker et al., 2008: 285). I was able to search the interactional data for every mention of the word 'parent' by using 'parent*' as a search term. There were 191 hits for this term, which then enabled me to look methodically at each of these hits in turn to see whether, and in what manner they reveal the ways in which parents are positioned by FLLN practitioners. For an even more particular analysis I also searched separately for each of the parents involved in the programme. I was able to do this as each of the eight parents enrolled on the programme was coded individually, from P1 to P8. In total, individual parents were referred to on 401 occasions. Again, being able to easily locate specific parents in the interactional data enabled me to analyse the fleeting narratives that practitioners choose to tell about individual parents.

Working back from the search results generated by the corpus linguistics program to the transcripts and audio-recordings ensured that I did not miss any references to 'parent*'. However, at the same time, I was careful not to decontextualise any such references, looking at the utterances that preceded and followed to ensure that any prior or subsequent use of relevant pronouns, (e.g. they, them, their, she, etc) did not act to obscure any additional 'parent' references, and therefore any possible fragments of narrative. In this way I made sure that I was always returning to my original datasets as part of the analytical process, using corpus linguistics as a way of promoting a closer and more detailed analysis of the interactional data itself.

In terms of investigating the narratives that Practitioners One and Two tell about themselves and each other (for Chapter 6) I was unable to use a corpus linguistics program as a

preliminary tool to search for particular terms, as there were no specific terms that would enable me to do this. For this chapter I systematically went through fieldnotes, my research diary and the transcripts of the practitioners' planning and de-briefing discussions as well as their individual semi-structured interviews. I wanted to ensure that I did not miss out any narrative allusions that would draw attention to the ways in which the practitioners construct and co-construct themselves and each other whilst also foregrounding the discursive construction of their working practices with each other. During my observations I had started to note that the way the practitioners spoke about each other during the teaching session provided an insight into how they regarded one another. This talk occurred when they were both present in the teaching session, and when one of the practitioners was absent (see Table 1 for an overview of the attendance of the practitioners). The keeping of comprehensive fieldnotes enabled me to pursue this 'head note', adding an additional layer to my data analysis, which, without keeping fieldnotes, would not have been available to me.

The process of investigation used for uncovering the ways in which the practitioners reveal a view of themselves and each other by dint of the narrative tellings they share during their conversations and within their teaching sessions was done 'manually'. The procedure I followed for the manual investigation of my data was firstly to copy each transcript of my interactional data into a new 'analysis' document whilst still keeping an original copy of each of the transcripts. I listened to, and read and re-read the audio-recordings and transcripts respectively. Each time I came across what I regarded as a narrative-in-interaction I annotated

the transcript by highlighting the relevant text and inserting a comment box[12] in which I wrote

analytical comments regarding the thematic content of the narrative I had identified. I

followed the same procedure for each transcript in turn. I then created a separate document

and cut and pasted the narrative fragments from each of the transcripts into this document. I

followed the same procedure when analysing my fieldnotes. As my research diary was hand-

written, after reading through it and identifying relevant extracts, I typed up these extracts

into the thematic document in which I had already pasted narratives-in-interaction identified

in the interactional datasets and in my fieldnotes. I read through these extracts in the new

document, again looking for themes that were evident within and across the datasets. I

reorganised the extracts within this document, categorising them according to the themes that

I had induced from my analysis of the datasets.

I followed the same procedure whether investigating the data for narratives related about

parents (for Chapters 4 and 5) or about practitioners (for Chapter 6). The only difference

between the approaches undertaken in relation to identifying and analysing parents' and

practitioners' narratives was that I integrated the use of corpus linguistics as an initial search

tool when identifying narratives tellings about parents. Both approaches to investigating the

data were very time-consuming. However, I realise that my experience is not unusual for, as

other ethnographers point out (Hammerseley & Atkinson, 2007; Delamont, 2002), the

analytical process is recursive. It is a process for which 'there are no short cuts, and one must

allow plenty of time and energy' (Delamont, 2002: 171).

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[12] This is a feature of Microsoft Word.

In the above discussion I have outlined the approach used to enable me to investigate the datasets in terms of lexical and interactional content. However, in terms of the interactional datasets what I have not discussed is the stage of turning audio-recordings into transcripts. This is something that I find really fascinating but, within the parameters of this thesis, cannot discuss at length. However, I want to draw attention to the complexity of this process, and argue that constructing transcripts is part of the analytical process itself, for, as Lapadat and Lindsay (1999: 82) suggest 'analysis takes place and understandings are derived through the process of constructing a transcript by listening and re-listening, viewing and re-viewing'. Many scholars agree that producing a transcript is not an objective or transparent process, it includes issues of interpretation, representation, entextualisation and recontextualisation (see Bird, 2005; Bucholtz, 2000, 2007; C.A. Davies, 2008; De Fina & Georgakopoulou, 2008; Duranti, 2006; Green et al., 1997; Vigouroux, 2007, 2009). Heath and Street (2008: 108) suggest that 'transcriptions can be a huge sinkhole from which you have no idea how to emerge', whilst Blommaert (2006: 60) proposes that transcription is never complete as 'there are always things that you will not show'. This resonates with Green et al.'s (1997: 173) perspective that 'a transcript represents both the researcher(s) and the participants in particular ways. Tran-scripts, therefore, are partial representations, and the ways in which data are represented influence the range of meanings and interpretations possible'.

I transcribed hours of audio-recording for this study. My initial transcriptions were not represented in the same way as those I transcribed as my research study progressed. When I returned transcripts to the practitioners each week, these transcripts did not look like the annotated transcripts I kept for myself. Again, the extracts of transcripts included in this thesis

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have gone through an iterative process of interpretation, and thought has been given to the best way to present them for this research. I have entexualised the interactional exchanges between the practitioners and myself, and recontextualised them according to my purposes and their intended audience. Therefore I recognise that in constructing transcripts I am not just producing a neutral document through which I am trying to understand the discursive practices I am studying but I am also engaged in a 'sociocultural practice of representing discourse' (Bucholtz, 2007: 785).

3.10   Ethical considerations

Throughout this chapter I have attempted to integrate my ethical concerns into discussions about the particular methods that I have utilised in the research process. I have done this because I view ethics as an iterative consideration that needs to be addressed on an ongoing basis. In this chapter I have already outlined the process undertaken to gain informed consent, the dilemmas I faced in using my 'insider connections' to gain access to the research site, the consequent problems this posed and how I attempted to address them. I have identified   that full disclosure is an ideal that is often affected by pragmatic considerations in the field. For example, although I had shared my original research questions (see Appendix 1) with the practitioners from the outset, what did develop over time was the foregrounding of my interest in how the practitioners socially identified the parents with whom they worked. I did not share this with the practitioners as I did not want potentially to alter the content of their conversations. Although I do have some unease about this, I do not think I was wrong to

behave in this manner but it does exemplify issues around whether a researcher can ever fully disclose the nature of their research (see Denscombe, 2007; Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007).

Another ethical consideration that I have already alluded to concerns the responsibility of the researcher in ensuring that no harms befalls research participants. In order to protect the research participants' anonymity I have coded their names and anonymised any place or organisation names. However, it is an ongoing concern for me that in a small-scale research project such as this, participants, particularly the practitioners, could be identified. This is a concern that I am still grappling with, and am mindful of how any research that I intend to publish needs to be presented to protect the identities of those involved.

One ethical consideration that I have not previously discussed is that of the researcher's making of judgments. Gewirtz and Cribb (2006: 142) argue that 'evaluative judgments are made at every stage of the research process'. Judgments are informed by one's own values and beliefs. Gewirtz and Cribb (2006) propose that researchers need to be ethically reflexive, thus in ensuring the rigour of their work researchers should be 'ready to give an account of the way in which their personal involvement in social and fieldwork relations shape their data collection, analysis and writing' (p.147). Furthermore, researchers need to be explicit about 'the value assumptions and evaluative judgments that inform or are embedded in every stage of […] research' (p.147) and be prepared to defend and explain them to others. This would seem to me to be particularly crucial at the writing stage, as it is at this stage that the researcher is articulating the judgments that they are inevitably making about those who have participated in their research.

3.11 Conclusion

This chapter has provided a detailed overview of the research context of my study. In it I have strived to demonstrate how the research methods I have selected are congruent with my chosen theoretical and methodological frameworks of ethnography, linguistic ethnography and positioning analysis. Whilst doing this I have also tried to articulate how my reflexive positioning as a researcher impacts on each step of the process of research, and that ethical considerations are integral to any research when working with people.

During the many stages of this research, from its inception, its design, the undertaking of fieldwork, including the stages involved in data analysis and my research's inscription into a thesis, it has become clearer to me that the researcher's role necessitates an ongoing engagement with selectivity on a regular basis. At times these are pragmatic decisions, at others they are ethical choices, and sometimes these are constrained by the situations in which we find ourselves. Regardless of the rationale behind our decision-making, being a researcher involves us in explaining the reasons for our choices. I hope that this chapter highlights not only the choices I have made during the research process, but also the reasons for my doing so.

CHAPTER 4: NARRATIVES-IN-INTERACTION ABOUT PARENTS

4.1   Introduction

This chapter presents a detailed analysis of the way in which the parents who attend a FLLN programme are constructed by the FLLN practitioners who teach them (see Chapter 3 for an overview of the datasets used for this analysis). It draws on two of my chosen methodological and theoretical frameworks of ethnography and linguistic ethnography in the following ways.

It utilises ethnographic data to provide a 'thick description' of the research situation. This is description in the ethnographic sense of being 'descriptive theory' (Blommaert, 2006, 2009); description grounded in specific methodological and epistemological ways, which foreground ethnography's roots in anthropology. This description recognises Blommaert's (2006, 2009) interpretation of ethnography, viewing language as 'the architecture of social behaviour itself, and thus part of social structure and social relations' (Blommaert, 2006: 9). It also reflects the focus on language that is an integral element of linguistic ethnography, presenting a 'close analysis of situated language use' (Rampton et al., 2004: 2). The descriptions of parents presented and discussed in the following sections provide a detailed analysis of the recurrent themes that thread through conversations between practitioners and how these are realised in and through their conversations, hence demonstrating the variety of ways in which practitioners categorise, signify, and therefore position, parents.

In relation to positioning analysis, although this chapter does not systematically go through the three levels of positioning analysis (outlined in Chapter 2), it does explore the way practitioners use small stories, or narratives-in-interaction to construct a notion of not only the particular parents with whom the practitioners work, but, in addition, how these narratives draw upon 'dominant discourses and master narratives' (De Fina et al., 2007: 7) as well as the practitioners' own situated histories to reveal the complex interweaving of locally held constructions of parents and parenting and, as Creese (2008: 233) puts it, 'those embedded in a wider social world'. However, these are not usually consciously constructed representations but what B. Davis (2008: 173) refers to as citational speech in which 'the ordinary everyday world is sedimented in repeated citations of the way the world is (and, it is believed, ought to be)'.

This chapter is divided into seven main sections. The first section discusses how parents became a central theme of this study. The second section provides a typology of the ways in which the practitioners describe the parents with whom they work. The following four sections provide detailed analyses of how these categorisations are created through the practitioners' socially situated language practices, indexed by the small stories they relate about the parents. The final section draws together the main arguments of the chapter, and offers concluding remarks.

Before I go on to discuss at length how the practitioners co-construct the parents in conversation, I want to explain how 'parents' emerged as a central theme in this study.

4.2   How 'parents' emerged as a theme

FLLN programmes are regarded as having a 'twin focus on children and adults', delivering 'positive results' in 'terms of adults' employability, qualifications and community involvement' (DfES, 2005: 20). This focus on adults is clear from the LSC's (2008) description of the purpose of FLLN programmes:

- improve the literacy, language and numeracy skills of parents;
- improve parents' ability to help their children learn; and
- improve children's acquisition of literacy, language and numeracy.
  (LSC, 2008: 4)

Of the three aims listed above, the first two are focused on improving the LLN skills of parents/carers and therefore their ability to help the children who are under their care. Therefore, it would seem that, without even looking at the datasets that were produced through this study, parents could be regarded as a central focus of FLLN programmes. However, although I came to this research with an understanding of the centrality of parents to these programmes, it was through being present in the field that 'parents' crystallised as a theme. It was through listening to practitioners talk and watching them teach, as well as collecting the texts that mediate the relationship between practitioners and parents, that it became conspicuously clear that the notion of 'parents' warranted further in-depth analysis. Practitioners' conversations were peppered with allusions to, and descriptions of, parents. Listening to the audio recordings, and reading and re-reading the transcripts reinforced the

significance of the representation of parents to this study, with practitioners' recollections and anecdotes about parents forming a consistent and recurring element of their discussions.

4.3   Descriptions of parents

References to parents are interwoven throughout the conversations between practitioners. On one hand this is to be expected, as, after all, both practitioners are working with the parents, and therefore it would seem unusual if they did not make mention of them in their pre- and post-teaching discussions together. However, it is the manner in which parents are represented that is of significance here. Maybin (2006: 4) draws on the Bakhtinian concept of evaluation to make the point that all talk is evaluative as 'we can never talk about anything without making some kind of judgement reflecting an assumed evaluative framework and signaling our own position in relation to it'. Wortham and Gadsden (2006) argue that those engaged in narration, whilst voicing themselves and other characters, at the same time evaluate these voices, taking a stance on the types of characters that are represented. Maybin (2006) makes this point in relation to her study about children's talk, and Wortham and Gadsden (2006) in relation to their study on the narrative self-construction of urban fathers. It is equally applicable to the talk of FLLN practitioners. When practitioners speak of parents, the form and content of their conversations index a number of evaluative stances towards the parents of whom they speak. In doing so, as Wortham and Gadsden (2006: 319) argue, 'narrators "voice" or position people represented in their narrative, including their own narrated selves, as recognisable types of people'.

The following sections outline the 'recognisable types' of parents that arise in and through the practitioners' conversations. The typology of parents offered here also calls into play the role of structure and agency in the parents' lives, to what degree the practitioners view that parents are in control of their own destiny or are constrained by the social structures of which they are part.

The categories outlined in Table 4 are conflations of the categories that I originally found when going through the interactional datasets (see 3.9, datasets 1-3). The five categories that I finally arrived at are my attempts to draw together the various 'recognisable types' of parents which the practitioners construct in conversation. At the same time I recognise that in naming these categories I am taking part in the process of identifying 'recognisable types', a process which I undertake with some unease. Maybin (2006: 29) speaks of her struggle to find an appropriate language of description which is able to meet her needs 'to identify the intricate linguistic features of children's talk' as well as 'acknowledge its dynamic nature within social practice'. She is concerned that using the terms 'knowledge' and 'identity' convey 'a sense of fixed territory, with boundaries' (Maybin, 2006: 30), when she wants to convey their construction, development and emergence over time. I suggest that the categories I describe in this chapter can be viewed as relatively nebulous in nature, contained within permeable boundaries. They are more pragmatic than precise. As such these categories serve the purpose of highlighting the ways that practitioners construct parents through the evaluative components of their conversations. However, the permeability of their boundaries reinforces the fluidity of the relationship between structure, agency and the categorisation itself.

Table 4: 'Recognisable types' of parents

1. Parents are desperate
2. Parents are in need of support
3. Parents are taking steps to improve their lives
4. Parents do not display appropriate parenting skills
5. Parents are living in chaos

Although I have identified five categorisations of parents (see Table 4), I am choosing to present a detailed analysis of the first four of these 'recognisable types', as I think it is better to narrow the scope of what I am presenting to ensure that, within the prescribed limits of this thesis, I am able to reflect the attention to detail with which I have analysed the data. The first of these categorisations is *parents are desperate*.

4.4 Parents are desperate

A recurrent theme within the practitioners' discussions is the desperate conditions and circumstances that the parents with whom they are working find themselves in. Such conditions and circumstances are usually made manifest in terms of references to *poor housing conditions*, parents' *financial hardship* and their *social isolation*.

4.4.1. Poor housing conditions

In Extract 4.1 both practitioners are conversing about the parents who are going to be attending the FLLN programme. However, even when parents are represented as living in

poor housing conditions there is an ongoing juxtaposition between the parents' individual agency and the structures that restrict them. Practitioner One combines generic and personal narratives (see Baynham, 2005, 2011) as well as an allusion to a previous telling (see Georgakopoulou, 2006b) in her sharing of some background information about the parents with Practitioner Two.

Extract 4.1

1	Practitioner One	Well these families have obviously been referred, for different reasons,
2		haven't they? They live in very desperate conditions and situations, and
3		like, as we've said before, when I was in teaching I thought that I knew it
4		all and I had no idea that families existed like this.

(Planning Meeting, 15 January 2008)

Practitioner One describing the parents as living 'in very desperate conditions and situations' can be viewed as Practitioner One acknowledging that the parents are not responsible for the structural aspects of their lives. However, at the same time, by making the point that the parents 'have obviously been referred, for different reasons, haven't they?', Practitioner One is inferring that some of the parents are responsible for the conditions in which they live. Vincent et al.'s (2010: 128) study into the lives of working-class mothers found that many of the lone mothers that took part in their research 'shared bedrooms with their children and were on seemingly never-ending council waiting lists for bigger properties'. They argue that 'space and location are limitations on family life and mothering at home and on life outside the home' (p.128). Gewirtz (2001: 365) proposes that in New Labour's attempt to 'eradicate class differences by reconstructing and transforming working class parents into middle class

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ones', the reasons why many working-class parents do not behave like their middle-class equivalents are ignored. 'Poverty, and the stress, ill-health and poor living conditions associated with it, make it difficult for large sections of the population to prioritise education' (Gewirtz, 2001: 374). According to Gillies (2005a: 81), the root causes of inequality remain unaddressed and 'lack of material resources is then redefined as a symptom of exclusion rather than its cause'.

4.4.2   Financial hardship

In a later part of the same planning meeting, referred to above, Practitioner One alludes to the *financial hardship* of the parents with whom they are working.

Extract 4.2

1	Practitioner One	Cause they're all quite happy to go to McDonalds. Yeah. And then have
2		no money by the end of the week. It's terrible isn't it? The education
3		system and other circumstances in their life have affected them like this.

(Planning Meeting, 15 January 2008)

In this generic narrative (see Baynham, 2005, 2011) Practitioner One presents negative and positive evaluations within the same utterance. She criticises parents for spending money at McDonalds when they can ill afford it, then follows this by stating how the parents have been lead to this by failures in the system.

Drawing on her study into the range of ways working-class parents support their children's schooling, Gillies (2006) argues that for wealthier parents spending money is not a particularly significant act. She points out that wealthier parents invest large sums of money to boost their children's education prospects. Her study found that aside from working-class parents not being able to afford such financial commitments, it was evident that alternative values and priorities came into play.

> When money is scarce treats and gifts can be highly meaningful and arguably more effective than spending small amounts on educationally orientated goods. Much desired items like brand name clothing or a favourite junk food for tea might make a difficult day at school more bearable for a child, while also communicating a strong message of love and care. (Gillies, 2006: 288)

It is clear from my study that the practitioners are aware of the financial constraints within which the vast majority of the parents operate, but in describing the parents, they position them drawing on their own middle-class values and priorities. They recognise that the parents lack money, but can tend to criticise what the parents choose to spend their money on. In Extract 4.3, the narration of what Georgakopoulou (2006b: 123) refers to as a 'shared (known) event', which elides into a generic narrative (see Baynham, 2011), provides an example of this.

Extract 4.3

1	Practitioner Two	She's very generous isn't she, P7.
2	Practitioner One	Very
3	Practitioner Two	Very generous really. She bought all those eggs
4	Practitioner One	/I know

5	Practitioner Two	for everybody …Um
6	Practitioner One	/They spend a lot of money don't they?
7	Practitioner Two	Yeah
8	Practitioner One	Considering

(De-briefing and Planning Discussion, 20 March 2008)

In Extract 4.3, even when P7 is referred to as generous (lines 1 and 3), as she bought all the other parents, the practitioners and the researcher each a cream egg, the use of the word 'considering' (line 8) indexes Practitioner One's reticence to evaluate this as an overall positive act. At the same time, Practitioner One also moves from the specific to the general by changing the pronoun from 'she' (line 3) to 'they' (line 6). In this rhetorical move Practitioner One is able to offer a veiled criticism of all the parents in relation to what she alludes to as inappropriate spending of their limited funds.

This is not the only representation within the interactional data of the criticism of parents for the ways they spend their money. However, I have chosen to highlight it here as whilst appearing to be a somewhat ephemeral example, it is actually a very powerful one, demonstrating the subtle interplay between positive and negative evaluations within the same narrative telling.

4.4.3   Social isolation

When describing how socially isolated the parents are, the practitioners make limited

reference to the parents' lack of money as one of the sources of their *social isolation*. Vincent

et al. (2010) found that:

> Mothers who had recently arrived in the United Kingdom were particularly
> likely to lack local social ties and boredom can easily turn into depression,
> and dependence on benefits with little or no income surplus means long
> hours spent at home in cramped accommodation. (Vincent et al., 2010: 131)

However, it is not only mothers who are recent arrivals in Britain that can lack local social

ties. Extract 4.4 exemplifies how Practitioner Two only considers P6's reference to never

being able to go out for a meal on her own in terms of P6 not being able to access a family

member to babysit for her.

Extract 4.4

```
1    Practitioner Two     And I think for such as P6, who obviously gets … doesn't seem to have
2                         any support at home does she? She
3    Practitioner One     /No, none
4    Practitioner Two     She doesn't talk about relatives or anything.
5    Practitioner One     No
6    Practitioner Two     Um you know I feel quite
7    Practitioner One     /She's so {overcrowded}
8    Practitioner Two     {I feel} very sorry for her, especially when she's said 'oh I never get to
9                         go out for a meal on my own'.
10   Practitioner One     No
11   Practitioner Two     And I just thought 'oh, that's a shame' but obviously the older girl could
12                        stay in with the children so P6 could go perhaps go out with a friend, or,
13                        I, I don't know but
```

(De-briefing and Planning Discussion, 20 March 2008)

In this telling of an ongoing event (see Georgakopoulou, 2006b) Practitioner Two does not

consider whether P6 can afford to eat out. From this example it does not appear to cross

Practitioner Two's mind, as, it could be argued, this does not resonate with her own

experience. However, the importance of being able to access a babysitter to relieve the

feelings of social isolation that being a parent can engender, does. In Extract 4.5 Practitioner

Two relates a personal narrative (see Baynham, 2011) about how isolated from adult

company she felt when her own children were young.

Extract 4.5

1	Practitioner Two	I mean when I'd got my two little … I was like stir-crazy. I couldn't bear
2		being at home with them all day. Much as I loved them and I did all
3		lovely things.
4	Practitioner One	Mm
5	Practitioner Two	I did lovely craft and everything and took them to groups
6	Practitioner One	Mm
7	Practitioner Two	and, but I still craved being with an adult.

(De-briefing and Planning Discussion, 8 May 2008)

Vincent et al. (2010: 131) found that working-class mothers who did not work were 'the least

ready to trust others, arguing that nurseries were not always safe and secure places.' This

finding is echoed many times in the words of the practitioners (the iterative narrative (see

Baynham, 2011) presented in Extract 4.6 is an example of this) when they indicate that one of

the reasons for parents attending FLLN programmes is to have some time away from their

children, whilst being safe in the knowledge that their children are being looked after.

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Extract 4.6

1	Practitioner Two	[…] But I think, and I think the things that they like I know initially was
2		the time away from the children was definitely the thing they liked
3		because lots of them don't get … doesn't seem like they get any relief at
4		all at home or no support or grannies and granddads or babysitters or
5		anything.

(Individual Interview with Practitioner Two, 21 February 2008)

It is clear that practitioners relate narrative fragments about the parents that demonstrate their understanding of the structural constraints within which the parents operate – what causes the practitioners to describe parents as 'desperate'. However, their sympathy is tempered by their own outlooks on life, which are informed by their own professional and personal experiences. Although the practitioners are themselves part of the structures that Gewirtz (2001) describes as aiming to re-socialise working-class parents into middle-class ones, both practitioners are walking the line, and at times alternate between the 'unreflected ordinariness' (B. Davies, 2008: 179) of iterating discourses of normative middle-class mothering practices, and the recognition that the parents they work with 'live in a presiding social reality in which conscious self-determination is sharply contained by external, relational and subjective factors' (Gillies, 2005a: 86).

4.5 Parents are in need of support

The epithet 'hard to reach' is often attached to learners who are characterised by their non-participation in formal learning activities (Bathmaker, 2007), although what 'hard to reach' actually means is not always clearly articulated (see Milbourne, 2002). 'Hard to reach' is also

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an expression used by schools to categorise parents who are not regarded as actively engaged in the education of their children (Crozier & Davies, 2007; Harris & Goodall, 2008), and is a term prevalent in policy documentation relating to family learning programmes (DfES, 2007; LSC, 2009a, 2009b; Ofsted, 2003, 2009). However, how 'hard to reach' becomes interpreted in practice is by practitioners regarding such learners deemed as 'hard to reach' as being in need of support. Practitioner Two refers to the parents on the FLLN programme she is co-delivering with Practitioner One as 'our hard to reach families'.

Being 'in need of support' is conceptualised by practitioners in a number of ways. Firstly, parents are regarded as *unable to manage for themselves*. At the same time parents are represented as *child-like* – both with respect to practitioners' descriptions of parents' behaviours, and in the lexical choices that the practitioners make when referring to parents. On the one hand, just like children, parents that are regarded as child-like *need to be protected*. On the other hand, part of the discourse of being like a child includes the perceived need for parents *to prove themselves* to be reliable and responsible. Parents need to prove themselves in order to be viewed as responsible enough to deserve support, to be deemed at the stage at which they are able to benefit from their participation in FLLN. In the context of FLLN, practitioners repeatedly refer to parents demonstrating their reliability with reference to parents being able to commit to a 15 week course. However, although parents are regarded as needing to demonstrate their commitment to FLLN it is clear that the practitioners view the parents' *lack of confidence* as at the root of why many of the parents find different situations difficult to deal with. Therefore allusions to, and examples of, parents' needing or wanting to

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improve their confidence are central components that underpin practitioners' understandings

of why parents are in need of support.

4.5.1 Unable to manage for themselves

Baynham (2011: 67) argues that 'the narrative as example or exemplum is told to illustrate a

point'. Extract 4.7 is an example of this type of narrative, providing a clear illustration of how

the practitioners co-construct the parents as requiring support.

Extract 4.7

1	Practitioner One	They don't know how to deal with different situations. Cause if they just
2		said 'I need some help with this?' You'd go and help wouldn't you?
3	Practitioner Two	Course you would
4	Practitioner One	But instead they draw, like a child draws attention to themselves
5	Practitioner Two	/Yeah
6	Practitioner One	because they're so concerned that they're not going to be able to achieve.
7	Practitioner Two	Yeah. But then we don't put them under any
8	Practitioner One	/No, but we are. We don't think we are, but {we are by making them
9		come}
10	Practitioner Two	{Even just a simple}
11	Practitioner One	over 15 weeks.
12	Practitioner Two	Yes

(Planning Meeting, 15 January 2008)

Practitioner One refers to a generic 'parents' by using the pronoun 'they' when she states,

'They don't know how to deal with different situations' (line 1). In this utterance she

positions the type of parents that the practitioners work with as being unable to manage for

themselves. She goes on to imply that the parents find it difficult to ask for help, and, in place

of asking for help they draw attention to themselves, as would a child. Here, by making a direct comparison with the attention-seeking behaviour of a child, parents are being constructed in a similar vein. Practitioner One rationalises what she refers to as the parents' child-like behaviour when she contradicts Practitioner Two's claim that the practitioners themselves do not put the parents under any pressure. Practitioner One argues that by 'making them come' to a 15 week programme they are placing the parents under considerable pressure. Practitioner Two initially tries to qualify Practitioner One's hypothesis by interjecting with 'even just a simple' (line 10), but then almost immediately concludes by agreeing with Practitioner One's viewpoint.

Practitioner One's understandings of the difficulties that the parents' experience in committing to a 15 week programme resonate with Crowther et al.'s (2010) findings. Their research focused on participation in adult literacy and numeracy courses by those who were considered at risk of non-completion. Crowther et al. (2010) found that for some of the learners:

> the step from non-engagement to participation in structured learning was too difficult to negotiate in one go. They needed sustained informal, 'drop in' tuition and guidance to gradually re-introduce them to the world of learning and to a sense of themselves as learners before they were ready to attempt it. (Crowther et al., 2010: 658)

They argue that the potentially lengthy lead-in time that is required to support these learners to enable them to participate in formal learning should not be underestimated. I will return to

this point later in this section when discussing how parents are constructed as needing to prove themselves to the practitioners.

That parents are unable to manage for themselves is also indexed in narrative tellings about parents' knowledge of healthy eating. Practitioner One recounts that 'some of the mums don't know how to cook, or even to provide three meals a day' (Individual Interview with Practitioner One, 11 February 2008). This type of talk is also evident in the practitioners' planning meeting (see Appendix 10).

In the FLLN programme that most of the parents attended prior to the one on which this study focuses, healthy eating was incorporated into the curriculum. It is an aspect of 'being healthy'[13], one of the five outcomes of the *Every Child Matters* (ECM) framework of universal services for children (see HMSO, 2003). The progress of children attending FLLN programmes is evaluated against the five outcomes of *Every Child Matters*[14], therefore parents' knowledge of what constitutes healthy eating becomes open for scrutiny, and, moreover, its integration into FLLN becomes an accepted and validated element of practice.

This FLLN programme differs from the vast majority of FLLN programmes as usually they are run in early years or school settings whereas this is run in a community location with parents whose children do not all attend the same school. What connects these parents to each

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[13] The elements of 'being healthy' are enjoying good physical and mental health and living a healthy lifestyle (HMSO, 2003).
[14] The five outcomes are: being healthy, staying safe, enjoying and achieving, making a positive contribution and economic well-being (HMSO, 2003).

other is that they are all receiving support from the family support charity for which Practitioner One works. Some of the parents are receiving support through being allocated a volunteer who visits them at home each week; others have been regularly attending a support group. The important role that volunteers play in enabling some of the parents to deal with the situations in which they find themselves, and in providing them with the level of support that enables them to deal with new situations, is often discussed between the practitioners.

Although some of the parents still have volunteers, attending the FLLN programme is regarded as a next step, a move to more a formalised learning environment. Therefore despite the parents being positioned as unable to manage, concurrently they have been deemed able to manage with what is viewed as the more demanding requirements of attending a FLLN programme. However, this step is scaffolded through the presence of Practitioner One, a representative of the organisation with which they all have an existing relationship. That this 'scaffolding' is put into place echoes Crowther et al.'s (2010) finding that learners who attend adult literacy and numeracy provision view the relationships they form with their tutors as highly important. They found that one of the main ways learners judged the accessibility of a course was in terms of 'how welcoming and accepting the people involved in the projects were' (p.658). Therefore, the co-delivery of the FLLN programme in question would seem an appropriate strategy to put in place to ensure that parents are more likely to attend, as Practitioner One is already known to them, hence mediating their participation in a more formal learning environment.

4.5.2   Parents as child-like

As already mentioned in the discussion of Extract 4.7, one of the ways that practitioners represent parents is as *child-like*. In Extract 4.7 parents are regarded as displaying child-like behaviour, in this case, attention-seeking behaviour. However, practitioners affirm their construction of parents as child-like through the apparent colonisation of some of their conversations with the type of discursive constructions that are commonly used by school teachers. When discussing two parents in particular, Practitioner Two asks Practitioner One 'Do we want to split P7 and P8 up?'. Through the use of this phraseology, P7 and P8 are positioned as pupils as opposed to adults. Moreover, they are positioned as pupils who Practitioner Two is predicting may display the sort of behaviour that will require their separation. By Practitioner Two asking whether P7 and P8 should be split up, she is assuming that they, Practitioner One and Practitioner Two, are imbued with the authority that would enable them to carry out this action. This belies two other recurrent themes that arise from the data – firstly, that the practitioners make considerable efforts not to be seen as 'teachers', and, secondly, that practitioners do not conceive that there is an asymmetrical power relationship between themselves and the parents, as would usually be denoted by the respective roles ascribed to teacher and pupil. Therefore, although the practitioners see themselves as a particular embodiment of an informal approach to learning, at times their lexical choices index a more hierarchical power difference between themselves and the parents with whom they are working.

Parents need to be protected

I have drawn attention to the two methods by which both practitioners position parents as child-like, via their lexical choices and their descriptions of parents' behaviour. Both the practitioners in this study have worked in early years education, therefore it may seem understandable that their language practices are imbued with the types of discourses prevalent in schools. However, what also needs to be taken into consideration is that traditional constructs of adult literacy and numeracy teaching position learners as 'lacking', with 'deficiencies' that need to be addressed and remedied (see Appleby & Bathmaker, 2006; O'Grady & Atkin, 2006; Oughton, 2007; Tett & Maclachlan, 2008). One of the ironies of this is that, although the responsibility for rectifying the problem of low literacy and numeracy is regarded as lying with the individual, at the same time adult learners are positioned as child-like, unable to operate as independent adults (Tett & Maclachlan, 2008). Therefore at the point that an adult literacy or numeracy learner engages in a formal learning environment, they come 'not as equal, capable adults, but as marked unequals who are positioned in the power hierarchies lower than 'normal' adult learners' (p.664). In addition to this, adult literacy tutors have predominantly been middle-class women (Lucas et al., 2004; Tett & Maclachlan, 2008) – just as the practitioners are in this study. Soroke (2004, cited in Tett & Maclachlan, 2008: 665) argues that the class and gender imbalance in adult literacy education positions tutors in a 'maternally protective role in relation to their students'.

Tett and Maclachlan (2008) refer to a discourse of maternal protectionism that they encountered when trying to access adult literacy and numeracy learners for their research

project. I would argue that this discourse of maternal protectionism is invoked by the practitioners in this study. In Practitioner Two's individual interview, she talks about the first time she heard about FLLN programmes. A woman came to talk to members of staff at the school where she was working. Practitioner Two recalls: 'she was talking about, you know, working with parents, and I was saying 'oh well some of our mums wouldn't feel very comfortable with that''. It is interesting to note that, according to Practitioner Two's narrative telling her protective attitude was displayed before she was involved in FLLN. It could be argued in the case of Practitioner Two that the maternally protective discourse that is prevalent in adult literacy could be regarded as compounded by the existing protective attitude towards parents that Practitioner Two displayed when she was a nursery nurse. However, it should also be taken into account that Practitioner Two is recounting this story after she has been involved in family learning for a number of years, and she may have unconsciously 'naturalised' this relationship with parents.

Practitioner One, on the other hand, does not have a history of working in adult literacy; her experience of parents is garnered from 20 years as a teacher in early years/primary education , and more recently as an organiser for a family support charity. Both these roles inform her practice on the FLLN programme. Indeed her responsibilities as organiser overlap and interweave with her role in FLLN. She is very mindful that the parents they are working with are vulnerable and Practitioner One consistently reinforces her protectionism by her attitudes and actions.

At the very beginning of the programme, I came to the group to talk to the parents and explain the research I wanted to undertake. All the parents agreed to take part at this initial meeting. However, directly afterwards Practitioner One telephoned each of them to double-check that they really agreed to my study. Telephoning to check-in with parents is something that Practitioner One does throughout the programme on an irregular basis, as and when she deems it is necessary. She explains that she feels she needs to be aware of what is happening in their lives, as 'they just all have things flare up' (Debriefing and Planning Discussion, 10 April 2008). Therefore she keeps in touch with the parents in order to encourage their regular attendance.

I would argue that this is a nurturing behaviour on Practitioner One's part and constitutes a practical way of 'looking after' the parents. I would further argue that this kind of nurturing behaviour differs from that alluded to by Practitioner Two, when she states that 'some of our mums wouldn't feel very comfortable with that'. In terms of structure and agency, Practitioner One could be deemed as supporting the agency of parents by engaging dialogically, whereas Practitioner Two does not seem particularly aware that her advocating on the behalf of parents denies them a choice in the decision-making process. However, I would reiterate that Practitioner Two is not purposefully reducing parents' agency. She is embodying a protectionism towards parents which often results in the unconscious removal of parental choice, whilst internalising that such actions are in the best interest of the parents themselves, protecting them from any potential further difficult experiences. This may appear to clash with one of the overarching aims that Practitioner Two posits, that of empowering

parents, but the discourses of empowerment and protectionism are not mutually exclusive and can operate in unconscious counterpoint.

In a discussion about how many other adults (in addition to the parents and practitioners) have been present in the session (see Table 1 for an overview of non-parent attendance in 'parents-only' teaching sessions) Practitioner One makes the point that I have been accepted because of my regular presence each week (see Extract 4.8, lines 1-2).

Extract 4.8

1	Practitioner One	They're very nervous, aren't they, at first … I think because you've been
2		here constantly every week, you're accepted.
3	Researcher	Mm
4	Practitioner Two	Yes
5	Practitioner One	Aren't you?
6	Practitioner Two	And I think the other people are accepted because we're here.
7	Practitioner One	Yes
8	Practitioner Two	And we're {accepting them}
9	Practitioner One	{Yeah}
10	Practitioner Two	If it was a strange person
11	Practitioner One	Mm
12	Practitioner Two	coming to deliver the lesson
13	Practitioner One	Mm
14	Practitioner Two	and you weren't here
15	Practitioner One	Mm
16	Practitioner Two	and there isn't a point of
17	Practitioner One	No
18	Practitioner Two	familiarity
19	Practitioner One	{They wouldn't like that.}
20	Practitioner Two	{I don't think that} would work at all. But because we're here
21		maintaining it and we're accepting them
22	Practitioner One	Mm
23	Practitioner Two	and going 'they're only going to sit there'. I think that makes it ok.

(Debriefing and Planning Discussion, 13 March 2008)

In this interweaving of a shared ongoing event narrative and a hypothetical narrative (see Georgakopoulou, 2006b), Practitioner One makes a telling comment about Practitioner One's and Two's roles in relation to accepting other adults in the classroom. Practitioner One proposes that because Practitioner One and Practitioner Two are accepting of others, as it were vouching for them, then parents are willing to accept them as well (see lines 6-23).

I would agree with this summation, as the level of trust between the parents and practitioners, and more particularly, Practitioner One, works as a guarantee that signifies to parents that those others invited into the sessions can also be trusted. This example demonstrates the course between trust, judgment and protectionism that practitioners need to navigate but are not always consciously aware of doing so. However, this example also indicates that Practitioner One has given careful consideration to the status that she thinks that the practitioners hold in the eyes of the parents – the power to sanction or accept on behalf of the parents themselves. Indeed the level of control that generally parents enjoy with small children.

In contrast with the perceived need to protect the parents, practitioners talk about parents in terms of their needing to demonstrate commitment, *to prove themselves* capable and willing to take part in FLLN.

Parents need to prove themselves

As mentioned earlier in this chapter, it takes considerable time to reintroduce learners into a structured learning environment as the move from non-engagement to participation is often too difficult to realise in one step (Crowther et al., 2010). The parents attending this FLLN programme have all previously attended a weekly drop-in support group run by the family support charity for which Practitioner One works. This would appear to be viewed by Practitioner One as a first step back for parents into a more formal learning situation. Moreover, regular attendance at the support group is used as an indicator for selection for FLLN; a selection of which Practitioner One is arbiter. Practitioner One's personal narrative in Extract 4.9 explains the rationale for her selection of parents for FLLN. However, it is unclear whether this indicator is shared with the parents.

Extract 4.9

1	Practitioner One	[…] So we set that [support] group up in the first instance and from that
2		group I identified parents who were … regularly attending this group …
3		either by themselves, making their own way there or by taking
4		responsibility for saying yes, they did want a taxi and they would call me
5		if they couldn't get to the group, for whatever reason. So that was the
6		first bit of responsibility for them really. So once they'd attended the
7		group on a regular basis um I then approached them to what their
8		circumstances were.

(Individual Interview with Practitioner One, 11 February 2008)

There seem to be number of circulating discourses that surround the construction of this need for parents to prove themselves in order to be chosen to attend FLLN. Firstly the idea that parents are required to prove themselves has the effect of limiting parents' agency. Parents are

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selected to join FLLN, but only once they have jumped over the hurdle of regular attendance at the support group. Only then are they informed of their option to take part in FLLN. This approach of needing to prove oneself invokes images of discussions between parents and children, and more particularly with challenging teenagers, where children are expected to behave in a certain way in order to obtain or regain a specified privilege or reward. In this case the reward of FLLN is earned by regular attendance at the support group, therefore demonstrating 'responsible' behaviour.

This regulatory discourse is not only informed by the apparent construction of parents as child-like but is intertwined with a discourse of finite resources. When operating within the constraints of limited funding, and the restrictions that accompany the funding, it becomes necessary, as Practitioner One puts it, to 'access the families who I thought would benefit from what we were offering' (De-briefing and Planning Discussion, 20 March 2008). Practitioner Two acknowledges this concern in an allusion to a previous narrative telling (see Georgakopoulou, 2006b), which Practitioner Two relates in her individual interview (see Extract 4.10) and, in doing so, indexes why '15 weeks' is held in such high regard by Practitioner One.

Extract 4.10

1	Practitioner Two	[…] And they [the parents] needed something to move on to. Cause
2		they'd sort of outgrown that group. So this was to take them a step
3		forward. And the issue … the thing that worried Practitioner One the
4		most was the fact that would they commit to the 15 weeks, cause it had
5		got to be 15 weeks. Um
6	Researcher	/Why do they have to be 15 weeks?
7	Practitioner Two	For our funding.

8   Researcher   Right.

(Individual Interview with Practitioner Two, 21 February 2008)

It would appear that parents are selected who are regarded as likely to stay the length of the programme and therefore to gain the most benefit from their attendance. However, being able to attend for 15 weeks is part of the dominant discourse that surrounds and restrains the construction of what constitutes a successful learner attending a FLLN programme. When Practitioner One's behaviour is contextualised in this way it becomes more understandable. She does not want to waste scant resources and the limited funding that is available to the parents who are clients of the charity for which she works – and she needs to operate within the constraints which enable access to FLLN funding. Concomitantly she needs to put together a viable cohort of parents – viable in terms of number and eligibility for funding[15]. As a consequence the interactional data is peppered with references to the 'enormity' of parents being able to commit to attendance for a 15-week period. This ability to commit to 15 weeks seems to take on a symbolic significance. Although one of its purposes is to meet funding requirements, it is as though it signifies a moment in time when parents make a conscious decision to engage in formal learning. However, this 15-week engagement in formal learning appears primarily to be constructed as an end in itself, and secondarily regarded as a step towards enabling the parents to take part in what are viewed as more demanding learning activities. Learning that takes place in adult or further education establishments is seen as less flexible and more structured in nature, and therefore more demanding.

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[15] The guidelines state that group size must be an average of nine to qualify for FLLN funding (Swain et al., 2009). Parents cannot already hold a level 2 qualification in literacy/English.

The practitioners make many allusions to the importance of parents being able to commit to 15 weeks (see Extracts 4.7, 5.1, and 5.2). These are only a few examples of those contained within and across the data, as these allusions pattern their interactions on an on-going basis. The prevalence of practitioners' references to the primacy of getting parents to commit to undertake a 15-week programme is testament to the importance that attendance and commitment is given by the practitioners (this theme is returned to in Chapter 5).

At first, I thought the ongoing iteration of these references to commitment overemphasised the difficulty of attendance, reifying it to almost unattainable proportions. However, after giving this more thought, and recalling my own experiences of teaching FLLN, which were triggered by further related reading about adult literacy and numeracy learners (see Crowther et al., 2010; O'Grady & Atkin, 2006; Oughton, 2007; Tett & Maclachlan, 2008), it became clearer to me that attendance over such an extended period is a considerable commitment, regardless of the lifestyles that parents are deemed to be living. However, at the same time, one has to be careful that regarding regular attendance as an end in itself too narrowly delineates the ways in which parents are viewed, constituting them all in a similar way potentially leading to a very limited definition of parents. As a consequence it is important to bear in mind that constructing parents in such a homogeneous manner may have the effect of 'voicing' (see Wortham and Gadsden, 2006) parents as a particular 'recognisable type' - in this case contributing to parents being positioned as low-achievers. Thus this repeated reference to the significance of attendance indexes a category of parents for whom regular attendance is *the* significant achievement, and therefore may act to potentially limit parents because of others' low expectations of them.

Tett and Maclachlan (2007: 152) point out that 'for many ALN [adult literacy and numeracy] learners, the powerful force of their ascribed identities as non-capable learners during their schooling blocks the possibility of them creating an alternative image of themselves as capable, competent learners'. It would be a pity if practitioners unknowingly were contributing to such a deficit discourse, when on a conscious level they are clearly trying to support and develop the learning potential of the parents. I would argue that attending for 15 weeks is an achievement but there needs to be a balance between identifying that adult literacy learners may already have 'very fragile or negative senses of themselves as learners' (Crowther et al., 2010: 657), whilst having realistic yet ambitious expectations for such learners - in this case, parents enrolled on a FLLN programme.

4.5.3   Lack of confidence

At the beginning of this section I stated that parents' *lack of confidence* is a recurrent theme in practitioners' interactions. Lack of confidence is invoked on numerous occasions to explain the reasons behind parents' attitudes and behaviours. This lack of confidence is viewed as the main reason that the parents find certain situations difficult to deal with.

Tett and Maclachlan's (2007) evaluation of the Scottish Adult Literacy and Numeracy Strategy revealed that there are complex connections between learners' engagement in learning, the development of self-confidence, increasing positive identities as learners and enhanced social capital. Tett and Maclachlan (2007: 157) point out that 'growth in self-confidence is the most widely documented 'soft outcome of learning'', therefore they wanted

to measure changes in learners' levels of confidence over time (see Tett and Maclachlan (2007) for details of the method used to measure self-confidence).They found a 'marked correlation between engagement in learning and increased confidence' (p.159).

Both practitioners identify improving parents' confidence as central to FLLN. In this narrative of an ongoing event, Practitioner Two goes as far as identifying 'confidence' and 'support' as the main purpose of the group (see Extract 4.11).

Extract 4.11

1	Researcher	So the group you're running now with Practitioner One, what do you
2		see as the main purpose of that group? What do you think the parents
3		are learning?
4	Practitioner Two	I think that the main thing we're doing for those parents is giving them
5		confidence really and support. I think … we're getting them used to the
6		idea of 'yes you can achieve something'. And hopefully they are all
7		going to hand in a portfolio at the end but I don't think that's … the
8		biggest thing with this group. I don't think the FLLN agenda is the big
9		thing for these learners. I think it's the fact that they've managed to
10		commit. They're managing to come now without volunteers with them,
11		do you know what I mean?
12	Researcher	Mm

(Individual Interview with Practitioner Two, 21 February 2008)

By listing 'confidence' and 'support' consecutively, she is not only emphasising the significance of these specific components of the FLLN programme but is allocating them equal status, as linguistically listing serves to make entities equivalent (Fairclough, 2003). Therefore Practitioner Two's list of two items serves to indicate their primacy, and their equivalence.

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Moreover, when undertaking teaching with parents that lack confidence, both practitioners understand that because the parents are lacking in confidence the importance of developing and sustaining a good relationship with the parents is even more important than usual. In practice, developing a good relationship starts by providing an inviting learning environment and continues by 'creating a supportive atmosphere' where learners are 'treated with respect and equality within relationships of warmth and trust in the classroom' (Ivanič et al., 2006: 38).

The practitioners' narrative tellings highlight not only the centrality of the relationship between parents and practitioners but also reveal that practitioners recognise and enact particular roles, and run the programme in a certain way, in order to ensure a welcoming environment and atmosphere (see Chapter 6).

4.6 Parents are taking steps to improve their lives

In Extract 4.12, the reasoning that Practitioner One presents for the parents attending FLLN alludes to a number of different aspects of FLLN provision. Practitioner One recounts an ongoing event narrative coupled with a personal narrative of the recent past (see Baynham, 2011). This supports Baynham's (2011: 69) findings that the interview narratives in his data were not characterised by 'canonical performed personal narrative' but rather by 'a complex texture involving the interaction of different kinds of narrative and argument structures, with strategic shifts into performance'.

Extract 4.12

1	Researcher	What's the reason you think behind them [the parents] coming?
2	Practitioner One	One is they're comfortable now to come like P7 and P6 and even P1, and
3		the two Asian ladies. Er they're very keen to get a qualification. Um …
4		and, as the 15 weeks went on, I think that became more evident, that
5		"yes, they do". And "yes", those ladies do want a chance and they want
6		to better their … lives. They want the opportunity of getting a job
7		eventually.

(Individual Interview with Practitioner One, 11 February 2008)

Firstly by using the phrase, 'one is they're more comfortable to come now' (line 2)

Practitioner One is indexing the priority that she (and Practitioner Two) have given to gaining

the trust and confidence of the parents. She specifies five of the eight parents on the

programme – P7, P6, P1 and P2 and P3 (referred to as 'the two Asian ladies'[16]). These are the

five parents who have attended the previous course that Practitioner One has run with

Practitioner Two. Therefore, she is noting that all those they have taught before have gained

in confidence to the extent that they are now comfortable to attend a more formal course.

Secondly, Practitioner One refers to all the parents being 'very keen to get a qualification'

(line 3). This keenness is constituted as separate from getting to the stage of being

comfortable in a formal learning environment, and indicates a move toward demonstrating

further commitment, and therefore indicates the motivation and agency to undertake a

qualification, and all that this entails.

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[16] Practitioner One categorises P2 and P3 in terms of their ethnicity, as opposed to using their names. This denotes a differentiation between parents but is not an aspect of discursive practice that is going to be focussed on in this section.

The third aspect of Practitioner One's response is an overt reference to parents wanting to improve their lives. When Practitioner One states that '"yes", those ladies do want a chance and they want to better their … lives' (lines 5-6), she is indicating that the FLLN programme they are enrolled on is an opportunity for them to move their lives in a more positive direction. She is aware that the parents want better lives – and attending FLLN and being provided with an opportunity to gain a qualification is one of the steps they are taking towards improving their situations. Obtaining a job is part of this discourse but is deemed to be something to be aimed for in the more distant future.

In Extract 4.12 Practitioner One appears to be in conversation with herself. She recollects that 'as the 15 weeks went on, I think that it became more evident, that "yes, they do". And "yes" those ladies do want a chance and they want to better their lives'. The insertion of "yes, they do" and "yes" (line 5) seems to indicate an internal dialogue made manifest in which Practitioner One is questioning whether the parents that she has selected for FLLN have actually demonstrated the commitment and motivation which would enable them to gain the most benefit from the programme. As discussed earlier in this chapter, the ability to attend for 15 weeks is viewed as a key indicator by Practitioner One of the parents' level of commitment to the programme and therefore acts as a demonstration of the parents' desires to implement changes in their lives. By saying "yes, they do" Practitioner One is acknowledging that she has succeeded in successfully selecting those parents who have made it evident through their attitude and application 'as the 15 weeks went on' to be appropriate candidates for FLLN – as 'they want to better their … lives'. However, I would argue that this peek into Practitioner One's internal dialogue also indexes a circulating discourse that Practitioner One

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and Practitioner Two often return to in their conversations, which concerns parents' abilities and desires to improve their lives.

In Extract 4.13, which takes place approximately one month before the conversation in Extract 4.12, Practitioner One is using almost identical linguistic constructions to the ones she used in her subsequent interview with the researcher.

Extract 4.13

1	Practitioner One	[…] The Children's Services, they, in the past, when I've worked with
2		families, have said to me 'you must always stand back and say "how
3		much does this family want to change their circumstances?"' And that's
4		stayed with me.
5	Practitioner Two	Yes
6	Practitioner One	Cause I've worked with families and some will go on, and on, and on
7		living in the dirty conditions, doing all the things they used to. But I
8		think these families, 'yes they do want to change'.
9	Practitioner Two	Yeah
10	Practitioner One	And that is a good sort of reminder for me
11	Practitioner Two	Yeah
12	Practitioner One	of how I identify which families go …
13	Practitioner Two	Yeah, {come to us really}
14	Practitioner One	{You know} 'How much *do* they want to change?' but, 'yes *they* do'.
15	Practitioner Two	Yeah
16	Practitioner One	P5 does
17	Practitioner Two	They want the chance {don't they?}
18	Practitioner One	{Yes}
19	Practitioner Two	Ah breaks your heart really doesn't it?

(Planning Meeting, 15 January 2008)

Drawing on a fragment of her own biography, Practitioner One's personal narrative clearly indicates how her experience of working with Children's Services influences her current working practices. She integrates the voice of Children's Services into her anecdote by using

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reported speech, recalling the advice that Children's Services provided her with that 'you must always stand back and say "how much does this family want to change their circumstances?"' (lines 2-3). By adding 'And that's stayed with me' (lines 3-4), Practitioner One is positively evaluating the advice she received. Moreover by answering this question in her co-conversation with Practitioner Two on lines (7-8), by stating 'But I think these families, 'yes they do want to change', and reformulating the Children's Services' question into her own words when asking 'How much *do* they want to change?' (line 14), she is demonstrating the complex interweaving of multiple voices that takes place when indexing and integrating the discourse of others into one's own discourse.

This extract demonstrates how Practitioner One owns and enacts this discourse, embedding the notion of to what degree parents want to change their lives in order to evaluate which parents are worth the investment of time and therefore money. Hence Practitioner One is integrating both personal and generic narrative into her talk. By using the personal pronoun 'they', Practitioner One is able to generalise the families that she does not deem worthy of supporting (see line 7) and those that she does. Interestingly she also uses 'they' to denote a generalisable group of families that want to improve their lives if they are given the opportunity to do so (see line 14). However, Practitioner One separates such families from the other families by initially using the demonstrative pronoun 'these' (line 8), thus putting them in opposition to 'those' families she has just described as not willing to change. In addition to this strategy Practitioner One moves away from generalising about families that 'want to change' and chooses to select a particular parent, P5, as a specific example to illustrate her point. (In the same meeting Practitioner One has previously told Practitioner Two about P5

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and her particular circumstances.). Practitioner Two interprets this as an example that illustrates the broader point about 'these' parents by replying to Practitioner One with the rhetorical question, 'they want the chance don't they?' (line 17). Thus through this conversation Practitioner One and Practitioner Two are co-constructing the parents that Practitioner One has selected to take part in FLLN as parents who want the chance to improve their lives.

Although I am discussing the practitioners' constructions of parents rather than the parents' own views of their motivations for joining the programme, it is evident that the practitioners' representations of parents as taking steps to improve their lives resonates with other research findings. Crowther et al. (2010: 662) found that the participants in the adult literacy and numeracy programmes they researched were 'all taking small and sometimes uncertain steps in an attempt to succeed in changing aspects of their lives for the better'. Practitioners One and Two realise that attending FLLN offers the parents a potentially different sort of future, and a break from the difficult environments in which some of the parents live.

It is clear that both Practitioner One and Practitioner Two regard FLLN as a vehicle for parents to improve their lives, and the lives of their children. It is also evident that parents value the opportunity to attend FLLN and enjoy and benefit from taking part. This may be in terms of the social aspect of their attendance, making new friends, having the opportunity to share their experiences with others, and therefore reducing any feelings of social isolation. It may be in terms of gaining a qualification, and the confidence that comes from successfully reengaging in a formal learning environment. Nevertheless, regardless of the unilateral

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affirmation of both parents and practitioners that attending FLLN is a contributory factor in parents improving their lives, and consequently the lives of their families, parents still have to operate within the socio-economic circumstances in which they are located. This results in an ongoing tension between agency and structure. Parents are regarded as having the agency to take the steps to improve their lives. However, this agency is mitigated by the structural constraints that surround the parents. According to Vincent et al. (2010: 136) working-class mothers struggle 'within an acute nexus of impossible expectations' as 'media and policies suggest an exaggerated sense of the agency of these women (their ability to do something different with their lives) while at the same time positioning them as particular kinds of discursive subjects'.

I think that both practitioners are overtly aware of the circumstances of the parents and regularly index this in their interactions. However, despite this, they are sometimes guilty of overestimating the agency that parents bring to the situation, as they themselves would appear not to have experienced the constraints that the parents experience on a daily basis. Nonetheless, this is not to say that the parents do not have the agency to improve their lives, as their participation in FLLN denotes that they have agentively taken the steps that enable them to do so. However, even this agency is diluted when one realises that the structure of this iteration of FLLN is such that Practitioner One has the power to deny or allow access to the programme to whomsoever she chooses.

4.7   Parents do not display appropriate parenting skills

Gillies (2005b: 839) proposes that the representation of parenting 'as a fundamental determinant of children's future life chances has underpinned a raft of policy initiatives designed to 'support' parents in the essential practice of raising children'. However, this 'support' is not in terms of material benefits such as child support and income benefit but rather, Gillies (2005b: 839) argues, 'New Labour's use of the word refers primarily to guidance and education and has become a common shorthand description for parenting classes'. Thus from Gillies' (2005b: 838) perspective, FLLN programmes can be regarded as part of 'a stream of initiatives designed to regulate childrearing as part of an almost evangelical drive to equip working-class parents with the skill to raise middle-class children'.

One of the prescribed aims of FLLN programmes is to 'improve parents' ability to help their children learn' (LSC, 2008: 4). Both practitioners reveal through the narratives that they co-construct about the parents, their constructions of what constitutes 'appropriate' parenting skills. Threaded through the practitioners' discussions are allusions to the parenting skills that are displayed (or not displayed) by the parents and are accompanied by the practitioners' evaluations of such representations of parenting skills. It is clear from the interactional data that the practitioners' constructions of appropriate parenting skills are informed by their own experiences of parenthood, their backgrounds as early years/primary educators and circulating policy discourses that represent the parenting of working-class parents as somehow deficient in nature.

The practitioners' narratives about parenting skills can be broadly categorised into three themes. The first theme concerns the ways in which *parents choose to spend time with their children*. The second is about the relationship between home and school, and more particularly about *preparing children for school*. The third theme relates to *parents' knowledge of healthy eating*, and what constitutes a healthy diet for their children. This third theme has been discussed earlier in the chapter (see section 4.5.1). Therefore this section will focus on what the practitioners constitute as appropriate parenting skills in relation to *spending time with children* and *preparing children for school*.

4.7.1   The ways parents choose to spend time with their children

In their interactions Practitioners One and Two often relate anecdotes that index the importance of the ways *parents choose to spend time with their children*. However, this is not just about the parents being in physical proximity to the children but about the perceived quality of interaction that takes place when parents and children are together. Creative play is regarded as an ideal way for parents to interact with their children.

P4 and P7 are positioned as parents who regularly engage in creative play with their children at home, and who recognise the value of engaging in this type of play. In Extract 4.14 this approach to playing is contrasted to that displayed by the other parents attending FLLN.

Extract 4.14

1	Practitioner Two	[…] I get the impression P4 does things with *her* children …
2	Practitioner One	Yes.
3	Practitioner Two	She gives that impression.
4	Practitioner One	Yeah. She does doesn't she?
5	Practitioner Two	{I know some of them are good at, good at. Yeah some of the are good
6		at}
7	Practitioner One	{Cause she did all that happy birthday thing didn't she?}
8	Practitioner Two	making them look like they do stuff,
9	Practitioner One	mm, mm.
10	Practitioner Two	you know they don't but she does seem to …
11	Practitioner One	around the chaos she does try and
12	Practitioner Two	/Yes I think she does.
13	Practitioner One	do things. Yes.
14	Practitioner Two	She seems to sort of value it, doesn't she?
15	Practitioner One	Yeah.
16	Practitioner Two	… whereas some of them {don't even value it do they?}
17	Practitioner One	{And P7} does doesn't she?
18	Practitioner Two	Yes. {And you can tell}
19	Practitioner One	{P8 doesn't}
20	Practitioner Two	No no
21	Practitioner One	Does she? And when we were talking, I saw her look and think 'what on
22		earth is she on about?' And I said 'you can rip the paper or screw it up, or
23		crunch it, or sticking it and messing in it' And she was thinking 'what on
24		{earth is that women?'}

(Debriefing and Planning Discussion, 10 April 2008)

The above extract again interleaves an allusion to a shared event with generic and personal

narrative. In this extract, P4 and P7 are mentioned specifically by Practitioner Two (see line

1) and by Practitioner One (see line 17) respectively, as parents who not only spend time

taking part in play activities with their children but also understand the importance of doing

so. When Practitioner Two relates to Practitioner One that she gets 'the impression P4 does

things with her children' (line 1), Practitioner One indexes agreement with this statement by

stating 'yes'. When Practitioner Two restates her viewpoint about P4, saying 'she gives that

impression' (line 3), Practitioner One restates her agreement by commenting 'yeah', and adding the rhetorical question 'She does doesn't she?' (line 4). However, this positive co-construction of P4's parenting skills is used by Practitioner Two to introduce a negative evaluation of other parents who attend FLLN programmes. These are a category of parents who she positions as being good at 'making them look like they do stuff' (line 8). Thus Practitioner Two draws a line between those parents who take the time and effort to actually engage in constructive play with their children, as opposed to those parents who merely present themselves as engaging in this type of activity, but are not doing so in reality.

Practitioner Two continues with her positive evaluation of P4 by referring to her as a parent who not only engages in play but understands its value. This is in direct contrast to what appears to be a third category of parents, who are referenced in Practitioner Two's comment, 'whereas some of them don't even value it do they?' (line 16). These are parents who do not even pretend to play with their children as they do not recognise the contribution that play makes to their children's development. In response to Practitioner Two's comment, Practitioner One offers P7 as a specific example of a parent with whom they both work who she regards as demonstrating the capability and capacity to engage in 'quality' play with her children. Practitioner Two immediately concurs with Practitioner One's positive evaluation of P7, and, in doing so, constructs P7's parenting skills (in relation to play) as equivalent to those of P4.

This line of conversation could have finished at this point on a positive note about particular parents' parenting skills but Practitioner One chooses to contrast P7's enactment of good

parenting skills with that of her friend, P8. The negative evaluation of the manner in which P8

plays with her children, indexed by Practitioner One's interpretation of what she thought P8

was thinking when Practitioner One demonstrated a way in which language development can

be integrated into play (see lines 21-24), references an ongoing primarily negative

commentary that circulates between Practitioners One and Two about P8. This is discussed

further in Chapter 5.

Practitioners One and Two repeatedly refer to one of their roles as modeling the type of

interactive play that they would like to see emulated at home between the parents and their

children. Both practitioners cite their previous experiences of working in early years settings

to validate this approach to working with the parents. This is particularly pertinent in relation

to the 'joint' session, in which the parents and children take part in activities that the

practitioners have planned for them (see Figure 2 for an overview of FLLN programme

phases, locations and timescales).

In Extract 4.15, Practitioners One and Two are responding to a question that asks them what

they hope the parents derive from the 'joint' teaching session. The question refers back to the

transcript of the previous session (this is part of the method of integrating 'repeated' or

'ethnographic' interviews into the research process – see Chapter 3). By directly referencing

the transcript, I am able to rearticulate the comments made by Practitioner Two in the

previous week's de-briefing and planning session, and therefore ask the practitioners to re-

orientate themselves towards, and comment on their previous utterances.

Extract 4.15

1	Researcher	I've just highlighted this one bit on page 6, right.
2	Practitioner One	Right.
3	Researcher	Because you're talking about the activities they're going to be doing for
4		the joint sessions
5	Practitioner One	Yes.
6	Researcher	after Easter.
7	Practitioner One	Yes
8	Researcher	Um, about that I'm just asking what do you hope the parents to get out of
9		the joint session. It just made me think, you're saying things about 'oh
10		they can do that and be messy, which they can't do that at home', you
11		know … 'we'll cut the card up really tiny and little' and 'mums won't let
12		them do that 'cause it's too messy'.
13	Practitioner One	Mm?
14	Researcher	I just wondered if that fed into sort of thinking about what you hope the
15		parents to get out of the joint session, and the children.
16	Practitioner One	… Well I'm pleased that they just engage with their child and they've got
17		an idea of what sort of activities their child gets some pleasure from.
18		Cause I think all children like to do that …
19	Researcher	Mm
20	Practitioner One	at that age and it's just nice that the parent is there with them and then
21		they might think 'I can do this at home'.
22	Practitioner Two	I always used to think that when I
23	Practitioner One	/I just think 'engage with the child' cause I'm constantly trying to do that
24		in group sessions.
25	Practitioner Two	Yeah. When I used to do the toddlers at [name of school] I always tried
26		to do things like leaf printing and things that didn't particularly cost a lot
27	Practitioner One	Mm
28	Practitioner Two	but just to say … '*you could do this at home, you know, if you wanted*'
29	Practitioner One	Mm, mm
30	Practitioner Two	if you've got some paints
31	Practitioner One	Mm
32	Practitioner Two	or just to try and plant a little seed in their mind
33	Practitioner One	Mm
34	Practitioner Two	'oh yeah, they're actually really liking this and it's not too bad'.
35	Practitioner One	Mm
36	Practitioner Two	But whether the message ever did really get home. But that's what I tried
37		to demonstrate by or I'd try to get things from like Early Learning and
38		like say 'you could buy this for your child for a birthday
39	Practitioner One	Mm
40	Practitioner Two	if you're thinking of something'
41	Practitioner One	Mm
42	Practitioner Two	other than a computer for a three-year old and inappropriate
43	Practitioner One	Mm

44	Practitioner Two	So it's just trying to model isn't it
45	Practitioner One	Mm, mm
46	Practitioner Two	Ideas
47	Practitioner One	Yeah
48	Practitioner Two	Really that they
49	Practitioner One	Ideas

(Debriefing and Planning Discussion, 10 April 2008)

This is quite a lengthy extract, but I am including it here as the personal and iterative narrative tellings included within it exemplify the point that Heath and Street (2008) make when they argue that narratives point to the past and the future. The fragments of narrative related in Extract 4.15 clearly index the previous experiences of the practitioners, and through this invocation of their more distant and recent pasts they indicate how this informs their current and seemingly future practice. The extract offers an insight into the practitioners' opinions of what they regard as appropriate ways for parents to play with children, and how they endeavour to promote such interaction. The allusions made about parenting practices index a particular view of parents, one which infers that parents are not spending the sort of 'quality' time at home with their children that the practitioners are promoting. This acts to undermine the parenting skills that the parents actually display when they play with their children, which results in the creation of a hierarchy of different models of play, with the practitioners' versions of play being valued more highly.

In Extract 4.15, Practitioner One utters the statement 'I just think 'engage with the child' cause I'm constantly trying to do that in group sessions.' (lines 23-24). By the near repetition of the phrase 'engage with their child', which is now repeated as 'engage with the child',

Practitioner One is emphasising the remarks she has made in her previous turn, whilst simultaneously referencing her own experience. As previously mentioned, she runs an informal drop-in group for parents. It is the practice she is also trying to engender in this group, of encouraging parents to engage with their children, that she is indexing in this utterance. Therefore she is drawing on her recent practice to inform her current practice in FLLN.

In this co-construction of appropriate ways for parents to spend time with their children, Practitioner Two indexes her agreement with Practitioner One, by uttering 'yeah' (line 25), then indicates that she, like Practitioner One, is also drawing on her previous experience to inform her current practice. In the example Practitioner Two gives, she is referencing practice in which she has engaged in her more distant past, when she used to work in a school setting (lines 25-42). However, not only do both practitioners converge in terms of their recognition that they are drawing on their previous experiences, but, in this extract, they both construct a notion of parents who do not engage in the types of play activities that the practitioners are actively trying to promote. To different degrees both practitioners represent the parents as not only needing to be shown the ways in which they should interact with their children, but also that the parents require to be *told* that they could interact in a similar way in their own homes, to that modeled by the practitioners during the 'joint' teaching session . This presupposes that how the parents interact at home with their children is in some way 'substandard'.

That the practitioners want to influence the home practices of parents is made evident by Practitioner One when she states 'it's just nice that the parent is there with them and then they might think 'I can do this at home'' (lines 20-21). Practitioner Two alludes to wanting to

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influence the home practices of parents through her recollection of working with a parents and toddlers group. Practitioner Two recalls modeling low-cost activities, such as leaf printing, as a way of informing parents '*you could do this at home, you know, if you wanted*' (line 28). Thus through the demonstration of appropriate and inexpensive[17] forms of play she hoped that these parents would replicate such activities at home. However, Practitioner Two is not sure 'whether the message ever did really get home' (line 36).

Regardless of whether parents follow the models offered by either practitioner in turn, or both practitioners together, what is clear is that both practitioners, as evidenced in Extract 4.15 (this interactional pattern is also apparent in other interactional examples), co-construct the parents as needing the intervention of other professionals (i.e. themselves) to improve the interactional quality of the time that parents spend playing with their children. That the parents are regarded as needing the intervention of others in order to support the development of their children resonates with Auerbach's argument that (1995) family literacy programmes that adopt an 'intervention prevention approach' are informed by a deficit model of parenting.

The practitioners' representation of what constitutes appropriate play resonates with a number of commentators (see Gewirtz, 2001; Gillies, 2005a, 2005b; Reay, 1998; Vincent et al., 2010) who argue that an oppositional view of parenting practices had been embedded within policy discourse. This normative view promotes 'middle class childrearing practices as normal and desirable', whilst working-class mothering is represented as 'lacking and insensitive' (Gillies,

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[17] See section 4.4 for discussion about the positioning of parents in relation to financial hardship and perceived appropriate spending.

2006: 283). Therefore 'intervention in the traditionally private sphere of the family is warranted' (Gillies, 2005b: 838). Furthermore, Gillies (2005b: 840) argues that any recognition of the socio-economic status of parents is obscured and instead what becomes foregrounded is the notion that appropriately raised citizens are able to 'negotiate and transcend obstacles in their path by exploiting opportunities, developing skills and managing risk' (Gillies, 2005b: 840), regardless of their situation. Thus parenting practices are isolated from any 'situated, interpersonal context' and presented as 'methods which must be taught for the public good' (p.840). I would argue that this is the meta-narrative within which the practitioners are operating, a meta-narrative that informs their local practices as much as their own specific experience of working in early years settings. If one takes into account the referential nature of circulating discourses, then their previous professional experiences would also invoke and index their understandings and instantiations of such negative models of working-class parenting practices. This deficit discourse of working-class parenting practices becomes accepted and consequently embedded in localised language practices, as it develops and hardens into an unquestioned 'truth' over time. It is this sedimented discourse, revealed through the practitioners' 'unoriginal repetition of the conventional normative order' (B. Davis, 2008: 179), that both practitioners bring to FLLN. Therefore it is not difficult to fathom why the practitioners see a direct relationship between their roles within FLLN and the need to remedy a perceived deficit in the working-class parenting practices of the parents with whom they work.

Running alongside this discourse of practitioners actively needing to encourage particular types of play between parents and children, specifically because parents are not aware of what

constitutes the most appropriate forms of play, there is an overlapping discourse that positions

parents as preferring to spend time doing other things as opposed to interacting with their

children. The hypothetical narrative (see Baynham, 2011; Georgakopoulou, 2006b) related in

Extract 4.16 offers an insight into the type of negative evaluation that the practitioners often

return to in terms of positioning the parents they work with as demonstrating different

priorities in their approach to parenting.

Extract 4.16

1	Practitioner One	Right. Do you want these things [nail care products] then? I don't, you
2		see I never know whether to save [name of parent] something, but to be
3		honest with a newborn baby …
4	Practitioner Two	No
5	Practitioner One	She's not going to have time to paint her nails, is she?
6	Practitioner Two	Well actually she might hadn't she?
7	Practitioner One	{(laughs)}
8	Practitioner Two	{They quite often find time for things like that, that we wouldn't.}
9	Practitioner One	Well there's a spare one of [nail care products] Have you got, go on, sort
10		it out between you. I don't care.
11	Practitioner Two	Well. Are you having some?
12	Practitioner One	No
13	Practitioner Two	Yeah go on!

(Debriefing and Planning Discussion, 7 February 2008)

Describing the parents in this way results in the 'othering' of parents, instantly categorising

them as different to the practitioners themselves. Practitioners One and Two are discussing a

parent who has recently had a child and whether she will actually have the time to join the

programme. Practitioner One has been saving the freebies that are given out each week in

anticipation of her attending the programme, but, as yet, she has not attended. Practitioner

Two introduces a negative evaluation of this parent (see line 6). In response to Practitioner

Two's negative comment Practitioner One laughs. Practitioner One's laughter could be interpreted as a deliberate avoidance strategy as by laughing she is not necessarily agreeing with Practitioner Two's statement but is avoiding engaging with it. This interpretation would seem to have some resonance as, in Practitioner Two's next turn, she extends her negative evaluation to encompass a general criticism of parents (see line 8), whereas in Practitioner One's subsequent turn, she changes the subject (see lines 9-10). This example actually reveals how Practitioner Two is instrumental in categorising and compartmentalising the parents as fundamentally different in their parenting behaviour to the sort of normal, expected behaviour that Practitioner One and Practitioner Two would display. Thus Practitioner Two categorises both herself and Practitioner One as essentially distinct from the parents they work with as the parents 'often find time for things like that, that we wouldn't' (line 8).

In this example, Practitioner Two obviously provides the negative evaluation in relation to how parents prioritise their time, but this is not always the case. On a number of occasions both practitioners co-construct negative commentaries about parents that position them as not wanting to spend time with their children whilst alluding to their own parenting behaviours as examples of what would appear to be 'socially acceptable' parenting. At the end of a co-conversation about parents not being interested in caring for their children, Practitioner One states 'we might think we have children and you want the best for them, you know. They don't have that at all' (De-briefing and Planning Discussion, 8 May 2008).

In this fleeting allusion Practitioner One is engaging in a type of collusional conversation that operates to differentiate between the values and practices of the kind of parents who attending

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FLLN with those of the practitioners. However, at the same time, practitioners also offer

many allusions to the potential similarities between themselves and the parents; if they had

been in similar circumstances (see Extract 4.5 for an example of this). I would argue that it is

not unusual to engage in such contrasting discourses, and doing so does not negate

categorisations or evaluations made in previous, current or subsequent interactions. What it

does is highlight the complexity of socially situated language practices, and the integral

fluidity that operates on both a moment-by-moment basis as well as over a more extended

time period.

4.7.2   Preparing children for school

Working-class mothers do not generally see themselves as their children's teachers (Crozier,

1997: Reay, 2004; Vincent et al., 2010). However, this does not mean that they are

uninterested in their children's educational development (Crozier, 1997; Reay, 1998, 2004;

Vincent et al., 2008, 2010). What it does mean is that because they do not regard themselves

as educators, working-class mothers become open to criticism as deficient in their mothering

practices (Vincent et al., 2008, 2010). Therefore 'at-home mothers' are 'potentially at risk of

being positioned by education and social welfare professionals in terms of being not 'there' in

a manner that would ensure the child's optimum intellectual development' (Vincent et al.,

2010: 132). This finding resonates with a personal narrative related by Practitioner Two (see

Extract 4.17).

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Extract 4.17

1	Practitioner Two	I would agree because … there's like the textbook version of children
2		isn't there?
3	Practitioner One	Yes
4	Practitioner Two	And I'm sure a lot of those textbooks are up at my daughter's school.
5		They don't have the issues we used to have at [name of school]
6	Practitioner One	No
7	Practitioner Two	where chairs across the classroom and all that sort of … It's like a
8		different ball game and parents at [name of school] could be um
9		…coming in arguing probably because, you know, they haven't been
10		heard read.
11	Practitioner One	That's right.
12	Practitioner Two	Whereas our experience of that *is* … 'what's a reading book?' Well, you
13		know 'we don't do that at home. You do that at school.' It's like a
14		different perception
15	Practitioner One	Mm
16	Practitioner Two	of it all isn't it?

(De-briefing and Planning Discussion, 20 March 2008)

In Extract 4.17 Practitioner Two is leading a discussion with Practitioner One in which Practitioner Two is voicing the difference between what she thinks is generally posited as the 'textbook version of children' (line 1) as opposed to the experience that she and Practitioner One have shared. Here the 'textbook version of children' is defined through the type of interactions that the parents engage in with school. On one hand, what could be regarded as middle-class parents (parents who have children at the school Practitioner Two's children attend) are positioned as potentially complaining to the school because the teacher has not heard their children reading their reading book (see lines 7-10). However, in direct contrast, Practitioner Two positions the parents that she and Practitioner One have experience of working with as at the opposite send of the scale. This is in terms of how they speak to

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teachers (in what could be regarded as a less constructive manner) and in the subject matter about which they talk to teachers (see lines 12-14).

Practitioner Two achieves this differentiation between 'types' of parents in two ways. Firstly, by what she selects to say about these parents, and secondly by the way she delivers this information. Practitioner Two chooses to use reported speech, which linguistically enables her to 'report' the words of the parents. Maybin (2006) points out that:

> 'reporting' always involves transformation; voices are not reproduced
> 'straight' in the reporting context, but are reworked and reaccented in
> particular ways by the speaker doing the reporting, in line with their own
> purposes (Maybin, 2006: 76)

Thus in 'reporting' the parents' words, Practitioner Two is actually selecting particular words and phrases, and in doing so is evaluating them at the same time as uttering them. Maybin (2006: 76) proposes that an element of evaluation is always included when incorporating reported speech into dialogue, as 'words are selected, changed or edited, or a whole quotation is slanted in a particular way'. This is the case with Practitioner Two. She reports the phrases 'What's a reading book?' (line 12), and 'we don't do that at home, you do that at school' (line 13), attributing these phrases to a recognisable categorisation of parents, which Practitioner Two correctly assumes is familiar to both herself and Practitioner One. Practitioner Two tags an additional comment to the end of the reported speech. By adding 'It's like a different perception […] of it all isn't it?' (lines 13-16) she reinforces the negative evaluation achieved by the use of her selection of reported speech. This leaves her co-conversationalist in no

doubt as to Practitioner Two's orientation towards the 'quotes' she has reworked. Interestingly, Practitioner Two uses the adjective 'different' in relation to 'perception'. This use of 'different' sets the perception of these parents in opposition to that of the middle-class parents previously referred to in the extract. Moreover, it positions the parents with whom the practitioners are working as less active in their children's learning than their middle-class counterparts, therefore demonstrating a lack of awareness or acknowledgement that the parents may be engaging with their children in different but equally valid ways. Lawler (2005: 435) points out that working-class women 'are always at risk of being judged as wanting by middle class observers'. In this case, the middle-class observers are also education professionals. Extract 4.17 provides an insight into the priority that Practitioner Two affords the home environment, viewing it as instrumental in supporting the work undertaken with children at school. Moreover, it simultaneously offers a representation of working-class mothers as distinct from their middle-class equivalent. In constructing this representation working-class mothers are 'othered', whilst middle-class existence is 'silently marked as normal and desirable' (Lawler, 2005: 431).

Both practitioners view the home as a location in which children should be prepared for school. As such they see school literacy practices as practices that not only can be undertaken at home, but should be. There is an overlap here with how the practitioners position parents in terms of the ways they choose to spend time with their children. However, there is a distinction in that the practitioners separate out the importance, and sometimes the urgent requirement, for parents to demonstrate appropriate parenting skills in relation to preparing their children for school. This preparation is viewed as lacking, and in Vincent et al.'s (2010:

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132) terms 'being not 'there' in a manner that would ensure the child's optimum intellectual development'.

In describing how Practitioner One became involved in FLLN, she provides a a personal narrative of her career path, and in doing so reveals what she regards as the gap between the expectations of school and parents (see Extract 4.18).

Extract 4.18

1	Practitioner One	[…] Right. I was a teacher in a primary school. And for the last three
2		years of my teaching career I was in a nursery. Right. And I had taught
3		for a long time and there were a lot of reasons why I decided I would
4		give up teaching. And one of them was that I realised the parents
5		bringing the children into school had a very different expectation from
6		what was expected of them in school, if that makes sense.
7	Researcher	You mean of the parents or the children?
8	Practitioner One	The parents really, they didn't have a clear understanding that children
9		would have to sit and listen … to someone and be spoken to, have eye
10		contact with them, haveum … understanding of colours, and … basic,
11		very, very basic skills that you would have expected them to have had
12		within the first three, four years of their life. And *I* thought I knew it all.
13		And I saw the job for [name of organisation] advertised and thought 'I
14		could do that. I would like to have a go'. And when I go into some of the
15		families' homes I realised why the children were coming into school like
16		that. Does this make sense?
17	Researcher	Yeah, absolutely. Yes

(Individual Interview with Practitioner One, 11 February 2008)

Drawing on her experience in teaching, Practitioner One points out that children are ill-prepared for school by their parents, as the parents are unaware of the behaviours and skills (see lines 8-12) that children need to have before attending school. However, Practitioner One does not end this recollection with a negative evaluation of the parents. Instead she interjects

the comment 'And *I* thought I knew it all' (line 12), which indexes a reflective stance on her narrative telling. She indicates that she now has a better understanding of how the social environment in which parents are situated impacts on the range of activities undertaken at home (see section 4.4).

In Extract 4.19 the practitioners are planning the sorts of activities that they want the parents and children to undertake together in the 'joint' session. In this extract Practitioners One and Two provide a commentary on why it is so important to include mark-making in the 'joint' session. The need for children to repeatedly practise mark-making at home in order for them to develop their writing skills is co-constructed between both practitioners. Within their conversation they both use the phrase 'at home' to emphasise the point that parents are not promoting and reinforcing such activities in their home environments.

Extract 4.19

1	Practitioner One	I think it'll have to be big felt tips.
2	Practitioner Two	Yeah. So I'll just put variety of mark-making
3	Practitioner One	Yeah, yeah.
4	Practitioner Two	And whatever we can pull together … 'variety of mark-making
5		{materials'}
6	Practitioner One	{Equipment}yeah.
7	Practitioner Two	'materials. Big felts'. Because I still think it's a message that they don't
8		listen to. They don't
9	Practitioner One	/No they need to
10	Practitioner Two	/They don't
11	Practitioner One	/do it lots of times
12	Practitioner Two	They don't get the message that if you don't practise these things at
13		home they're not going to be writing and whatnot.
14	Practitioner One	I mean, the big thing with like water and a paintbrush – I know it sounds
15		boring but they could actually just do that at home.
16	Practitioner Two	Yeah
17	Practitioner One	And they could just do it on newspaper.

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18	Practitioner Two	I used to do it on the paving slabs …
19	Practitioner One	I know
20	Practitioner Two	outside
21	Practitioner One	Or chalks.
22	Practitioner Two	and things like that with my children. 'Talk about pre-writing activities at
23		home. Big felts, chalks'.

(Planning Meeting, 15 January 2008)

In this co-constructed generic narrative, interlaced with narratives of personal experience,

Practitioner Two initially makes the connection between the mark-making activities they are

planning for the 'joint' session and parents' lack of understanding about the seemingly urgent

need for such activities (see lines 7-8). Practitioner One interrupts Practitioner Two to state

her agreement with Practitioner Two. She does this by adding 'No they need to […] do it lots

of times'. However, in the middle of Practitioner One's statement Practitioner Two also

interrupts. Practitioner Two repeats 'they don't', which is the start of the next utterance she

wants to make. She has already tried to initiate this utterance in lines 8 and 10. By lines 12-13

Practitioner Two gets to finish the statement she has tried to complete, on her third attempt.

She states 'They don't get the message that if you don't practise these things at home they're

not going to be writing and whatnot'. That she is so determined to include this remark in the

conversation highlights the importance that she attributes to this utterance.

In this comment Practitioner Two is simultaneously negatively evaluating the parents'

understanding of the relevance of the play activities that Practitioners One and Two are

promoting and modeling, whilst also reiterating the importance of parents' supporting the

development of their children's skills in order to ensure that their children are properly

prepared for school. These mark-making skills are an element of the 'very, very basic skills' (see Extract 4.18) that Practitioner One makes reference to as being expected by teachers to be in place before children go to school. These are also the skills that Practitioner Two indicates that she worked on with her own children – 'I used to do it on the paving slabs' (line 18). In Practitioner One's response to Practitioner Two's allusion to her own childrearing practices, although not providing a fragment of biography as Practitioner Two does, she infers that she has indulged in similar practices by her response 'I know' and then her subsequent addition of 'or chalks' implies a reference to her own personal experience of the range of materials that can be used to practise mark-making outdoors.

The practitioners seem to view the importance of preparing children for school from three overlapping perspectives. Firstly, from a personal standpoint, they are both parents, and it can be argued that their own childrearing practices are imbued with middle-class values and aspirations. Walkerdine and Lucey (1989, cited in Vincent el al., 2008: 16) argue that middle-class parents are more likely to accept responsibility for 'all aspects of the child's development including their early intellectual development'. Therefore 'the learning environment becomes the entire home, every possible permutation of events, actions and conversations becomes a 'not to be missed' opportunity for a valuable lesson' (Walkerdine & Lucey, 1989, cited in Vincent el al., 2008: 16). The internalisation and acceptance of these all-encompassing middle-class practices are reflected in the allusions that the practitioners make to their own childrearing practices (particularly Practitioner Two, who regularly indexes her own experiences of childrearing within her teaching, and in her discussions with Practitioner One). I would argue that in making such allusions the practitioners are

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inadvertently, and, at times overtly, marking their own middle-class practices as normal and desirable (Lawler, 2005). Therefore if they view their own practices are 'normal' then one cannot question the appropriacy of wanting to promote these practices to the parents enrolled on FLLN.

Secondly, from a professional point of view, they are both drawing on their backgrounds of working in schools, which feeds into wanting to ensure that children are prepared for the rigours and expectations of school. However, in the context of FLLN being an adult literacy programme, is interesting that neither practitioner has a history of working in the field of adult literacy. The initial design of the BSA's model of family literacy proposed that programmes were to be run in partnership between a school teacher and adult literacy tutor (see Chapter 1). Staffing it in such a way recognised the programme's twin focus on children and parents, therefore giving equal emphasis to the children and parents by utilising practitioners each with expertise in either teaching children or working with adults.

Practitioner Two is regarded as the 'adult literacy tutor' in her partnership with Practitioner One, although Practitioner Two's main educational background is working in early years education. Consequently, Practitioner Two is not drawing on her expertise in adult literacy learning when working with the parents, but rather she is filtering her adult literacy teaching through an early years lens which foregrounds the perceived needs of the children in preference to that of the parents. Therefore, although parents are informed about the nature of the schooled literacy practices that their children are expected to participate in, and be

prepared for, which in itself is important, what is lacking is encouraging parents to critically engage with such practices.

In one of the family literacy programmes that Tett (2001) investigated, she discovered that parents were encouraged to see themselves 'as educators who had their own valuable knowledge to contribute to their children's education although this knowledge might be different from that seen as important by the school' (p.191). I think this discourse remains unvoiced in the interactions and embodiment of FLLN in which the practitioners in this study are involved. There appears to be a silence in relation to a professional discourse that encourages parents to critically engage and evaluate the schooled literacy practices in which their children will be engaging. Instead the practitioners uncritically model and promote the practices that the children need to master in order to succeed at school. I am not advocating that parents do not value knowing what is expected of their children at school, but I am proposing that family literacy programmes are also a site in which the reification of schooled literacy practices can be discussed and contested, as opposed to being a site in which they are purely reproduced (see Marsh, 2003; Pahl & Kelly, 2005).

The third perspective which informs the need to ensure that parents prepare their children for school is at a meta-discursive level. According to the government, inadequate parenting is the source of serious social ills, responsible for driving a cycle of deprivation characterised by poverty, low aspiration and anti-social behaviour (Gillies, 2005b, 2006). In order to avoid such a cycle of deprivation it is necessary to intervene in the traditionally private sphere of the family, as the family unit itself becomes regarded as a site of failure (Tett & Crowther, 1998;

Tett, 2001). Tett (2001: 193) proposes that, in relation to parent education programmes, there is an assumption that 'it is not the fault of schools if they fail to educate disadvantaged children rather it is mothers who are blamed, and they in turn blame themselves, for the institutional failure of schools'.

This deficit model of parenting pervades the rationale for the provision of FLLN itself (see Chapter 2). The policy meta-discourse that repeatedly espouses a deficit model of parenting appears to inhabit the practitioners' professional and personal discourses in relation to what constitutes appropriate parenting skills. Thus the three levels of discourse become inextricably and seamlessly intertwined, resulting in an ongoing narrative that almost seems to take on a life of its own, with practitioners being apparently unaware that their personal and professional discourses are being invidiously colonised by a normalised meta-narrative that marginalises and excludes working-class parenting practices. Thus parents are criticised for not displaying the type of middle-class parenting practices that the practitioners themselves have been socialised into accepting as the 'norm'. From this standpoint, the practitioners would appear to lack any understanding that the parents with whom they are working are not invested in the same model of parenting as themselves. Therefore that the practitioners imbue the parents with the agency to display what they would deem as 'appropriate' parenting skills is fundamentally flawed. The practitioners and parents are starting with a different perception of what is appropriate parenting, therefore any judgments visited by the practitioners on the parents should be regarded as influenced and, on occasion, restricted by middle-class perameters.

4.8   Conclusion

There is no doubt that both practitioners view FLLN as a vehicle for parents to take a step towards improving their lives and the lives of their children. They recognise that the parents benefit from the social aspect of their attendance, enabling them to share their experiences in a welcoming environment, not needing to worry about their children who are being taken care of in the crèche; an inviting, supportive setting in which the parents can re-engage with learning. Thus, it could be argued, contributing to parents identifying themselves as 'capable, competent learners' (see Tett & Maclachlan, 2007: 152). At the same time parents are improving their understanding of what their children will be expected to do when they go to school, and are given the opportunity to spend focused one-to-one time with their children in the 'joint' session.

All the above statements are true. However, what is revealed by a close analysis of the practitioners' descriptions of the parents, revealed through and in their narratives-in-interaction, is that there are a number of discourses evident in the practitioners' narratives, discourses that complement, interweave and, at times, compete with each other. It is through studying these in detail that one is able to discern that although Practitioner Two speaks of empowerment of parents, such empowerment is enframed and restricted by broader discourses – of maternal protectionism, deficit notions of parents and of adult literacy learners. As Auerbach (1995: 644) intimates, the antideficit discourse prevalent in intervention prevention approaches to family literacy, masks 'fundamental underlying differences in values, goals, ideological orientations, and pedagogical approaches'. She

argues that this antideficit discourse actually represents 'a neodeficit ideology' (p.644), which perpetuates a deficit model of parenting. Thus inherent to the model of family literacy of which the practitioners are part is a government policy discourse of deficiency in relation to working-class parenting practices, therefore requiring such practices to be rectified by professional intervention.

The practitioners in this study would not appear to recognise the instrumental ideology that underpins FLLN programmes. This is in part due to their personal and professional backgrounds. The practitioners embody and practice middle-class 'norms' in relation to their own parenting practices. They also both share a background of working in primary schools. Both practitioners want to encourage in the parents the types of behaviours that, firstly, reflect the behaviours that the practitioners themselves value and view as 'normal'. Secondly, they want to promote those parenting behaviours that will enable their children not to be at a disadvantage when starting school. This results in the practitioners modeling ways of behaving, ways for parents to interact with their children that they regard as the most appropriate and beneficial in terms of supporting the educational development of the children attending FLLN. It also results in the practitioners foregrounding the role that home-life plays in supporting the work of the school. What it does not do is leave any room for the competing discourse, evident in the NLS, which questions the primacy of schooled literacy practices, and positions such literacy practices as one amongst many. This voice is not evident in the narratives tellings related by the practitioners in this study.

However, what is clear is that the practitioners identify the parents attending FLLN as 'fragile' (see Crowther et al., 2010). They realise that it is a significant achievement for the parents to attend a 15-week programme. Practitioner One in particular 'scaffolds' this transition from the drop-in provision offered through her family support charity, to the more formally structured FLLN programme. Both practitioners create an inviting and supportive atmosphere in which the parents are made to feel welcome on an ongoing weekly basis.

Both practitioners vacillate between positioning the parents as having a level of agency that enables them to make changes in their lives, whilst at other times articulate an awareness that the 'presiding social reality' in which the parents live is 'sharply contained by external, relational and subjective factors' (Gillies, 2005a: 86). This reflects the dichotomy evident in the discursive practices of the practitioners in which at times they use 'citational speech' (B. Davies, 2008: 179), involving the 'unoriginal repetition of the conventional normative order' (p.179). Therefore they re-voice and reaffirm the circulating discourses of deficit that surround working-class parents. By doing this they are socially identifying the parents with whom they work as 'certain types of people' (Wortham, 2004b: 166). The more times these identifications are repeated over time, the more normalised they become, resulting in the 'thickening' of social identities (see Wortham, 2004b: 166). This is a mainly a subconscious process. However, it would be helpful if the practitioners were aware that they are involved in this process of social identification, as it would enable them to reflect on how the small stories they relate about the parents are informed by larger circulating discourses, and how such discourses are implicated in their own teaching practices. It may avoid the danger of

categorising parents attending FLLN as a homogeneous group rather than as individual

parents who are attending the same programme.

CHAPTER 5: SMALL STORIES ABOUT ONE PARENT IN PARTICULAR

5.1   Introduction

This chapter looks at the narrative tellings that Practitioners One and Two make in relation to

one parent in particular who is attending the FLLN programme – P8. Georgakopoulou (2007:

8) espouses that 'narrative accounts in which nothing much happens' should be 'firmly

integrated into the scope of analysis as opposed to being an analytical nuisance'. Thus

narrative accounts should be located 'in place and time' in order to scrutinise the social and

discourse activities with which they are habitually associated (Georgakopoulou, 2007: 8).

By drawing on the recordings and transcripts of the interactions that took place between the

practitioners in the interstitial space before and after teaching, and the recordings and

transcripts of the ethnographic and individual semi-structured interviews that were undertaken

with both practitioners, this chapter aims to examine how the recycling and reworking of

narratives-in-interaction about P8 become habitual in nature. By placing these narrative

accounts in place and time, I am able to explore what narrative allusions and retellings are

constituted in the talk between practitioners, and how this changes (or remains the same) over

time.

Chapter 4 presented a detailed description of a typology of parents, as represented through

and in the co-conversations held between practitioners, and constructed by practitioners in

their individual interviews. The phrases and words chosen to describe the parents as well as

the form of the practitioners' utterances were analysed in order to demonstrate the complex interweaving of local and global discourses that are invoked and embedded in the practitioners' narrative tellings. This chapter aims to use specific examples of a particular parent to realise the fluidity of parental representation, even when practitioners are referring to the same person.

This chapter is divided into seven sections. The first section explains why I have chosen to focus particularly on P8. The second section describes how I am foregrounding positioning analysis as an analytical framework in this chapter. The third section presents the focal extract on which this chapter is based. The following three sections use positioning analysis to investigate the small stories told by the practitioners about P8, and in doing so demonstrate how the practitioners' own identity positions are revealed. The main themes of the chapter are returned to in the final section.

5.2   Rationale for choice of parent

Vincent et al. (2010: 123) argue that their work does not seek to make general empirical claims about working-class mothers but rather to provide insights into contexts within which discourses about working-class mothering practices 'become visible and palpable', as 'these discourses are played out in very practical and material circumstances'. In common with Vincent et al. (2010), my work aims to provide insights into the 'visible and palpable' enactment of discourses; in this case those discourses revealed and enacted by the practitioners about the parents with whom they work.

A close analysis of the small stories that the practitioners tell about any of the eight parents who attended the FLLN programme would reveal an insight into how discourses circulate, change and harden about specific individual parents. I have specifically selected P8. The main reason for the selection of this parent was due to my impression that the small stories shared between practitioners about P8 were predominantly negatively evaluated, which seemed out-of-keeping as, overall, they were usually positive about the parents. This was the impression that I developed whilst being in the field. In the light of this, I wanted to drill down into the interactional data to see whether my impressions would be substantiated by a more detailed analysis, or whether my impressions were based on only a limited number of incidents[18].

5.3   Small stories about parents

One of the aims of this chapter is to demonstrate how, by drawing on the complementary frameworks of ethnography, linguistic ethnography and positioning analysis, I am able to dissect the practitioners' interactions by focusing on the references they make to a specific parent - the allusions to, and narrative tellings about, P8. Viewing the interactional data in this way enables an in-depth analysis of the ebb and flow of the moment-by-moment discursive practices that circulate about P8, not just in a single utterance but across time, across the duration of the FLLN programme; thus capturing the myriad of contrasting voices that are indexed within practitioners' conversations. At the same time, by integrating positioning

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[18] I found out the number of mentions for each parent by loading all the transcripts into the corpus linguistics program, AntConc, and searching for each parent (P1, P2 etc) in turn. The program provided me with the total number of hits for each parent. The average number of times individual parents are mentioned in the interactional data is 50. P8 is referred to on 58 occasions

analysis into this study, I am contributing to the development of linguistic ethnography, putting into practice the understanding that ethnography is open to 'wider interpretive approaches' (Creese, 2008: 229). I am fusing together ethnography, linguistic ethnography and positioning analysis, using positioning analysis as an analytical framework to investigate the linguistic detail in the ethnographic data I have collected. Thus, in this chapter, I am using positioning analysis as a framework for analysing and interpreting the small stories that are a focal part of this research.

De Fina (2008: 425) proposes that 'in order to understand any kind of narrative activity, it is necessary to uncover through ethnographic observation the particular and often subtle links that connect narrators and the narratives they tell with the social activities in which they are engaged'. Barkhuizen (2010) also espouses the integration of ethnographic data such as interviews and written journals to inform and support analyses using positioning analysis. Bamberg (2004c: 4) states that 'investigations that conduct several 'takes', from different angles and in different situations, can lay out revisions in our sense-making and re-storying capabilities in much more detail and with greater effectiveness'. My study has been designed to ensure through its collection of naturally-occurring conversations, on-going ethnographic interviews, individual interviews, and by ethnographic observation, to provide multiple opportunities for different 'takes' to be captured.

The practitioners tell a number of small stories about P8. The examination and re-examination of these stories has revealed two main themes: attendance and commitment; and, friendship and support. The focus of this chapter will be on the small stories that the practitioners tell

about P8 in relation to attendance and commitment. My aim is to present a comprehensive analysis, therefore I have decided that it is better to concentrate on one theme in detail as opposed to offering a shallower analysis that encompasses them both.

5.4   Small stories of attendance and commitment

The interaction in Extract 5.1 takes place in Week 12. The part of the conversation that I want to look at in detail is initiated by Practitioner Two and starts on line 10 with the phrase 'I never quite know how to take …'. This is one of a number of discrete yet interlinked narrative tellings embedded within a broader discussion about P8. However, I am choosing to include the exchange that takes place before the focal interaction as, as Bamberg (2004a: 355) points out, it is important to look at 'the challenging and confrontational nature of everyday interactions in which stories are contested, followed by other stories that modify the claims made, shifts into new domains, and the like'. The small story that is co-constructed by both practitioners demonstrates how the subject of discussion, in this case P8, remains the same, yet shifts in emphasis, bringing previous narrative tellings into play. It would appear to be a particularly typical example of the types of small story that 'we tell in passing, in our everyday encounters with each other' (Bamberg, 2004a: 356).

Extract 5.1

1	Practitioner One	Yeah cause P8 is very aware of who's in the room because … you know
2		the first time she came here she said someone in the crèche knows her
3		other children
4	Researcher	Right
5	Practitioner One	And she was very concerned about the details that were given out.

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6	Practitioner Two	Oh
7	Practitioner One	Do you remember in the first session of this
8	Practitioner Two	Yeah
9	Practitioner One	So …
10	Practitioner Two	/I never quite know how to take …I never quite know whether we've
11		quite got her on board {or not P8}
12	Practitioner One	{No} No
13	Practitioner Two	She's a hard one
14	Practitioner One	Yes
15	Practitioner Two	…to fathom
16	Practitioner One	Yes.
17	Practitioner Two	…isn't she? Cause her attendance isn't brilliant is it?
18	Practitioner One	No
19	Practitioner Two	I know she's always sent an apology but
20	Practitioner One	She was choosing to go to the Wednesday group really
21	Practitioner Two	Right
22	Practitioner One	So she can dip in and out of that
23	Practitioner Two	Right
24	Practitioner One	But then I said 'right. Actually …' cause she was going to share a taxi
25		with P7 and I said 'actually P7 isn't going to come any more to the
26		Wednesday' cause last time, the first 15 week sessions, P7 did both.
27	Practitioner Two	Yes
28	Practitioner One	Both groups you see. But I've stopped that because of the cost of the
29		transport. So um she said 'oh well I'll do that one then'.
30	Practitioner Two	Right
31	Practitioner One	And I'm thinking
32	Practitioner Two	Yeah
33	Practitioner One	'hang on a minute'
34	Practitioner Two	I do but we have, you have asked her {repeatedly if she wants to be on
35		board but I just feel she's not as committed as the others.}
36	Practitioner One	{Yes I have. Yeah. And I checked at first. I said you know it's not like
37		the Wednesday group.}
38	Practitioner Two	But then when we were over there last week – we were doing the
39		recording.
40	Practitioner One	Mm
41	Practitioner Two	I sort of felt a bit of an affinity.
42	Practitioner One	Right
43	Practitioner Two	I don't know I felt like I got on with her a bit better. I don't know.
44	Practitioner One	Oh right.
45	Practitioner Two	I felt a bit closer to her really. Perhaps it's the first time I've spoken to
46		her in a smaller group. Cause she doesn't volunteer a lot does she to the
47	Practitioner One	No
48	Practitioner Two	…group normally.
49	Practitioner One	You see she couldn't come to the first 15 weeks sessions because she
50		hadn't got the children with her then.

51	Practitioner Two	Yes {I know you told me.}
52	Practitioner One	{Do you remember?} So er because I had mentioned it to her cause I
53		knew they were good pals and I thought they might support each other to
54		come. But in actual fact P7 doesn't need support …but it's P8 that does.
55	Practitioner Two	Mm
56	Practitioner One	Mm …and I'm not sure really of their relationship. I think they're fine
57		but you're never quite sure are you?
58	Practitioner Two	No.
59	Practitioner One	And it's not for me to delve into […]

(De-briefing and Planning Discussion, 24 April 2008)

In Extract 5.1 the picture of P8 that Practitioner Two begins to paint in line 10 builds on the description provided by Practitioner One in Practitioner One's previous turns (lines 1-9). In this exchange P8 is alluded to as someone who is suspicious of others. This is achieved by Practitioner One's comments that 'P8 is very aware of who's in the room' (line 1) and that 'she [P8] was very concerned about the details that were given out' (line 5). Practitioner One's reference to the 'first session' (line 7) also points to a common experience that both Practitioners One and Two have in relation to P8's behaviour. This is the jumping off point for Practitioner Two to elaborate further about P8.

In an attempt to achieve a thorough and nuanced understanding of this small story I am investigating it using the lens of positioning analysis, following each of its three interrelated analytical stages in turn (for a detailed discussion of positioning analysis see Chapter 2).

5.5 Positioning Analysis Level One

The first stage of positioning analysis requires an examination of the characters and content of the story (Barkhuizen, 2010). According to Bamberg (2004b: 336), Level One of positioning analysis involves scrutinising 'the linguistic means used to establish the characters in the story – how they are drawn into existence and how they are placed in relationship to one another'. This enables the question 'How are the characters depicted, and what is the story about (its theme)?' (p.336) to be answered. However, Watson (2007) points out that although Level One of positioning analysis relates to the story and Level Two to its telling, in practice separating them is actually very difficult to do. Watson (2007: 384) argues that 'the contextual interdependence of these two levels needs to be recognised even though procedurally it may be advantageous to treat them as independent, though mutually feeding, levels of analysis which the analyst then re-synthesises'. Therefore, although I recognise that the story and its telling are constitutive of each other, I am following the procedural nature of positioning analysis, and starting at Level One.

In terms of the individual characters in the story, the first identifiable character is Practitioner Two. Practitioner Two indexes her inclusion as a character by using the first person pronoun 'I' when she states 'I never quite know how to take … I never quite know whether we've quite got her on board or not P8' (lines 10-11). In this same utterance Practitioner Two also includes Practitioner One as a character. This is indexed by the shift from her use of 'I' to 'we've'. P8's name is also mentioned in the same utterance. The only other individual mentioned by name is P7 (see lines 25-26 and 54). However, two groupings of characters are

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also indexed in this interaction, 'the Wednesday group' (see lines 20 and 37) and 'the others' (see line 35).

Practitioner Two aligns herself with Practitioner One by including Practitioner One in the initial evaluative statement she makes about P8. Practitioner Two is expressing doubt about whether P8 is actively engaged in FLLN. She restates and maintains the sentiment of her first utterance 'I never quite know how to take …', reformulating it as 'I never quite know whether we've quite got her on board or not P8'. This signals a shift of ownership of the utterance to include Practitioner One. It could be argued that Practitioner One is acknowledging this utterance by her minimal repeated response of 'no' (line 12), thus signaling her agreement. By offering this minimal response Practitioner One is providing backchannel feedback, which is often interpreted as serving to express agreement, attention or understanding (Ward & Tsukahara, 2000), and therefore providing positive feedback in a conversation (Kjellmer, 2009). (The interactional features of Extract 5.1 are discussed in more detail in the following section.)

Practitioner Two's assertion that P8 is not fully on board is an allusion to previous narrative tellings that Practitioner One has related about whether P8 really wanted to attend FLLN in the first place, and also contributes to the general impression that the practitioners have created over the duration of the programme, that P8 is not particularly committed to FLLN. Practitioner Two points out that P8 has not attended FLLN regularly ('cause her attendance isn't brilliant is it?' (line 17)), which again connotes a lack of commitment on P8's part. However, at this stage in the programme (Week 12), this is P8's third absence. Prior to this

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session, P5, P6 and P8 have all missed two sessions, but P6's absence is perceived differently as it is due to illness as opposed to being 'absent'. Practitioner Two states that P8 has previously notified the practitioners of any non-attendance ('I know she's always sent an apology but' (line 19)). However, the use of the contrastive discourse marker *but* at the end of this utterance implies that Practitioner Two is taking a critical stance towards P8's attendance, regarding it as seemingly not regular enough. The *but* also offers an opportunity for Practitioner One to contribute a negatively evaluated 'mini-telling' (see Georgakopoulou, 2007: 69, and section 5.6) about P8, continuing the conversation in the vein that *but* implies.

Georgakopoulou (2007: 11) argues that 'narrative bits that have to do with the assessment of or commentary on events are more likely to be recycled'. This would seem to be the case. In continuing a generally negative assessment of P8, Practitioner One specifies that P8 was 'choosing to go to the Wednesday group really' (line 20) as it is the type of group that 'she can dip in and out of' (line 22). Practitioner One also implies that P8 is attending FLLN rather than the Wednesday group only because P7 was now attending FLLN instead of the drop-in group, suggesting that her friend's attendance, P7, was the key motivation for P8 (see lines 24-26). This is the third occasion on which Practitioner One narrates the reasons why she thinks P8 is attending FLLN as opposed to 'the Wednesday group' (the other occasions on which a version of this anecdote is told is in Session 8's de-briefing and planning discussion, held four weeks prior, and in an earlier exchange within this session, Session 12).

The Wednesday group is contrasted with the FLLN programme in terms of formality and the requirement for consistent attendance. In aligning P8 with the Wednesday group Practitioner

One is signifying that P8 has not, and is not, demonstrating her commitment to FLLN. This is further demonstrated by Practitioner Two negatively evaluating P8's level of commitment in relation to 'the others'. In lines 34-35 Practitioner Two recounts that Practitioner One has 'asked her [P8] repeatedly if she wants to be on board but I just feel she's not as committed as the others'. By separating out P8 from the rest of the parents, who are grouped together as 'the others', P8 is not only constructed as isolated from them but also placed as displaying contrasting behaviour to them. Therefore the practitioners are inferring and substantiating through their co-constructed conversation that P8 is different. They are 'othering' her in relation to the rest of the parents, and, as a consequence 'othering' her commitment and investment in FLLN as a whole.

This notion of P8 being isolated is also inferred by Practitioner Two's assertion that P8 is 'a hard one […] to fathom' (see lines 13-15). This is further compounded by Practitioner Two's interpretation of P8's reticence to take part in group discussions (see lines 46-48). Interestingly, this utterance occurs as an evaluative comment at the end of an interjection that Practitioner Two makes about a positive experience she had with P8 during the previous week's teaching session. Practitioner Two recalls that she 'sort of felt a bit of an affinity' (line 41) with P8 when she was recording P8 doing her presentation. Practitioner Two elaborates further, commenting that 'I don't know I felt like I got on with her a bit better. I don't know' (line 43), then adds 'I felt a bit closer to her really. Perhaps it's the first time I've spoken to her in a smaller group' (lines 45-46). It is at this point that she closes her anecdotal interjection with the evaluative comment that P8 does not usually contribute to group

discussion. It is almost as though she is trying to equate her own lack of interaction with P8, to P8's perceived lack of engagement with the rest of the group.

So far, through using the first level of positioning analysis I have established how the characters are depicted and what the story is about that is being enacted. I have chosen to focus on the interweaving narratives as they position P8 in terms of her relationship to FLLN and to the practitioners. I recognise that there is much that can be said in relation to how P8's friendship with P7 is depicted, but this is not pertinent to the current discussion.

It may be useful at this point to summarise what has been revealed by applying Level One of positioning analysis to this story. It is clear that the main character in this story is P8. Every other character in the story is constituted in relation to P8. Within this multi-layered small story constructed between Practitioners One and Two, P8 is positioned as a learner who does not seem to have fully invested herself in the FLLN programme (see lines 10-11 and 34-35), whose attendance is poor (see line 17) and who is only attending because her friend, P7, is doing so (see lines 24-29). P8 is constructed as a relatively isolated figure, despite her friendship with P7. She is someone who maintains her own counsel (see lines 13-15 and 46-48), and someone with whom the practitioners do not seem to have developed a particularly close working relationship (see lines 41- 46).

5.6   Positioning Analysis Level Two

Positioning analysis at Level Two concentrates on the performance aspect of the story (Barhuizen, 2010). Thus Level Two is concerned with the interactional effects of the story (Bamberg, 2004b; Watson, 2007), how this 'interactive work is being accomplished between the participants in the interactive setting' (Bamberg, 2004b: 336), and 'the positioning of speakers within the flow of interactions' (Watson, 2007: 378). Bamberg (2004b: 336) explains this level of analysis as not so much directly contributing to principles of how talk is done in social interaction, 'but rather how talk is made use of so we can analyse it as 'resulting in identities''. According to Bamberg (2004b: 336), at this stage, the analyst needs to ask 'why a story is told at a particular point in the interaction or, more specifically, why the narrator claims the floor at this particular point in the conversation to tell the story'.

As noted earlier (see section 3.7.1), Blommaert (2006: 64) proposes that much can be discerned by looking at a transcript rather than reading it, as the 'visual inspection of transcripts already reveals textual patterns'. Looking at Extract 5.1 reveals the on-going positioning of the practitioners in the roles of speaker and listener within the flow of interactional exchanges.

From lines 10-19 Practitioner Two is holding the floor. This changes at line 20 when Practitioner One takes on the role of speaker, which continues until line 33. The exchange that takes place in lines 34-37 is almost a reprise of the practitioners' earlier exchanges in this extract. Practitioner Two repeats that she is not sure whether P8 is 'on board' and Practitioner

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One reconfirms that she has told P8 about the nature of the FLLN group in contrast to 'the Wednesday group'. This small exchange resonates with one of Georgakopoulou's (2007: 11-12) findings in her research with young people in Greece that 'the process of interactional recontextualisation of a narrative leads through repeated tellings over time to mini-tellings and ultimately to condensed quotable forms that can be reworked and stylised'. This exchange (lines 34-37) is really a mini-telling recreated between the practitioners, restating what could be regarded as the main point of their conversation at this specific point in time. In lines 38-48 Practitioner Two reestablishes herself in the speaker role, then from line 49 to the end of Extract 5.1, the roles are reversed. Thus, interactionally there is an ebb and flow to the conversation between the practitioners.

Extract 5.1 is a typical example of the nature of the interactional data that I have collected, in which both practitioners often relate small stories, which, in turn, reveal the positionality of themselves and those of whom they speak. As Wortham and Gadsden (2006: 324) point out 'by virtue of telling a particular story in a particular way, narrators position themselves interactionally with respect to their interlocutors'. By using the data presented in Extract 5.1, I want to make explicit the interactional contribution that the responses play which are uttered by the practitioner in the listener role.

Richards (2011: 98) indicates that close attention needs to be paid to minimal responses as 'they have the power to influence the development of subsequent talk and they are a classic illustration of the way in which such talk is constructed by the participants involved'. In relation to discourse markers that function as markers of recipiency, Gardner (1998: 206)

claims that 'they provide ways in which conversationalists express their understanding of what another is saying, and as such are an example par excellence of co-construction in action'. Therefore as part of positioning analysis at Level Two it would seem appropriate to explore the function of these minimal responses.

Ward and Tsukahara (2000) offer a definition of what they regard as a clear case of back-channel feedback.

> One person is explaining something or telling a story, the other person is paying attention and understanding, and produces a typical word or sound to indicate this, and also to indicate that he wishes the story-teller to continue. The story teller, without showing any awareness of this response, continues with his story, perhaps slightly encouraged to know that his listener is still interested. (Ward & Tsukahara, 2000: 1178)

Tottie (1991: 255, cited in Kjellmer, 2009: 83) describes backchannels as 'the sounds (and gestures) made in conversation by the current non-speaker, which grease the wheels of conversation but constitute no claim to take over the turn'. Carter and McCarthy (1997: 12, cited in Kjellmer, 2009: 83) posit that backchannels are the 'noises (which are not full words) and short verbal responses made by listeners which acknowledge the incoming talk and react to it, without wishing to take over the speaking turn'. The responses that can be categorised as backchannels include *mhm, mm, uh-huh, yeah, oh, right*, *okay* and phrases such as *you know*, and *I know what you mean*. However, Ward and Tsukahara (2000: 1183) state that 'there is great variation in the words and phrases used in back-channel feedback, and infinitely many non-lexical vocalizations are possible'.

In Extract 5.1, *no, yes, yeah, oh, right, oh right, mm* and *so* are used as backchannels (see Table 5 for an overview of the types of backchannels used, who is using them and their frequency). Reading the transcript and listening to the audio-recording reveal that the vast majority of these backchannel responses (*no, yes, yeah, right,* and *mm*) function as 'continuers'. Using a 'continuer' displays 'an understanding that an extended unit of talk is underway by another, and that it is not yet, or may not yet be (even ought not yet be), complete. It takes the stance that the speaker of that extended unit should continue talking.' (Schegloff, 1982: 81, cited in Richards, 2011: 99). Such responses also function as 'reception markers' (Fuller, 2003).

Table 5: Overview of backchannels used in Extract 5.1

	No	*Yes*	*Yeah*	*Oh*	*Right*	*Oh right*	*Mm*	*So*	**Totals**
Practitioner One	4	3	2		1	1	2	1	14
Practitioner Two	1	1	2	1	3		1		9
Researcher					1				1
Totals	5	4	4	1	5	1	3	1	24

I would argue that all utterances of *yes*, *yeah*, (except in line 51 where Practitioner Two uses *yes* as an affirmative response rather than a backchannel) and *no* operate as discourse markers that signify both understanding and agreement as well as encouraging the speaker to continue their turn. Kjellmer (2009: 101), in his research into the relevance of the location of discourse markers in conversation, argues that the occurrence of a backchannel is 'almost expected when the concept represented by the subject is familiar or easy to sympathise with or

acknowledge'. This can be seen in the exchanges between the practitioners in Extract 5.1. In 15 out of 21 cases of backchannel feedback (those using *no, yes, yeah, right* and *mm*) the backchannel occurs after the subject of the utterance has been completed (see lines 4, 8, 12, 18, 21, 23, 27, 30, 36, 40, 42, 55, 56, and 58). Both practitioners are evidently familiar with the topic being discussed and regularly provide supportive backchannelling that not only 'greases the wheels of conversation' but display an agreement with the opinion being offered by the practitioner who is holding the floor.

However, what I think is particularly significant are the interactional exchanges that take place in lines 13-15, 31-33 and 45-48. In each of these examples the backchannels are 'turn-internal' (see Kjellmer, 2009), where backchannels are inserted within a phrase. Kjellmer (2009: 106) points out that these cases 'suggest that listeners can guess in what direction the argument is moving' and 'show that listeners are kindly disposed, listening and paying attention'. In these three examples both practitioners are involved in providing turn-internal backchannelling, demonstrating their attunement with, and positive disposition towards their co-conversationalist.

Now let us turn to look at the function of the discourse marker *oh.* Fuller (2003) argues that an utterance-initial *oh* can have a range of functions. Drawing on Heritage, Fuller (2003: 29) proposes that 'when the answer to a question is prefaced with *oh* it means that, from the viewpoint of the respondent, the question is problematic in terms of its relevance, presuppositions, or context'. Moreover, Fuller (2003: 29) states that 'this perspective can be expanded to include not only questions but all cues for utterances'.

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At this juncture I want to focus particularly on Practitioner One's use of *oh right* in line 44.

This requires revisiting the small story to which I have already referred (see section 5.5) in

which Practitioner Two recounts a personal narrative that implies she is developing what she

views as a better relationship with P8 (see lines 38-46). In my previous discussion, I

emphasised that, although the story was generally positive, it ended with a negative evaluative

comment. What I want to concentrate on here is how the backchannel *oh right* indicates that

Practitioner One is at odds with the content of Practitioner Two's narrative telling about P8.

Having referred to this telling as generally positive in tone, it is interesting to note that

Practitioner Two actually employs a variety of hedging strategies which act to dilute the

positivity of her story. Practitioner Two knows from previous discussions, and indeed from

the conversation at hand, that it is more usual for both practitioners to construct P8 in negative

terms. Therefore Practitioner Two is offering a story that goes against what has become

habitual practice.

In the four turns that constitute this narrative Practitioner Two uses the hedges 'sort of' (line

41) and 'a bit' (lines 41, 43, 45). She uses 'a bit' on three occasions within these four turns.

Their use softens the positive force of what she is saying. Practitioner Two also bookends 'I

felt like I got on with her a bit better' with the phrase 'I don't know' (line 43), which not only

reduces the force of her statement, but may indicate the potentially negative reception that

Practitioner Two anticipates from Practitioner One. However, in interactional terms, what

indexes the way Practitioner One is receiving this information is her use of *oh right* as a

backchannel response. For this would seem to indicate, drawing on Fuller's (2003)

interpretation of *oh*, that Practitioner One finds the prior utterance made by Practitioner Two to be problematic.

The examples of backchannelling that have been described so far go some way to demonstrating how studying the interactional detail of Extract 5.1 reveals the ways in which the interactional performance of their small stories reinforces their linguistic content. The analysis presented here is obviously not exhaustive, yet it highlights the significance of unpicking these narrative tellings to reveal and understand what work is being accomplished through the actual telling of the narratives-in-interaction, serving to emphasise the interactional component as well as the narrative content.

5.7   Positioning Analysis Level Three

Bamberg (2004b: 337) states that 'the analysis of the first two positioning levels is intended to progressively lead to a differentiation of how speakers draw on normative discourses and position themselves in relation to these discourses'. He argues that at Level Three of positioning analysis narrators '(most often implicitly) address the question 'Who am I?' In doing so, they position themselves vis-à-vis cultural discourses and normative (social) positions, either by embracing them or displaying neutrality, or by distancing, critiquing, subverting, and resisting them' (p.336).

Barkhuizen (2010) provides a clear description of analysis at Level Three. He refers to it as 'moving beyond the small story content and telling to consider the normative discourses (the

broader ideological context) within which the characters agentively position themselves and by which they are positioned' (p.3). He suggests extending this stage to include a move outside the small story being analysed, therefore enabling the analyst to consider additional narrative data that may be available to them. Such data may include 'other small stories-in-interaction collected from the same participants at different times in different settings' (Barkhuizen, 2010: 4). I will be incorporating this type of data into my analysis.

In Watson's (2007) research into the construction of the professional identities of student teachers, she identified that applying positioning analysis at Level Three enabled an analysis of the small stories of teachers in relation to dominant discourses of what it means to be a teacher. However, she found it more problematic to incorporate into the analysis the way the student teachers constructed their pupils through a process of social identification. I propose extending the analysis at Level Three, just as Barkhuizen (2010) proposes the incorporation of additional narrative data at this level of analysis. I suggest that analysis at this level should not only identify the normative discourses by which individuals are positioned, or position themselves, but should also concern itself with examining the more locally produced discourses that also inform and underpin social practice. In terms of this study, what I mean by this are the range of circulating discourses that come to surround, and it would seem, on occasion, define those of whom they speak. Therefore, at this level of analysis, in the following discussion I aim to investigate how P8's emerging identity in relation to attendance and commitment can be traced 'through the contingent process of emerging intertextual links across events' (Wortham, 2005: 98), for, as Wortham argues, social identification is rarely accomplished in one discursive interaction. Individuals become socially identified 'across a

trajectory, as subsequent events come increasingly to presuppose identities signaled in earlier ones' (Wortham, 2005: 98).

As Wortham (2004a: 716) indicates, social identification requires two primary components: 'social categories of identity that circulate through time and space and the characteristics or behaviours of individuals that are interpreted with reference to those categories'. By attending to this process in Level Three of positioning analysis, I think a more nuanced understanding of how P8 comes to be identified as exhibiting the characteristics or behaviours of 'recognisable types of people' (Wortham & Gadsden, 2006: 320) can be determined. Therefore, although I accept Watson's (2007) point that the concepts of 'identity' and 'identification' are different, I think both concepts can be addressed if this level of positioning analysis is extended to recognise not only the significance of the small story in relation to the self-construction of the narrator, but also to realise that the narrator and the narrated are intertwined, and therefore so is identity and identification.

Level Three of positioning analysis seeks to generate claims that are transferable to other situations (Watson, 2007). From Bamberg's (2004b: 337) perspective, 'the original story gains an independent status above and beyond the situation for which it was originally relevant'. In light of this, at this stage of analysis in order to strengthen any argument in relation to the story gaining independent status, I think it is important to investigate the additional data that one has to hand to look for traces of similar storylines. In my opinion, this enables the researcher to establish whether these meta-narratives are invoked and repeated over time, as opposed to being indexed on a single occasion. Therefore I am able to examine

the recursivity of such discourses and their relationship to previous and future tellings, revealing whether or not such positionings 'solidify' (see Wortham, 2003a: 17) or 'thicken' (see Wortham, 2004b: 166) over time.

In summary, at this level of positioning analysis, concurrently I aim to examine the positions that Practitioners One and Two take up in relation to the normative discourses that are indexed in Extract 5.1, whilst unpicking the 'socially circulating categories of identity' (Wortham, 2004a: 717) and the locally produced circulating discourses, with which the practitioners identify and categorise P8. I will start by examining how P8 is socially identified by both practitioners.

5.7.1   The social identification of P8

The exchange between Practitioners One and Two about P8's attendance not being 'brilliant' is not the first time that the practitioners discuss P8's attendance. Indeed as early in the programme as Session 3 (31 January 2008), P8 is mentioned in relation to attendance (see Extract 5.2).

Extract 5.2

1	Practitioner Two	This is the trouble with this [the programme]
2	Practitioner One	Yeah
3	Practitioner Two	if they miss something
4	Practitioner One	Yeah
5	Practitioner Two	like that that's especially been arranged, then it's hard to come back from
6		that. Because then you've got to try and arrange something else … just so
7		that, you know, the odd person can *** it.

8	Practitioner One	{No}
9	Practitioner Two	{So we could do with a good attendance}
10	Practitioner One	They were all informed before
11	Practitioner Two	Yes
12	Practitioner One	… that it was a 15 week course.
13	Practitioner Two	Yeah.
14	Practitioner One	{They knew that}
15	Practitioner Two	{So what's happening with} P8, then?
16	Practitioner One	Her children were poorly.
17	Practitioner Two	Oh, right. Fair enough. … Fair enough. …

(De-briefing and Planning Discussion, 31 January 2008)

Extract 5.2 starts with a generic narrative about the importance of parents being present if something is particularly arranged, for example, a guest speaker, and how disruptive it can be if the 'odd person' is absent as this necessitates rearranging subsequent sessions. Practitioner Two reiterates how vital good attendance is (line 9), and Practitioner One reminds Practitioner Two that Practitioner One told all the parents that 'it was a 15 week course' (lines 10-14). In telling Practitioner Two that Practitioner One has informed the parents about the importance of consistent attendance Practitioner One is not only relating that the parents know, but also that she, Practitioner One, acknowledges the significance of good attendance. It is at this point that Practitioner Two introduces a narrative allusion to the 'shared (known) event' (see Georgakopoulou, 2006b) of the day's session, by asking Practitioner One 'So what's happening with P8, then?' (line 15). This juxtaposition of talk about attendance, and moreover, the consequence for Practitioner Two in particular of sporadic attendance, with Practitioner Two's questioning of P8's absence that day starts to shape P8's behaviour as potentially disruptive. This is despite P8 having informed Practitioner One that she was unable to attend due to her children's illness (line 16). Practitioner Two's reaction of 'oh,

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right' (line 17) signifies her surprise at Practitioner One's utterance (see section 5.6 for a detailed discussion of the function of the discourse marker 'oh').

This construction of P8 could be regarded as the start of a speech chain (see Agha, 2003) in which P8 is negatively evaluated in relation to her attendance and overall commitment to the programme. This acts to initiate what Wortham (2005: 98) refers to as the establishment of a '"poetic structure" of signs and event-segments' in which 'these signs and segments become mutually presupposing'. This discourse around P8's attendance is returned to in Session 7 (6 March 2008), as evidenced below in the co-constructed telling of the ongoing event narrative of P8's absence.

Extract 5.3

1	Practitioner Two	Do you think P8's all right?
2	Practitioner One	She's all *right* isn't she? Um …
3	Practitioner Two	Like this hospital appointment
4	Practitioner One	{*I know*}
5	Practitioner Two	{I just wondered}
6	Practitioner One	Now she never said last week and I did check didn't I? And I wasn't
7		aware that she said she couldn't come.
8	Practitioner Two	Mm
9	Researcher	/She did just say and I think that you were talking to P5
10	Practitioner One	Oh right
11	Researcher	So you probably didn't just catch it.
12	Practitioner One	No I didn't.
13	Practitioner Two	Yeah. She said 'I can't come next week. I've got a hospital appointment.'
14		I know. And then {when we were talking about}
15	Practitioner One	{And she didn't give a talk or} wanted to do it at all did she?
16	Practitioner Two	No. And when we said about doing something she said to P7, didn't she?
17		'oh you've got that doctor's appointment next week'. Almost like
18		{putting words in her mouth}
19	Practitioner One	{Oh}
20	Practitioner Two	So I don't know. We didn't have her last term did we?
21	Practitioner One	No

22	Practitioner Two	So she's not one of our
23	Practitioner One	/No well I was concerned wasn't I? She's only here because P7's here.
24		Cause she wanted they, P7 used to come with P8 to my other group.
25	Practitioner Two	Ok

(De-briefing and Planning Discussion, 6 March 2008)

In Extract 5.3 Practitioner Two enquires about the health of P8, as P8 is absent due to a hospital appointment that day (see line 1). Practitioner One is adamant that P8 did not inform anyone about her hospital appointment (see lines 6-7). At this point the researcher points out that P8 actually did tell them about it the previous week (see line 9). In line 13 Practitioner Two confirms that P8 had told them. In stating this Practitioner Two voices P8, uttering that 'She said 'I can't come next week. I've got a hospital appointment.'' (line 13). This utterance could be interpreted as Practitioner Two purely relating what P8 said, but Practitioner Two directly follows this re-voicing with two negative utterances. Firstly she says 'I know' (line 14). In saying 'I know' Practitioner Two is echoing the 'I know' that Practitioner One utters in line 4. In both instances this use of 'I know' implies that the interlocutor is questioning the veracity of the utterance that immediately precedes it.

The second negative evaluation proved by Practitioner Two concerns her interpretation of a comment made by P8. In lines 16-18 Practitioner Two recalls a narrative fragment in which P8 reminds P7 that P7 will be absent next week due to P7 having a hospital appointment. Practitioner Two's commentary on this piece of information is to accuse P8 of 'almost like putting words in her mouth' (lines 17-18). Again the veracity of P8's statement is brought

into question and there is also an implication here that P8 is a potentially negative influence on P7.

At the same time that the reason behind P8's non-attendance is brought into question Practitioner One introduces into the conversation P8's reticence to give her presentation to the rest of the group (see line 15). This conflates her absence with a lack of commitment on her part, which is further compounded by Practitioner Two's utterances that 'We didn't have her last term did we?' (line 20) and 'So she's not one of our' (line 22). In this small exchange (lines 20—25) the practitioners are concurrently 'othering' P8 as not being an integral member of the group whilst Practitioner Two is interactionally aligning the practitioners with each other by her use of the personal pronouns 'we' and 'our'.

Although by Session 12 (see Extract 5.1) the practitioners have anecdotally established that P8 is neither committed to FLLN nor has 'brilliant' attendance, the initial doubts about P8's commitment to the programme are discursively sown by Practitioner One in Practitioner One's first allusion to P8 in the practitioners' planning meeting on 15 January 2008 (see Extract 5.4).

Extract 5.4

1	Practitioner One	P7's keen. Her friend P8 is now coming, and they're sharing a taxi.
2	Practitioner Two	Ok
3	Practitioner One	I think, um, it'll be interesting to see now, how that relationship develops
4		because, as you say, P7 made a friendship with P6. And P8 doesn't
5		always take things seriously.

(Planning Meeting, 15 January 2008)

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In the above exchange, in which narratives of 'ongoing events', 'allusions to tellings' and narratives of 'hypothetical events' are linked together (see Georgakopoulou, 2006b: 123), P8 is initially introduced as a friend of P7's, with whom she will be sharing a taxi. This could be regarded as a neutral, or even positive representation of P8. However, Practitioner One introduces some doubt into the desirability of the friendship between P7 and P8 by contrasting it with the friendship that P7 has formed with P6, which has previously been alluded to as having positive consequences for both P7 and P6. Practitioner One justifies her apparent negative evaluation of P8 by adding that 'P8 doesn't always take things seriously'. Thus P8 is positioned as a potentially bad influence on P7, and as someone who may not be fully committed to FLLN.

This locally constructed discourse that is introduced in the practitioners planning meeting becomes hardened over time. This is achieved through the practitioners' repetition of citational speech (see B. Davies, 2008) in relation to P8, which results in the creation of an habitual association between P8, a lack of commitment and poor attendance. This resonates with Wortham's (2005: 98) supposition that 'sometimes one denotationally explicit metasign suffices to frame other signs as having meant something in particular. But more often several subsequent utterances, each of which presuppose the same meaning for the focal sign are required'. In the case at hand, the negative habitual association that is initiated in the practitioners' planning meeting is rearticulated in subsequent utterances, for example in the de-briefing and planning discussions in Session 3 (see Extract 5.2), Session 7 (see Extract 5.3), Session 12 (see Extract 5.1), as well as in Session 10 (10 April 2008), Session 11 (17 April 2008), Session 13 (8 May 2008) and Session 14 (15 May 2008).

The interactions presented in Extracts 5.1, 5.2 and 5.3 exemplify the perennial nature of circulating discourses as they reemerge and become rearticulated on an ongoing basis. In the above discussion and in Chapter 4 we established that social identification is rarely accomplished in one discursive interaction (Wortham, 2005). Extract 5.5 reveals how such discourses are not static but more emergent in nature, with practitioners repositioning themselves towards the social identifications they are creating within and throughout their co-conversations. Therefore sometimes they reorientate themselves towards the discourses they have been co-constructing (as in Extract 5.5) and, on other occasions, such discourses become 'solidified' (see Wortham, 2003a). Extract 5.5 illustrates how a combination of personal narrative of the recent past (see Baynham, 2011) and telling of a future event (see Georgakopoulou, 2006b) interweaves to bring P8's negative association with commitment and attendance into question.

Extract 5.5

1	Practitioner One	So it's a very big step for her. But
2	Researcher	But having said that last week she did write
3	Practitioner One	{Yes she did}
4	Researcher	{She did write} two sides
5	Practitioner One	Yes, she did
6	Practitioner Two	Yes, she'd got a page of writing that I looked at.
7	Practitioner One	And I mean her attendance hasn't been that bad.
8	Practitioner Two	No
9	Researcher	No
10	Practitioner One	So
11	Practitioner Two	/I just wondered when she said that very suddenly I thought
12	Practitioner One	No
13	Practitioner Two	Is that because she's really worried about this. I mean she could not do
14		the accreditation if she doesn't want to. She could just
15	Practitioner One	/I, I shall ring her up
16	Practitioner Two	Ring her up
17	Practitioner One	Yeah

18	Practitioner Two	And say if you just want to come to the group and don't want to do it
19	Practitioner One	Yes
20	Practitioner Two	That's fine.
21	Practitioner One	Yeah
22	Practitioner Two	Being as it's her first lot of 30 [hours] she doesn't have to.
23	Practitioner One	No
24	Practitioner Two	She can just
25	Practitioner One	Yeah
26	Practitioner Two	put the bits and pieces
27	Practitioner One	Yeah
28	Practitioner Two	she wants to and not do the talk
29	Practitioner One	{Mm, mm}
30	Practitioner Two	{if she feels that worried} about it.

(De-briefing and Planning Discussion, 6 March 2008)

In lines 2 and 4 the researcher reminds the practitioners that P8 had been actively engaged in the previous week's session. Both Practitioner One and Practitioner Two concur with this statement (see lines 5-6). It is at this point that Practitioner One provides a somewhat hedged positive evaluation of P8's attendance – 'And I mean her attendance hasn't been that bad' (line 7). This evaluation is validated by Practitioner Two and the researcher by their individual utterances of 'no'.

Extract 5.5 displays a softening of the social identity with which P8 is being, and has come to be, associated. Not only is she positioned in more positive terms in relation to her engagement with FLLN but there is also a recognition by Practitioner Two, initially signaled in line 1 ('so it's a very big step for her') and returned to from line 11 onwards, that P8's perceived orientation towards the course may be to do with P8 finding it difficult to return to a formal learning environment in which she is facing the pressure of providing the evidence required to achieve a qualification. Thus, in Extract 5.5 P8 is identified in relation to two meta-narratives.

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Firstly, that adult learners need support, particularly in the initial stages of reengaging with formal learning as it can be very daunting when a learner's previous experience of schooling has resulted in them viewing themselves as a non-capable learner (see Crowther et al., 2010), and secondly that of a deficit model of adult learners, where a learner, in this case P8, is positioned as someone whose success on FLLN is limited to being measured purely in terms of attendance rather than attainment (this 'recognisable type' of adult literacy and numeracy learner is discussed in section 4.5.2). Besides the meta-narratives that are indexed in relation to P8 there are other normative discourses evident in Extract 5.5.

Practitioner Two mentions that P8 'could not do the accreditation if she doesn't want to' as (lines 13-14) as 'being as it's her first lot of 30 [hours] she doesn't have to' (line 22). In uttering these statements Practitioner Two is referencing her need to run the FLLN programme within certain funding constraints. The constraining consequence of funding requirements in relation to running FLLN is often cited by Practitioner Two. In doing so she usually chooses to distance herself from, and critique, the regulatory and arbitrary nature of the institutional discourse of funding requirements in which she is immersed. In Extract 5.5 Practitioner Two is able to use the way FLLN funding is organised to enable P8 not to have to complete the work required to achieve the accreditation on offer[19]. Thus Practitioner Two is not only able to position herself as someone knowledgeable enough about funding to be able

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[19] This is the first FLLN programme that P8 has attended therefore she does not have to complete any formal accreditation as any learner enrolled on FLLN is allowed an initial 30 hours of non-accredited learning.

to use it to her own advantage[20], but, moreover, to use it in a way that recognises that P8 may be feeling worried about putting together a portfolio of evidence, and saving her from having to do so. Therefore Practitioner Two is signaling that she is a conscientious and thoughtful tutor who is aware of the individual needs and concerns that the parents attending FLLN may experience. Practitioner Two agentively positions herself as a tutor doing her best to accommodate what she thinks are the needs of parents whilst also juggling the constraining discourse and practical implications of funding requirements.

I have just presented examples of how four different yet interrelated discourses are indexed in Extract 5.5. The first two discourses are concerned with the process of social identification in which P8 is positioned simultaneously as embodying low aspirations and as a learner who is potentially worried about the pressures that being engaged in formal learning brings. The second two discourses are concerned more with how Practitioner Two is constructing her own identity as a knowledgeable and caring tutor.

I have spent the first half of this section evidencing the emergent and ongoing ways in which P8 is socially identified by Practitioners One and Two, both in relation to locally produced circulating discourses and broader ideological categories of identity. However, I have just touched on, in the discussion above, how Practitioner Two (in Extract 5.5) positions herself 'vis-à-vis cultural discourses and normative (social) positions' (Bamberg, 2004b: 337). It is

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[20]In terms of official figures it is beneficial for Practitioner Two for P8 to be viewed as completing the programme despite not completing the accreditation. In this way P8 avoids being officially recorded as a non-completer and therefore does not negatively impact on Practitioner Two's completion figures.

this aspect of positioning analysis at Level Three - the identity positions of Practitioners One and Two - that I will concentrate on in the remainder of this section.

Let us now return to our focal extract, Extract 5.1, to investigate the interactional construction of the practitioners' identity positions indexed within this extract with respect to normative discourses, then go on to consider how such positions are rearticulated in subsequent interactions as well as in previous conversations.

5.7.2   Constructions of identity: the practitioners

Practitioners One and Two are engaged in the collaborative delivery of a FLLN programme to parents who are already clients of the family support charity for which Practitioner One works. The question then at Level Three of positioning analysis is how the practitioners interactionally make manifest their identity positions in relation to 'doing' collaborative working and teaching. In other words, what needs to be analysed in relation to both practitioners is 'Who am I in all this?' (Bamberg & Georgakopoulou, 2008: 391), and how this construction in the interactional here-and-now establishes them as 'a particular kind of person' (Bamberg & Georgakopoulou, 2008: 391) – and the subsequent transferability of this 'kind of person' to other situations. Therefore positioning analysis at Level Three foregrounds the supposition that 'whatever has been accomplished locally between the interactants by sharing the story can be told *about* the speaker elsewhere' (Bamberg, 2004b: 336-337).

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Close examination of Extract 5.1 reveals a number of identity positions with which Practitioner One identifies herself. At the beginning of the extract Practitioner One foregrounds herself as both perceptive about the sensibilities of parents (see line 1) as well as being someone with whom parents feel they can talk (see lines 1-3, 5). Practitioner One also demonstrates that she is perceptive about the emergent relationships between parents whilst on the FLLN programme (see lines 52-54).

From this extract it is clear that Practitioner One is knowledgeable about the parents' circumstances (see lines 49-50 and 52-53). However, she is not only knowledgeable about the parents themselves, which is understandable as she has a relationship with them outside the auspices of FLLN, but she is also the holder of this knowledge, knowledge that she can either choose to share or withhold from Practitioner Two. It would seem evident from Extract 5.1 that Practitioner One shares much information about the parents with Practitioner Two. This is made clear from both practitioners' references to previous conversations that they have had about P8 (see lines 7, 19, 49-52) as well as through Practitioner One's sharing of information within the current interaction (see lines 56-57). It is also apparent that Practitioner One is the main communication conduit with the parents. It is through Practitioner One that information is communicated to the parents outside of the FLLN session (see lines 24-26 and 34-37), and, in turn, it is through Practitioner One's narrative fragments that information concerning the parents is relayed back to Practitioner Two. Practitioner One sits in a privileged position with relation to information about parents because of her role as organiser within the family support charity with which the parents are affiliated, as such she has a pivotal position, one which Practitioners One and Two recognise as such. However, Practitioner One does not view

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herself as having a personal relationship with the parents, which she indicates when discussing the friendship between P7 and P8 (see line 59). Having clear boundaries around her role is very clearly part of what Practitioner One regards as part of her professionalism, an element of practice that she has brought with her from her time spent as a teacher in primary schools.

It would appear that Practitioner One positions herself as having an organising role in relation to 'who she is' in the collaborative partnership that she has developed, and continues to develop with Practitioner Two. Practitioner One is responsible for recruiting and liaising with parents, requiring regular contact with the parents outside of the FLLN sessions. She is also responsible for organising the transport (see lines 28-29). The importance of being able to fund transport (i.e. taxis) in order for parents to be able to attend FLLN, and the time-consuming nature of its organisation is a recurrent topic in the interactional data.
In demonstrating her role in relation to the parents, Practitioner One is delineating her role in relation to Practitioner Two. Practitioner One positions herself as someone who contributes to the working relationship with Practitioner Two in practical ways, whilst, because of her existing relationships with the parents, she is also able to be supportive of the parents within a classroom situation.

Within Extract 5.1 it is interesting that it is Practitioner Two who positions herself more overtly in terms of 'being a teacher'. It is Practitioner Two that questions whether P8 is 'on board or not' (line 11 and lines 34-35) with the FLLN programme, and mentions P8's less than brilliant attendance record (see line 17). It is Practitioner Two who identifies herself as a

teacher by the narrative fragment she chooses to tell about her improving relationship with P8 (see lines 38-45). However, at the same time, it is worth noting that when Practitioner Two speaks of P8's orientation towards FLLN she includes in her utterance the personal pronoun 'we'. By incorporating Practitioner One into this statement through Practitioner Two's change from the singular personal pronoun 'I' to the plural, 'we' (I never quite know whether we've quite got her on board or not P8 – lines 10-11), Practitioner Two is foregrounding the collaborative nature of their working relationship. The only other utterance of 'we' in Extract 5.1 is also by Practitioner Two. In this instance Practitioner Two moves from the first person plural 'we', to the second person singular 'you' (see line 34). In doing so Practitioner Two is indexing her acknowledgement that is it Practitioner One who actually speaks to the parents outside the classroom. Thus it could be argued that Practitioner Two's use of 'we' in this interactional exchange seeks to acknowledge that both Practitioner One and Practitioner Two are involved in the delivery of the programme, whilst Practitioner Two recognises that Practitioner One takes a lead when it comes to liaising with the parents.

Therefore, in terms of answering the question posed at the beginning of this section – 'Who am I in all this?' – it would appear that Practitioner One constructs herself in an organisational role. This role involves administrative tasks such as organising taxis and parent liaison. In addition she also constructs her identity in relation to providing support to parents within the classroom. Practitioner Two clearly identifies herself primarily as a teacher. In Practitioner Two's construction of herself as a teacher she is not only concerned that all the parents attending FLLN are engaged with the programme but that the parents also attend regularly. Practitioner Two portrays herself as a teacher who tries to develop sympathetic

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relationships with the parents she is teaching, although she has not found this easy in the case of P8.

The question that needs reflecting upon at this point is whether the identities that are locally accomplished by the practitioners in Extract 5.1 are reenacted elsewhere within the data collected for this study.

When I interviewed both practitioners individually I asked them directly what they viewed as their roles, and to describe how they worked with each other. Practitioner One's personal narrative in which she describes the nature of the collaboration between the practitioners (see Extract 5.6 below) supports the suppositions that I am making about the nature of Practitioner One's identity claims as evidenced in Extract 5.1.

Extract 5.6

1	Researcher	Just describe for me how you think um you and Practitioner Two work
2		together.
3	Practitioner One	I think we get on *very well*. And it's a good partnership I feel, because
4		I've been able to, if you like, provide the families and to give her a bit of
5		knowledge and understanding about them, and she's provided the work,
6		or, you know, the workload, the curriculum, whatever it's called to to
7		help them on … so me giving a bit of general knowledge, she adapted it
8		and adjusted it to the level that they're at.
9	Researcher	So what then do you see then as *your* role within your working together?
10	Practitioner One	… our partnership?
11	Researcher	Mm
12	Practitioner One	Um I don't know how to answer that one. (both laugh)
13	Practitioner One	Um I suppose we benefit from each other, that we're learning from each
14		other actually. I'm learning how, you know, she's adjusting the work and
15		she's understanding how the … where the families are coming from. So I
16		suppose we've both learned from each other. And we sort of sit down

| 17 | and pool our ideas. And by that you are learning from each other aren't |
| 18 | you. |

(Individual Interview with Practitioner One, 11 February 2008.)

In Extract 5.6 Practitioner One identifies herself and Practitioner Two in a number of ways. Practitioner One states that she has been responsible for recruiting the families (see line 4) and providing Practitioner Two with 'a bit of knowledge and understanding about them [the parents]' (lines 4-5). She goes on to say later in the interview that 'it's been very chaotic since you've [the researcher] been coming along', as describes herself as having been 'up and down' and 'in and out' (see Extract 5.7). As some of the children have not settled in the crèche it has been Practitioner One who has left the classroom and gone downstairs to the crèche to encourage the parents in question to come to the classroom and leave their children with the crèche workers.

One of the identity positions that Practitioner One enacts, also alluded to in Extract 5.1, could be interpreted as a display of maternal protectionism, a discourse often found in adult education (see section 4.5.2). Practitioner One somehow seems to feel responsible for the parents, and although she identifies Practitioner Two as in charge of delivering the curriculum aspect of FLLN (see Extract 5.6, lines 5-8 and line 14), and Practitioner Two being knowledgeable in this domain, she regards herself as providing support to the parents within the classroom situation. It is as though she feels there is a need for a 'buffer' between Practitioner Two and the parents. Moreover, it would appear as though she is supporting the

parents whilst also seeking to support Practitioner Two. How this process is manifested is

described in the ongoing event narrative related by Practitioner One in Extract 5.7.

Extract 5.7

1	Researcher	Do you see then Practitioner Two as being in charge of that teaching …
2		when you're together or do you see it as you doing it together?
3	Practitioner One	On the whole I think it's Practitioner Two. I just intervene sometimes, or
4		pull things back sometimes because I think she might be … particularly
5		in the beginning, I was a bit nervous, you know, if you interrupt the
6		parents or whatever and they needed to get something off their chest, that
7		I knew them better. I could say 'right' you know 'hang on a minute. We
8		need to move onto this now', or 'Practitioner Two's really wanting to
9		know how to do this' or what to do next, so can we … 'it's Practitioner
10		Two's turn now'. So … I'd sort of intervene. I just think it's been very
11		chaotic since you've [researcher] been coming along.

(Individual Interview with Practitioner One, 11 February 2008.)

In this extract Practitioner One refers back to when the practitioners started to work together.

In her description Practitioner One seems to be describing her 'buffering' role as monitoring

and, at times, directing what was happening in the 'parents-only' teaching session. Therefore,

through her description of her behaviour, it would seem as though Practitioner One is also

positioning herself as a teacher within this particular classroom, even though she may actually

view herself in a more supporting role in relation to Practitioner Two when it comes to the

delivery of the adult literacy curriculum on offer within the classroom itself. This is one

instance of many examples that I could draw upon that demonstrate how Practitioner One

both consciously and unconsciously draws upon her previous experience of being a primary

teacher. At times the discourse and practices of being a teacher in primary education would

appear to inhabit her behaviours without her being aware of this taking place.

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Although there are many more instances of these recognisable identities within Practitioner One's interactions I have only selected a few of these to act as exemplars. In doing so I think I have proven that the identity claims that I attribute to Practitioner One from a detailed analysis of Extract 5.1 are also evident at other times, along a trajectory of events. This is also true of Practitioner Two.

In her individual interview, Practitioner Two relates ongoing and recent past event narratives in which she positions herself as having specific responsibility for the delivery of FLLN (see Extract 5.8). It is understandable that she regards herself as taking a leading role as she is specifically working in partnership with Practitioner One because of her (Practitioner Two's) expertise and understanding of what is involved in delivering a FLLN programme.

Extract 5.8

1	Researcher	So what do you see as your role then, within that relationship?
2	Practitioner Two	Um well I think I'm the person who, who drives it really. Cause I say we
3		need to cover this, this, this and this and this. And then we try and work
4		it out between us as to the best way to do that. I mean her, her skill is
5		meant to be in the joint time but we do tend to do it between us.
6	Researcher	Mm
7	Practitioner Two	When we were planning we were tending to bounce ideas off each other.
8		So, um but I think I'm the one with the agenda to get through. Her
9		agenda is just to be there and be supportive and doing the logistics of the
10		taxis and those sorts of things

(Individual Interview with Practitioner Two, 21 February 2008)

When asked to describe her role Practitioner Two states 'I think I'm the person who, who drives it really' (line 2). She makes it clear that she needs to take the lead, as she is 'the one

with the agenda to get through' (line 8) as opposed to Practitioner One whose agenda 'is just to be there and be supportive and doing the logistics of the taxis and those sorts of things' (lines 9-10). However, Practitioner Two also acknowledges that, although she, Practitioner Two, is more cognizant of what the content of the session needs to be (see lines 2-3), she states that both herself and Practitioner One plan the content of the session together (see lines 3-4 and 7). This echoes Practitioner One's description of how they share ideas during the planning process (see Extract 5.6, lines 16-17).

Later in the interview with Practitioner Two, when discussing whether it may be more useful for Practitioner One to be present in the crèche session instead of the 'parents-only' teaching session (see Figure 2, for an overview of the structure of the FLLN programme), Practitioner Two proposes that one of the reasons that Practitioner One comes to the 'parents-only' teaching session is because 'she's [Practitioner One] quite interested in it, isn't she?'. Practitioner Two then adds that 'she [Practitioner One] wants I think she wants to know as well what I'm saying and what's going on, which is fine'.

By Practitioner Two referring to Practitioner One as wanting to know 'what's going on' in the adult session, Practitioner Two is positioning herself as being the one who knows 'what's going on' and therefore as the person who has a greater understanding and knowledge of the content of the teaching session. For although Practitioners One and Two may 'bounce ideas off each other' (line 7), it is Practitioner Two who goes away and writes a more detailed plan for the upcoming lesson, and it is Practitioner Two that takes a lead in the teaching sessions themselves. Therefore it is evident that Practitioner Two not only positions herself as a

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competent teacher through her own narration but also that she enacts this by taking on the roles and responsibilities of teaching in the classroom as well as in maintaining the textual practices of teaching, e.g. writing the scheme of work, marking the parents' work.

Although I have not gone into great detail about the identities-in-interaction that Practitioner Two is projecting in Extract 5.1, I think I have demonstrated that her self-positioning in terms of being a conscientious and thorough teacher is not a one-case only portrayal, and is achieved both discursively and interactionally. I have also tried to show that both practitioners identify themselves as having distinct yet intertwining roles. This is discussed in detail in Chapter 6.

The above discussion draws on the two threads of positioning analysis at Level Three: the social identification of the narrated and the self-construction of the narrator(s). I have tried to show how the social identification of P8 becomes habitualised by the practitioners. I have also analysed the emerging identity construction in which Practitioners One and Two are engaged, in and through their interactional exchanges.

5.8   Conclusion

This chapter highlights the dialogic and referential nature of the small stories that 'we tell in passing' (Bamberg, 2004a: 356). It examines how narratives-in-interaction not only reflect and reinforce our attitudes and values but also have the potential to impact and inform behaviour.

P8 was withdrawn from FLLN before the end of the programme. Although there is not an argument for a causal relationship between her withdrawal and the practitioners' habitual negative positioning of P8 in terms of commitment and attendance, what is clear is that such narrative tellings circulated and permeated in and across the discursive practices of the practitioners on an on-going basis. These habitual associations are formed over time, creating a 'speech chain' (Agha, 2003) across a trajectory of events. What is important to bear in mind is that we all are guilty of selecting particular anecdotes or narrative fragments, which, whether subconsciously or consciously chosen, in their telling position those of whom we speak, and, of course, ourselves. However, perhaps we need to give more thought to the narratives that we share as it would seem that inevitably they will be resurrected and re-enacted along the way, for such is the temporality, and power, of social identification.

The practitioners in this study would not appear to be aware that they were involved in the ongoing and emergent co-construction of P8, positioning her as predominantly an uncommitted participant in FLLN, yet at times acknowledging the circumstances that may underpin her apparent attitude towards FLLN – being a 'fragile' adult learner, lacking confidence in the more formal learning environment of FLLN with its expectations that those attending would meet the standards required to achieve a qualification. In P8's case, the objectification of her durable identity (see Wortham, 2008a) became 'solidified' (see Wortham, 2003a) as an unengaged participant, who was not meeting the requirements of the programme. However, this is just a single example of a specific parent's process of social identification.

One of the other parents, P6, was initially constructed as being 'always negative' (Planning Meeting, 15 January 2008), and therefore apparently uncommitted. However, during the period of the FLLN programme she became identified by the practitioners in a predominantly positive light. Their narrative allusions to P6 became patterned with repeated positive evaluations. The length of this thesis does not allow me to present more than one in-depth example of the process of social identification but I think it is important to foreground that the thickening of social identities can follow both positive and negative pathways. Working across and within data over a trajectory of events in which specific individuals are tracked is a useful analytical process, enabling the researcher to investigate the relative positioning of parents, revealing how the small stories that circulate about parents may actually impact on the ways in which the parents are not only positioned in discursive terms, but how they are dealt with in more practical ways by the practitioners.

In this chapter I have used positioning analysis to reveal how, through the telling of small stories, the practitioners make claims in relation to their own identities, particularly in terms of the working relationship and roles they undertake in concert and in counterpoint to each other. In their storytelling they are indexing normative as well as locally produced discourses. Thus this chapter reiterates the interplay between the here-and-now of narratives-in-interaction and how they are 'embedded in a wider social world' (Creese, 2008: 233).

CHAPTER 6: PRACTITIONERS' STORIES ABOUT PRACTITIONERS

6.1   Introduction

In the previous two chapters I have concentrated on the narratives-in-interaction that the practitioners have related about the parents attending the FLLN programme. In doing so I have made it clear that, as Wortham and Gadsden (2006: 319) point out, narrators not only position people represented in their narratives as recognisable types of people but that such positionings include their 'own narrated selves'. Thus in Chapter 4 I presented a typology of parents as revealed through a detailed analysis of the narratives recounted about the parents by the practitioners. In doing so I was able to reveal not only the positionings attributed to the parents by the practitioners but also those positionings that were enacted by the practitioners themselves as part of the story-telling process. In Chapter 5 I used positioning analysis to provide a fine-grained analysis of one parent in particular, P8. Undertaking such an analysis also enabled a detailed study of the positionings taken up, resisted and negotiated by the practitioners in their co-construction of P8.

This chapter focuses on the narratives that Practitioners One and Two relate about themselves and each other. The aim of the chapter is to provide an insight into how the practitioners position themselves and each other by dint of the narratives-in-interaction that they share during their conversations, in their individual interviews, and within their teaching sessions with the parents. By examining these narrative tellings I aim to tease out the range of

discourses that are embedded and invoked within these tellings as well as examine how these narratives operate to discursively construct the practitioners' working practices.

This chapter is divided into five main sections. The first section sets the scene for the rest of the chapter, explaining why the practitioners' stories have been organised into the three themes of *fragments of autobiography*, *narratives about each other*, and *narrative tellings about working together*. The following three sections address each of these themes in turn. The conclusion constitutes the final section.

6.2   Practitioners' stories about themselves and each other

It became clear to me during the fieldwork phase of this research that the practitioners often told stories about previous and more current experiences which appeared to underpin and sometimes validate the decisions and the approaches they used in their delivery of FLLN. Having similar experiences and sharing these experiences with each other appeared to create a bond between them. However, this was not the only 'head note' that I developed during my observations (see Chapter 3). It was also apparent that the practitioners talked about each other – sometimes when the other practitioner was present and sometimes in their absence. In providing these often fleeting narrative orientations about each other, each practitioner discursively situated the other, providing an insight into how each regarded their co-worker.

Both practitioners were aware that one aspect of my research was concerned with trying to understand how FLLN practitioners develop and maintain an effective working relationship.

As a consequence there were times when I asked direct questions concerning their joint working practices. However, at the same time, I was privy to their actual working relationship and how this unfolded in their moment-by-moment interactions. Indeed how they discursively constructed their working together was an integral part of most of their conversational exchanges. Therefore I am analysing both narratives told in elicited responses as well as those narrative fragments that could be considered to have occurred more naturally.

On close analysis, three broad categories of narrative can be extrapolated from the range of narratives told by the practitioners (other than those about the parents). Firstly, practitioners relate autobiographical narratives – both of a personal and professional nature. Secondly, they talk about each other.[21] Thirdly, they tell small stories that illuminate how they work with each other. Often these three categories of narrative are not discrete.

Each of the following sections looks at, in turn, the three types of small stories that the practitioners tell about themselves and each other. The first of these examines the fragments of autobiography that the practitioners share about themselves.

6.3   Fragments of autobiography

The fragments of autobiography that the practitioners reveal in their interactions fall into three categories. The first of these is *personal narratives*. The other two categories are concerned

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[21] They also relate anecdotes specifically about other professionals with whom they have worked or currently work. When these stories do not also contain autobiographical allusions they have not been included in this chapter.

with professional identification. The practitioners each index their *professional pasts* in the stories they tell. The third category is concerned with the narrative tellings that they relate about their *current professional practice*. Although I have identified *current professional practice* as a separate category within 'fragments of autobiography' these stories tend to overlap with those narrative tellings that discursively construct the practitioners' joint working practices, therefore I have decided not to address *current professional practice* as a separate category but integrate it into section 6.5.

6.3.1   Personal narratives

In Ivanič et al.'s (2006: 41) research into the social elements of adult LLN learning they noticed that 'tutors used social talk, talk about the everyday, talk about themselves as bridging between formal and informal elements of lessons'. Thus they observed many instances of tutors 'interweaving personal and task-based talk, fine-tuning their individual or group interactions according to the reactions of students' (p.42). This is the sort of practice that Practitioner Two frequently engages in whilst teaching (This is also noted in section 4.5.3). Many of the personal allusions she makes during her teaching are in relation to her experiences of being a mother. An example of this is in Extract 6.1 when Practitioner Two empathises with P1 about her son's teething.

Extract 6.1

P1 tells me that she's just sneaked out while her son was looking at a magazine. Practitioner Two says that her son is looking a lot happier this week. P1 explains that it's because he's teething and because of his sleep patterns. Practitioner One is making drinks for P1 and P3.

P3 has gone into the kitchen to help make her drink. Practitioner Two talks about teething with P1, and the experience of one of the other mums that Practitioner Two works with.

(Fieldnotes, 24 April 2008)

In this extract Practitioner Two simultaneously indexes her current professional practice as she draws on a conversation she has had in another group with a mother who is having difficulty with her child's teething. In this way Practitioner Two is demonstrating how autobiographical narratives often index multiple experiences. In this case her personal experiences as a mother herself as well as her current experience of working with other parents attending FLLN programmes.

As mentioned above, it can be argued that the type of talk Practitioner Two involves herself with, exemplified in Extract 6.1, is mainly concerned with her experiences of motherhood. Practitioner Two is aware that she mentions her children within her teaching (see Extract 6.2).

Extract 6.2

1	Practitioner Two	Um … I know that I talk about my own children a lot. Um cause I just
2		sort of think I'd be rubbish in prisons because you're not meant to in
3		prisons are you, say anything about your family background and I don't
4		think I could do it. Sometimes I think it really helps cause I think they
5		like to know that perhaps you've had similar issues or you've had similar
6		problems. I think it makes you, makes it less of a, sort of a 'oh well yes
7		you're like that but I'm like this'. I think it's common ground isn't it
8		really when I say 'yeah my daughter is a fussy eater or my daughter
9		doesn't sleep or'. So I think in that respect it helps to break down barriers
10		and … it helps to just sort of give you some common ground.

(Individual Interview with Practitioner Two, 21 February 2008)

In the above extract Practitioner Two is reflecting on why she incorporates personal narratives into her teaching. She is clearly using her experiences strategically as a way of positioning herself as similar to the parents, as sharing comparable experiences to the parents. Her repetition of the phrase 'common ground' (see lines 7 and 10) denotes the importance that Practitioner Two gives to being viewed by the parents as having first-hand experience of the issues that may arise when raising children, as she thinks it helps promote an equitable relationship between the parents and herself as a practitioner. This is apparent in the assertion she makes in lines 4-7.

However, what is also interesting is, at the same time as strategically aligning herself with the parents during the teaching session, in conversations with Practitioner One, when indexing her experiences of motherhood and childrearing, Practitioner Two often vacillates between putting the parents' parenting practices in opposition to those demonstrated by Practitioner One and herself (see Extract 4.15. and Extract 4.19), whilst on other occasions aligns her own personal experiences of childrearing with those experienced by the parents (see Extract 4.5).

Practitioner Two consciously recognises the relevance and function of integrating personal narratives into her teaching and also their significance in the process of building effective relationship with colleagues (see Extract 6.3).

Extract 6.3

1	Practitioner Two	And it was the week before and she said 'I'm going to a wedding' and I
2		was going 'oh that sounds nice'. Cause I quite like talking about things
3		like that

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4	Practitioner One	Ah
5	Practitioner Two	but you have different relationships with different people
6	Practitioner One	Yes
7	Practitioner Two	don't you? No you see I would never talk to [name of Family Learning
8		Manager] about … She's not really very interested in talking about
9		things like that. Do you know what I mean? I might say 'what are you
10		wearing?' 'I'm wearing a skirt and top.' But she's, but do you know what
11		I mean? It's … that doesn't really interest her as a person whereas I quite
12		like talking about, and I'm quite interested, and I'm quite good at
13		noticing when people have got new things like new glasses or like your
14		[the researcher's] shoes and that's the sort of person I am though. But …
15	Researcher	But then there's the issue about how people build rapport isn't there?
16	Practitioner Two	Yeah and
17	Practitioner One	{Yes yes}
18	Practitioner Two	{perhaps that perhaps people just think} I'm very nosey and not very,
19		you know … a bit soft really. But that's the sort of thing I'm interested
20		in. But then people quite like it if you remember things.
21	Researcher	Absolutely
22	Practitioner One	{That's right. Yes.}
23	Practitioner Two	{'Oh I really like those shoes} you had on last week' or 'How did you
24		get on at your wedding?' 'Oh actually it was really'. And I think it's a
25		personal interest, isn't it, in people, other than the professional. So I quite
26		like that's how I am really, {whether that's a good or a bad}
27	Practitioner One	/{On the whole you want to be} friends don't you, but sometimes you
28		can't take to everyone, can you, but
29	Practitioner Two	No
30	Practitioner One	I think you're lucky aren't you, when it just sort of flows. And you think
31		'oh yes, I'm looking forward to that'.
32	Practitioner Two	Yeah
33	Practitioner One	It makes it all much easier then.

(Debriefing and Planning Discussion, 13 March 2008)

Practitioner Two also recognises that the integration of social talk in interactions with

colleagues is not always appropriate, as not everybody wants to engage in personal

discussions. Practitioner Two makes the general comment, as 'you have different

relationships with different people' (line 5), but then goes on to particularise this comment by

providing the Family Learning Manager as an example of someone who does not readily

engage in personal talk (see lines 7-11). Practitioner Two mentions that part of the reason that she engages in social talk with colleagues is because she is actually interested in other people (see lines 11-14). However, Practitioner Two also realises that 'people quite like it if you remember things' (lines 19-20). That this is the case is born out by Practitioner One's interjection that 'On the whole you want to be friends don't you, but sometimes you can't take to everyone, can you,', implying that they, Practitioners One and Two, are friends, which is beyond what is required for a professional relationship, but having such a relationship that 'just sort of flows' (line 30), makes for a more amenable professional relationship between them. Thus Practitioner Two's interweaving of personal narratives within her teaching and in her interactions with Practitioner One encourages both the parents and Practitioner One to share their personal short stories with her, enabling Practitioner Two to integrate her knowledge of her co-conversationalists into subsequent interactions. This I would argue she does more because, as she puts it, 'that's how I am really' (line 26), rather than as a purposeful decision to use her own personal narratives to elicit those of other people in order to build rapport. However, the end result is that whether she does this on a conscious or subconscious basis, it does enable her to develop very good working relationships with both the parents and Practitioner One.

Practitioner One would appear to be considerably more reticent about sharing personal tellings with the parents than Practitioner Two. She does not overtly index either her own experience of being a mother or her experience of being a school teacher in her interactions with the parents. (This will be returned to in section 6.3.2.) Only when there is discussion of holding children's parties does she briefly reference her experience of holding parties for her

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children. This is the only instance I have noted of her including personal narratives about issues around childrearing within the teaching sessions. However, in her conversations with Practitioner Two, Practitioner One often alludes to her experiences of being a mother – sometimes aligning her experiences with those of the parents, and sometimes placing herself in opposition by dint of the negative evaluative comments that she attaches to the narrative tellings she makes in relation to the parents' parenting practices (see Extract 4.15).

When looking at the type of talk in which Practitioner One engages with the parents it is necessary to take into account that Practitioner One does not have the same kind of relationship with the parents as Practitioner Two. Practitioner One's relationship is informed by her institutional role as organiser for the family support charity for which she works, therefore she does not appear to deem it appropriate to relate her own personal narratives to the parents who she has contact with outside the teaching space of the FLLN programme. As mentioned previously (see Chapter 5) Practitioner One clearly delineates between her professional and personal life, making sure that there is very limited crossover between the two in terms of her interactions with the parents.

The types of personal narrative tellings that both practitioners share are not confined to the subject of childrearing. However, childrearing is a topic that both practitioners share a common interest in. These stories are obviously at the forefront of many of the practitioners' conversations because of the nature of the programme they are jointly delivering. Sharing their personal stories indexes their personal values and beliefs about the nature of what constitutes good parenting; values and beliefs that cannot be extricated from their own

middle-class backgrounds, or indeed their respective experiences in early years education. I have chosen to discuss this category at some length because the language practices that the practitioners engage in reveal their stances in relation to the 'curriculum' of parenting skills that they view parents want to be taught, indeed, 'that's *really* what they desperately want' (Debriefing and Planning Discussion, 8 May 2008). It also highlights the differences between the practitioners in terms of how they conduct interactions with the parents during the teaching session, as evidently Practitioner One appears much more guarded about indexing her experiences of being a mother when she talks to the parents than Practitioner Two does.

Indeed, despite both practitioners engaging in what I am calling 'general personal talk' – a category which covers talking about one's health, holidays and home-lives, and includes sharing personal viewpoints – it is noticeable that although both practitioners talk about their health with the parents, Practitioner One does not choose to integrate personal narratives about her home-life into the teaching sessions, as opposed to Practitioner Two who appears to integrate elements of her home-life into her teaching without giving it a second thought. However, both practitioners share narratives concerning 'general personal talk' with each other.

There is another category of personal narratives that the practitioners share with each other (and the researcher) but not with the parents. Each of the practitioners articulates and re-articulates small stories about their 'personal circumstances'. Although these types of personal narratives are not going to be discussed here I think it is important to register that the practitioners' interactions with each other often include personal narratives other than those

told in relation to childrearing. It is in their sharing of 'general personal talk' and stories about their 'personal circumstances' as well as those about 'childrearing' that the practitioners co-construct their own lifeworld of joint working practices.

6.3.2 Fragments about their professional pasts

I have already mentioned (see Chapter 4) that both practitioners draw on their backgrounds of working in schools, as they index in narrative tellings the importance of ensuring that children are prepared for what is required of them at school, what the practitioners regard as appropriate ways for parents to play with children, and how both practitioners make manifest through their language practices – their lexical choices and descriptions of parents' behaviour – discourses that are prevalent in schools. I have also discussed how Practitioner One uses her experience of working with the Children's Services to inform her decision-making processes in relation to which families she chooses to take part in FLLN (see Extract 4.13), and how Practitioner Two's experience as a nursery nurse feeds into a discourse of maternal protectionism in which both practitioners are invested (see section 4.5.2).

Tett (2001: 192) states that analysts agree that in order to enable successful collaboration to take place across organisations, organisations need to have 'similar (or at least compatible) aims, involve similar professional groups and involve similar culture, procedures and perceived power'. Practitioners One and Two are perceived (one of the reasons the Family Learning Manager recommended that I attend this iteration of a FLLN programme was because the practitioners were viewed as having a successful partnership) and would regard

themselves as having built, and as continuing to develop an effective collaborative working relationship with each other.

I would argue that one factor that underpins their relationship is the similarity of their respective professional pasts, but moreover what is particularly significant is what they share with each other through the telling of their autobiographical narratives about their pasts, and the ways in which they do so. By dint of the narratives that the practitioners recall they position themselves and co-construct each other as members of similar professional groups and index similar cultural references. They have both worked in schools in early year settings but whilst Practitioner One was a teacher, Practitioner Two was a nursery nurse – roles that traditionally are afforded very different statuses. Practitioner One is very aware that having been a teacher in the past may have the potential of adversely affecting her developing relationship with Practitioner Two, and states that she neither told Practitioner Two nor the parents that she had been a teacher as she 'didn't know how it would influence the relationship [with Practitioner Two] ' (Individual Interview, 11 February 2008), whereas Practitioner Two had already informed Practitioner One that she had worked as a nursery nurse before becoming involved in family learning.

In a subsequent discussion, in which both practitioners share personal narratives about the practitioners' previous jobs roles, Practitioner One restates that she was worried that if she had shared her work history with Practitioner Two it could have impacted negatively on their working relationship (see Extract 6.4).

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Extract 6.4

1	Practitioner One	[…] I think I said that [being worried about what Practitioner Two might
2		think] in my interview didn't I? That if I told her straightaway I was a
3		teacher you might 'oh well she thinks she knows it all'. *(laughs)*
4	Practitioner Two	I wouldn't have thought that.
5	Practitioner One	Well you might though but …
6	Practitioner Two	I wouldn't have thought … I don't think I would cause like my best …
7		friend really
8	Practitioner One	Yeah.
9	Practitioner Two	who I go on holiday with is like the teacher I worked with in nursery.
10	Practitioner One	But some teachers do {have that}
11	Practitioner Two	{Some teachers} are very like that aren't they? And you're not as
12		comfortable with them.
13	Practitioner One	No. With older children you could see, the primary school where I was,
14		that they had certain specific jobs to do
15	Practitioner Two	Yes
16	Practitioner One	and that was that. The photocopying or …
17	Practitioner Two	Yes
18	Practitioner One	But with younger children I don't think that applies so much. I may be
19		wrong but in my {circumstances}
20	Practitioner Two	{experience}
21	Practitioner One	It's never …
22	Practitioner Two	No.
23	Practitioner One	I've always just welcomed the nursery nurse being there and I've never
24		asked her to do anything I wouldn't do.
25	Practitioner Two	That's how I've always been. And when we've had students I would
26		never ask the student to do anything that I wouldn't do myself.
27	Practitioner One	Mm
28	Practitioner Two	But that's us as people isn't it?
29	Practitioner One	Yes. Yes, it could well be.

(Debriefing and Planning Discussion, 20 March 2008)

In the above extract Practitioner Two argues that knowing that Practitioner One had been a

teacher would not have made any difference to her (see line 4), and when Practitioner One

expresses doubt as to whether this would be the case (see line 5), Practitioner Two responds

by repeating her previous utterance 'I wouldn't have thought' (line 6) but this time gives a

reason as to why this is the case – 'I don't think I would cause like my best … friend really

(lines 6-7) who I go on holiday with is like the teacher I worked with in nursery' (line 9). This is an interesting statement to make as in doing so Practitioner Two seems to be simultaneously offering this information as a way of expressing that, firstly, she had a very good working relationship with the teacher with whom she used to work, therefore the 'label' of teacher would not have made any difference to Practitioner Two, and secondly, the teacher became a personal friend of hers, which could be regarded as Practitioner Two positioning herself and the teacher as similar sorts of people. The inference from this is that Practitioners Two and One are similar types of people and that Practitioner Two recognises that Practitioner One is not one of those 'know-it-all' types of teacher. Therefore in making this statement Practitioner Two is socially identifying Practitioner One as the type of teacher that does not let perceived status differences determine the nature of a working relationship. Practitioner One continues this 'othering' of certain kinds of teachers by her use of the quantifier 'some' in line 10. Practitioner Two echoes this phrase in her subsequent utterance 'Some teachers are very like that aren't they? And you're not as comfortable with them' (lines 11-12). Within these few lines Practitioners One and Two socially identify and co-construct 'some teachers' as 'other' to Practitioner One.

'Some teachers' is not the only linguistic structure that is initially articulated by Practitioner One then repeated by Practitioner Two. In lines 23-24 Practitioner One mentions her practice in relation to working with nursery nurses. In lines 25-26 Practitioner Two almost repeats Practitioner One's phrase 'I've never asked her to do anything I wouldn't do' when she utters 'And when we've had students I would never ask the student to do anything that I wouldn't

do myself'. Thus Practitioner Two not only shows her agreement with Practitioner One through the content of her utterance but also by its structure.

Maybin (2006) draws on Falk's (1980) term 'duetting', originally coined to describe the way couples sometimes talk to a third party, to illustrate the manner in which the children she interviewed spoke when sharing information with her.

> Falk suggests that where the partners have mutual knowledge of a topic, a sense of camaraderie and a common communicative goal, linguistic patterns will include speakers repeating or paraphrasing each other, talking simultaneously but not in competition for the floor and overlapping and continuing each other's turns. (Maybin, 2006: 58)

The repeated use of 'some teachers' and the reframed phrasing of 'I've never asked her to do anything I wouldn't do' to 'I would never ask the student to do anything that I wouldn't do myself' would seem to provide examples of the 'repetition and parallel phrasing which is typical of duetting between friends' (Maybin, 2006: 59). The practitioners also often speak at the same time as one another. An example of their utterances overlapping is evident in lines 19-20. Practitioner One is holding the floor, and utters the word 'circumstances' to complete her turn. At the same time as Practitioner One saying 'circumstances' Practitioner Two utters 'experience', offering this as an appropriate word to complete Practitioner One's utterance. Indeed in the context of Practitioner One's utterance, 'experience' is a semantically suitable replacement for 'circumstances'.

There are many examples in the interactional data of both practitioners continuing each other's turns in the same vein as started by the initial speaker. Maybin (2006: 59) proposes that 'in conveying shared knowledge about events and practices and expressing friendship, children's utterances may be so closely dialogically aligned that they may speak, as it were, with one voice'. I am not arguing that the practitioners share the same voice but analysis of the interactional data would suggest that when both practitioners are recalling the practices of their professional pasts they both index shared cultural references in relation to working in early years settings in schools and in doing so interactionally align themselves with each other. They demonstrate a collaborative style of interacting in which they may talk simultaneously but are rarely in competition to hold the floor.

In Extract 6.4 Practitioner Two continuously foregrounds the practitioners' similarities by indexing what they have in common, rather than any differences between them. In the penultimate turn of the exchange Practitioner Two offers a closing comment that functions as a positive evaluation of the co-constructed narrative of their past professional practice. She comments 'But that's us as people isn't it?' (line 28). Again this utterance serves the purpose of reinforcing their similarities – that they are similar types of people – going beyond any specific job roles they may have inhabited in their past work histories, although it is their past work histories that underpin and reinforce their current working relationship.

This section has concentrated on the practitioners' narratives of their professional pasts in terms of how the practitioners index their professional histories in their interactions with each other, as opposed to how the practitioners utilise their professional pasts in relation to their

interactions with the parents. Both practitioners regularly index their past experiences in their interactions with each other. Moreover, what is indicated by an analysis of their professional past narratives is that their both having their professional roots in early years education is a significant factor in their joint working practices and the ease with which they relate to one another. They are both operating from a culture which expects and requires certain behaviours from children when they enter school, and therefore a certain type of support and knowledge is required of their parents. These are the types of parenting practices that the practitioners are trying to encourage with the parents attending FLLN.

The next section examines the narratives that the practitioners tell about each other.

6.4   Narratives about each other

This section focuses on the narrative allusions and stories that the practitioners relate about each other in the other's absence. It is divided into two parts. Firstly it looks at tellings about Practitioner One. The stories that Practitioner One tells about Practitioner Two constitute the second part of this section

As noted in Table 3.1 there were occasions when only one of the practitioners was present for the teaching of the FLLN programme. In weeks 2, 3, 5, 6, 7 and 15 the programme was delivered, for all intents and purposes, by one practitioner as opposed to two (see section 3.4 for an explanation of the reasons for the practitioners' absences). On these occasions I was struck by the fact that, although the other practitioner was absent, they were discursively

present, as the practitioner running the session would refer to the other member of staff in their absence. They did not tell fully blown stories but rather made brief narrative allusions to the other practitioner. I am interested in how each practitioner's narrative allusions discursively position their colleague.

At the same time as the teaching was being undertaken, I also individually interviewed each practitioner. During these interviews both practitioners made reference to their co-worker as a naturally occurring part of their responses. They also did so as a result of being asked direct questions about them (see Appendix 8, questions 4 and 5). This section draws on both these elicited and non-elicited narrative tellings.

6.4.1   Tellings about Practitioner One

I have already mentioned that the practitioners recognise the significance of providing an inviting learning environment as a precursor to developing and sustaining a good working relationship with the parents attending FLLN (see section 4.5.3). In Practitioner Two's telling of a 'narrative as example' (see Baynham, 2011: 67), Practitioner Two is narrating how Practitioner One's actions greatly contribute to the creation of a welcoming space for the parents (see Extract 6.5).

Extract 6.5

1	Practitioner Two	That's Practitioner One though isn't it? Practitioner One's the one who
2		lays everything and puts … The first week Practitioner One put flowers
3		on and a tablecloth. Now you see I wouldn't have done that. I wouldn't

4		have thought to that extreme. I mean I always get my pens out and my
5		paper out and all my bits but I wouldn't have put flowers on the table.
6		But that's what Practitioner One did and a tablecloth, to make it more
7		welcoming.
8	Researcher	So you know those little things sometimes are easy to take for granted.
9		And I've got to remember not to take them for granted, because that isn't
10		what always happens.
11	Practitioner Two	No, *absolutely not* … No. And that's something I, you know, you think
12		about that sometimes don't you afterwards. And you think … 'that was a
13		really nice touch. That's a good thing to think about.' … yeah. So and
14		that's what Practitioner One brings to the relationship that I don't …
15		That's her nurturing isn't it?

(De-briefing and Planning Discussion, 28 February 2008)

Clift (2006: 580) argues that reported speech has the capacity to provide evidence 'as no mere paraphrase could, of an event which existed prior to, and independently of, that which prompted its introduction in the current talk'. This is the work that Practitioner Two's use of self-reported speech is performing here, in lines 12-13. In integrating reported speech into her utterance Practitioner Two is using it as a way of indexing 'evidentiality or stance within the turn' (Clift, 2006: 583). Such 'stand-alone evidentials typically serve to calibrate the speaker's accountability with regard to the truth of what is said' (Clift, 2006: 583). By using this linguistic device Practitioner Two is emphasising the veracity of her positioning of Practitioner One as a thoughtful and nurturing person.

Practitioner Two rearticulates this positioning of Practitioner One on a number of occasions. In my fieldnotes I noted that on the first week that Practitioner One was on holiday (Week 5), Practitioner Two made a comment about Practitioner One to the parents (see Extract 6.6).

Extract 6.6

Practitioner Two opens the biscuits. Practitioner Two tells everybody that Practitioner One 'is so conscientious' as she's given Practitioner Two the biscuits for the two weeks when she's on holiday.

(Fieldnotes, 21 February 2008)

This narrative allusion may appear so brief that it is hardly worth being mentioned but such allusions contribute to the social identification of Practitioner One as a certain type of practitioner, and person. During the same session P6 contributes to this social identification of Practitioner One by recounting a small story concerning her leaving an inhaler in the classroom and Practitioner One phoning round all of the parents to see whose it was. Thus these two comments contribute to a narrative of thoughtfulness and concern about the parents. They also index Practitioner One's organisational role as Practitioner One is responsible for buying the biscuits, and liaising with the centre in which they run the FLLN programme (Practitioner One's role as organiser is discussed further in sections 5.7.2 and 6.5). Another organisation role that Practitioner One performs is indexed by a separate comment that Practitioner Two makes to the parents in Practitioner One's absence.

In Week 3 (when Practitioner One is required to work in the crèche), Practitioner Two explains that there is going to be a guest speaker the following week who is 'going to do manicures and talk about beauty routines and things like that' (Fieldnotes, 31 January 2008). When P6 asks a question about the speaker that requires a more detailed reply, Practitioner Two acknowledges that she has not been party to the arrangements – 'I don't know the details. Practitioner One arranged it' (Fieldnotes, 31 January 2008).

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Practitioner Two also describes Practitioner One as somebody who enables the parents to access FLLN because without her some of the parents would not be confident enough to attend. As Practitioner Two puts it 'some of the others last term weren't so comfortable. Um, and that's where Practitioner One [comes in], cause they knew Practitioner One' (Individual Interview, 21 February 2008). From Practitioner Two's viewpoint the presence of Practitioner One provides ongoing support to the parents. However, as we have already mentioned, there is a careful balancing act between sometimes providing such a 'supportive' environment and delimiting the expectations that one may have of the parents, so much so that just attending a programme becomes the full extent of what is expected of 'fragile' learners by the tutors who teach them (see section 4.5.2). This is exemplified by a small story in which Practitioner Two interweaves an allusion to a previous telling by Practitioner One, with a narrative about the shared events of earlier that day (see Extract 6.7).

Extract 6.7

1	Practitioner Two	Um. I really hope that they recognise that it's like a proper qualification.
2		It's not like a micky mouse something.
3	Researcher	Mm
4	Practitioner Two	It's a proper … something that counts for something … you know. Cause
5		I thought they might, Practitioner One said 'oh I don't know if they're
6		going to like this. If they're going to want to do this talk.' And then today
7		they were like 'no, oh we're fine about doing the talk.' That really
8		surprised me.

(Individual Interview with Practitioner Two, 21 February 2008)

In Extract 6.7 Practitioner Two is talking about the speaking and listening qualification that the parents are undertaking. Practitioner Two talks about the qualification in terms of being a

'proper qualification' (line 1). However, the part of this interaction that I want to concentrate on is not in relation to the relative positioning of the qualification itself but rather how Practitioner Two voices Practitioner One's attitude towards the talk the parents have to give in order to gain the qualification.

Practitioner Two prefaces her integration of reported speech with her own doubts about the parents' willingness to give a talk – 'Cause I thought they might' (lines 4-5). It is at this point that she appears to interrupt herself with the voice of Practitioner One (see lines 5-6). In doing this Practitioner Two is using Practitioner One to confirm her own opinion, that she herself did not think the parents would be willing to give a talk. Practitioner Two then condenses the voices of the parents, attributing them with the single voice of 'no, oh we're fine about doing the talk' (lines 7). That they react in this positive manner is a surprise to Practitioner Two as it is not the way that she expects them to behave, nor is it the attitude that Practitioner Two projects that Practitioner One expects them to have. Thus this exchange illustrates the strength of embedded and sedimented discourses of low expectations of adult literacy learners as embodied by Practitioner Two, and attributed to Practitioner One by Practitioner Two.

We have already discussed that Practitioner Two positions Practitioner One and herself as similar to one another in relation to their past professional practice, and on occasion their personal attributes (see section 6.3.2). Such commentaries made by Practitioner Two imply that Practitioner Two views Practitioner One as both a colleague and friend. Extract 6.8 provides an example of how these two discourses of friendship and collegiality interweave.

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Extract 6.8

1	Practitioner Two	I think she'd, you know, be nice, if her contract doesn't carry on, that you
2		know I'm sure we could find her some work and I think she'd quite like
3		it as well. I don't know. Um but I like her and I think we've got a similar
4		sense of humour because the things she says sometimes really make me
5		laugh. I just like the way she is sometimes, the things she says. But
6		professionally I think, *I think* we sort of complement each other … I
7		don't know. It'd be interesting to see what the mums said really. What
8		they thought of our relationship but I … I look forward to working with
9		her and there definitely people you come across and you think 'oh, I'm
10		not very comfortable about going there and there's not very … helpful'. I
11		don't find that with Practitioner One at all.

(Individual Interview with Practitioner Two, 21 February 2008)

It is evident in this ongoing event narrative that Practitioner Two not only likes Practitioner

One (see lines 3-5) but looks forward to working with her each week (see lines 8-11).

Moreover she enjoys working with her so much she would actively try and find Practitioner

One employment at her own workplace if Practitioner One's contract were not to continue

(see lines 1-3).

One of the other themes that threads through Practitioner Two's small stories about

Practitioner One is whether Practitioner One should be spending more time with the children

as opposed to being in the 'parents-only' session. This theme is addressed in section 6.5.2.

The narrative tellings that Practitioner One relates about Practitioner Two are discussed in the

following section.

6.4.2 Tellings about Practitioner Two

In Weeks 2 and 7, when Practitioner One is running the programme without Practitioner Two, Practitioner Two is discursively present within the classroom despite her physical absence. On both these occasions Practitioner One makes reference to Practitioner Two in terms of the content of the session and the activities that Practitioner One is asking the parents to do (see Extract 6.9)

Extract 6.9

1	•	Practitioner One tells the group that Practitioner Two has left a sheet for parents to
2		complete about fine/gross motor skills – and this will be going in their folder. She briefly
3		recaps what fine and gross motor skills are. (Practitioner Two is still present – although
4		she's not there)
5	•	[…]
6	•	P6 asks Practitioner One whether dressing up counts as fine or gross motor skills.
7		Practitioner One explains that some activities cross both skills. P6 suggests that the sheet
8		needs a third column. Practitioner One says she'll tell Practitioner Two – in jokey manner.
9		(Presence of Practitioner Two – although absent. Is Practitioner Two used as/referred to as
10		an authority figure?)

(Fieldnotes, 24 January 2008)

In Week 2 Practitioner One informs the parents that the worksheet that Practitioner One is asking them to complete has been supplied by Practitioner Two. I made a note of this in my fieldnotes as it struck me at the time that such a comment by Practitioner One somehow signified the presence of Practitioner Two within the teaching practices that Practitioner One was embodying (see Extract 6.12, lines 1-2). It is Practitioner Two's worksheet rather than something that Practitioner One identifies with, or has ownership of, and in Practitioner One's

referring to it as such it could be interpreted that Practitioner One is distancing herself from the content of the session. However, on the other hand, it would seem that Practitioner One's reference to Practitioner Two supplying the worksheet is giving the worksheet greater significance than she thinks the parents would give to a worksheet if it were supplied by herself. That Practitioner One tells the parents that the worksheet will be going in their folder (see line 2) also adds to the importance of this particular worksheet, as anything that 'goes in their folder' is denoted as paperwork that needs to be kept as evidence for their qualification.

The worksheet requires parents to categorise activities into those that use fine or gross motor skills. P6 asks Practitioner One a question about fine and gross motor skills in relation to a child dressing up (line 6). Practitioner One informs her that some activities require the use of both skills (line 7). When P6 responds by saying that the worksheet would benefit from a third column to accommodate this category, Practitioner One invokes Practitioner Two (lines 7-8). By saying that she will inform Practitioner Two about this, Practitioner One is deferring to Practitioner Two as the one who has responsibility for the content of the session. However, she is doing more than this, for, as noted in my fieldnotes (lines 9-10), at the time it appeared as though her comment had a dual function of not just positioning Practitioner Two as responsible but also positioning her as an authority figure. Through Practitioner One's positioning of Practitioner Two as being in charge she is also positioning herself in a subordinate role, as though Practitioner One is 'filling in' for Practitioner Two in Practitioner Two's absence. This is exemplified in Extract 6.10.

Extract 6.10

1 Practitioner One starts to recap on last session by referring the group to the outcomes on the
2 board that Practitioner Two had put up during the last session. Practitioner One says 'I think
3 those of you that were here had a sheet like this for 'free writing'. Ok? Now Practitioner Two
4 has suggested that you can either choose 'free writing' about, er, well she thought of a party'.
5 P1 interrupts 'how to organise a children's party'. 'Yeah I think that's what you thought of
6 last week, wasn't it, and some of you have had that sheet.' P1 – 'yeah'. 'Ok? Now if you
7 weren't happy to do a children's party she's given you the choice, and you could have one
8 about your child. Ok? Now I can read through these with you, if you like, but I'm not sure
9 who's got what at the moment' (Example of presence of Practitioner Two, denoting role of
10 being responsible for the content of the session).

(Fieldnotes, 6 March 2008)

By dint of Practitioner One's inclusion of the phrases 'Now Practitioner Two has suggested'

(lines 3-4), 'she thought of a party' (line 4) and 'she's given you the choice' (line 7),

Practitioner One is making it clear that she is just carrying out what has been set by

Practitioner Two. The employment of 'I think' and 'but I'm not sure' in her utterances (see

lines 2-3 and 8-9) imply that Practitioner One is not totally sure of what she is being expected

to teach. This again reaffirms that Practitioner Two has the lead role within the teaching

element of their partnership. However, one needs to take into consideration that Practitioner

One has been on holiday for two weeks so needs time to reconnect with what the parents have

been doing in her absence. Although, since Practitioner One had returned from her holiday,

Practitioner Two had been to see her to let her know what Practitioner Two had done in the

sessions over the previous two weeks, and to advise about the content for the subsequent

session (see Extract 6.11).

Extract 6.11

1   Practitioner One had met with Practitioner Two earlier in the week. Practitioner Two had
2   gone to her office to brief her about the scheme of work being changed and what she'd
3   covered with the parents while Practitioner One had been on holiday. I noticed that
4   Practitioner Two had written a brief outline of what was to be covered during the session on a
5   post-it note. Practitioner Two referred to this when she introduced the session. Practitioner
6   One always seems a bit nervous when Practitioner Two isn't there – slightly unsure of herself.

(Research Diary, 6 March 2008)

My observations (as noted in my diary entry above) also confirm Practitioner One's seeming

lack of confidence when she is left in sole charge.

Practitioner One clearly delineates between the roles she views that she and Practitioner Two

have. In the personal narrative that Practitioner One relates about their current practice (see

Extract 6.12) she articulates these roles and in doing so intimates how much she respects,

relies on and trusts Practitioner Two.

Extract 6.12

1   Practitioner One   Well Practitioner Two I look up to, to think she's got all the information,
2   what's got to be done. So I rely on her to deliver that and to tell me how I
3   can support her really. I don't feel that that's my role. We agreed that I
4   would support the families while she was delivering the course, and then
5   write up the notes for the children. That was what we agreed early on.

(Individual Interview with Practitioner One, 11 February 2008)

Practitioner One realises that without Practitioner Two's input they would not be able to run

the programme together, because it is Practitioner Two who she relies on to deliver the

programme and to tell Practitioner One what she needs to do in order to support her (see lines 2-3). Extract 6.12 also reveals how she envisions their working partnership. This is implied by Practitioner One's move to using the first person plural pronoun 'we' in lines 3 and 5. Her use of 'we' is repeated when Practitioner One is asked to sum up how she and Practitioner Two work together (see Extract 6.13).

Extract 6.13

1	Researcher	So if you had to put it in a few words, how would you sum up how you
2		and Practitioner Two work together?
3	Practitioner One	… I think we have a wonderful time.
4		(Both laugh)
5	Practitioner One	Actually I think we're very professional and we get um we have learnt
6		from each other. We sit down and plan things together and suggest what
7		might work or what won't work um very open about it and … er just
8		really trying to get the best for the, you know, the group that's there, the
9		families that are going there.

(Individual Interview with Practitioner One, 11 February 2008)

Practitioner One initially responds with the somewhat glib answer 'I think we have a wonderful time' (line 3). She then prefaces her next turn with the adverb 'actually' (line 5), which in this instance functions as a discourse marker. Lenk (1998) argues that when 'actually' functions as a discourse marker, it can be used to mark opinion, objection or used to mark a topic shift. In this case Practitioner One is using 'actually' to denote not so much a topic shift as a change of tone, from jovial to serious. It is in this narrative telling of the ongoing event of their working together that Practitioner One really positions herself and Practitioner Two as working as a team who are comfortable with each other – so much so that they are able to express contrasting ideas and opinions without fear of judgment from either

party as they both have the shared aim of trying to do the best they can for the parents with whom they are working (see lines 6-8). This sentiment is indexed by Practitioner One a month later when, in conversation with Practitioner Two, she mentions how lucky they are that their relationship 'just sort of flows' (Debriefing and Planning Discussion, 13 March 2008. Also see Extract 6.4).

This section has focused on how the practitioners position each other through the narrative fragments recalled by each practitioner in the absence of the other. These narratives touch on how the practitioners' working practices are indexed in and through such narratives. The following section focuses particularly on how the co-constructed narratives-in-interaction of the practitioners reveal the discursive construction of their working together.

6.5   Narrative tellings about working together

Extract 6.14

1	Practitioner One	I said to Practitioner Two she's done basic literacy can't you do basic
2		numeracy?
3	Practitioner Two	*I can't! I can't do it!*
4	Practitioner One	She can't do it.
5	Practitioner Two	I can't. I'm sorry. Oh, I'm hideous … Could I make myself do it {just for
6		you?}
7	Practitioner One	{*Yes!*}
8	Practitioner Two	Are you good at numeracy?
9	Practitioner One	*Oh yes of course I am!*
10	Practitioner Two	Well you'd have to do it then
11	Practitioner One	{(laughs)}
12	Practitioner Two	{And I'd be the supporting person.} We'd have to just muddle through.
13		{I could probably}
14	Practitioner One	{I had to count up and} down to 10 in nursery and {there's many
15		different ways …}

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16	Practitioner Two	{Well you see I'm all right there.} I'm all right there. It's when we get on
17		{to fractions and percentages.}
18	Practitioner One	{Oh yes I was going to say that.} Apart from doing the registers
19	Practitioner Two	Yeah
20	Practitioner One	(laughing) I can't remember.
21	Practitioner Two	But I should make myself address it really. I should I delivered … I
22		delivered a six week programme
23	Practitioner One	*See!*
24	Practitioner Two	and I was all right with that. But then I didn't do it again. I haven't done
25		it again for about 12 months and you need to keep doing it don't you and
26		then
27	Practitioner One	Right
28	Practitioner Two	You gain more confidence with it. But (laughing) it's not my specialism
29		at all (intake of breath) It would be like the blind leading the blind.
30	Practitioner One	{Well it's something to think about isn't it?}
31	Practitioner Two	{We have got}, we have got numeracy tutors} so, you know, somebody
32		else could come. I know but then I'd be sad then.
33	Practitioner One	(laughs)
34	Practitioner Two	Cause I'd want to come.
35	Practitioner One	We want to work together now.
36	Researcher	You want to be together!
37		(Practitioner One and Researcher laugh.)
38	Practitioner Two	Can I be part of the group please? I always give away my nice groups.
39	Practitioner One	(laughs)
40	Practitioner Two	Give them away to other tutors and don't want to.

(Debriefing and Planning Discussion, 8 May 2008)

The above interaction takes place two weeks before the programme ends. Practitioner One's

utterance in lines 1-2, although on the surface would appear to be meant for me,

interactionally functions as an opener to draw Practitioner Two into the conversation. The

exchange that follows in lines 3-5 exemplifies the interactional practice of repeating and

paraphrasing each other's utterances which is characteristic of 'duetting' (see section 6.3.2).

In line 3 Practitioner Two exclaims '*I can't! I can't do it!*'. Practitioner One repeats the

structure and minimally changes the content of this utterance to 'she can't do it' (line 4).

Practitioner One is rephrasing practitioner Two's words not just in terms of the change of

pronoun (from 'I' to 'she') but she also changes the tone of delivery. Practitioner One's utterance is performed in a soft tone in contrast to Practitioner Two's strident voicing of her utterance. Practitioner Two then repeats 'I can't' (line 5) - this time using a soft tone, echoing the style of Practitioner One's turn. The 'duetting' interplay alluded to above can be interpreted as both practitioners interactional demonstration of their friendship. Maybin (2006: 56-57) found that, in her interviews with children, 'they often expressed dimensions of their friendship […] through the ways in which they interacted and orientated towards each other's utterances'. She discovered that 'identifying oneself as someone else's friend involves a combination of language use, interaction, choice of topic and evaluative stance, and there was often a subtle negotiation around these' (p.57).

In Practitioner Two's subsequent utterance of 'I'm sorry. Oh, I'm hideous' (line 5), Practitioner Two is negatively evaluating herself and her lack of confidence in teaching basic numeracy. After a pause she then goes on to ask herself the question 'Could I make myself do it just for you?' (lines 5-6). The 'just for you' part of this utterance overlaps with Practitioner One's exclamation of 'Yes!' (line 7). Practitioner Two's choice of 'just for you' is particularly significant, for it indexes the type of relationship that Practitioner Two has with Practitioner One. The linguistic construction 'just for you' is one that is more likely to be found in a personal rather than professional interaction. It indexes the friendship that has been forged between the practitioners. In lines 8-30 Practitioner Two vacillates between considering taking up the challenge of teaching numeracy and admonishing herself for not feeling confident enough to do so.

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In lines 31-32 Practitioner Two informs Practitioner One that there are other tutors who could deliver a basic numeracy course to the parents. Her inclusion of 'I know but then I'd be sad then' at the end of this turn reveals her evaluative stance toward somebody else working with this particular group of parents, and with Practitioner One. Practitioner Two makes her stance even clearer with her subsequent utterance of 'cause I'd want to come' (line 34). This stance is affirmed by Practitioner One's response 'We want to work together now', thus demonstrating that she also wants to work with Practitioner Two, implying that she would prefer to continue to work with Practitioner Two rather than any other tutor. Practitioner Two's next turn begins with a seeming imploration – 'Can I be part of the group please?' (line 38). There is some ambiguity in relation to who the addressee of her imploration is, but, nevertheless, in response Practitioner Two offers the revelation – 'I always give away my nice groups' (line 38), which she continues in line 40 – 'Give them away to other tutors and don't want to'.

The reason I have chosen to start this section with this extract that combines tellings of hypothetical events with personal narrative is because it succinctly and clearly demonstrates that Practitioners One and Two enjoy working together. This is illustrated not only by their language use, but also through their choice of topic, the evaluative stance that is enacted in their interactional exchanges and by their style of interaction – their ease of floor sharing, their overlapping turns, their 'repeating, paraphrasing and expanding on each other's utterances' (Maybin, 2006: 73). All these elements combine to indicate that the practitioners have developed a working relationship which works for them.

It is clear that they 'want to work together' but what does working together actually mean for them? How do they use narratives to co-construct their joint working practices? Four themes that emerge in relation to their working practices are *planning*, *working with the parents*, *documentation* and *resources*. This section focuses on the first three of these themes. The theme of leading and supporting is also discussed as it is an interweaving thread that runs through the practitioners' interactions.

6.5.1   Planning

How the practitioners position themselves and each other in the planning process are explored in this section. There are many instances of their planning together in the interactional data. I am using three extracts as indicative of the ways in which they discursively construct notions of and the actions of planning.

The practitioners held an initial planning meeting before they started to run the programme together. During this Practitioner Two informs Practitioner One the nature and content of the accreditation that the parents would be working towards – an Open College Network qualification in speaking and listening. This is unfamiliar to Practitioner One (see Extract 6.15).

Extract 6.15

1	Practitioner One	Well, just the fact they've come for 15 weeks {Practitioner Two}
2	Practitioner Two	{absolutely}
3	Practitioner One	is a huge, huge
4	Practitioner Two	major
5	Practitioner One	achievement. {Yeah}
6	Practitioner Two	{Yeah}yeah so …
7	Practitioner One	I don't know whether that's what you're about but …
8	Practitioner Two	I don't think this will be too taxing for them.
9	Practitioner One	No I don't. I think they're looking for that now aren't they?
10	Practitioner Two	*(shows Practitioner One the performance criteria and reads from it)*
11		'Talk to a known group on a familiar topic'. 'Express … statements'
12	Practitioner One	No cause we can help them. We're not going to like let them stand there
13		and suffer are we?
14	Practitioner Two	And then they'll get together um … like this. They've got to build a
15		portfolio like this to hand in.
16	Practitioner One	Oh lovely
17	Practitioner Two	Then it goes to a moderator and what-not.
18	Practitioner One	We can explain all that to them can't we, the first week as well? You
19		know, say this is what … Then I can turn round and say to them 'Is this
20		for you?'
21	Practitioner Two	Yes
22	Practitioner One	D'you know? Is this what you want?
23	Practitioner Two	Want to do?
24	Practitioner One	I can speak to them and just clarify that's what we're hoping. And are
25		they happy to still attend?
26	Practitioner Two	Yes
27	Practitioner One	And then if they're not … you know, we can deal, address it, can't we?
28	Practitioner Two	Yeah. And try and get some ur, um.
29	Practitioner One	Yeah
30	Practitioner Two	I mean other than that
31	Practitioner One	They were all like 'yes' 'yes' 'yes' before we broke up weren't they?
32	Practitioner Two	Yeah
33	Practitioner One	And then we have to actually go to them and say 'This week it's lovely
34		to welcome everybody here back, new people. And this is what we're
35		hoping to achieve'.
36	Practitioner Two	Yes
37	Practitioner One	And then I, you know, 'Practitioner One will contact you to see if you're
38		still' … cause we don't want to put them on the spot or anything.
39	Practitioner Two	No … no. Do you think that's the best thing then? … I think that's the
40		{best option}
41	Practitioner One	{Well that's what} we're hoping.
42	Practitioner Two	other than, other than to, other than that we'd have to something around
43		… um … like punctuation and … you know like writing sentences

44	Practitioner One	I think that's too much going back to school for them {at the moment}
45	Practitioner Two	{I think this will be better}
46	Practitioner One	Yeah
47	Practitioner Two	This is the one that I thought would be the best one for them.
48	Practitioner One	Yes, I agree with you

(Planning Meeting, 15 January 2008)

In lines 10-11 Practitioner Two shows Practitioner One the performance criteria for the qualification and starts to read them out loud. She also shows Practitioner One a completed portfolio as an example of what the parents will have to produce (lines 14-15) and explains that the completed portfolio then goes to the moderator (line 17). In line 8 Practitioner Two asserts that she does not think 'this will be too taxing for them'; an assertion that Practitioner One agrees with but implies that even if it were more difficult than what the parents had done before she thinks 'they're looking for that now aren't they?' (line 9), and that they, the practitioners, are there to help them (lines 12-13).

It is interesting that in this narrative of a future event (see Georgakopoulou, 2006b) Practitioner Two is demonstrating her knowledge of what is required to achieve the speaking and listening accreditation, and proposing it as the more suitable option, whereas Practitioner One is foregrounding the support that can be provided by the practitioners. From lines 18-38 Practitioner One's turns are primarily concerned with making sure the parents are well-informed about the nature of what is required of them, and giving them the opportunity to decide whether the accreditation is something they would be interested in doing. She even rehearses what she is planning to say to them in the first session (see lines 18-20, 33-35, and 37-38). Practitioner Two tells Practitioner One that the alternative to speaking and listening is

'something around um like punctuation and, you know like writing sentences' (lines 42-43). Both practitioners agree that the speaking and listening qualification is the preferred option (see lines 44-48).

Although Extract 6.15 highlights a negotiated consensus between the practitioners it is clear that they are both driven by different concerns. Practitioner Two wants and needs to sort out the accreditation, as this iteration of the programme needs to be accredited in order to be funded. On the other hand, Practitioner One foregrounds what she perceives as the needs of the parents – in terms of the practitioners supporting them through their studies and also in terms of their being consulted and informed about the requirements of the programme.

Both practitioners at different times state that they are comfortable with each other and feel confident about sharing ideas with one another. The hypothetical narrative in Extract 6.16 provides an example of Practitioner Two making a suggestion about an activity parents could do – role-playing reading a story to children (lines 1-4) – and Practitioner One disagreeing with Practitioner Two's suggestion.

Extract 6.16

1	Practitioner Two	Yeah. … I wonder if we could do something where they have to, like …
2		if they had to read a story to other members of the group and then the
3		other members of the group could pretend to be the children. I can
4		remember doing that at college. D'you know what I mean?
5	Practitioner One	Yes yes
6	Practitioner Two	And they've got to put some {sort of expression}
7	Practitioner One	{But that's quite} difficult if they're not that good at reading.

8   Practitioner Two   Yes, that's true

(Planning Meeting, 15 January 2008)

What I think is important about this exchange is that it is characteristic of the manner in which the practitioners are both able to offer suggestions, and, whether they agree or disagree, there is no loss of face, as they both respect each other's opinions. This is not to say that there are not sometimes abrasive moments evident in their interactions (see discussion of Extract 6.17 below).

Although Practitioner One is responsible for writing the scheme of work for the children's session, it is evident that Practitioner Two positions herself as being responsible for ensuring that all schemes of work are completed (see Extract 6.17).

Extract 6.17

1	Practitioner Two	[…] So we've just started the scheme of work, haven't we, but what you
2		need to do is do that with more of a focus on the children.
3	Practitioner One	Right. Yeah yeah
4	Practitioner Two	Um, I suppose what would be quite good is if we could do that in
5		advance and give it to the crèche worker, so that
6	Practitioner One	All right Practitioner Two
7	Practitioner Two	You can do that by Thursday Practitioner One. I can't see any unearthly
8		reason why not!
9	Practitioner One	I've got a terrible meeting, all day today.
10	Practitioner Two	I'll copy that
11	Practitioner One	And I've got a group tomorrow.
12	Practitioner Two	I'll give them that to start them off then.
13	Practitioner One	All right.
14	Practitioner Two	Because it gives them an idea
15	Practitioner One	Yes
16	Practitioner Two	doesn't it, of what we're sort of focusing on each week. So
17	Practitioner One	Shall I photocopy it now again?

18	Practitioner Two	And I'll just give it to them.
19	Practitioner One	Shall I?
20	Practitioner Two	Yeah. Or you can give it to them.
21	(Practitioner One leaves the room to photocopy. She comes back in after 2 minutes)
22	Practitioner One	(hands over the photocopies) There you go.
23	Practitioner Two	Great.
24	Practitioner One	All right?
25	Practitioner Two	So if we give that to the crèche people.
26	Practitioner One	I'll sort all this in a minute, a mess.
27	Practitioner Two	So for Thursday then Practitioner One
28	Practitioner One	Yes, yes.
29	Practitioner Two	can you just make sure then that I can have 'creche' *(writes 'creche').*
30		Let me just put that on. If I remember to give that to them. Um …
31	Practitioner One	No I haven't actually got to get anything have I?
32	Practitioner Two	No
33	Practitioner One	But I have got them a puzzle. {They're from Christmas}
34	Practitioner Two	{And just like the refreshments}
35	Practitioner One	Yes
36	Practitioner Two	So, we're ok aren't we?
37	Practitioner One	That's all right.
38	Practitioner Two	Um
39	Practitioner One	Yep
40	Practitioner Two	So, just the stuff that we've done today then. You're going to write that
41		up for Thursday.
42	Practitioner One	Yeah

(Planning Meeting, 15 January 2008)

In this future narrative Practitioner Two tells Practitioner One (line 7) that she needs
Practitioner One's scheme of work to be ready for the upcoming Thursday. Her use of
humour as a way of softening her request does not deflect from the fact that she is telling
Practitioner One what to do. Although Practitioner One gives two reasons why the time
constraint would make it difficult for her (see lines 9 and 11), Practitioner Two does not react
to these utterances, instead she carries on a conversation with herself about what she needs to
have prepared for their first session. Practitioner Two repeats the Thursday deadline on two

further occasions in this interaction (see lines 27 and 40-41) and in response to both these utterances Practitioner One agrees that she will meet the deadline.

According to Holmes (2000: 171) humour is often used to 'reduce the force of a directive between equals', where there is no formal institutional basis on which one person has the right to direct the other's behaviour. This is what Practitioner Two is doing when she makes her initial request in lines 7-8. Her use of a smile-voice delivery offers a way of managing the asymmetry of the situation, in which humour offers 'a means of maintaining and negotiating respect between participants' (Holmes, 2000: 171).

The next section looks at how the practitioners discursively position themselves and each other in relation to working with the parents.

6.5.2 Working with the parents

In Week 8 (13 March 2008) an outreach worker from a Children's Centre comes to observe the session as she is thinking of running a FLLN programme. Practitioner Two is explaining to the outreach worker how the joint teaching model is supposed to operate (see Extract 6.18).

Extract 6.18

1	Practitioner Two	[…] So what you need to think about is your early years worker don't
2		you?
3	Outreach Worker	Yeah, so, yeah, yeah.
4	Practitioner Two	You see Practitioner One is our early years person (*fire alarm goes off*)
5		We've got to ignore that haven't we?

6		*(Discussion about fire alarm)*
7	Practitioner One	It just, I feel needs two people. Do you agree? I don't know if you
8		normally have that.
9	Practitioner Two	It just {depends}
10	Practitioner One	{depends}
11	Practitioner Two	It depends.
12	Practitioner One	And like P5, you're probably wondering, wasn't here last week so that's
13		why I moved to be by her. Because she hadn't done last week's writing.
14		And often someone is away, aren't they? It's not 100% attendance is it?
15	Practitioner Two	No … But you see, in other settings,
16	Practitioner One	Mm
17	Practitioner Two	Practitioner One, the early years person, could be working downstairs
18		with the children. So that, like you say, the children are downstairs being
19		looked after while we're up here and then when we join it's the early
20		years person who sort of takes the lead on that session. I lead on the adult
21		***
22	Practitioner One	Oh right
23	Practitioner Two	and *** takes the lead on the downstairs
24	Practitioner One	Right.
25		*(Fire alarm man comes in the room)*
26	Practitioner Two	We can hear it. *(referring to the fire alarm)*
27	Practitioner One	I wouldn't want to work in the crèche.
28	Fire Alarm Man	I'm just seeing how noisy it gets in this room.
29	Practitioner One	I don't mind standing in once
30	Practitioner Two	Or twice
31	Practitioner One	But I do not want to work in the crèche.
32	Practitioner Two	No.
33		*(Fire alarm man goes out)*
34	Practitioner One	Well I don't mind what we do.
35	Practitioner Two	You like do the planning don't you?
36	Practitioner One	Yes, yeah
37	Practitioner Two	And you sort of decide the activities with me and
38	Practitioner One	Well I get them
39	Practitioner Two	and just
40	Practitioner One	I buy the resources.
41	Practitioner Two	You buy the resources.
42	Practitioner One	Don't I? And tell the ladies
43	Practitioner Two	Tell the ladies what we're doing. And when we go down you're sort of
44		the lead person for that. That's your bit.
45	Practitioner One	Well supposedly, on paper.
46	Practitioner Two	But we share it don't we?
47	Practitioner One	I'm usually in and out with taxis aren't I, to be fair.
48	Practitioner Two	But we share it don't we?
49	Practitioner One	Yes.
50	Practitioner Two	But …

51	Practitioner One	/And I write it up, {what we've done}
52	Practitioner Two	{in a school setting} that would be a teacher doing that bit
53	Practitioner One	Right.
54	Practitioner Two	They might be leading on the maths
55	Practitioner One	Yes
56	Practitioner Two	curriculum or
57	Practitioner One	I understand what you're saying. It's probably more focussed than what
58		we do.
59	Practitioner Two	Yes
60	Practitioner One	But these children are much younger.
61	Practitioner Two	They're young.
62	Practitioner One	Aren't they?
63	Practitioner Two	Yes. Yes. Yeah.
64	Practitioner One	So it depends on the ages of your children and your families and
65		*(Fire alarm stops)*

(Debriefing and Planning Discussion, 13 March 2008)

The above exchange is a lengthy one, containing a number of narrative types, but is worth reproducing here as it represents a discursive construction co-produced by the interlocutors, which interweaves the positions they ascribe to themselves and to one another, demonstrating how the practitioners are involved in ongoing negotiations of their relative positionings. These positionings are negotiated in relation to the localised establishment of their working practices and informed by those working practices that are prescribed at a meta-discursive level – what has come to be regarded as the 'normal' joint model of FLLN. Within Extract 6.18 the co-construction of the practitioners' working practices reveal the presence of two potentially conflicting discourses.

In line 1 Practitioner Two is giving advice to the Outreach Worker about what needs to be put in place in order to deliver FLLN. In line 4 Practitioner Two provides the example of Practitioner One being the 'early years person' in their organisational partnership. From lines

7-14 in Practitioner One's turns she appears to be reiterating to the Outreach Worker that this sort of programme requires two people to run it. From Practitioner One's point of view these two people are both required in the 'parents-only' session. This is the way Practitioner Two interprets Practitioner One's utterance in lines 7-8, as evidenced by Practitioner Two's response 'it just depends' (line 9). Practitioner One anticipates Practitioner Two's responses as she utters 'depends' at the same time as Practitioner Two. In line 11 Practitioner Two removes the hedge 'just', reinforcing her previous statement by reducing it to 'it depends'. This appears to give Practitioner One pause for thought in relation to her role as the second practitioner in the classroom, resulting in her telling a fleeting personal narrative involving P5, which turns into a shared event narrative about how she had supported P5 during the session (lines 12-13). She seems to be relating these narratives as a way of justifying her presence[22]. Practitioner One makes it clear that supporting the parents within the classroom is an ongoing part of her role as 'often someone is away, aren't they? It's not 100% attendance is it?' (line 14). (Practitioner One positions herself as providing support for the parents within the classroom as early as Week 3 of the programme - see Appendix 11).

However, despite Practitioner One's foregrounding of this role in her interaction with Practitioner Two, Practitioner Two does not validate Practitioner One's view of the significance of Practitioner One being present in the classroom alongside Practitioner Two. Practitioner Two does agree with Practitioner One's comments that all the parents do not

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[22] I had noted in my fieldnotes that Practitioner One was individually supporting P5, catching the parent up with what had been happening and reassuring her that she would help her during the session. Practitioner One tried to reassure P5 about her children in the crèche, and went to the crèche to check on them so that P5 would not have to leave the classroom.

attend every session, and acknowledges this through her utterance of 'No' (line 15). It is at this point that Practitioner Two chooses to use the contrastive discourse marker 'but' to denote that what follows will not be in concert with the utterance made previously by Practitioner One. Instead she integrates hypothetical and generic forms of narrative to inform Practitioner One of how the joint model of FLLN usually works in other settings (see lines 17-21 and 23). Practitioner One meets this explanation with the utterance 'oh right' (line 22). Her use of 'oh' indicates that Practitioner One is not aware of how FLLN 'normally' operates and is surprised by the description provided by Practitioner Two (for a discussion of the significance of 'oh' see section 5.6).

From lines 1-32 it could be argued that Practitioner Two is presenting to Practitioner One what she regards as the 'normal' and 'ideal' model of partnership working in FLLN. This is based upon her unquestioning acceptance that the model of practice recommended by the BSA should be adhered to as closely as possible, which is compounded by her experiences of running FLLN programmes in primary schools. Research into FLLN practices (Mallows, 2008; Brooks et al., 2008) reveals that the model of family literacy prevalent in the UK adheres to that espoused by the BSA. I am not arguing that the BSA model does not work, what I am arguing is that Practitioner Two has come to view this as the 'true' model and that any other approach that does not adhere strictly to this standard she does not deem to be quite as good.

In response to Practitioner Two's description of this 'normal' structure of FLLN practice, Practitioner One makes it very clear by her use of what Baynham calls a negated narrative

(see Baynham, 2011) that she does not want to take on the usual role of the 'early years person'. She achieves this through her initial assertion 'I wouldn't want to work in the crèche' (line 27), which she hardens into the less ambiguously structured utterance 'But I do not want to work in the crèche' (line 31). Practitioner One's argument is based on her experience of being a nursery teacher and, moreover, her experience of the localised practices that the practitioners have developed in tandem with each other. Practitioner One is drawing on a discourse of local practice, which has been formed through ongoing negotiations between the practitioners as opposed to the policy discourse being espoused by Practitioner Two, in which she invokes the discourse of FLLN's prescribed joint working practices which for Practitioner Two have become normalised and sedimented as part of an unquestioned understanding of the best way to run FLLN. This is a discourse to which Practitioner One has not had previous access.

These conflicting discourses inform a tension between Practitioners One and Two which is emergent during this part of their interaction (lines 4-32). It centres on where the early years worker should be located during the parallel 'parents-only' and 'crèche' sessions. For Practitioner One her place is in the 'parents-only' session, whilst for Practitioner Two Practitioner One should be in the 'crèche' session. It would appear at this point that there is no room for negotiation. However, after a slight pause in the conversation due to the Fire Alarm Man leaving the room, Practitioner One adopts a more conciliatory tone, a softening echoed by the content of her utterance. By Practitioner One uttering 'Well I don't mind what we do' (line 34), she is evaluating her previous stance, which she seems to have regarded as being too inflexible, and is offering this utterance as a conciliatory opener to Practitioner

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Two. This utterance also indexes that Practitioner One enjoys working with Practitioner Two, as it could be argued that because of this Practitioner One is willing to undertake activities that she would usually prefer not to do. What is particularly of interest here is that Practitioner Two would appear to interpret this utterance as an appeasing move on Practitioner One's behalf, and in her turn, initiates an iterative narrative which is co-constructed between the practitioners of all the activities for which Practitioner One is typically responsible (see lines 35-51). It is almost as though, through the creation of this list Practitioner Two is articulating the role that Practitioner One plays within their partnership, and therefore giving it credibility. Their co-construction of this list provides an insight into how Practitioner One is positioned, and positions herself, in relation to working with the parents. However, in contextualising this interplay one must also acknowledge that this interaction is being played out in front of a new audience member – that of the Outreach Worker. Therefore, it could be argued that the presence of a different audience member leads to a different kind of interplay, or 'performance' than may usually be the case, for, as Wortham et al. (2011: 43) assert, 'narrators also always perform social actions through their storytelling, positioning themselves with respect to interviewers and audiences in the event of speaking'.

From line 35, Practitioner Two starts to list what Practitioner One contributes to the partnership. It is at line 42 of this exchange that Practitioner One mentions one of the ways that she works with the parents when she utters 'And tell the ladies'. The last three words of this utterance are repeated by Practitioner Two as the start of her turn. This seems to seamlessly continue the thread of the utterance that Practitioner One had begun. Practitioner Two is co-constructing how Practitioner One works with the parents as she confirms that

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Practitioner One tells 'the ladies what we're doing. And when we go down you're sort of the lead person for that. That's your bit' (lines 43-44). Practitioner One's response to Practitioner Two's assertion that Practitioner One is responsible for the joint time between the parents and their children is to downplay this as an aspect of their working partnership for which Practitioner One takes sole responsibility. She achieves this very succinctly with the utterance 'Well supposedly, on paper' (line 45). 'On paper' implies that this is not really the case, and the use of the discourse marker 'well' and the adverb 'supposedly' to prefix this response reinforces the lexical content of her utterance, interactionally strengthening her argument that this is not really the case at all. The fact that Practitioner Two's inclusion of the hedge 'sort of' when describing Practitioner One as 'the lead person' implies that Practitioner Two is aware that there is some ambiguity in relation to who is the lead person for this part of their working together with the parents. Practitioner Two suggests – 'But we share it don't we?' (line 46). In making this suggestion Practitioner Two seems to be offering Practitioner One a way of reconciling their potentially conflicting opinions about who takes responsibility for this part of the session, whilst still acknowledging that Practitioner One has a significant role in the parents' and children's joint session. That Practitioner Two has formulated this utterance by using a tag question in the turn-final position indicates that Practitioner Two is expecting Practitioner One to agree with her in Practitioner One's next turn, as, not only are tag questions used as a means of encouraging orderly and shared turn-taking (Moore & Podesva, 2009: 458) but 'it is also generally accepted that tag questions convey the speaker's orientation to the proposition by signalling a specific attitude and the expected response' (Kimps, 2007: 272). Therefore Practitioner Two expects Practitioner One to agree that they share responsibility.

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However, Practitioner One does not follow this convention. Instead Practitioner One does not respond to Practitioner Two's tag question but instead counters with 'I'm usually in and out with taxis aren't I, to be fair' (line 47). At this point Practitioner Two chooses to repeat her previous utterance (see line 48). After this repetition Practitioner One then agrees with Practitioner Two that they share the lead in the joint session. However, Practitioner One decides to foreground that she is the one who is responsible for documenting what happens in the joint session (see line 51), which Practitioner Two counters by returning to a generic narrative, highlighting the typicality of this practice. She informs Practitioner One that if they were in a school Practitioner One would be doing that anyway and be taking a lead in whatever aspect of the curriculum was pertinent to the children at that time (see lines 52-56). In line 57 Practitioner One seems to acknowledge Practitioner Two's argument – 'I understand what you're saying' but at the same time indicates that one of the differences between a FLLN programme being run in a school setting and their FLLN programme is the ages of the children; a point which Practitioner Two accedes, and in doing so enables this exchange to draw to a close, allowing Practitioner One to have the final word (see lines 60-64).

It is interesting that in Extract 6.18 Practitioner One chooses to construct her role in relation to resources, the taxis, documenting the joint session, and informing the parents about what has been planned for them to do with their children. These are tasks for which Practitioner One clearly understands herself to be responsible. In addition to these activities Practitioner One positions herself as responsible for providing support to the parents in the 'parents-only' session. The issue of contestation here is not that Practitioner One supports parents in the

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classroom but rather whether this role needs to be undertaken at all. However, I would argue that Practitioner One does not just provide additional support for those parents who may require it but enacts a much more complex role in the 'parents-only' session. At times she aligns herself with the parents, as though she were a parent attending FLLN herself. For example, during the manicure demonstration given by the guest speaker, when Practitioner One returns from the crèche as she has been trying to calm down one of the children, she takes a seat in the midst of the parents, positioning herself physically with the parents. At the same time Practitioner One also comments that she did not know about using three strokes to apply nail varnish. This small aside is characteristic of one type of interaction that Practitioner One engages in whilst in the classroom. Practitioner One 'positions herself with the parents – putting herself in a non-expert role with her comments' (Fieldnotes, 7 February 2008).

Within the same session Practitioner One moves to more of a supporting role in which she quietly encourages three of the parents (P1, P5 and P8) to ask the speaker questions about the demonstration. When one of the parents says 'sorry' (P3) in recognition that she is tending to take over the floor and not allow the other parents to ask any questions, the rest of the parents laugh, whence Practitioner One utters 'it's alright I think some other ladies want to ask a question' (Fieldnotes, 7 February 2008). Although this is viewed as a light-hearted quip, as the parents continue to laugh, it also denotes Practitioner One taking more of an authority position in relation to the running of the session. Indeed enacting behaviour that may be expected of the person who is leading the session as opposed to someone who views themselves in a supporting role.

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I would argue that the multiple roles, touched on here, that Practitioner One enacts in the classroom – that of parent, support worker, teacher, go-between and organiser, are a reflection of the multiplicity and density of roles that Practitioner One undertakes in relation to her working with the parents. That there is a seamless lamination of these roles is testament to the development and maintenance of an effective working relationship with Practitioner Two. Overall Practitioner Two is in charge of the teaching of the 'parents-only' session. She knows the curriculum, she supplies the resources and she delivers the teaching in a relatively informal, enthusiastic, humour-filled and supportive manner. Moreover, what Practitioner Two also does is enable Practitioner One to take on an active role within the teaching, although Practitioner Two may not be doing this on a conscious level.

It is somewhat difficult to provide an overall flavour of how the practitioners work together in the classroom environment, but if I had to do so, I would describe it as something akin to a double-act. However, I do not see this simply in terms of a comedy double-act, despite there being much humourous interplay between them, as it is more than that. It is also a double-act in which they reflect and echo much of each other's behaviour, demonstrating how comfortable they are with each other on a personal and professional level. On one hand they perform a double act in practical ways - through the support they provide one another in terms of their backing up of each other's opinions and their abilities to refocus the session when a discussion has digressed. Thus both practitioners are able to command the attention of the parents, and of each other, without there being a question of who is 'in charge' (see Extract 6.19).

Extract 6.19

Practitioner One brings the session back to focus by saying 'moving on' and asking Practitioner Two whether she can have a little spiel first. Practitioner Two says 'oh go on then'.

(Fieldnotes, 13 March 2008)

On the other hand they perform their double act in terms of the encouragement and praise that they consistently and continuously offer the parents, often demonstrating this linguistically through replicating the words of the other practitioner. Extract 6.20 offers an example of this practice.

Extract 6.20

P6 is concerned that she can't find the notes for her talk. Practitioner One says 'it's there somewhere'. This is echoed by Practitioner Two 'it'll be there somewhere.' Practitioner One - 'take you time.' Practitioner Two - 'that's right'.

(Fieldnotes, 20 March 2008)

This section has concentrated on the discursive positionings negotiated between the practitioners around their working with the parents. Its main focus has been on the positionings resisted, offered and enacted by Practitioner One drawing on one particular narrative telling of the practitioners working practices as a locus for this discussion. The theme of documentation is addressed in the following section.

6.5.3   Documentation

During the course of my research I systematically collected all the texts that I encountered during my ethnographic observations. These numbered 72 (see Table 3.3 for a comprehensive overview). I classified these in terms of those texts used for teaching, for assessment and for administration purposes (see Chapter 3). I decided to collect this documentation because, as Smith (1999: 209, cited in Barton, 2001: 100) points out 'our lives are infused with a process of inscription, producing written or printed traces or working from them'. Iedema and Scheeres (2003) refer to the increase in discursive demands of the workplace as the textualisation of work. They argue that workers are being expected to 'engage in ways of speaking (and writing), that call into question conventional conceptions of what it means to be and speak like a doctor, or a line operator, or a shop floor supervisor' (p.317). In the context of this study I wanted to explore how this textualisation is made manifest in the practitioners' interactions and whether this impacts on what it means to be a FLLN practitioner. Therefore, in this section I am not concerned with the documentation that is directly related to teaching, such as handouts, worksheets and activity sheets – what I am concerned with here are those texts that I have categorised as being produced for assessment and administration purposes, those texts that could be considered peripheral to the work of teaching, the type of documentation that is commonly referred to as 'paperwork'.

Tusting (2009: 15) argues that 'people engage with texts in particular ways in specific settings, associated with complex histories and configurations of practices'. In her research into the paperwork demands of an adult education college and an early years education centre

she found that paperwork demands were interpreted and experienced differently in each of the sites. Tusting (2012a: 126) makes the point that paperwork was an issue for both sets of staff but at the early years centre 'staff were more likely to talk about having moved from anxiety about these demands to confidence' whereas 'staff at the college were more likely to describe a more ongoing process of managing and coping with the demands they were faced with'.

Tusting's findings (2009, 2012a) resonate with those understandings of paperwork that are discursively constructed by the practitioners in this study. Practitioner One does not view the amount of paperwork that she has to complete as overly onerous, particularly in relation to the amount of paperwork she undertook as a nursery teacher. However, there is a contrast in her confidence depending on her familiarity with the type of paperwork she is expected to undertake. Thus completing the scheme of work and the lesson plans for the children's only crèche session and completing written observations during the joint session are elements of the paperwork demands that Practitioner One does not feel are problematic (see Extract 6.21).

Extract 6.21

1	Researcher	What about… because you mentioned as well that you observe the
2		children …
3	Practitioner One	That's right. And I have to match those outcomes to the Every Child
4		Matters outcomes. But Practitioner Two has given me all that paperwork
5		that she then takes back and I presume is evaluated with Family Learning
6		Manager.
7	Researcher	So you do that for the group, as it were?
8	Practitioner One	Yes
9	Researcher	As part of the deal
10	Practitioner One	Yes. Well I, yes, I think to support Practitioner Two as well, to be honest.
11		I mean I don't know, I haven't, I suppose I offered to do it. Cause when
12		we first got together I said 'what do you want me to do?' And she just
13		said 'well, if you can do the children's bit. That would be useful'. And I

| 14 | said 'well actually I'm happy to do observations because of my |
| 15 | background'. |

(Individual Interview with Practitioner One, 11 February 2008)

However, although glossed over in Extract 6.21, in which Practitioner One's telling of a personal narrative elides into an allusion to a previous telling, Practitioner One has found matching the children's learning outcomes to the ECM outcomes more challenging as the ECM framework is not a framework of reference she has used previously. Therefore she is not able to draw as extensively on her previous professional experience. Practitioner One relies on Practitioner Two's guidance in cross-referencing the ECM outcomes to the work planned for the children (see Appendix 12). This reliance is also evident with the children's end of course evaluation that Practitioner One is expected to complete. In addition to knowing how to complete the paperwork the other issue that Practitioner One voices in relation to paperwork is having enough time within her existing work schedule to complete it. FLLN is only one aspect of Practitioner One's job, as opposed to Practitioner Two who has a full-time job in family learning.

It is common to be employed as a tutor on a part-time rather than full-time basis in adult, further and community education (see Gleeson et al., 2005; Gleeson & James, 2007; Hamilton, 2009; Tusting, 2012a). However, Practitioner Two's job does not only involve teaching but also incorporates what could be regarded as managerial responsibilities. Having this dual role of actually using the paperwork as well as being involved in its ongoing design and redesign places Practitioner Two in a conflicted position. This is exemplified in the

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personal narrative told in Extract 6.22 in which she recounts her part in redesigning the tutor file each year.

Extract 6.22

1	Practitioner Two	[…] and it's like when we did the tutor file every year that says all these
2		bits of paper. You see our boss goes on courses and somebody else in the
3		country is doing it this way
4	Practitioner One	*Ah*
5	Practitioner Two	And 'I think this will be a good bit of evidence
6	Practitioner One	*Ah*
7	Practitioner Two	to have in'. And we're saying 'oh no I don't think we need that'. I'm
8		always the voice saying 'no I don't think we need any more'
9	(Practitioner One and Researcher laugh)	
10	Practitioner Two	'I really think we're covering that'. And she's the one saying – 'cause
11		you can always find more ways can't you!'
12	Practitioner One	Yeah
13	Practitioner Two	There's always more
14	Practitioner One	Yes
15	Practitioner Two	but is it necessary
16	Practitioner One	And different people have different things {that work}
17	Practitioner Two	{Is it,} is it necessary to have another form that says that because we
18		already do this and sometimes that's hard isn't it cause … unless you're
19		using it you don't realise how long it does take.
20	Researcher	Absolutely
21	Practitioner Two	Do you, unless you're actually working with a group and having to fill
22		out all those forms, you don't realise
23	Practitioner One	No

(Debriefing and Planning Discussion, 8 May 2008)

In this extract Practitioner Two positions herself as in counterpoint to her manager. She uses reported speech to highlight both her own viewpoint (lines 7-8, 10) and that of her manager (lines 5, 7, 10-11). In line 7, by using the first person plural 'we' on two occasions, she indexes that she is not the only member of the family learning team who has the opinion that there is too much paperwork. However, in her following utterance of the same turn – 'I'm

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always the voice saying 'no I don't think we need any more' (lines 7-8), she indicates that she is the member of the team who is more likely to question the need for additional paperwork. Her use of the definite article before 'voice' infers that she is 'the' voice, as opposed to 'a' voice amongst others, who questions the Family Learning Manger's suggestions. Practitioner Two makes it clear that her stance towards paperwork is informed by the practical considerations of 'actually working with a group and having to fill out all those forms' (lines 21-22), as 'unless you're using it you don't realise how long it takes' (lines 18-19).

Tusting (2012a: 131) found that, in college, small changes in paperwork happened 'at least termly and often more frequently, increasing the sense people described of fragmentation or incoherence in the demands they were facing'. Her research also found that tutors often had to replicate the same information on different forms dependent on who the information was for, for example, the LSC or county council. In Practitioner Two's case replication of information is often driven by the need to produce auditable evidence for both internal and external inspection purposes. That replication of paperwork as an issue is indicated by Practitioner Two in Extract 6.22 (see lines 10, 17-18). This referencing of paperwork demands is a recurrent theme in Practitioner Two's interactions.

Practitioner Two is also completing many of these forms at home, which it could be argued, adds to the time-consuming nature of completing paperwork. This again resonates with Tusting's (2012a: 128) findings that in the college site 'most paperwork was completed by most staff in their own homes'. In Practitioner Two's case, although she does have an office base she spends most of the week teaching at different community locations which results in

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most of her time being spent away from her desk. Therefore this makes her work what Tusting (2012a) refers to as spatially fragmented.

The last point that I want to make about Practitioner Two's discursive representation of 'the paperwork' is her tendency to individualise the difficulties she has in its completion. A particular example of this is in relation to ILPs. She uses phrases such as 'I'm failing miserably with ILPs', and 'I'm just pointing out my own failure here because I should do it the first week *(raises voice)* I just find it hard' (10 April 2008). Ball (2003) argues that such feelings are symptomatic of the policy technologies of education reform – technologies of the market, managerialism and performativity. Ball (2003: 222) posits that the requirements of performativity mean that 'teachers are no longer encouraged to have a rationale for practice, account of themselves in terms of a relationship to the meaningfulness of what they do, but are required to produce measurable and 'improving' outputs and performances, what is important is *what works*'. Thus due to the requirement for teachers to make their achievements visible, learning needs to be inscribed in recording and monitoring systems, and then validated through inspection. Ball (2003: 220) points out that 'within all this, the contentments of stability are increasingly elusive, purposes are made contradictory, motivations become blurred and self-worth is uncertain'. Moreover, in a technology of performativity such concerns 'become matters of self-doubt and personal anxiety rather than public debate' (Ball, 2003: 220).

I would argue that the self-doubt expressed by Practitioner Two in her competence in relation to paperwork is due to a disjuncture between the way Practitioner Two positions herself as a

practitioner and the 'commodified representations of teaching and learning for monitoring and auditing' (Tusting, 2012a: 130) that she is required to produce. As Tusting (2012a: 133) found, 'particular problems arose when the paperwork was seen as actively clashing with the tutor's teaching goals'. This is how Practitioner Two characterises her situation – as the paperwork obfuscating the main purpose of the job. The disjuncture that Practitioner Two experiences is aptly described in Extract 6.23, in which she interweaves personal and hypothetical narratives.

Extract 6.23

1	Researcher	Are you part of redesigning them [ILPs] as well then?
2	Practitioner Two	Well *I am*, *I am* and I don't agree with them. And I try and argue against
3		lots of the paperwork. 'Ooh we ought to have a form for that'. And I go
4		'ooh, ooh, er, um, couldn't we erm?' But it's like 'well they want it in
5		black and white. We need this for inspection' and it
6	Researcher	I used to find that that I'm designing paperwork that
7	Practitioner Two	I don't agree with. The tutor file, well you've seen it, it gets bigger and
8		bigger. And you've got to do this. Now we've got to do risk assessments
9		now, and we've got to do … And you just think well … I'm surprised
10		tutors ever want to do it because it just gets more and more and more and
11		more and more. You know … I think, I think all teachers are like this
12		though aren't they? I think it's common to the … it's not standing there
13		and doing the teaching which *should* be the *most important thing*. And if
14		you've prepared for your lesson and you can say 'yeah, I think they're at
15		this, they're at this. And she's achieved that.' That should be it. But it's
16		not is it? It's got to be in black and white. And it's got to be proven and
17		it's got to be evidence and you've got to be able to track it back.

(Debriefing and Planning Discussion, 28 February 2008)

Practitioner Two's experience of paperwork is different to Practitioner One's, as Practitioner Two's practice is located in a framework of performativity with which Practitioner One does not come into contact. Practitioner Two provides a buffer between the paperwork Practitioner

One is responsible for completing and the reporting systems to which Practitioner Two is answerable. Practitioner Two has overall responsibility for ensuring all the paperwork is completed appropriately and handed in on time. Therefore their relationships with the paperwork are not similar as their investments in it are not equitable.

6.6   Conclusion

This chapter has analysed the small stories that practitioners relate about themselves and each other to reveal the multiple positionings that the practitioners index in their narratives-in-interaction. Stories have been examined not only in terms of lexical content but also in relation to the linguistic features of these interactions. It has investigated the autobiographical narratives that index their personal and professional experiences and analysed how identity construction is emergent and relational. How narrative analysis can provide a window on the practitioners' co-construction of their working practices is also evident.

Both practitioners regularly integrate fragments of autobiography into their conversations with each other. During the teaching sessions with the parents, Practitioner Two often includes personal narratives, particularly in relation to her experiences of being a mother. Such narratives function as a way of strategically aligning herself with the parents. Practitioner One does not adopt this strategy as she is considerably more reticent about mixing the personal with the professional in a teaching environment. This could be regarded as reflecting her institutional role as organiser in the family support charity and also attributed to her not having experience in the teaching of adults. Therefore it could be argued that

Practitioner One is not party to the discursive practices of adult learning in which 'interweaving personal and task-based talk' (Ivanič et al., 2006: 42) is common practice. Moreover, Practitioner One did not initially tell Practitioner Two that she had been a nursery teacher as she did not want this to act as a barrier to Practitioners One and Two forming an effective partnership, as Practitioner Two had previously worked as a nursery nurse, a role which is subordinate to that of a nursery teacher.

The practitioners have similar yet different professional pasts, but in their co-constructed tellings of their past experiences of working in schools their narratives become aligned. They co-construct themselves and each other as similar sorts of people, not just in the content of their tellings but also in the collaborative style of interaction that marks their conversations. Their ease of floor-sharing, overlapping talk and their ability to continue each other's turns is testament to this (see Maybin, 2006). They have developed the sort of relationship in which each respects the other's opinion, gives each other space to articulate their viewpoint, yet are able to disagree without it impacting negatively on their working relationship.

It would seem on the surface that they have each carved out distinct roles for themselves and each other. This is mainly the case. However, what a detailed analysis of their narratives-in-interaction reveals is the emergent nature of their relationship, a relationship which also involves ongoing negotiations of their relative positionings. In relation to some aspects of their working together their positionings are readily co-constructed. Practitioner One creates a welcoming classroom environment, organises the taxis, buys the freebies for the parents to take home at the end of each session, liaises with the centre where the class is held, and is a

contact point with the parents. That she is a support to the parents by her being there is not a point of contestation. However, whether she needs to be present in the 'parents-only' session is. This is not because Practitioner One does not take an active role in the session, but rather because this practice does not emulate the BSA model of FLLN.

The practitioners have developed their own way of working that does not adhere to the BSA model but does demonstrate a certain amount of flexibility as they have developed locally constructed working practices that fit the perameters of the learning situation of which the practitioners and parents are part. However, Practitioner Two sees their working practices as deviating from the 'norm', which indicates how the BSA model has become sedimented and internalised by Practitioner Two. Therefore, instead of celebrating how their model works for them, Practitioner Two instead indexes through the narrative allusions she makes that the practices they have developed are 'other', and, as they deviate slightly from the prescribed structure of FLLN, in her eyes they can never seemingly be as good. Practitioner One, on the other hand, is not knowledgeable about the policy discourse of FLLN and its inherent structures. Consequently all Practitioner One knows of is the co-constructed working practices that Practitioner One and Practitioner Two have developed together, therefore she does not question their practices in light of what they ought to be. She is more concerned with what they are, and whether what they are doing is the best way of supporting the parents who are attending the programme.

Practitioners One and Two come from a place of shared values and beliefs, and similar professional backgrounds, but because they work for different organisations they are driven

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by different concerns and demands. Practitioner One's primary concern is with the children and that FLLN will benefit both parents and children. Practitioner Two has overall responsibility for the programme they are running together. Practitioner Two brings with her an in-depth knowledge of FLLN. She selects what she deems to be the most appropriate accreditation for the parents to undertake. In her own words, Practitioner Two 'drives it'. She plans in detail the content of the 'parents-only' session, supplies the teaching resources, leads the teaching, provides Practitioner One with an outline of any session for which she is not going to be present. She also shares the planning and delivery of the joint session for which Practitioner One is responsible 'on paper'. Practitioner Two supports Practitioner One in the paperwork that Practitioner One needs to complete in relation to the children. In fact, it is part of Practitioner Two's responsibility to ensure that all the required paperwork is completed and handed-in on time.

Responsibility in relation to paperwork provides Practitioner Two with an additional pressure. This is particularly as Practitioner Two is also involved in the ongoing design and redesign of paperwork pertaining to FLLN. Thus Practitioner Two is in a conflicted position. She is part of the institutional discourse that requires evidence to be inscribed in order to be auditable, and therefore meet policy and institutional requirements. However, she is also a practitioner who recognises how the time taken to complete the paperwork she has had a hand in designing constrains the teaching and working practices of, not only herself, but the other tutors in the team of which she is part.

CHAPTER 7: CONCLUSION

7.1 Introduction

In Chapter 3 I outlined how the theoretical, methodological and analytical approaches I have used to collect and analyse my data would enable me to answer my research questions. The first section of this chapter brings together and summarises my findings in relation to each of the research questions in turn. How my research contributes to knowledge creation is found in the second section. The third section of this chapter includes my final reflections.

7.2 Answering the research questions

This section summarises the research findings in response to each of the research questions.

7.2.1 To what extent do the FLLN practitioners' backgrounds and experience, as indexed in their narrative tellings, influence their current practice?

Evidence presented in all three of the analysis chapters (chapters 4-6) indicates that the practitioners index their backgrounds, and experiences in their narrative tellings. Moreover, the discourses embedded and invoked in their co-conversations, individual interviews, and within their teaching (the latter example, particularly in the case of Practitioner Two) are implicated in their current working practices. Their narratives index their socio-cultural and socio-economic backgrounds as middle-class women, their personal experiences of being

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mothers, and their professional experiences of working in primary schools. Practitioner One invokes her more current professional experience, working for a family support charity, in narrative allusions that highlight the differences in perspective she has gained since taking on this role, as opposed to when her only experience of working with families was as a teacher. Practitioner Two alludes to the other schools in which she delivers FLLN programmes and draws on these experiences to inform her current practice on the FLLN programme in question.

The practitioners share a common language undergirded by common values, beliefs and understandings which have developed as a consequence of their own lived histories; lived histories that they share with each other through their telling of small stories. The collaborative style of the interactional exchanges in which they share their histories with each other also enables them to foreground their similarities rather than any differences. The content of their stories, in addition to the manner in which they are told, supports the practitioners in the development and maintenance of their working relationship and the practices that are an inherent part of their relationship.

7.2.2 How do the practitioners construct the FLLN programme they are delivering together, and the policy that underpins it?

Both practitioners construct FLLN as a vehicle for promoting certain parenting practices. This approach reflects the instrumental ideology underpinning FLLN. However, it would appear that Practitioner Two does not regard their practices as necessarily reflecting the policy

discourse of FLLN, for Practitioner Two associates the policy discourse with the push for parents to gain a qualification in a very limited period of time, and this is not what Practitioner Two regards as the programme's main purpose.

The reasons why neither practitioner regards promoting particular parenting skills as problematic is because they both view acceptable and appropriate children's behaviour, and the parenting skills that accompany this behaviour, through the twin lenses of their own middle-class parenting practices, and their professional experiences of what is expected of children when they start attending nursery and primary provision. They want the parents attending FLLN to have a clear understanding of what 'basic skills' their children need to master before they start school. Therefore, the practitioners construct FLLN in light of their personal and professional backgrounds. Hence FLLN is regarded as a vehicle for teaching parents what behaviours and schooled literacy practices their children need to acquire and provides parents with the wherewithal to start developing these practices in the home environment, in preparation for their children starting school.

FLLN is also constructed as an opportunity for the parents to reengage with formal learning in a relatively informal and highly supportive learning environment. It is a chance for the parents to socialise with other parents, discuss their experiences of parenting, and have some time away from their children, safe in the knowledge that their children are being looked after in another part of the building. It is also a space in which parents are encouraged to interact with their children during the 'joint' time, engaging in the activities and putting into practice ways

of interacting with their children that the practitioners have promoted during the 'parents-only' session.

The overarching construction of FLLN by the practitioners is as a programme that benefits the lives of the parents and children who attend it. However, it is not open to anyone. It is offered to those parents affiliated to the family support charity that Practitioner One regards as, firstly, having demonstrated that they want to improve their lives, and, secondly, that are willing and able to commit to regular attendance on a 15-week programme, for, in a world of limited funding, difficult decisions have to be made about who is more deserving.

I also want to draw attention to what Ball (2003) refers to as the policy technologies of education reform. The pressure to inscribe learning so that artifacts are produced which can be used to monitor and audit learning, to prove that learning is taking place, situate FLLN soundly within the technologies of the market, managerialism and performativity. This pressure is particularly indexed by Practitioner Two, which is understandable in light of her overall responsibility for the programme.

7.2.3 What do the narratives related by the FLLN practitioners reveal about the nature of their working relationship and the roles they each enact within it?

Each practitioner has designated activities for which they are responsible within their working partnership. These activities are either institutionally ascribed or locally constructed, played out discursively in and through the practitioners' narratives-in-interaction.

Practitioner Two is positioned by herself and Practitioner One as taking the lead, as Practitioner Two is the one with the knowledge and experience of what is entailed in running FLLN programmes. Practitioner Two has overall responsibility for the content of the programme, and ensuring that all relevant documentation is completed so that any evidentiary requirements are met. Practitioner One liaises weekly with the Centre where the programme is run; this includes informing the crèche about the expected number of children so that appropriate staffing is allocated. Practitioner One contacts the parents each week to check whether they are going to attend and organises their taxis accordingly. Although Practitioner Two leads the teaching of the 'parents-only' session, Practitioner One is also present in this session. Practitioner One sees her role as providing a warm welcome for the parents and supporting the parents, as and when required.

The presence of Practitioner One in the 'parents-only' session is the only aspect of their working practices over which there is slight tension, and this is only displayed by Practitioner Two. On a number of occasions Practitioner Two states that the 'early years person' – i.e. Practitioner One – should be in the 'children-only' rather than the 'parents-only' session, as this fits the FLLN structure prescribed by the BSA. Interestingly, although Practitioner Two seems to acquiesce to the BSA model of FLLN, she also regularly indexes the value she attributes to Practitioner One's presence in the classroom, and the flexibility that this arrangement affords them. Practitioner Two appears to fluctuate between an unerring need to follow the BSA model, that she has internalised as the 'true' model, and recognising that the locally produced practices that they have formulated in the here-and-now of their working

relationship appear to meet the particular needs of their situation. This negotiation of Practitioner One's role in the classroom is part of an emergent dialogue between them.

It is evident that the practitioners practically and interactionally support each other in their delivery of FLLN. They have an easy working relationship in which they both respect the skills, experience and understandings that each contributes to their partnership. Although they are driven by the different demands of the organisations for which they work, what underpins their relationship is their positioning of themselves as similar types of people, with similar values and attitudes. The nature of the relationship they have forged with each other is reflected in the respectful and friendly way with which the parents regard both practitioners.

7.2.4 How are the parents positioned in the small stories told by the FLLN practitioners in this study?

A detailed analysis of the practitioners' small stories reveals a lamination of multiple discourses which interweave within and across their narrative tellings. Normative discourses of deficit about working-class parenting practices ebb and flow with their socially situated interactional exchanges. Sometimes these are accompanied by an awareness of the social and economic constraints within which the parents live, at other times such structures remain unacknowledged within their discursive practices.

Two sedimented and inter-related discourses that are embedded in the narrative allusions shared between the practitioners concern how the parents are positioned as LLN learners. The

parents' literacy practices are constructed in relation to the notion of literacy as the acquirement of skills, as a consequence of this stance the parents are regarded as lacking, with this lack needing to be remedied. This results in their literacy abilities being judged in relation to schooled literacy practices, and their abilities to support the development of the schooled literacy practices of their children. Accompanying this notion of a singular literacy is the discourse of maternal protectionism, a discourse at times prevalent in adult literacy and numeracy education (see Tett and Maclachlan, 2008). However, what is missing is any discussion about multiple literacies, and the recognition that schooled literacy practices are one amongst many literacies that people use in their everyday lives.

It is acknowledged that learners require time and support to change negative views of themselves as learners into that of competent and confident learners (see Crowther et al., 2010; Tett & Maclachlan, 2007). This discourse is regularly invoked in the practitioners' narratives-in-interaction. However, the circulating discourses evident in the discursive practices of the practitioners are not confined to the invocation of meta-narratives as within their co-constructed narratives local discourses also emerge, are repeated and become refined over time. Such local discourses are both consciously and subconsciously constructed but become part of an 'unreflected ordinariness' (B. Davies, 2008: 179) in which both practitioners engage. This is the case in relation to the social identification of parents in which locally constructed identifications become 'solidified' (see Wortham, 2003a) over the duration of the programme. However, it is clear that local discursive constructions of the parents are informed by circulating ideological discourses that are sedimented within the practitioners' narratives.

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The next section identifies how this study contributes to the development of knowledge.

7.3 Contribution to knowledge

The ways in which this study contributes to knowledge can be categorised into two main areas. Firstly, it does so in relation to the development of methodological, theoretical and analytical approaches. Secondly, in relation to FLLN in particular and family literacy programmes in general, its findings have the potential to inform practice. Additionally, it contributes to research in family literacy by bringing a different analytical lens to the ethnographically-informed studies that are at the forefront of research in this field.

7.3.1 Contribution to methodological, theoretical and analytical approaches

This research builds on the work of Bamberg, Georgakopoulou, De Fina, and others who have contributed to the development of positioning analysis (see Chapter 2). Taking a lead from Watson (2007) I have integrated the social identification of the narrated alongside the identity construction of those narrating – both being revealed through an investigation of how the practitioners' narratives-in-interaction index normative and locally constructed discourses. This I have done by examining the patterned nature of language practices, investigating how such practices move within and across events over a temporal trajectory. In undertaking such a detailed analysis I have been able to trace and foreground the iterative and circulating nature of such discourses.

Whilst playing a part in the development of positioning analysis I am simultaneously contributing to the diverse fields of investigation that are drawing on linguistic ethnography as a research framework. I think that this study's focus on the linguistic detail of narratives-in-interaction gathered through ethnographic means reinforces linguistic ethnography's claim to be a locus where different approaches can meet, a site which is 'open to the recognition of new affinities' (Rampton, 2007: 585). My work provides an example of how fruitful combining ethnography, linguistic ethnography and positioning analysis can be in enabling the production of a fine-grained analytical study of practitioners' narratives-in-interaction, regardless of the context in which practitioners are working.

Throughout this thesis I have tried to highlight that the language practices we engage in are inherently social practices, including the language practices engaged in during interviews. Accordingly interviews should not be bounded off as separate entities in which the content is the only aspect worthy of analysis. Instead their co-construction needs to be taken into consideration. Hence this study builds on methodological debates that regard interviews as social practice in which the possibility of the neutrality of the interviewer is called into question. Indeed this research also foregrounds issues surrounding the role of the researcher in ethnographic research, and highlights what I regard as the 'interactional awkwardness' of undertaking research of this kind.

7.3.2 Contribution to family literacy: practice and research

I have already identified that focusing on a single iteration of a FLLN programme is a limitation of this study (see section 1.5). Moreover, as I am analysing the socially situated language practices of only two practitioners it begs the question of to what extent my findings can be extrapolated and applied to wider issues pertaining to family literacy. However, despite the limited nature of my research I think there are claims I can make in relation to contributing to practice and research in this field.

I have tried to unpick what creates and maintains an effective working partnership between practitioners when they come together to deliver a FLLN programme. It is common practice in the FLLN paradigm to need to form a working relationship between two people who have never met each other before in a relatively short period of time. This study focuses an acute lens on the discursive practices of the practitioners, drilling down to uncover what discourses underpin and are indexed in their narrative tellings. This provides an insight into what informs and sustains their relationship as it develops over time. It analyses and makes visible the practitioners' 'taken-for-granted' understandings, values and attitudes. This has implications for family literacy practice as it shines a light on the need for practitioners to develop a shared understanding of the purpose of FLLN, as it cannot be taken for granted that practitioners will be interpreting the purpose of FLLN from the same viewpoint. Therefore it is necessary that each collaborative partner makes their stance explicit and is clear about their expectations of their working relationship, aware that each partner may be required to enact multiple roles as their relationship develops.

It is argued that schooled literacy practices and home literacy practices operate on a continuum, and that 'family literacy operates at the intersection between home and school' (Pahl, 2008c: 153). However, my research has highlighted that, within the programme under investigation, schooled literacy practices are given primacy. There is some evidence of valuing home literacy practices but the amount of time devoted to this and the level of emphasis is not comparable. To me this indicates that, despite the move for research to inform practice, this is not always the case, and that training for FLLN practitioners needs to include debate around the nature of the pedagogical practices they use. Without this discussion practitioners do not have the opportunity to either articulate or realise the nature of the normalised discourses that underpin FLLN; discourses which may be sedimented and indexed in their discursive and pedagogical practices.

Pahl (2008c: 153) states that the ways in which FLLN programmes are conceptualised 'can be understood as being embedded in both practical experience and epistemological position'. Furthermore, 'the link between research and practice in FLLN is vital in order to understand that epistemologies are shaping FLLN policy and practice' (Pahl, 2008c: 153). Pahl argues that many practitioners are putting these principles into practice. However, I would argue that for those practitioners who are not putting these principles into practice it is not necessarily a matter of choice but rather that they are not aware of the range of research that exists in relation to family literacy or the work of the New Literacy Studies.

As alluded to above, I would propose that practice and scholarship often follow parallel paths and that opportunities need to be provided to enable these paths to cross. One way of

addressing this is to make reference to the ways current research can inform practice within in-house training, at a time when adult LLN tutors and early years/primary teachers meet together, providing them with practical examples of how practitioners can integrate and adopt such practices. Luke (2005) points out that, for those teaching in the field of literacy, trying to apply New Literacy Studies 'will provoke your thinking and unsettle your practice' (p.x). I think there is a place for having one's practice unsettled, and in revealing the sedimented and unreflected upon discourses that underpin the practitioners' pedagogical practices my work contributes to the notion of needing to unpick and rethink the taken-for-granted, and open oneself up to new epistemologies and their related discursive and pedagogical practices.

7.4   Final reflections

A thread that weaves through this thesis is that the narratives that practitioners relate are not separate from their practice; they are part of it. Sometimes this is in obvious ways, but usually it is a more subtle process in which 'the ordinary everyday world is sedimented in repeated citations of the way the world is (and, it is believed, ought to be)' (Davies, B., 2008: 173). For it is clear that narratives of identity and social identification go hand in hand, as when we narrate others, we are also narrating ourselves as 'narrators "voice" or position people represented in their narrative, including their own narrated selves, as recognisable types of people' (Wortham and Gadsden, 2006: 319). However, the unreflected nature of this process is revealed in greater clarity through an analysis of not only the content of the practitioners' small stories, but also their stories' interactional detail.

A second thread that is evident in the very fabric of the narrative fragments told by the practitioners is that they really want to make a difference to the families attending FLLN, and are both highly invested in the work they are doing. It is also clear from my observations that the parents value being on the programme, and appreciate the approach and input provided by both practitioners. That the practitioners enjoy each other's company, and value the knowledge, experience and commitment that each bring is indexed in the form and content of the stories they tell. However, the practitioners seem to be unaware that they may be discursively pigeon-holing some of the parents too readily and in doing so limit the learning potential of those they seek to empower.

List of Original Research Questions

1. How do FLLN practitioners' socio-cultural and historical backgrounds and experience

    influence their current practice?

2. How is FLLN constructed by FLLN practitioners?

3. How do FLLN practitioners work together?

4. What are the range of discourses voiced (or unvoiced) in FLLN?

Consent Form (Practitioner) **How do tutors work together when running a family learning course?**

	Please tick box	
	Yes	No
I confirm that I have read the research study outline proposed by Liz Chilton and we have discussed it.	☐	☐
I understand the methods by which she proposes to undertake the study.	☐	☐
I understand that this research will not interfere with the normal activities of the course.	☐	☐
I agree to teaching and planning sessions being audiotaped.	☐	☐
I agree to being interviewed and for any interview to be audiotaped.	☐	☐
I agree to information being audiotaped and its content being used for research purposes.	☐	☐
I understand she will ensure the confidentiality of all participants, including myself and my students.	☐	☐
I agree to participate in this study.	☐	☐

_____   _____
_____
Name of participant   Date   Signature

_____   _____
_____
Name of researcher   Date   Signature

Contact details
Name   Liz Chilton
Telephone number: (provided in original)
Email address: (provided in original)

Information sheet   **How do tutors work together when running a family learning course?**

My name is Liz Chilton and I am a student at the University of Birmingham. As part of my course I want to undertake a research study to find out how your tutors work together to plan and run the course you are attending.

Before you decide whether or not to be part of this study, it is important that you know what will be involved.

What is the study about?
I want to find out how tutors work together in family learning courses. One of the best ways to do this is by attending a course they plan and deliver together. In order to gather the information I need for my study, I plan to:

- Be present at your teaching session and observe what normally happens
- Take notes about what happens during the session
- Audiotape the session
- Talk to you about the session

Why have I been asked to take part?
The main focus of this study is on your tutors, not on you. But as parents, you are a central part of the teaching session, and I want to look at the kind of topics, activities and discussions that take place during a usual session. I want to look at your experience of family learning as a **group** of parents, and therefore will not be identifying any individuals as part of this study.

Do I have to take part?
It is up to you to decide whether or not to take part. If you decide to take part you will be given this information sheet and asked to sign a consent form. You can withdraw from the study at any time without having to give a reason.

What will I have to do?
The idea is that I observe what usually happens within your session. The only extra thing is that I want to check with you that I am keeping a correct record of the topics that are being discussed in the group. You may also be asked to take part in a brief interview.

Will the information collected be kept confidential?
All the information collected during this study will be kept strictly confidential. You will not be able to be identified in any reports or publications.

What happens to the results of this study?
This study will form part of the thesis that I am required to produce for my course. I may also use information collected as part of this study in other relevant publications.

Who can I contact for further information?
Liz Chilton   (telephone number and email address provided in original)

If you agree to take part in this study, please complete and sign a consent form. You will be given a copy of this information sheet and a copy of your consent form to keep.
Thank you very much for taking the time to read this.

Consent Form　　　**How do tutors work together when running a family learning course?**

	Please tick box	
	Yes	No
I confirm that the project has been explained to me and I have received and understand the information sheet.	☐	☐
I confirm that I have been given the opportunity to ask questions.	☐	☐
I understand that taking part is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving a reason.	☐	☐
I agree to teaching sessions being audiotaped.	☐	☐
I agree to being interviewed and for any interview to be audiotaped.	☐	☐
I agree to information being audiotaped and its content being used for research purposes.	☐	☐
I understand that all information will be treated as confidential and that I will not be identified in any reports or publications.	☐	☐
I agree to take part in this study.	☐	☐

_____ _____ _____
Name of participant　　　　　Date　　　　　　　　　　Signature

_____ _____ _____
Name of researcher　　　　　Date　　　　　　　　　　Signature

Contact details
Name　　　　　　　　　　Liz Chilton
Telephone number:　　　　(provided in orginal)
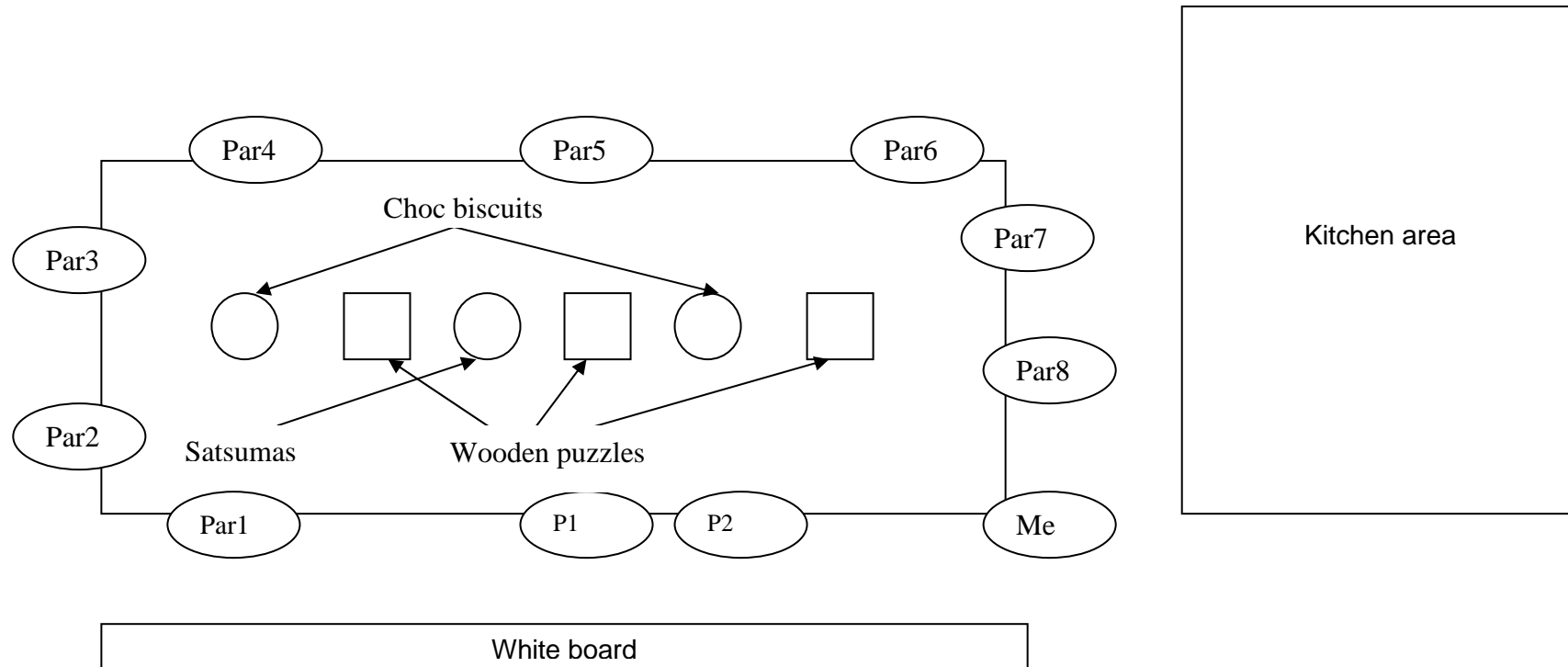Email address:　　　　　　(provided in orginal)

17 January 2008

Activities and discussions   **Session 3 – 31 January 2008**

- Tutor being in the crèche

- Quality of the biscuits

- Freebies – slinkies and 'smiley tambourines'

- What drinks people want

- Speaking and listening accreditation

- Completing induction form

- Recapping on last week – fine and gross motor skills

- What the speaker will be doing next week

- Being able to recognise and understand open and closed questions – linked to questioning of own children and working out open questions for next week's speaker

- Sound of children crying in the crèche – and identifying whose children are crying

- Working out questions to ask speaker next week so that everyone has a question already prepared that they can ask

- Importance of everyone having the opportunity to ask a question so that they have evidence for their qualification

- Explanation of the activities for the joint session with children – reinforcing questioning skills

Session 1 – 17 January 2008

Layout of room – table setting

Narrative	Comments
Table set out in welcoming manner – each place with A4 ring binder, plastic wallets, dividers. In the middle of the table are chocolate biscuits, satsumas and wooden puzzle games.	Really struck with how very welcoming the environment is especially how the table is set out – supplying the materials for attendance on a course but also supplying 'comfort' items.

Extract from an Example of a Transcript Returned to Practitioners

Debriefing after teaching session on 28 February 2008. Only Tutor2 present as Tutor1 on holiday (her second week on holiday). The recorder is put on as soon as come back in the classroom.

Tutor2	You could just quickly dip in couldn't you? You could do a lot with that couldn't you really. I was quite chuffed when I found that. Umm, but like … and I just said to her, you know, the accommodation – there's only so much you can bring in with you every week. And she said 'yeah'. And you know I said this is really nice. Some of the places we work. I mean [name of tutor] worked in the [name of Centre] and literally it was like a shed. It was quite unsafe really. Umm. from a health and safety point of view, but it's not important is it, at the end of the day she's getting in there and starting the learning process.
Researcher	I suppose it depends on how unsafe it is in health and safety sort of thing.
Tutor2	It wasn't that unsafe but they needed to do lots of things, and put chairs out the way. You know what I mean. It was really not ideal.
Researcher	Not as welcoming.
Tutor2	No, no. But they made it … they did the best they could. At least I've got some of those to hand in as well now so, that's another box ticked. So yeah, that's interesting 'I saw you pick those up and put them down again'. *(she laughs)*
Researcher	I did though. It's also because you'd been through that *(lesson plan)*
Tutor2	It's called thinking on your feet!
Researcher	and I knew what you were thinking you were going to do and I thought 'oh, she's decided not to do that now'.
Tutor2	I just thought 'no … no, no, don't go there, you know. Let's move it on.'
Researcher	Which is quite, you know, which is quite good in a way then, you showing me what you're going to do, because then I can know whether you've done it or not.
Tutor2	Yeah.
Researcher	You know what I mean? And that kind of thought processes of changing it.
Tutor2	As you just go along really, as I say, it's that start thinking on your feet thing isn't it? But I think, I think [name of T1] will be fine with that next week. Do you?
Researcher	Umm.
Tutor2	If [name of T1] just talks, just gets them to do some, a rough draft in those areas. I mean she'll be able to … if I take this up to her she'll be able to talk them through, erm.
Researcher	Have they got … 'cause they've got that sheet as well haven't they? Have they got that 'free writing' sheet?
Tutor2	Yes, yes. And I can give [name of T1], and I can give … that's what it's going to come onto in the end.
Researcher	Ok.
Tutor2	So it's the points that they'll want to talk about to the rest of the group. So that, that's … I've put it in my diary that I'll just pop up to the office.

De-briefing on 28 February 2008 and 6 March 2008: Questions Relating to Transcription

How have you managed to organise and liaise over the last three weeks?

What difference does it make when you have an additional adult in the session?

How do you decide who brings which resources to the session?

What does it mean for you that P2 appears to have left the course?

Practitioner Questions

1. Tell me how you came to be involved in teaching this group. (The route you've taken to get to this point.)

2. How did you become involved with FLLN?

3. What do you see as the main purpose of this group? What do you want the parents to learn?

4. What do you think [name of other practitioner] sees as the main purpose of the group? What do you think she wants the parents to learn?

5. Describe how you and [name of other practitioner] work together.

6. What do you see as your role?

7. How do you think your background influences
   - your role in the group?
   - your relationship with [name of other practitioner]?
   - your relationship with the parents?

FLLN Tutor File Contents

Section 1   **Introduction**

- Welcome note
- What is Family Learning?
- Family Programmes
- Role of the tutor

Section 2   **Contact information**

- Contact list
- Useful websites and contacts
- Resources and further reading

Section 3   **Guidance**

- Guidance notes
- RARPA (Recognising and Recording Progress and Achievement in Non-accredited Learning)
- Disability equipment list

Section 4   **Documentation**

- Document checklist
- Course details page
- Course master details form
- Enrolment form
- Tutor register
- Induction checklist
- Information Learning Technology agreement
- Physical Activity Readiness Questionnaire (PAR-Q)
- Photographic consent form
- Confirmation of employment form
- IAG referral form
- Tutor record of learner achievement
- Tutor record of assessment
- Scheme of work
- Session plan
- Self Assessment Report (SAR)
- Learner satisfaction form
- Summary of learner satisfaction forms

Section 5   **Partner's paperwork**

- Children's register
- Children's scheme of work
- Children's session plan
- Summary of children's evidence (birth – 3 years)
- Summary of children's evidence (3 years +)
- Resources checklist

Section 6   **Assessment**

- Literacy initial self-assessment
- Free writing sheet and marking guidance
- Numeracy initial self-assessment
- Pacesetter questionnaire
- ESOL initial assessment
- ESOL initial assessment – Assessor Guide
- Literacy diagnostic assessment
- Numeracy diagnostic assessment

Section 7   **Individual Learning Plan**

Section 8   **Resources**

- Nation tests
- Learning style questionnaires
- Ice breakers
- Every Child Matters outcomes framework

Section 9   **Teaching and learning observations**

- Teaching and learning observation form
- Grading guidance

Section 10   **Workshops**

- Workshop enrolment form

Healthy Eating

Practitioner One	Cause when I did the 'Get Cooking' course, she said to me how does this help you with your families and I said, 'to be honest, they're not at that level'.
Practitioner Two	No
Practitioner One	I said they're at the level where you need to say 'we need breakfast …
Practitioner Two	Yeah
Practitioner One	... something in the middle of the day and something at the end of the day'
Practitioner Two	Yeah
Practitioner One	And to advise them on what food is healthy for them to eat
Practitioner Two	Yeah

(Extract from Planning Meeting, 15 January 2008)

Practitioner One Providing Support in the Classroom

Practitioner One	It's probably you've got them more on task because I wasn't here and didn't interrupt.
Practitioner Two	(laughs)
Practitioner One	Yeah, but I do don't I? Because sometimes … I either bring it back or say 'this is what …'
Practitioner Two	Yes
Practitioner One	Sort of reinforcing what you're saying.
Practitioner Two	Yes
Practitioner One	Sometimes
Practitioner Two	Yeah
Practitioner One	I've noticed that.
Practitioner Two	Yeah. So …
Practitioner One	So, there were no interruptions really, were there?
Practitioner Two	Not, well …
Practitioner One	No, and …
Practitioner Two	I just thought they seemed …
Practitioner One	… a bit more focused.
Practitioner Two	We were pacey I thought.
Practitioner One	Right.
Practitioner Two	Really. Um, cause I looked at it, and I thought 'we'll never got through this', but they did, you know, kept ploughing on

(Extract from Debriefing and Planning Discussion, 31 January 2008)

Cross-referencing to *Every Child Matters* Criteria

Practitioner Two	{This is all my evaluating}
Practitioner One	{I haven't copied} but, cause I'm not sure, if, what you needed. *Ok*? So that goes week by week.
Practitioner Two	That's fab
Practitioner One	But there's no dates
Practitioner Two	That doesn't matter
Practitioner One	But the difficulty I had was matching it to every child reference, 'the matters'. Because some of it was English and maths wasn't it?
Practitioner Two	Mm
Practitioner One	And the 'Every Child Matters', I couldn't find a point that covered it. So I'm sorry about that because …
Practitioner Two	I'll tell you what I did …
Practitioner One	{I'm not sure so}
Practitioner Two	{Um I}
Practitioner One	Anyway, those
Practitioner Two	Is that what *** for 'Every Child Matters'?
Practitioner One	Well that's what you gave me
Practitioner Two	Did I?
Practitioner One	to look at
Practitioner Two	{Yeah}
Practitioner One	{Yeah} It started off … if it's social and emotional and all those …
Practitioner Two	Yeah
Practitioner One	things that come into it
Practitioner Two	Yeah, that's it. I'd put loads of 3.1
Practitioner One	Yes, yeah,
Practitioner Two	because that's enjoy and achieve, isn't it, which covers lots of things

(Extract from Planning Meeting, 15 January 2008)

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