

THE ROLE OF TEACHER/PUPIL INTERACTION
IN CLASSES OF LOW ABILITY ADOLESCENTS

by

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A thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

London School of Economics and Political Science

and

The Institute of Education

(University of London)

October, 1989.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

It is difficult to convey how much I owe to the advice and support of my two supervisors. From the inception of the project until the last weeks of her life, Professor Hilde Himmelweit provided frank counsel, tempered always with kindness and delivered with inimitable style and wit. Her judgement was a touchstone against which to measure progress. Nowhere was the soundness of that judgement more in evidence than in her efforts to secure for me joint supervision with Derek May at the Institute of Education. His specialised knowledge of research on classroom interaction, meticulous attention to detail and warm encouragement have been invaluable.

I would also like to thank all the teachers and pupils who took part in this project. For the teachers in particular this involved a willingness to expose themselves in potentially challenging situations, at a time when, due to strike action, they were already under considerable pressure. If the research is occasionally critical of some aspects of their practice, any insights gained are due to their unselfish cooperation.

**THE ROLE OF TEACHER/PUPIL INTERACTION
IN CLASSES OF LOW ABILITY ADOLESCENTS**

Noira Bovill

ABSTRACT

Case studies of low ability Third Year classes were carried out in four schools selected from a representative sample of Inner City secondary schools taking part in a major research project concerned with underachievement. The four schools represented a contrastive sample on the basis of the different percentages of their pupils (between 33% and 72%) expressing the wish to stay on in school after the Fifth Form. The schools' state examination results were also very divergent.

A symbolic interactionist perspective was adopted and the focus of the research was on teacher/pupil interaction, and in particular on the language of the classroom and the kinds of conversational opportunities teachers left open for their pupils.

The research methodology was that of 'combined levels of triangulation': information at the level of the school, the class group and the individual teacher and pupil was gathered in order to further understanding of classroom interaction. Discourse analysis was used to analyse transcripts of tape-recorded classroom talk. Teacher, pupils and researcher each contributed to the evaluation of classroom process: written work produced as a result of the lessons was also examined.

Four research questions were addressed:

- 1: Does the same class of low ability adolescents behave differently with different teachers?
- 2: Does the same teacher behave differently with different classes?
- 3: What kind of classroom interaction is favoured by teachers?
- 4: What are the effects of different types of classroom interaction on pupils' interest and work levels?

It was found that the same class behaved very differently with different teachers, but that features of the teacher's self-presentation and teaching style changed little across classes. Teachers preferred classes which they could control well and in which there was a close match between their most cherished professional skills and the class's needs. Such classes confirmed their professional self esteem. The sensitive management of interpersonal relations proved crucial to a teacher's success with low ability groups. Such pupils presented their teachers with particular problems of control in 'whole class' discussion of a freer kind: they lacked necessary discourse skills, and (particularly in more traditionally-run schools) behaved as if they did not see such opportunities as legitimated learning situations. This caused some teachers to restrict class discussion to highly structured and relatively unchallenging teacher-question pupil-answer sessions. However where the teacher could supplement this kind of interaction with interludes in which pupils' contributions were not limited to such responses, valuable learning opportunities were seen to result. Teachers who could approach potential challenges to their control of the situation as exhilarating rather than merely stressful were more likely to persevere in encouraging this type of pupil participation. Implications of research findings for practising teachers were discussed.

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INTRODUCTION

The present research focuses on the classroom experience of low ability adolescents and their teachers in inner city schools. The special problems of teachers in inner city schools in working class areas have been documented since the earliest days of state education, but their origins have been for the most part traced to factors beyond the control of the teachers themselves. Johnson (1970) and Grace (1978) have drawn attention to the writings of James Kay-Shuttleworth, an influential pioneer of popular education in the 1840s and 1850s and the records of the Victorian School Inspectorate. These describe graphically the difficulties experienced by such teachers and reveal some contradictory opinions concerning causes and possible solutions. Kay-Shuttleworth (1892) writes of the young teacher facing his first appointment in an urban school:

'He has left the training school for the rude contact of a coarse, selfish and immoral populace whose gross appetites and manners render the narrow streets in his neighbourhood scenes of impurity. he is at once brought face to face with an ignorant and corrupt multitude to whose children he is to prove a leader and guide. His difficulties are formidable.'

p 391

In Victorian times the root cause of problems in urban schools was most often located in this 'social pathology' view of working class life and the solutions most commonly advanced emphasised the importance of rigorously enforced discipline and the achievement of narrowly conceived 'results'.

Thus a report¹ submitted to the Popular Education Commission describes a school which is seen as 'one of the noblest specimens of the class' in terms of the efficiency with which the children are controlled:

'There could hardly be a more striking sight to the understanding eye than the interior of this school, in which I have seen 600 children present at one time, all under the most perfect command, moving with the rapidity and precision of a machine and learning as though they were learning for their lives. It is difficult indeed to overrate the greatness of the work which Mr James Wrigley, to whose intelligence and unflinching energy the success of the school is entirely due, is effecting the town.'

However Grace notes that amongst the Victorian Inspectorate there were individuals who saw things very differently, finding fault with even those establishments which others judged successful and challenging the ideological basis of official policy. A notable figure is Edmund Holmes, a former Chief Inspector of the Board of Education who writes in 1911:

'The teachers hope for advancement and increase of salary, and fear degradation and loss of salary... the children hope for medals, books, high places in their respective classes, and other rewards and distinctions, and fear corporal and other kinds of punishment.....Time tables, schemes of work, syllabuses, record books, progress books, examination result books and the rest, - hours and hours are spent by the teachers on the clerical work which these mechanical contrivances demand. And the hours so spent are too often wholly wasted. The worst of this machinery is that, so long as it works smoothly, all who are interested in the school are satisfied. And it may all work with perfect smoothness, and yet achieve nothing that really counts.....there is no vital movement, no growth, no life. From the highest to lowest, all the inmates of those schools are cheating themselves with forms, figures, marks, and other such empty symbols.'

p 141

This diagnostic divide is still reflected in modern debate. As Grace (1978) points out the current 'solutions' to the educational crisis

¹ Newcastle Commission, 1861, Vol. 2, pp. 222-3

proposed by conservative, liberal and 'progressive' educationalists demonstrate similarly conflicting views. The conservative advocates a reassertion of discipline in the classroom, more centralised control of a traditional curriculum and less emphasis on the teacher-as-social-worker, allowing teachers to concentrate on the business of teaching: liberals and 'progressives' attribute difficulties to maladministration, inappropriate curriculum which denigrates working class culture and low levels of expectation on the part of teachers. Their solutions are subsequently sought in altered management techniques, policies of educational priority areas or community schooling, the integrated curriculum and, with varying degrees of politicization, an increasing commitment on the part of teachers to the social and emotional as well as educational development of children. Although there is much in these suggestions which both sides would acknowledge as important, the emphasis is very different.

Such different conceptualizations of the legitimate means and ends of the educational process sociologists would contend are best understood in ideological and ultimately political terms. According to this perspective individual teachers do not determine important educational outcomes. They are 'agents of social and cultural reproduction' and as such often seem in sociological accounts to be little more than puppets, their influence and potential to educate powerfully constrained by the social structures within which they operate.

The present project sets out from rather different premises and focuses on a particular group of pupils and their teachers. It is the result of the researcher's experience as a part-time English teacher in an inner city Docklands secondary school, and was inspired by memories of certain incorrigible classes of 'low ability' adolescents, and of some

teachers who, like Daniel, emerged unscathed from the lions' den, occasionally with astounding and baffling proof of their pupils' previously untapped potential.

The classroom is a very private public place: teachers all too seldom have the opportunity of learning from each other. This research therefore, while acknowledging the overwhelming importance of wider social factors, gives priority to the study of face-to-face interaction between teacher and class. The underlying assumptions are that teachers can make a difference to educational outcomes, and that we can hope to increase our understanding of why certain teachers are more successful than others by studying their behaviour in the classroom. By bringing to bear upon their performance the analytic tools of social psychology it was hoped that more might be learned about the complicated social dynamics underpinning classroom life. This is after all the arena in which daily the educational experience is recreated: it is shaped, certainly by external pressures but it is also a complex human encounter with all that entails for the creation of new possibilities and change.

.....

The thesis is divided into four parts:

- PART 1: Development of the research approach
- PART 2: The schools as social institutions and their effects on pupils' attitudes and expectations
- PART 3: Classroom interaction
- PART 4: Conclusions

PART 1

DEVELOPMENT OF THE RESEARCH PROJECT

Chapter 1

Developments in Small Group research and educational research are reviewed in order to establish the methodological approach of the present project.

Chapter 2

The conceptual framework of the research (symbolic interactionism) is outlined. 'Triangulation' within a case study framework is to be adopted as the research methodology.

Four research questions are identified, and the principles guiding the selection of sample schools are explained.

Chapter 3

Pilot work undertaken to test the research design, and to develop research instruments is described. The procedure adopted for data collection is discussed.

CHAPTER 1

Review of literature

Abstract

Section 1

An overview of the diversity of social psychological approaches to the study of small groups, and consequent conceptual and methodological problems highlights the need to develop indices of group behaviour which are different from the average of individual characteristics.

Modern trends within sociology and social psychology emphasise that behaviour in social situations must be understood in terms of its meaning for participants, and that group processes must be contextualised within a wider social framework. The challenge facing social psychology may be viewed as how to integrate, or 'articulate' these different levels of explanation.

Section 2

The educational literature which examines group interaction in the classroom and teachers' influence on pupil outcomes is reviewed. Particular attention is paid to studies involving low ability students. Relevant methodological issues are discussed.

Section 3

Consideration of key conceptual and methodological issues in small group research, and the review of the educational literature on classroom interaction suggest a social psychological perspective and a methodological approach suitable for the present research.

1:1 Background: social psychology and the study of small groups.

The following overview focuses on conceptual and methodological problems in Small Group research, in order to contextualize the review of educational literature and what it has contributed to the understanding of

classroom interaction within the wider framework of social psychological studies.

1: 1: 1 Group dynamics

Group Dynamics became an identifiable field towards the end of the 1930's in the United States, and takes its name and origin from the work of Kurt Lewin. It has been defined by Cartwright and Zander (1968) as:

'a field of enquiry dedicated to advancing knowledge about the nature of groups, the laws of their development and their interrelations with individuals, other groups, and larger institutions. It may be identified by its reliance on empirical research for obtaining data of theoretical significance and the potential applicability of its findings to the improvement of social practice.'

p. 19

The study of group phenomena has interdisciplinary relevance. Sociologists, psychologists, philosophers, psychiatrists, public administrators, educationalists and political scientists have studied groups, and drawn upon each others work. Students of Group Dynamics within the universities have capitalised on the experience of group workers in the social services (see Wilson and Ryland, 1949), and often collaborated with them in research projects. The research effort has therefore proceeded along several very different lines and the knowledge base within the social sciences on group life is consequently extensive but bewilderingly varied. Problems arise because the interests, conceptual tools and methodologies of different professionals are not easily reducible to a common vocabulary, and their enquiries are conducted at different levels of analysis which are at best difficult to integrate and at worst ultimately irreconcilable.

Researchers of Group Dynamics have added to this complexity by using different definitions of the group, addressing themselves to different problems, and developing different kinds of research instruments.

Thus Kurt Lewin (1948) broadly defined the group in terms of 'social interaction or other types of interdependence'. Homans (1950) makes interaction the sole criterion. Newcomb (1951) proposed the existence of group norms as the defining factor. Deutsch, (1949) focused on cooperation and competition, and sought to distinguish between 'sociological groups' who have unity in so far as the members pursue interdependent goals, and 'psychological groups' who exist in so far as their members perceive themselves to be pursuing interdependent goals. The narrowest definition is probably that of Bales (1950), who, wishing to make evident the limited generalisability of findings derived from his laboratory-based groups, stated the following:

'A small group is defined as any number of persons engaged in interaction with one another in a single face-to-face meeting or series of such meetings, in which each member receives some impression or perception of each other member distinctive enough that he can, either at the time or in later questioning, give some reaction to each of the others as an individual person, even though it be only to recall that the other was present.'

p. 33

There were also a wide variety of theoretical approaches such as Lewin's (1951) influential 'field theory', 'interaction theory' as developed by Bales (1950), Homans (1950) and Whyte (1951), and a variety of 'systems theories' (Newcomb, 1950; Miller, 1955; Stoghill, 1959). Moreno (1934) had begun a tradition of sociometric analysis: Freudian psychoanalytic theory had a pervasive influence through the work of Bion (1952), Scheidlinger (1952) and Stock and Thelen (1958). Researchers like Cattell (1948) and Hemphill (1956) worked within an empiricist-statistical tradition, and tried to establish the main dimensions of group processes using factor analytic techniques. Using the conceptual framework of cognitive psychology,

significant contributions were made by Asch (1952) and Festinger (1957) amongst others.

Since the goal of Group Dynamics as set out by Kurt Lewin was to develop a systematic theory of group life this diversity was somewhat unfortunate. It meant that research efforts were rarely cumulative. It was often not at all clear in how far definitions and concepts overlapped and different research situations reflected the same or different group processes.

A proliferation of measurement techniques also created problems. These were developed within the conceptual framework of behaviourist experimental psychology. Quantifiable data was to be gathered, usually in controlled laboratory settings, analysed statistically, and hopefully replicated by independent investigators. Problems arose concerning the definition of 'group level' data. A fundamental requirement of group research is that it must be able to specify how group characteristics (as opposed to individual characteristics) may be identified and measured.

Cattell (1944, 1951) specifically addressed this problem and developed a 'Three Panel' taxonomy which gives a basis for specifying the different levels of abstraction upon which group characteristics may be measured. The three levels outlined were as follows:

- 1: The level of population variables. These are usually measured characteristics of the component individuals. They are distinct from the characteristics of the group as a group, and can be measured before the individuals become a group.
- 2: The level of structure. Variables at this level are at a high level of abstraction and are statements of the relations which involve all members of the group. Included would be 'status gradients', 'the clique relations as revealed by sociometry', reciprocal role relations, the form of leadership structure etc.
- 3: The level of syntality, or the group equivalent of personality - 'that which determines the organism's reactions when the stimulus

situation is defined'. This is measured by variables which 'represent the performance of the group acting as a whole'. For example Cattell quotes 'the total number of words spoken per hour within the group' as a characteristic of syntality or 'the ratio of criticisms to suggestions for the group as a whole'.

For Cattell the third level - syntality - was central, and it was his hope that the cumulative results of research would enable psychologists to define dimensions of the 'syntality' of groups similar to 'traits' in the psychology of individuals by means of factorisation techniques applied to a large variety of commonly used attributes. He believed that certain dimensions had already been identified (such as 'the twelve dimensions of national culture patterns') and that other studies showed a factor of general ability in groups similar to the factor of general ability in individuals, and three distinct features of 'morale'.

Cattell (1951) saw group behaviour as a function of both group characteristics and the 'stimulus situation', or as he put it:

$R = f(O.S)$

where R is the reaction, O defines the organism and S the stimulus situation in which the organism, in this case the group, is placed.'

p. 163.

He also noted that we must be prepared to consider the perceptions of the group because of:

'the difficulty of handling the introspective variable of the 'meaning' of a perception with the truly behavioural variables defining how one reacts to the perception.'

p. 179

Cattell was therefore also aware of the need to contextualise interaction within a setting, and to deal with the meaning of events, even if he rather simplistically identified this with perception.

Cattell's project was, however, never successfully completed. The proliferation of measurement techniques and approaches has continued, with researchers often developing unique instruments rarely used by any apart from their inventor. Bonjean, Hill and McLemore (1967, p.9), reviewing scales and indices reported in four sociological journals between 1954 and 1965 report some 2,080 scales, only 47 of which were used more than 5 times.

By 1980 many researchers were extremely concerned about the lack of direction in Group Dynamics, and the fact that it had not fulfilled its early promise. In 1968 Cartwright and Zander (although considering the discipline to be 'in its adolescence, and like many adolescents ... testing out its capacities' had stated that:

'Group dynamics is ready for the third stage of scientific development in which theorizing and data collection mutually contribute to our understanding.'

p. 29

Over ten years later Alvin Zander (1979) was less optimistic. In an article entitled *The Study of Group Behaviour During Four Decades* published in the *Journal of Applied and Behavioural Science* he writes:

'Research in group behaviour still suffers from an absence of useful and well stated primary notions.'

p. 280

In the same year Ruzicka et al summarised the problems of Small Group research in the following way:

- 1: lack of a common conceptual base
- 2: lack of appropriate design
- 3: lack of external validity
- 4: lack of adequate instrumentation
- 5: lack of appropriate statistical procedures

These authors subsequently proposed a revival of Cattell's (1951) 'Three Panel' model of group characteristics, since in their opinion it provided an excellent base for multivariate statistical designs.

In 1982, however, the central problem facing any researcher of group processes was regarded as still unsolved by Marie Jahoda:

'Group processes are continuous and pervasive: their strength and directions can be described a la Bion, but prove so far resistant to measurement. Even though the belief that the group is different from the sum of its parts is strongly entrenched in our thinking, efforts at measurement of the group consist as a rule of adding up individual responses; the group process is then identified with the average of individual feelings or actions.'

p. 7

Such statements point to the failure of empirically based research into group processes to deliver the results that had been confidently expected.

It became clear that early interpretations of laboratory-based studies had failed to take into account the full complexity of the processes involved. The importance of the fact that the social psychological experiment represented a particular kind of interpersonal situation which had meaning for subjects was increasingly appreciated (Orne, 1962; Rosenthal, 1966; Alexander, Zucker and Brody, 1970). Doise (1986) notes:

'The experimental paradigm tends to isolate and reify elements of a more complex process. In some ways one might say that Sherif's experiments on intergroup relations and Lewin's on climates and social change were primarily simulations or scale models rather than experimental analyses of the dynamics of interdependence between artificially created situations and a social context. Finally the reason for Sherif and Lewin's very relative lack of success may be an important characteristic of the experimental approach itself, which tends to eliminate all it cannot directly control.'

p. 10.

Group dynamics therefore on the one hand had produced outstanding research. Kurt Lewin's early study of the effects of different

leadership styles, Sherif's account of the genesis of group norms and Asch's of conformity had established beyond doubt that group effects were powerful determinants of human behaviour, and that they could be explored in laboratory conditions. On the other hand, at the beginning of the 1980s, the research field, according to social psychologists committed to the study of groups, stood in considerable conceptual and methodological disarray.

1: 1: 2 Social Situations

It is in the context of this theoretical impasse that we can best appreciate the contribution of Michael Argyle and his colleagues whose work on social situations represents another attempt within an empiricist framework to deal with the problems of Group research. While carrying out work on aggression, altruism, assertiveness, attraction, gaze, leadership, conformity and self disclosure, Argyle, Furnham and Graham (1981) developed the concept of the 'situation' defined as 'the sum of the features of the behaviour system, for the duration of a social encounter'. This 'situational' approach allows in a novel way for a more inclusive treatment of social phenomena.

Argyle has produced, like Cattell, a classificatory system in terms of which researchers may organise data collection. He suggests that the following ten dimensions should be considered:

- 1: Goals and Goal structure.
- 2: Rules.
- 3: Roles.
- 4: Repertoire of elements.
- 5: Sequences of behaviour.
- 6: Concepts.
- 7: Environmental setting.
- 8: Language and speech.
- 9: Difficulties and skills.
- 10: Interpretation and explanation of situations.

However while Cattell's scheme addresses the central problem of how to distinguish between levels of explanation, Argyle's ten dimensions are drawn indiscriminately from each of Cattell's three taxonomic levels and also includes elements of the 'stimulus situation'. In so doing it bypasses, rather than solves, the problem of how to define 'group' as opposed to 'average individual' characteristics, and with its proliferation of dimensions poses great difficulties of data collection and integration.

1: 1: 3 Qualitative approaches

The disenchantment felt by many researchers in the field of Group Dynamics strengthened the case being argued for the use of more qualitative approaches to the study of group process.

Sociological thinking by the 1960's, while retaining its distinctive preoccupations, had begun to incorporate many of the insights of the sociology of knowledge - namely that the reality of everyday life, or the 'commonsense' knowledge by which people interpret their experiences and guide their behaviour, is not objectively given, but socially constructed by individuals in an ongoing dialectic with the society of which they are part (see Berger and Luckmann: 1966). Bernstein (1975) has summarised the main direction of these influences:

'From different sources, Marxist, phenomenological, Symbolic-Interactionist and Ethnomethodological viewpoints began to assert themselves. Although there are major differences between these approaches, they share certain common features:

- (1) A view of man as a creator of meanings.
- (2) An opposition to macro-functional sociology.
- (3) A focus upon the assumptions underlying social order, together with the treatment of social categories as themselves problematic
- (4) A distrust of forms of quantification and the use of objective categories
- (5) A focus on the *transmission* and acquisition of interpretative procedures

pp. 162 - 163

This has led to an increasing preoccupation with language and symbolic systems, and the way in which through them ideologies are diffused and perpetuated, legitimating power bases and systems of social control, and a complementary shift away from methodologies which relied upon the analysis of survey material and questionnaires to the use of participant observation techniques and 'case study' approaches.

The researcher who relies upon ethnographic, ethnomethodological phenomenological and allied approaches would claim that empiricist observation schedules often take for granted the very issues that they should regard as problematic, and hence in need of explication. Since in their view the meanings attached by participants to their actions are central to any understanding of how human life is structured, empiricist research, although it may be interesting in other respects, does not allow major insights into social processes.

The benefits and drawbacks of such an unstructured approach are outlined by Dean et al (1967) in McCall-Simmons definitive text *Issues in Participant Observation*. Amongst the more noteworthy benefits the authors list the following:

- 1: The researcher can reformulate the problem as he goes along.
- 2: The researcher is better able to avoid misleading or meaningless questions.
- 3: The researcher can get at depth material more satisfactorily.
- 4: Difficult-to-quantify variables are less distorted
- 5: The highest paid talent is in direct contact with the data in the field. (Data collection can be left to others where less subjective methods are used.)

Such an approach is therefore especially suited to that stage of enquiry where it is more realistic to be concerned with generating appropriate

hypotheses, than prematurely testing out theories formulated on the basis of insufficient knowledge. It is also very well adapted to the study of how meanings come to be negotiated and belief systems built up as a group history develops over time.

However unstructured methods have two major drawbacks. Firstly, although guidelines have been provided for the proper conduct of case study research which can have its own kind of methodological rigour (Campbell and Fiske, 1959; McCall and Simmons, 1969; Denzin, 1970; Kazdin, 1981; Yin, 1984), the results cannot be generalised to a wider population. This is a major limitation of case studies (see Campbell and Stanley, 1963). The claim that properly designed case study research 'generalises to theory', while experimental studies 'generalise to the population' has been made (Yin, 1984, Wells, 1987). The analogy must however be considered doubtful. Secondly, because of the researcher's use of relationships he establishes in the field, there is the likelihood of bias. This has led some researchers to seek for solutions in essentially phenomenological terms. Such a stance, if adopted fully, has profound implications: the research project comes to be seen not in terms of escaping individual bias (as this is both impossible and all that there is), but of revealing and contrasting different and equally valid perspectives.

1: 1: 4 Levels of explanation in social psychology

Despite almost fifty years of dedicated enquiry, and some not inconsiderable success, the measurement of group effects therefore remains in the 1980s problematic. In addition, the insights gained through qualitative research, and the increasing awareness of the relativity of experimental findings (which are now seen as contingent upon particular

circumstances) have dauntingly underlined the need for more elaborated explanatory models.

Recent work within social psychology with a sociological bias, and within European social psychology in particular, has addressed these challenges most directly and effectively. The work of William Doise (1982, 1986) may be seen as a case in point. Doise has developed a conceptual framework which allows us to see the dilemmas facing Small Group research (the need to distinguish, and at the same time integrate, the contributions of individual and group characteristics within the wider social context and develop more comprehensive models of interaction) as paradigmatic of the challenges facing social psychology as a whole.

Doise puts forward a taxonomy of levels of analysis in social psychology analogous to the Three Panel model proposed by Cattell for the study of groups. Going beyond the usual dichotomy between 'individual' and 'social' he distinguishes four levels and identifies each with reference to past research in social psychology.

- 1: **the 'psychological', or 'intra-personal' level.**
At this level only the way in which the individual organises his perceptions or evaluations is considered. Research into perception, or Heider's (1958) Balance theory are relevant examples.
- 2: **the 'inter-personal' or 'intra-situational' level**
Research at this level is concerned with interpersonal processes, in a given situation. Bavelas' (1950) studies of communication networks operates at this level.
- 3: **the positional level**
Here differences in social positions that exist prior to the group coming together as a group are considered. An example would be Kelman's (1958) study of social influence processes.
- 4: **the ideological level**
At this level the researcher considers the ideologies and belief systems of the wider society. Lerner's (1971) experiments on the 'innocent victim' which invoked the 'Just World' hypothesis, or Milgram's (1974) explanations of his subjects' behaviour in terms of the prestige of Science, would be cases in point.

Although he restricts his focus to work within experimental social psychology, Doise states that this 'preference for experiment in no way implies that field studies or clinical investigations are not amenable to the same levels of analysis' (Preface p viii).

Using this analytic framework Doise shows how most experimental work in social psychology has been restricted to levels 1 and 2, although other levels have sometimes been invoked in concluding discussions, or explored in refining replications. As an example of the first, Doise quotes Milgram (1971) who, having carefully controlled in his experimental manipulations for Level 1 and 2 type variations (psychological make-up of individuals, proximity to the experimenter and victim etc) goes on to produce in his conclusions a Level 4 explanation. - 'the prestige accorded to Science' - which he has in no way experimentally tested. Cognitive dissonance research is quoted to show how as research on an area increases, other levels of explanation are drawn in. Festinger's theory, in as far as reduction of dissonance is seen as a cognitive reorganisation within the individual, relies on Level 1 explanations. However Level 2 explanations have been implicated in subsequent research which consistently relates to the process the importance of self-image in relation to others. Level 3 explanations have been proposed by Cooper and Mackie (1983), who show 'the importance of definitional attitudes linked to group membership'; Level 4 explanations have been advanced by Beauvois and Joule (1981) and by Poitou (1974) 'in the sense that the former looked at the process of reduction of dissonance as forming part of the function of ideology, and the latter looked at it as the product of an ideology which sees the individual as autonomous and consistent' (p 16).

Doise points out that among the most interesting developments in social psychology have been research initiatives which have allowed for the integration at different levels of explanation. The work of Tajfel and his collaborators on social mobility and social change illustrates this clearly. Starting from research at Level 1 into categorisation, Tajfel (1974) has developed a paradigm for the study of inter-group relations and a social identity theory integrating level 2 and 3 type explanations. This has produced a rich mine of social-psychological research (Giles, 1977; Billig, 1973, 1976, 1982; Turner, 1975, 1980; Tajfel, 1982).

Another particularly promising approach is that of Moscovici on social representations (1961, 1976: see also Farr and Moscovici, 1984). Social representations are 'general beliefs which can be modified and transformed, depending on social position' or can emerge as 'aspects of inter-personal relations and individual development'. They therefore undergo multiple transformations which make them potentially powerful tools for the 'articulating' analysis of the four levels of explanation.

For Doise such developments point up the nature of the challenge facing social psychology, and help identify its proper area of concern - the interconnecting or 'articulation' (1) of these different levels of explanation. He stresses that the levels he has proposed are arbitrary, and that he has advanced no general theory. There are many possible ways in which explanations may be articulated and no complete reconciliation between sociological and psychological explanations is to be expected.

¹ The *Dictionnaire Le Robert* lists a number of figurative meanings of 'articulation', amongst which Doise's English translator notes as the most important;

'Organisation of the separate elements
which contribute to the functioning of a whole.'

'Interlinking of two processes.'

Doise therefore although providing no easy solution has shown how a conceptual framework may illuminate and impose structure on the bewildering diversity of research findings. His work can also be seen as proposing an agenda for future social psychological research - the 'articulation', in as far as is possible given the limitations of present knowledge, of different 'levels of explanation'.

.....

It is in this wider context of the study of group process and trends within sociology and social psychology that we must contextualise the educational literature which is the proper background of the present research. The following account will outline the methodologies and research instruments commonly used to study classroom interaction. Their strengths and weaknesses will be examined in the light of Teacher Effectiveness and Teacher Expectancy studies. Special attention will be paid to findings which cast light on the situation of low ability/achieving pupils.

1: 2 Educational Research

During the 1970s a great deal of research was devoted to the development of different methodologies for the study of classroom process: this was regarded both as worthy of study in its own right, and essential if the dimensions of teaching behaviour which were most relevant to successful student outcome were to be discovered.

Difficulties arose however as researchers struggled to find ways of adequately characterizing the complexity of classroom life. Properly understood, interaction involves the reciprocal influence of teacher upon

pupils and pupils upon teacher: but how was the essence of this process to be captured? Clearly it was neither possible nor desirable to record everything: but which principles should guide the selection of relevant behaviours and how were they to be recorded? Researchers differed in the degree of explicitness with which they spelt out the theoretical bases underlying the selection of what was considered worth documenting (see Rosenshine and Furst's (1973) distinction between 'implicit' and 'explicit' theoretical bases for research instruments).

Most influential work however, as in the social psychological study of Small Groups, may be conveniently described in terms of two types of research approach:

1: Ethnographic studies.

2: Systematic observation studies.

The first is qualitative and reflects the more recent emphasis within sociology on the social construction of reality derived from the sociology of knowledge. The second is quantitative and empirical like most research in Group Dynamics. These different approaches focus on different aspects of classroom life and each has inherent advantages and disadvantages.

1: 2: 1 Ethnographic and allied approaches

Much of the most informative and sensitive work on classroom interaction has been done in this tradition. Case studies often have no pretensions to systematic data collection, or analysis, but rely on the observers' impressionistic descriptions of classroom experience. Any comprehensive review of the literature on classroom interaction would have to give considerable emphasis to such accounts.

This present review has a more limited objective - to justify and trace the roots in past research of the methodological stance to be adopted

in the present project. For this reason only two illustrative examples will be briefly described.

The contribution of case studies to the development of theory

Furlong (1976) followed a low ability/achieving adolescent, Carol, throughout the school day and noted how her behaviour altered as she interacted with different people within her group during different social situations. His research shows how case study material can refine theory and lead to the development of new concepts in terms of which we may more perceptively interpret what we observe. From this study there emerged the concept of 'interaction set' to designate that group of people, who may not necessarily be friends, but who in specific situations share a common, mutually negotiated 'definition of the situation' and hence become available for each other as interacting partners in the creation of social meanings. 'Interaction sets' are in this way suggested to be more appropriate tools with which to generate explanations for social behaviour than other more traditional measures of sociometric choice, which produce static models of group membership. These imply that group norms are consistent and obedience to them in some sense obligatory.

Carol has a repertoire of possible behaviours: which are expressed seems to depend on her assessment of the teacher, and the content of the lesson. Furlong emphasises that Carol wants to learn, and does not respect teachers who cannot secure a learning situation for her, despite the fact that she often seems to do everything she can to resist working. Such ambivalence and poignant conflict of motives among low achieving pupils is implied in other research (see Hargreaves, 1967, 1975; Marsh et al, 1978).

The contribution of case studies to the understanding of historical process

Walker and Adelman's (1976) paper 'Strawberries' illustrates the superiority of ethnographic techniques when the object of study is a complex and subtle issue for which no preestablished category system may be sensibly devised. Their study focuses on the function of humour in the establishment of social solidarity and control and the development of classroom identities, and takes its name from a particular incident. A boy replies to his teacher's comments on an unsatisfactory piece of work 'Strawberries, strawberries' - referring to one of his teacher's favourite expressions that their work was 'like strawberries - good as far as it goes, but it doesn't last nearly long enough'. As such it is illustrative of the main thrust of Walker and Adelman's argument - that key issues, such as the nature of the teacher's 'classroom identity' or the way in which it is 'organically related' to the identities of pupils and may be modified in different social situations, cannot rightly be understood by a researcher who has not been present in the classroom over a long period, or who restricts himself to the use of quantitative techniques.

1: 2: 2 Systematic observation

Researchers working within the empiricist tradition have developed a large number of observational systems, designed to capture different aspects of classroom life: the American *Mirrors for Behaviour* (Simon and Boyer: 1975) lists over 200, and *British Mirrors* (1978) over 40 different systems. These (see Chanan and Delamont, 1975) may be subdivided into:

- 1: category systems, which assign specified units of behaviour into one of a mutually exclusive and comprehensive number of categories. This is most often done at specified time intervals.
- 2: sign systems, which record selected behaviours, usually whenever they occur.

Sign systems are particularly useful for documenting non-verbal behaviours, while category systems are more suitable for the description of classroom talk. The observer may concentrate on either the pupil or the teacher, or both. Usually when the pupil is the focus of attention, individual pupils are monitored at specified time intervals. Interest may focus on low inference variables such as number of call-outs, answers to teacher questions, hand raising or overt misbehaviours (throwing paper etc.) or high inference variables such as time-on-task.

This type of research instrument has several noteworthy advantages: data are relatively easily and quickly collected, and may be analysed statistically. They also provide a way of comparing different classroom contexts.

American Research

American work using systematic observation was dominated in the earliest days by the work of Flanders (1970), a student of Bales, who developed an observational system specifically designed for use in the classroom situation. Rosenshine and Furst (1973) note that in the 1970 *Mirrors for Behaviour* twenty three of the seventy three schedules are minor modifications of the Flanders Interaction Analysis Category System (FIAC).

The Flanders' system categorises classroom talk into seven categories of teacher talk, two of student talk, and a grab-bag 'Silence or confusion' category: observations are recorded every three seconds. Since the researcher relies upon on-the-spot inferential coding, there are associated problems : instantaneous judgements have to be made about the intentions and effects of teacher utterances. Some would argue that no bystander is in a position to make such judgements (see Delamont, 1984:

Walker and Adelman, 1975). Other drawbacks include the relatively scant attention paid to pupil behaviour, and the narrow 'range of convenience' of the system - it is really only suitable for use in traditional 'talk-and-chalk' classroom situations.

British Research

If we turn to the systems listed in Galton's *British Mirrors* (1978) we discover no comparable domination of the field by Flander's type coding schemes. There is however an equally confusing variety of alternative methodologies. Forty five percent of the schemes have never been used except by their devisor. The majority (76%) were developed to provide a 'description of classroom process' while only 40% related either 'presage' or 'process' variables to pupil outcomes. Thirty nine percent of authors report no reliability score for their instruments, although this is regarded as 'not applicable' to only one system (Sinclair and Coulthard's (1975) system of linguistic analysis). The authors also focus on many different aspects of classroom life:

TABLE 1.1 Observation Systems listed in *British Mirrors**

Focus of Instrument	Percentage	
	Central Aim	Subsidiary Aim
1: Management and control of routine activities	15	49
2: Organisational learning task/ pupil as initiator	15	39
3: Classroom climate	12	37
4: Knowledge and intellectual content	15	15
5: Linguistic analysis	2	24
6: The class as a social system	2	12

* Adapted from descriptive matrix in *British Mirrors*

It will be readily appreciated that there are inherent difficulties, as in the research on Group Dynamics, in coordinating research findings based on such a variety of data collection instruments. Knowledge gains made in the field of teacher effectiveness research have however largely been the result of the application of such quantitative techniques.

1: 2: 3 Teacher Effectiveness studies

In the field of Teacher Effectiveness studies there has been a move away from early research which ignored classroom process and tried to establish direct links between pupil academic outcome and personality characteristics of teachers. Researchers in the '40s and '50s had experienced no difficulty in finding correlated characteristics: rather the problem arose from the sheer number of characteristics which could, given different age groups and teaching situations, be shown to be important. Even exemplary work in this tradition such as that of Ryans (1960) had failed to come up with any substantive findings. In a study involving 6,000 teachers in 1700 schools at both primary and secondary levels, over 400 relevant personality traits were found, which even factor analytic techniques could not reduce to interpretable dimensions. The study of classroom interaction held out the promise of a fresh approach which might resolve the stalemate.

Teaching behaviours associated with positive pupil outcomes

In America a well-funded research programme into the acquisition of basic skills in elementary schools produced a flood of research which is summarised in a number of reviews (Brophy, 1979: Dunkin and Biddle, 1974: Good, 1979: Peterson and Walberg, 1979). Although measuring instruments are not conjured out of thin air, and by their very selectiveness do represent a theoretical stance, much of this research was not explicitly theory-driven.

Researchers interested in understanding what made a teacher effective, adopted a pragmatic approach and compared the practice of teachers considered successful according to some previously ascertained and generally accepted criterion (such as the pupils' test results), with that of less outstanding colleagues. Brophy (1979) concluded his review with the observation that effective teachers were those who had high levels of contact with their students, and whose lessons were pitched at a level of difficulty which 'allows consistent success'. Rosenshine (1979) listed the following teaching characteristics which were consistently associated with good pupil outcome:

- 1: a clear focus on academic goals.
- 2: effort directed at encouraging pupil participation.
- 3: extensive coverage of subject area.
- 4: emphasis on the setting of clear goals.
- 5: close monitoring of pupil progress towards these goals.
- 6: the giving of immediate and academically oriented feedback.
- 7: structured learning activities.
- 8: task-oriented but relaxed environments.

Such findings are disappointingly general. A major difficulty, familiar to students of Group Dynamics, is posed in Rosenshine's view by the fact that so much of the research is not directly comparable, due to the different focus and measuring instruments used.

There were also interventionist programmes which attempted to test the success of different teaching approaches by training selected teachers and comparing the results with those of teachers who had not been part of the training programme. Four such studies are reviewed by Gage and Giaconia (1980) who conclude that teaching behaviours can be changed by instruction and pupil outcome improved as a consequence.

The work of Good and Grouws (1979) on the Missouri Mathematics Project illustrates this type of work. These researchers first monitored the classroom behaviour of 100 Fourth-Grade teachers who worked in a middle class urban school district and used the same text-book. On the basis of their students' performance on a standardised achievement test in mathematics especially effective teachers were identified, and found to differ from their less effective colleagues in the following respects:

- 1: they taught the class basically as a whole.
- 2: they presented information more actively and clearly and with more emphasis on meaning.
- 3: they were task-focused.
- 4: they were basically non-evaluative and created a relaxed learning environment in which there was comparatively little praise or criticism.
- 5: they expected more of their pupils (in respect of homework assignments, faster pace of work, 'more alert environment').
- 6: they had fewer behavioural problems.

Many different aspects of the teachers' performance are implicated - managerial strategy (1), attitudinal factors (5), evaluative techniques (4), approach to the cognitive organisation of the material to be presented (2), and success in controlling pupils (6). It is difficult once again not to experience some dismay at the disparate nature of such findings.

On the basis of their work however, Good and Grouws wrote a 45 page manual for teachers. The programme was then tested on forty classrooms in Oklahoma. Roughly half of the teachers were assigned to the experimental condition, given the manual and 2½ hours of instruction. The results of standardised achievement tests indicated that the pupils in experimental classrooms were five months in advance of those in control classrooms. Three months after the programme ended, those students were still performing better than control students.

Good hypothesised that the success of the Missouri programme was due to the emphasis it laid upon the opening stages of the lesson in which the meaning of the mathematical concepts and procedures were explained by teachers. On the other hand he did note that such conclusions were, at the most, informed speculation and acknowledged that not enough was in fact known about why the programme worked. Although the mean scores showed that the experimental teachers were the more successful, there were important individual differences which required explanation. Why did some teachers find it easier to use the system than others? Was it necessarily the case that all teachers could benefit by techniques which exceptional teachers used? The research design had assured that the same material was being taught. Might different types of material require different approaches?

Pupil behaviours associated with positive pupil outcomes

Hoge and Luce (1979) reviewed studies which established links between observed pupil behaviours and some index of academic achievement. In fact nine studies focus exclusively on pupil behaviours (e.g. level of attentiveness) while eight are concerned with teacher/pupil interactions (e.g. negative and positive teacher contacts). A survey of the seventeen studies leads to the conclusion that:

'Positive relations between measures of pupil attention and pupil performance appear with some consistency, while generally negative relations appear between measures of pupil inattention Further teacher/pupil interaction measures reflecting level of academic activity (e.g. pupil initiated work contacts, volunteering) relate positively to performance. These teacher-pupil interaction variables which reflect teacher attention to the pupil show rather more complex relations with achievement. While negative teacher contacts ... generally relate negatively to achievement, positive types of attention show more variable relations with achievement.'

p. 486.

The authors conclude that only moderate levels of association have been established, and too little attention paid to the problem of explanation: they stress the point that there is a need for 'more complex models ... to guide research in the area'. Once again these are the classic criticisms of empirical research.

Teaching styles: American research

Researchers on both sides of the Atlantic have attempted to impose structure on such findings by developing the concept of teaching style. Flanders for example postulated a distinction between what he called 'direct' and 'indirect' influence in the classroom. A teacher who uses indirect means will take the ideas and information the pupils already have, and use them as the basis for his teaching technique - as in the original sense of the Latin 'educere': to lead out. The 'direct' teacher, on the other hand, will concentrate on providing information, rather than on teasing out the implications of what the pupils already know. Good and his colleagues (Good, 1980: Evertson, Anderson, Anderson and Brophy, 1980: Weber, 1978) have more recently recommended a teaching style which they call active teaching. Teachers who are effective are described as 'more active in presenting concepts, explaining the meaning of those concepts, providing appropriate practice activities, and monitoring those activities prior to seatwork' (Good, 1980). Active teaching, although it seems in many ways close to the 'direct' teaching style regarded as less desirable in Flanders-type research, is seen by its advocates as not necessarily at variance with the indirect teaching style supported by the findings of such work. This is because it is an essentially broader concept, which can be realised in a variety of organisational situations, and which depending on the educational aims of the instruction can be more or less 'direct' (Good, 1979). Most

importantly, active teaching lays much emphasis on providing the student with opportunities for 'active learning': as a result studies have increasingly concentrated on student as well as teacher behaviour. In particular much interest has focused on student 'time on task', which has been consistently related to good pupil outcomes (Denham and Lieberman, 1980; Rosenshine, 1980).

Teaching styles: British research

In Britain the debate has centred round 'formal versus informal' or 'traditional versus progressive' teaching styles. These different approaches are ultimately prefaced upon different philosophies or ideologies (Level 4 type concepts in Doise's terms) which conceptualise human nature and society in profoundly different ways. These can be seen as 'social representations' which have important repercussions for education and the role of the teacher.

The roots of the traditional approach reach back to classical humanism, and the writings of Plato in which it was assumed that 'the quest for knowledge could in principle ultimately yield permanent truths which transcended all actual political and social situations' (Skilbeck, 1976). Teachers are seen in Platonic terms as the 'guardians' of society's cultural inheritance, which it is their duty to maintain and transmit to succeeding generations. This confers upon them certain leadership rights, and has legitimated an elitist approach to education, in terms either of the educational potential and/or social class of those who are to be educated.

The 'progressive' approach is generally traced back to 18th and 19th century Romanticism and the writings of Rousseau, in particular his imaginary biography of the education of a child from infancy to adulthood, *Emile*. Where classical humanism is a traditionalist philosophy, conservative

and 'adult-centred', concerned to advance knowledge by preserving the values and achievements of the past, the progressivist Romantic approach is 'child-centred' and stresses self discovery and the authenticity of childhood experience. Society's values are perceived as problematic and potentially depraving: knowledge and personal fulfilment are to be achieved by direct experience.

Progressivists therefore were from the beginning involved in a radical critique of society. However later developments led to important differences from the position advocated by Rousseau, who wished the child to be isolated from the supposedly pernicious effects of society. Through the influence of philosophers such as John Dewey the importance of the relationship between the school and society was reestablished. The aspiration of progressivist education now became for many to reconstruct society through education which was seen as a major force for planned change in society - 'individuals and society are inextricably bound together and improvements in one means improvements in the other' (Lawson and Petersen, 1972, p. 35).

Both currents have been reflected in public debate and practice concerning state education in Britain since Victorian times (see Johnson, 1970: Grace. 1978). The 'progressive' approach is represented in the work of pioneers like Homer Lane and his Little Commonwealth, which influenced J.H. Simpson at Rugby and A.S. Neill at Summerhill. It had the support of the Piagetians, and had considerable influence, particularly for primary school education, through the powerful advocacy of the Plowden Report. In secondary schools it was most likely however to be experienced by lower ability pupils who were not expected to sit public examinations. The traditional approach on the other hand was exemplified in the Arnoldian

tradition of the English public schools and in the grammar schools of 20th century Britain, and continues to inform the thinking of influential educationalists. The Black Papers for example with their emphasis on strict discipline, authoritarian teacher/pupil relationships, and the importance of examinations are classical-humanist in orientation.

In the '70's grave doubts were expressed concerning falling standards in education (Start and Wells, 1972: Burke and Lewis, 1975) and opposition to 'progressive' teaching methods gathered momentum. The work of Neville Bennett (1976) was widely quoted as lending support to the view that traditional teaching approaches which relied on competition, regular testing and strictly disciplined classrooms produced superior results. 'Progressive' methods were held to be only suitable for exceptionally gifted teachers:

'Progressives' all agree that their methods demand more effort and higher intelligence from the teacher. This is one major reason for the chaos in so many schools. These methods are not suited to the average teacher, who may well have only one or two years' experience, and who is facing a class of thirty five or more.....

'..... the best Public, Grammar and Direct Grant schools are by and large better now than they were before the war, particularly when they draw on their own preparatory schools. These are amongst the best schools in the world. High standards of discipline and work are balanced by new flexibility, new methods and the educational achievements are impressive. These are the schools that the Labour Party wishes to destroy. But the general picture all over the country is quite different. Examiners are appalled at the low standard of English among candidates, the supposed intellectual cream of their generation.'

Black Paper Two: the Crisis in Education

Although Bennett had deplored the use in earlier studies such as that of Barker Lunn of over simplistic categorisations of teaching methods, and although his research did in fact outline a more complex and extended number of 'mixed' teaching styles, the final conclusions of his report gave

support to 'formal' as opposed to 'informal' (widely interpreted as equivalent to 'traditional' as opposed to 'progressive') teaching styles. Later Bennett (1978) himself interpreted his findings in terms of the greater 'time on task' ensured for pupils by 'formal' teachers' managerial techniques.

However only a limited amount of follow-up observational work had been carried out in the Lancaster study: Bennett had relied for the most part on a questionnaire methodology, and this led critics (Wragg, 1976; Galton Simon and Croll, 1980) to question his conclusions. Largely unsubstantiated assertions were being made about classroom practice.

Galton Simon and Croll's (1980) ORACLE project was subsequently designed to address the problem of the effectiveness of different teaching approaches by a methodology which would use 'observation to describe the actual process of teaching'. It was the first large-scale longitudinal study of primary school classrooms to use this methodology.

Two main observation instruments - the Teacher Record and the Pupil Record - were used in the ORACLE project and other types of information were also gathered - for example data about seating arrangements in the class, curricular activities, materials used and the teacher's organisational strategies. In addition descriptive accounts were written by the observer at the end of observation periods, in order to allow for more subjective insights to be recorded. Assessments of the pupils' performance were made and teachers asked to rate their pupils' capacities in relation to certain other more general aims which previous research had shown teachers to value highly (Jasman, 1979).

The quality of the research conclusions bears eloquent testimony to the gains from such diversity. The use of different measuring

instruments within the same research project allows for a more subtle and integrative analysis. Thus six different teaching styles were identified which escape the gross over simplifications of earlier research, allowing for discussion in terms of interactive effects with four different 'pupil styles' and resulting changes in pupil performance throughout the year.

The ORACLE researchers concluded that, despite widespread rumours to the contrary, most schools still used a very traditional curriculum, with a central focus on literacy and numeracy, and that most teachers exercised tight control of their classrooms. They did however find that 'individualisation both of work and attention', such as had been recommended by the Plowden Report, was 'utilised very widely'.

However while the recommendation had been made in the light of educationalists' belief that the teacher by probing, questioning and guiding the child in such circumstances would stimulate the 'questing exploratory character of the individual child's activity', the ORACLE researchers found that this was not borne out by observation. In the classrooms of teachers who opted for a high degree of individualisation, contact with pupils was 'overwhelmingly factual and managerial'. The researchers attributed this to the fact that 'a high degree of individualisation both of work and attention imposes a management problem on the teacher of a relatively new type'. Teachers who used the technique of group work were also found to have interactions with their pupils which largely took the form of 'giving them facts and instructions'. Nor was this organisational strategy found to increase pupil/pupil interaction to any significant extent. It was in the 'whole class' teaching situation, specifically discouraged by Plowden, that most probing, higher order type questions and statements with individuals in fact occurred.

The researchers' conclusions were that the 'progressive' Plowden ideology, seen as based essentially on individualisation, was, given contemporary class sizes, impractical.

The ORACLE research can be seen as doing much to extend our knowledge base about how different kinds of managerial styles on the part of teachers are related to different 'pupil styles' within the classroom. It can also inform us about the types of teacher/pupil contact which different teaching styles facilitate, and relate these to pupil achievement. These are major achievements: and the direct result of a research methodology which does not limit itself to a single research perspective and employs a wide variety of measuring instruments. ORACLE however cannot tell us anything about the meaning of the interaction for participants, and therefore cannot help unravel the interpersonal dynamics of teacher influence. This is an inevitable consequence of its behaviourist methodology and the kinds of data to which this approach is tied.

1: 2: 4 Teacher Expectancy studies

The body of research on Teacher Effectiveness which we have discussed operates within a model in which managerial strategy and instructional technique are seen in themselves as sufficient to explain teacher influence. Yet as we have seen researchers consistently call for more developed explanatory models. Teacher Expectancy research has developed one such account. It shows how the prior expectations of a teacher can under certain specified circumstances effect pupil outcome by modifications in relevant teaching behaviours which both limit pupils' access in practical ways to potential learning experiences and have

¹ For a fuller account of the Teacher Expectancy literature the interested reader might consult a number of comprehensive reviews: Braun, 1976; Brophy and Good, 1974; Cooper, 1979; Dusek, 1985; Jussim, 1986; Rodgers (1982)

repercussions for pupils' motivations and self concept. Although the details of the process have not been fully explicated, enough is now established to suggest that future researchers should not ignore such processes in any attempt to explain the influence of a teacher on a class. Research on Teacher Expectancy effects has therefore, as recommended by Doise, successfully integrated different levels of enquiry. Classroom behaviours are studied as well as the attitudes and expectations of teachers and their pupils, and these are related to educational outcome.

Early studies: experimentally-induced expectancies.

The seminal work in this area, despite its methodological flaws, is undoubtedly that of Rosenthal and Jacobson (1968) on 'self-fulfilling prophecies' in the classroom. Rosenthal (1964a, 1964b, 1966) following Orne (1962) had previously examined the cues, or 'demand characteristics', communicated unintentionally by the experimenter in the social psychological experiment, and had demonstrated how, in this very unique kind of social situation, these could effect the behaviour of subjects and hence research outcomes.

In 1966, together with Jacobson, Rosenthal went on to apply his findings in a field experiment involving twenty teachers in a Californian elementary school. Pupils were given an IQ test, and their teachers informed that several of the students, identified as the top 20% according to the results of the test, were likely to 'bloom' in the next year. These students had in fact been randomly selected, and there was no objective foundation for this forecast. The experimenters returned eight months after having informed the teachers about the potential 'bloomers', and retested the children: they found that the so-called 'bloomers' had made an average gain

of twelve IQ points, as opposed to a gain of eight IQ points made by the control children. This difference, according to the tests applied by Rosenthal et al, was statistically significant, although on further analysis by grade level, the researchers found the result was attributable solely to the IQ gains of the youngest children (aged 6-8 years). Rosenthal and Jacobson concluded that these effects were due to a 'self-fulfilling prophecy' process: the teachers had come to typecast certain pupils in particular ways: such typifications had effected teacher-pupil interaction and hence the educational experience of pupils.

However closer consideration of Rosenthal's methodology, procedure and data revealed serious flaws which cast doubts on the validity of his conclusions. A detailed account of the problems with the original research may be found in Elashoff and Snow (1971). It is sufficient for our purposes to note that Rosenthal et al risked incurring 'experimenter effects' by collecting their own data, their statistical manipulations were not sufficiently rigorous since they had used individual children and not the class as the unit of analysis, some of the IQ scores reported were not credible and, finally and most importantly, their argument depends on an inferential chain which is not in any way substantiated by the data collected, since no measures of the teachers' actual behaviour towards the 'bloomers' and the control children were taken.

The majority (see Claiborne, 1969; Fleming and Anttonen, 1971), although not all (see Meichenbaum, Bowers and Ross: 1969) of the attempted replications of Rosenthal's work using manipulated expectancies in real-life situations failed to find an Expectancy effect. On the other hand studies which attempted to explore the phenomenon under simplified experimental conditions regularly demonstrated Teacher Expectancy effects (Beez, 1968:

Cooper, 1979: Finn, 1972: Mason, 1973 Rothbart, Dalfen and Barrett, 1971: Rubovits and Maehr, 1971).

The work of Beez (1968), who examined both the actual behaviour of teachers subsequent to the communication of expectancies, and the effects on the achievement levels of children, is particularly startling. From our point of view his work is also of especial interest since he shows the harmful effects of inducing negative social and academic expectations about a disadvantaged child. Results are the more convincing in that he used real children (sixty 5-6 year olds from the summer Head Start programme in Bloomington, Indiana) and actual teachers (sixty graduate students from the School of Education of Indiana University, with a mean teaching experience of 4.6 years). Beez also avoided possible experimenter effects by employing as experimenters two graduate students in English who were not told about the real focus of the research and who did not know what information they were passing on about particular children to the teachers involved.

Results showed that 'teachers' asked to teach as many of a series of twenty words as they could in a ten minute period if they were given favourable expectations tried to teach on average 10.43 words, while the mean for the 'low ability' group was 5.66 words ($p < .001$). Eight or more symbols were taught by 87% of the teachers expecting better performance, while only 13% of teachers expecting poor performance attempted to teach as many words ($p < .0000001$). Of the children alleged to have better intellectual prospects 77% learned 5 or more symbols. Only 13% of the 'low ability' children learned a similar number ($p < .000002$). Ratings of social and intellectual ability varied significantly in the predicted direction, and 63% of the teachers of 'low ability' children rated the symbol learning task

'too difficult' for their pupils as opposed to only one subject (3.3%) who judged similarly for a 'high ability' pupil. Beez himself states:

'Even if we consider that this was a somewhat artificial situation and that normally the teacher has a much better knowledge of the child, we are, nevertheless, overwhelmed by the data suggesting drastic effects of expectancies.'

Results from such early studies although contradictory, and sometimes of limited generalisability, had nevertheless undeniably shown that the expectancy effect was operative under certain conditions. We all construct hypotheses about the likely attitudes and actions of others: without such a process human interaction is inconceivable: these inferred expectancies may sometimes be mistaken and have unfortunate consequences. Although non-veridical and biased expectation will not distort interaction in every classroom, its occurrence is an omnipresent possibility (see Leigh, 1977). The task of subsequent research had become to discover under which conditions the phenomenon was likely to arise and exactly how it operated. Thus the focus in later research was upon discovering not only which kinds of expectations were involved, but how these expectations were translated into behaviour and effected the teacher's interactions with pupils inside actual classrooms, and how interaction could be hypothesised to effect pupil outcome. Such studies consequently involved the collection of both attitudinal and behavioural information.

Determinants of teachers' naturally occurring impressions of pupils

Several studies in a classroom setting with naturally occurring expectancies (as opposed to the experimentally induced expectancies so far discussed) conclude that teacher/pupil interaction is effected by the teacher's naturalistic expectations: they also note that these expectations

are not necessarily determined by the pupil's academic potential or performance.

Work within the attribution theory framework on the determinants of a teacher's impressions of pupils has shown that teachers, like everyone else, are influenced by the social desirability of characteristics. Thus a number of studies have for example shown a link between positive teacher evaluations of, and behaviour towards, their pupils and the physical attractiveness of the children (Clifford and Walster, 1973; Dion, 1972). Algozzini (1977) found that attractive children engaged in more positive interactions with their teachers. Research in the more general areas of person perception would lead us to believe that such effects are likely to be more pronounced for negatively valenced characteristics, which typically carry more weight than positive features (Warr, 1974; Kanouse and Hanson, 1972).

Ideal-type matching has been postulated as an important factor in the process whereby teachers form an impression of and expectations for their pupils. According to this theory the central characteristics of the teacher's ideal pupil gives salience to different characteristics, which then determine the valence of crucial first impressions. Thus a teacher whose over-riding preoccupation is discipline will prefer the obedient pupil and evidence of good and bad behaviour will be especially noted, while the teacher whose ideal pupil is the hard-worker will look for signs of work effort.

Rist's (1970) case study of a Kindergarten teacher is especially interesting in that it demonstrates how a teacher's typifications of her pupils, based on social and not academic issues, can have a powerful determining influence on subsequent levels of pupil achievement. This study

shows how this teacher grouped the children in her class into 'fast medium and slow learners'. Rist however demonstrated that these groupings could be better explained in terms of how closely the children approximated to the teacher's 'ideal pupil'. Moreover the teacher's preferences were not based on academic criteria - the children at the top table were cleaner better dressed and 'nicer' than the other children. Rist's year-long observations revealed that the teacher spent an increasing proportion of her time with the top table. The children were followed up for the next two years and the effects of this early grouping were seen to be perpetuated.

Rist's work was carried out in the USA, but her findings concerning the importance of social as opposed to academic factors was confirmed by British researchers. Crano and Mellon (1978) undertook the reanalysis of Barker-Lunn's (1970) research into the effects of streaming policies in English and Welsh primary schools, using cross-lagged panel analysis, a statistical technique which unlike correlational analysis can make claims concerning the relative strength of causal factors. Crano and Mellon concluded that previous academic performance had an effect on teachers' expectations, but that social as opposed to academic determinants of a teacher's expectations had relatively more effect on a child's later performance. Thus results showed that the social expectations of first year teachers had more causal effect on the performance of second year children than did the academic performance of those same children at the end of the first year.

The work of Sharp and Green (1975) offers a particularly thoughtful analysis of why such first impressions sometimes result in certain pupils becoming typecast while others do not. Their research focused on three teachers in a 'progressive' primary school. They

demonstrated how the teachers' own need to positively evaluate their own performance under difficult circumstances led to the formation of qualitatively different types of relationships with individual pupils. Sharp and Green distinguish 'contemporary' relationships in which the teacher has little personalised contact with pupils and is much more likely to infer personal characteristics from a stereotypic impression of the pupil, from 'consocial' relationships in which more intimate contact between teacher and pupil makes it more likely that the teacher's judgement is directly based on the child's actions, rather than inferred from impressions. Whether or not a child was accepted into a 'consocial' relationship, according to Sharp and Green, was largely dictated by how closely that child approximated to the teacher's 'ideal pupil'. The teacher's need to positively evaluate her own professional competence leads to a largely subconscious restriction of interaction to those pupils who will show desired behaviours which will by implication reflect well on the teacher's own performance.

It has been claimed that, since there is evidence to suggest that teachers in real life situations make accurate assessments of pupils' potential, it may be inappropriate to suggest that expectancies, simply because they are confirmed, have any causal significance (see Dusek and O'Connell, 1973: O'Connell, Dusek and Wheeler, 1974). The research of Rist and Sharp and Green among others would teach us otherwise.

1: 2: 5 Implications for low achieving pupils

After 1970 a great deal of research focused on how teachers' classroom behaviour differed as a function of the achievement level of the students. Ample evidence was accumulated which documented that low achievers experienced different treatment (Brophy and Good, 1974: Carew and Lightfoot, 1979: Good, 1981: Good and Brophy, 1980: McDermott, 1976).

Amongst the behaviours towards low achieving pupils most commonly reported by researchers Good (unpublished manuscript) notes the following:

- 1: Seating them in groups farther from the teacher
- 2: Smiling less often and maintaining less eye contact with them.
- 3: Asking them fewer questions in class.
- 4: Criticising their incorrect answers more frequently.
- 5: Praising their correct answers less frequently.
- 6: Praising their inadequate answers more frequently.
- 7: Giving less detailed and frequent feedback about their responses.
- 8: Demanding less work and effort from them.
- 9: Interrupting their performance more frequently.
- 10: Waiting less time for them to come up with appropriate answers.
- 11: Providing them with fewer clues to promote successful responses, and asking fewer follow-up questions.

This would suggest that low ability students are rarely accorded the benefits of 'active teaching'.

There are also indications that low achieving pupils do not experience such consistent treatment from their teachers as do high achievers. This may create difficulties for pupils in moving from classroom to classroom, and make it hard for them to understand what is expected of them (Good, 1981). Weinstein et al (1980) have reported that pupils themselves perceive that low achieving pupils experience more variability in the way they are treated by teachers.

It was recognised very early that the Teacher Expectancy research had important implications for the underachieving and disadvantaged groups in society whose situation for many reasons was becoming a research priority area. Efforts to evaluate the Head Start programme in America pointed to the need to understand more about the complexity of the change process. Rosenthal had manipulated positive expectations, but his reasoning could clearly be applied to negative expectations also. Subsequent work (Beez, 1972; Mason, 1973) had

demonstrated that the effects of negative discrimination were likely to be particularly influential. These results could provide a potential explanation for the effects of socio-economic status on schooling. If middle-class teachers could be shown to have lowered expectations for working class children, and the 'self-fulfilling prophesy' effect could be demonstrated, teachers could be seen as ultimately responsible for such pupils' comparative lack of success.

Low achievers, the Teacher Expectancy process and labelling theory

In Britain Hargreaves (1967: 1975) also concentrated on the educational experience of lower ability/achieving pupils such as those who are the focus of the present research. His work demonstrates how the social psychological work on the Expectancy process could be combined with sociological work on labelling theory to produce a model of typecasting which could illuminate our understanding of deviant behaviour in schools.

Hargreaves is committed to the notion of the central importance of the subjective meaning of social action, and underlying his research approach is the assumption that the notion of deviance is in itself problematic. Following Becker (1963), and using the key interactionist concepts of 'roles' and 'rules', he emphasised how deviance is not inherent in particular types of act or persons, but only arises when particular acts are recognised as rule infringements and those who perform them subsequently 'labelled' by society as deviant. Attributions of deviance may then become a kind of 'self-fulfilling prophesy'. In his earlier work Hargreaves (1967) shows how in Lumley Secondary Modern the more prestigious and competent members of staff were assigned to the upper streams, while the less experienced teachers were given the lower streams. This is seen as no accidental process, but as part of a school policy

heavily biased in favour of the more academic children. Attention is drawn to the process of social categorization whereby teachers come to expect certain more desirable behaviours from upper stream pupils and make invidious comparisons upon which they base their role expectations of lower stream pupils. In this way, drawing upon both teachers' and pupils' own accounts of their experience, Hargreaves documents how schools which practise streaming policies can damage the self esteem of lower ability pupils and alienate them from the educational system.

The later work of Hargreaves (1975) concentrates on a more fine-grained analysis of exactly how deviance in the classroom is defined by teachers and pupils, and the process whereby pupils come to be classified as deviant. Although many symbolic interactionists, following Becker, have chosen to ignore the potential problems posed by discrepancies between the researchers' perspective on deviance and those of the subjects of the research, this issue was comprehensively addressed by the phenomenologists who attached much importance to the study of different models of deviance, and the critical evaluation of the particular model involved in the research perspective. It is to such work that Hargreaves turned for further insight.

In this ever-increasing preoccupation with process and the pupils' perspective as well as that of the teacher, Hargreaves' research trajectory is typical of recent work within the Expectancy framework. However, although Hargreaves explicitly draws upon Expectancy literature and theory, he nevertheless deals with teachers as a body, and not as individuals who may differ from their colleagues as regards their typifications of pupils. As a result his work, like that of Rutter (1979) adds more to our appreciation of 'schools effects' than it does to our understanding of how individual teachers may differentially effect

classroom process. It also has nothing to say about those pupils who do not choose to act deviantly, despite finding themselves in similarly stigmatised situations.

The intermediary role of the self concept

Hargreaves, working within the symbolic interactionist perspective, drew attention to the way in which negative expectancies on the part of teachers may effect a pupils' self concept, and subsequently lower self-esteem. It is presumed that this is in some way linked to lowered achievement motivation and the rejection of school related values. These issues are further explored by many writers.

From a symbolic interactionist point of view, the Teacher Expectancy effect can be most easily explained by invoking these concepts in an intermediary role. Since a person's self-concept, following Mead, is seen as ultimately the reflection of the views of 'significant others', the teacher can be seen as a major influence in shaping his or her pupils academic self image, which in turn can be supposed to have a determining effect on behaviour.

Unfortunately however empirical research, although it has been able to show that measures of pupils' academic success are positively related to self concept scores (Bledsoe, 1967: Brookover, Thomas and Patterson, 1964: Combs, 1964: Fink, 1962), has not demonstrated that achievement is necessarily causally determined by self concept. Thus Caslyn and Kenny (1977) using cross-lagged panel analysis to reexamine Brookover's data fail to corroborate his conclusion that the self concept determines levels of academic attainment. A more likely explanation would seem to be that the causality is bi-directional: a high self concept is likely to be

both the consequence of past academic achievement and the cause of subsequent successes (Burns, 1979).

Nor do pupils' self concepts directly reflect teachers' attitudes. Most researchers draw attention to important developmental changes: parents appear to be more influential in the early years, while the peer group becomes increasingly important as the child grows older (Maccoby, 1980: Shavelson et al, 1976). There is accumulating evidence that the self concept is highly differentiated (Purkey, 1970). The issues that we have been considering are currently understood to involve a complex interaction of a constellation of related concepts - self esteem, self worth and achievement motivation. There is evidence that these are most powerfully influenced not by teachers, but by parents, and by child-rearing practices which give the child the opportunity to feel in control of important outcomes in his world (Coopersmith, 1967). Research which has attempted to change pupils' self concepts by manipulating teachers' behaviour have been largely unsuccessful. (Brookover Patterson and Thomas, 1965). No difference has been found in the self concepts of children from 'progressive' and traditional streamed schools, although the philosophy of the former is specifically geared to the improvement of pupils' sense of self worth (Groobman Forward and Peterson, 1976: Klass and Hodge, 1978: Ruedi and West, 1973). Barker-Lunn (1970) in her investigation of the effects of streaming found that the self concepts of pupils of average ability were not effected by streaming, although interesting consequences arose where the individual teacher's own attitudes were at variance with school policy. For example the lowest self concepts were found amongst boys of average ability in non-streamed classes whose teachers favoured streaming.

Teacher Expectancy effects, the self concept and ethogenic theory

At secondary school level it has been suggested that pupils differ in the importance they attach to that part of the self concept which is concerned with academic issues. If the adolescent considers other aspects of his personality more central to his self esteem, this may have important consequences for his school behaviour. Moreover the treatment a pupil receives in school from teachers may influence whether the academic part of the self concept becomes central or peripheral to a student.

These ideas are developed by Marsh Rosser and Harre (1978) who in *The Rules of Disorder* provide further insight into the world of rebellious adolescent underachievers in school. Their work extends and complements research into deviance based on labelling theory: these authors work within the 'ethogenic' theory of social action according to which both accounts of actions and actions themselves are seen as stemming from an individual's store of social knowledge. It is from this store that the individual derives the interpretative and prescriptive rules necessary to guide behaviour. Marsh et al see deviant school behaviour not as meaningless and anarchic, but as rule-bound and purposeful action intended to further an 'alternative moral career'. The rationale advanced is that if teachers do not provide pupils with self-validating experiences in school, then many are liable to create an alternative reality for themselves in a social setting which they see as denying them personal dignity. Marsh et al's research methodology relies on the evidence provided by accounts of participants to reconstruct the meaning systems by which they regulate their lives. In so doing the authors draw attention to the multi-dimensionality of social situations, within which participants who are supposedly sharing the same social reality are nevertheless inhabiting

different and mutually incomprehensible symbolic universes. Once again however, like the Hargreaves' research, their work tells us nothing about pupils who choose not to act deviantly.

1: 3 Implications for future research

At the beginning of this chapter we noted the dissatisfaction consistently expressed by social psychologists in the early 1980s concerning methodologies for the study of group process. Qualitative work is insightful, but not generalizable to a wider population: quantitative work typically falls back on average individual measures which are inadequate indices of group process and there is no consensus concerning either relevant dimensions of group life, or how to measure them.

These problems have been presented not as particular to Small Group research, but as symptomatic of the dilemmas facing social psychology as a whole. It is not therefore surprising that, when we examined the educational literature on teacher influence in classrooms, we found the same doubts and difficulties reflected. Qualitative research has increased understanding by the analysis of particular cases, but results cannot be extrapolated to the wider population and may reflect the subjective bias of the observer. Quantitative research on Teacher Effectiveness has produced a bewildering variety of associations for the most part based on 'average pupil' outcome measures, although it is generally accepted that such averages mask considerable individual variation which needs to be explained. On all sides the call is for more complex explanatory models.

To date work within the Teacher Expectancy paradigm has given the most promising lead. From early work which tried to link the expectancies of teachers to pupil outcome without consideration of how this

effect might be mediated by the teacher's classroom behaviour, researchers have moved on to enrich such Level 1 'psychological' explanations with both qualitative and quantitative studies demonstrating how teaching behaviour in the classroom and the self-concept of pupils are implicated in the phenomenon. Such studies have involved other 'levels of explanation' in Doise's terms, and have in particular increased understanding of the situation of low achieving/ability pupils who are the focus of the present research.

This review of the relevant literature has therefore provided a number of clear, general guidelines for the proposed research project:

1. Research within the Teacher Effectiveness and Teacher Expectancy paradigms has endorsed the decision to focus on classroom interaction.
2. Research in Group Dynamics has drawn attention to the need for a most careful analysis of the logic underlying the selection and operationalisation of group level variables. Group process is not properly represented by 'average member' measures.
3. Educational research has demonstrated that the ways in which teachers influence pupil outcomes are unlikely to be explicable in terms of single explanatory variables, or without consideration being taken of the differing perspectives of pupils and teachers and of their social circumstances. A holistic multi-method approach is needed to give a more comprehensive account of a very complex social phenomenon.
4. Quantitative and qualitative approaches are not mutually exclusive strategies, but may complement one another in the furnishing of such an account.
5. Recent advances in social psychology suggest that where such differing 'levels of explanation' are implicated, these should ideally be 'articulated' into an integrated whole (Doise, 1986).
6. Since the academic self concept of pupils and how this is shaped by their experiences in school would seem to be particularly important for low ability pupils, conceptual frameworks such as symbolic interactionism, which use 'self concept' and 'socialisation' as key concepts, would appear useful in any such articulation.

CHAPTER 2

The Development of the Research Approach

Abstract

Section 1.

Symbolic interactionism is adopted as the social psychological perspective of the research: the interactionist focus on language and the key concepts of 'self-concept' 'roles' 'rules' and 'socialisation' are to guide the research activity.

Section 2

A case study approach using 'triangulation' is to be adopted as the research methodology. Data is to be gathered from three levels of analysis: that of the individual, the group, and the institution. In addition the different perspectives of teacher, class and the researcher are to be taken into account.

Section 3

Four specific research questions are developed.

Section 4

Key issues concerning research methodology are discussed:

- 1. The approach to 'articulation' of the three levels of analysis and their relative status.*
- 2. The three research perspectives and their implications for data collection and analysis.*
- 3. The focus on classroom language as an appropriate measure of group process.*
- 4. The establishment of the research sample: the search for 'theoretically significant cases'.*

2: 1 The social psychological perspective of the present research

The review of the research literature had shown that symbolic interactionist and related perspectives had produced much of the most insightful work on the classroom experience of low ability/achieving pupils. This was consequently the perspective adopted in the present project.

2: 1: 1 Symbolic interactionism

The term symbolic interactionism refers to a group of closely related social psychological theories which trace their ancestry to the work of William James, George Herbert Mead, Charles Horton Cooley, W.I. Thomas and John Dewey. The seeds of the symbolic interactionist perspective can be traced to William James' *Principles of Psychology* (1890), and in particular to his brilliant exposition of how men's actions, through their crystallisation into 'habit', mould personality:

"Habit a second nature! Habit is ten times nature," the Duke of Wellington is said to have exclaimed; and the degree to which this is true no one probably can appreciate as well as one who is a veteran soldier himself. The daily drill and the years of discipline end by fashioning a man completely over again, as to most of the possibilities of his conduct.'¹

The force of habit leads to repetitive behaviour patterns which are by implication rule-bound: 'roles' and 'rules' consequently became basic conceptual tools of the symbolic interactionist approach.

From its earliest beginnings therefore symbolic interactionism has focussed on the study of human social behaviour, which is seen not merely as the consequence of environmental factors and personality characteristics, but as a determining force in its own right.

¹ James, W. (1948) *Psychology*, Cleveland: World Publishing Co., p.143. This is James' own abridgement of the *Principles*, and I am indebted to Martindale (1961), p. 340, for pointing out the quotation and its relevance.

This is a point well made by Blumer (1966), one of the most influential modern interactionists:

'Several important matters need to be noted in the case of symbolic interaction. First it is a formative process in its own right. The prevailing practice of psychology and sociology is to treat social interaction as a neutral medium, as a mere forum for the operation of outside factors. Thus psychologists are led to account for the behaviour of people in interaction by resorting to elements of the psychological equipment of the participants - such elements as motives, feelings, attitudes, or personality organisation. Sociologists do the same sort of thing by resorting to societal factors, such as cultural prescriptions, values, social roles, or cultural pressures. Both miss the central point that human interaction is a positive shaping process in its own right Factors of psychological equipment and social organisation are not substitutes for the interpretative process. Symbolic interaction has to be seen and studied in its own right'

pp. 535 - 44.

The centrality of behaviour, or of what people actually do, was endorsed, and given as it were philosophic legitimation in the theoretical work of George Herbert Mead (1934). Mead developed the argument further by demonstrating how human group life could be seen as the necessary precondition for the emergence of 'mind' as we know it, and consequently for the development of self-consciousness and the concept of 'self': in this evolutionary process he saw the development of language as crucial.

Although there are differing interpretations now made of the repercussions of some of the central tenets of symbolic interactionism, Blumer (1969) has suggested that we may consider the symbolic interactionist perspective as defined by three basic premises:

- 1: Human beings act towards the objects and people in their world on the basis of the meaning those objects and people have for them.
- 2: The meaning that things acquire arises out of the social interaction that one has with one's fellows.

3: In particular situations people do more than act on the basis of previously established meanings: the actor selects, checks, suspends, regroupes and transforms the meanings in the light of the situation in which he is placed and the direction of his action.

These three premises seem to provide an excellent set of presuppositions with which to embark on a study of how a teacher might influence work motivation in a classroom. They emphasise interaction as the rightful focus of study and the central generator of the values, or 'meanings' which instigate human behaviour (Premise 2). They take account of the restrictions within which the teacher works - the preestablished meanings which the pupils bring to the classroom as a result of prior experience (Premise 1) - and yet leave room for the possibility of changes as a result of new experience (Premise 3).

In addition, the active 'world-making' 'meaning-generating' model of man implicit in the approach suggests ways in which, although we are studying people in terms of roles rules and social structures, we need not find ourselves trapped in an overly deterministic stance. If roles rules and realities are created in and through interaction, then all participants, teachers and pupils alike have a responsibility for the way things turn out, and the potential for influencing change. As Blumer (1966) states:

'Social change becomes a continuous indigenous process in group life instead of an episodic result of extraneous factors playing on established structure. Human group life is seen as always incomplete and undergoing development instead of jumping from one completed state to another. Social disorganisation is seen not as a breakdown of existing structure but as an inability to mobilise action effectively in the face of a given situation. Social action, since it has a career, is recognised as having a historical dimension which has to be taken into account in order to be adequately understood.'

p. 544.

According to this perspective, in social interaction people seek to express the self and confirm their notions of self-worth. Such an approach emphasises the importance of the 'expressive order'. The assumption is made that in the classroom encounters which we observe, we will be able to discern the on-going process of the social construction of the 'selves' of teacher and class, which may have educationally relevant repercussions. The central presupposition of the research is that successful teachers will be those who manage to make the low-status pupil role acceptable without loss of their own authority. The emphasis on the social construction of personal identity is considered particularly appropriate to the study of the adolescent with his or her developing and often aggressively defended sense of self. The interactionist focus on such explanatory variables and processes as the self concept, the presented self, social roles, role strain and language are therefore held to be appropriate tools for the analysis of classroom life.

The social situation in low ability classrooms creates potential conflict between the drive to maintain self-respect and the pressure to accept the 'definition of the situation' as a learning situation. As a result, in crucial ways both parties, teacher and taught, are intensely vulnerable: for this reason, the work of Goffman was seen as likely to be important because of its emphasis on how participants in social interaction utilise strategies for protecting a besieged sense of self-worth or legitimising potentially unacceptable social roles. Particularly likely to be useful are his notions of 'role distancing' techniques, 'facework', 'footing' and 'framing' shifts, and strategies for dealing with stigmatisation, as they are realised in conversational exchange.

2: 1: 2 Symbolic interactionist assumptions underlying the research approach

The research perspective entails certain assumptions about classroom life. These and their repercussions for the present research are set out below:

- 1: **In face-to-face encounters such as that between a teacher and a class, all participants are centrally concerned with the maintenance and construction of a favourable social and self image.**

It is therefore assumed that the successful teacher will be the one who offers to students a classroom role with which they can identify without loss of self respect and which gives them opportunities for self expression by encouraging them to participate actively, rather than assume a passive 'receiving' role in the classroom situation.

Since student/teacher roles are mutually interdependent it is supposed also that teachers will work best with pupils who confirm their feelings of self worth by the ways in which they respond to instruction.

Since the teacher is regarded as having the final responsibility and as being in the dominant position, the teacher's sources of professional pride, and teaching philosophy (the way in which he or she defines the instructional situation in the classroom), are seen as particularly important in determining the course of the educational encounter.

- 2: **The expectations and options of an individual teacher are powerfully constrained by institutional pressures and the previous educational history of the class he faces.**

In secondary schools, where no one teacher is solely in charge of the educational experience of pupils, it is necessary to take into account the

social climate of the school and the general attitude towards education of pupils, if the work of an individual teacher is to be properly evaluated.

Comparisons between different teachers working with the same class within the same institution would therefore be particularly instructive.

- 3: It is largely through language that social roles and situations are sustained and defined, and through conversational interaction that the educational experience is constructed.

The research will therefore focus on the language of the classroom. Teachers and their pupils are assumed to influence the educational potential of lesson-time through their communicative interactional skills.

- 4: Verbal interaction depends upon the creative exploitation of situationally specific sets of rules and expectations which are largely culturally determined.

Regularities detectable in terms of those underlying constraints and rules are expected to be amenable to scientific enquiry. Classroom life expresses itself through a shared and cooperative 'language' of behaviours and procedures, and legitimate comparisons can be made across different groups and across different classroom situations.

2: 2 The research methodology

2: 2: 1 Triangulation

In educational research, as workers in the field become ever more impressed by the complexity of the issues involved, then 'triangulation', or the use of more than one method of data collection in the study of some aspect of behaviour (see Campbell and Fiske, 1959: Denzin, 1978: Wells,

1987), is increasingly accepted as an appropriate research methodology.

Cohen and Manion (1982) state unequivocally:

'Multiple methods are suitable where a *controversial aspect of education* needs to be evaluated more fully. The issue of comprehensive schools, for example, has been hotly debated since their inception; yet even at this point there has been little serious research investigating these institutions as totalities. It is not sufficient to judge these schools solely on the grounds of academic achievement with 'league tables' based on O- and A- level results, important as these are. A much more rounded portrayal of these institutions is required and here is a clear case for the advocacy of multiple methods.'

pp. 215-216.

Within the context of symbolic interactionism Norman Denzin (1978) has provided a comprehensive account of the way in which techniques of multiple triangulation may be used to overcome the 'inherent difficulties of generating valid sociological data':

'The shifting nature of the empirical world and the unique bias that arises from theories, methods, and observers make doing sociology a task fundamentally different from that of the other sciences. I have suggested that the resolutions to this are twofold. First, sociologists must realise that their growth as a science is contingent on the recognition of these elements. Second, multiple strategies of triangulation are proposed as the preferred line of action. By combining multiple observers, theories, methods, and data sources, sociologists can hope to overcome the intrinsic bias that comes from single-method, single observer, single-theory studies.'

p. 306-307.

Denzin outlines four basic types of triangulation:

- 1: Data triangulation:
 - a) time
 - b) space
 - c) person ('combined levels')
- 2: Investigator triangulation
- 3: Theory triangulation
- 4: Methodological triangulation.

'Time and 'space' triangulation involve sampling behaviours at a number of points in time and in a variety of social settings. 'Person' or 'combined levels' of triangulation occurs when data is gathered about individuals, interactional process, and the collectivity. The first two levels would correspond with Doise's Levels 1, and 2. In the third level, which is the one commonly associated with structural-functional analysis, the observational unit is the organisation, a community or even an entire society. It therefore includes elements of Doise's Levels 3 and 4, but cannot be mapped directly on to them. 'Investigator' triangulation occurs when more than one observer is employed. When more than one theory is tested against a body of data, this is 'theoretical' triangulation. 'Methodological' triangulation occurs when multiple methods and measures are used in order to maximise the validity of findings.

Support for the use of a multi-method multi-measure approach was expressed as early as 1946 by Merton and Kendall:

'Social scientists have come to abandon the spurious choice between qualitative and quantitative data: they are concerned rather with that combination of both which makes use of the most valuable features of each. The problem becomes one of determining *at which points* they should adopt the one, and at which the other, approach.'

pp. 541-557.

In retrospect those authors seem to have been over sanguine about the methodological armistice: in 1982 Cohen and Manion (p. 208) described triangulation as 'a technique of research to which many subscribe in principle, but which only a minority use in practice.'

The decision was made in the present research project to follow the principles of multiple triangulation within a symbolic interactionist

perspective. In particular a strategy of 'combined levels' of triangulation was to be adopted and data gathered at three levels - that of individuals (teachers and their pupils) the group (classroom interaction) and the institution (the school). It was also planned to try to take into account the perspectives of teachers and pupils as well as that of the researcher when evaluating group process.

2. 2. 2. The case study approach

The decision to gather data at the three levels ('combined levels' triangulation) and to try to take into account the differing perspectives of teachers and pupils ('investigator' triangulation) meant that work carried out by a single researcher could be undertaken in only a limited number of school settings. A case study approach had therefore to be adopted.

Wells (1987), following Yin (1984), has suggested that high quality case studies are characterised by:

- a) the selection of a theoretically significant case
- b) the specification of a few study questions
- c) the collection of evidence pertaining to these questions
- d) the use of multiple sources of evidence
- e) a reliance upon standardised research protocols (as opposed to unorganised note-taking)
- f) the application of several perspectives when interpreting findings

Triangulation ensures that issues d) and f) are covered. The remaining criteria point to:

1. the need to develop specific research questions to focus the study (b)
2. the need for a clearly structured approach to data

collection (c: e)

3. the importance of the choice of schools within which to carry out the research (a).

These three issues will be considered next.

2.3 The development of specific research questions

The following four research questions were developed:

- 1: Does the same low ability class behave differently with different teachers?

Is the behaviour of a class significantly effected by different teaching approaches, or is it a relatively fixed characteristic in a particular group of children? In order to answer this question it would be necessary to see the same group of low ability children with at least two different teachers. Interaction should be monitored at the end of the school year, when teachers and class had settled down together, and normative patterns were well established.

- 2: Does the same teacher behave differently with different classes?

The flexibility of a teacher's approach might be an important feature if it was presumed that different classes presented teachers with different kinds of challenge. In order to answer this question it would be necessary to see the same teacher with at least two contrastive classes.

- 3: What kind of classroom interaction is favoured by teachers?

Do teachers in fact prefer classes with higher levels of pupil participation? Do they seek to retain control of the talk in the ways that

'normative' models of classroom process would suggest (see Barnes, 1969: Willes, 1978). How do those who value high levels of pupil participation reconcile this with their own need to control classroom talk?

In order to be able to address this last question it was decided to observe each teacher with the class they were currently finding most rewarding to teach. It was reasoned that this would allow us to monitor directly each teacher's preferred style of interaction.

There were two additional advantages associated with this plan. Firstly, it was likely to ensure that we had the opportunity to watch each teacher with two contrastive classes (see second research question). Secondly it might make teachers more willing to take part in the research. In asking teachers to allow an observer to watch them work with low ability adolescents, we would be asking them to expose themselves publicly in possibly unfavourable circumstances. It was felt that each teacher should have the chance to demonstrate his or her teaching talents in less stressful situations. Given this opportunity, the teacher was likely to feel less threatened, and therefore be more relaxed and less defensive, during the observation sessions with the potentially more difficult lower ability groups.

4: What are the effects of different types of classroom interaction on pupils' interest and work levels?

Are teachers and pupils in agreement about which kinds of classroom interaction are the most successful, and do the views of either reflect the researcher's interests in levels of active pupil participation in teacher/pupil talk and the maintenance of a positive self image?

2: 4 Key issues concerning the research methodology

The need for a clearly structured approach to data collection requires further clarification of ~~four~~ important issues:

- 1: What is the relative status of information collected at the three levels of analysis?
- 2: How do we approach the three different perspectives of teacher, pupils and researcher?
- 3: How do we satisfy at group level the requirement that data should be a true measure of group process and not merely an 'average' of individual characteristics?
- 4: How do we select 'theoretically significant' cases?

2: 4: 1 The three levels of analysis: their status and the approach to articulation.

The decision has now been reached to collect information at three levels: data is to be gathered concerning individual teachers and their pupils (the individual level) and their schools (the institutional level) in order to enrich understanding of classroom interaction (the group level). The main focus of the research is therefore classroom interaction: data at the level of institutions and individuals will serve an ancillary function and provide a background against which the study of group process can be more clearly understood.

The key concepts of symbolic interactionism will allow for 'articulation' of these three levels of analysis. The school can be viewed as a socializing agent which defines for its members behavioural rules, educational goals and the reciprocal role-set of pupils and their teachers. This can be assumed to have repercussions at the individual level in the self-evaluations of pupils and teachers, which in turn (as Teacher Expectancy research has shown) will influence their role performance in the class group.

The relationship between individual beliefs and self evaluations, classroom performance and institutional factors is complex. As Blumer's third premise (see Chapter 2, section 2: 1: 1) emphasizes, social behaviour is not only the outcome of certain attributes of the participants and influences from the environment, but is also a creative force in its own right. Thus although we will consider pupils' attitudes both in the light of their experiences in the schools as social institutions (where they will function as 'output' or 'product' variables) and as influencing classroom interaction (where they are potentially 'input' or 'presage' variables), no strictly deterministic stance or uni-directional flow of influence is implied.

2: 4: 2 The perspectives of teacher, pupils and the researcher.

It was considered particularly important to take into account the views of teacher and class when evaluating classroom interaction. The research perspective has been seen to entail certain evaluative assumptions: our first research assumption (see Chapter 2, section 2: 1: 2) stated that:

'the successful teacher will be the one who offers to students a classroom role with which they can identify without loss of self respect and which gives them opportunities for self expression by encouraging them to participate actively, rather than assume a passive 'receiving' role in the classroom situation.'

Following the principles of 'investigator triangulation' it was proposed to compare these assumptions with those of teachers and pupils. From the outset it was fully accepted that no necessary agreement was to be looked for. Often the researcher's definition of the goals of the educational process might not coincide with those of the classroom teacher, whose aims for each lesson could be expected to vary. Pupils also might define their educational needs differently.

Relevant outcome measures had therefore to be decided upon. One of the difficulties however which dogs educational research is the problem of assessing in any clear-cut and definitive way educational objectives which may be considered relevant across different teaching situations. The child's experience within school has an educational and a socialising aspect. Varying emphasis is placed on, and different interpretations are made of, these two basic aims by different schools and different teachers who may have very different philosophies of education.

Amongst educational goals there could be named such discrete sub-categories as:

- 1: examination success.
- 2: acquisition of information.
- 3: ability to think independently.
- 4: interest in the subject.
- 5: understanding of the subject.
- 6: enlargement of intellectual horizons.
- 7: increase in self-confidence in the subject area.

The list could be extended still further.

A solution was sought in terms of the use of short-term outcome measures. Long-term outcomes are often, indeed inevitably, subject to influences quite outside the individual teacher's control, and were therefore considered likely to be insensitive and often inappropriate indicators. It was argued that if the teacher's behaviour was to be monitored in the classroom, then pupil outcome should also be assessed at the level of day-to-day classroom interaction. For these reasons the teacher's assessment of a lesson immediately after it had taken place, and the evidence of any written work produced by pupils during that lesson were held to be of particular interest.

2: 4: 3 Language as a measure of classroom process: an interactionist approach.

The decision to focus on the language of the classroom has been endorsed by the findings of Teacher Effectiveness research which has identified as important the different kinds of linguistic opportunities given by teachers to low-ability students. For example, seven out of eleven teacher behaviours noted by Good as likely to impair the progress of low achieving pupils have to do with the way in which the teacher asks questions and evaluates student replies (see Chapter 1, p 58).

Work in sociolinguistics, (Bernstein, 1975, 1977) also suggests that the language used by underprivileged ethnic groups and the working classes have important implications. Although the earlier 'deficit' model has been refuted (Edwards, 1979, Labov, 1970, McCauley, 1977, Houston, 1970, Richmond, 1979, Stubbs, 1976, Trudgill, 1975); nevertheless the central reality remains that our educational system continues to fail to provide working class and ethnic minority children with the means to translate their often not inconsiderable verbal skills into communicative coinage which is acceptable in the schools.

An interactionist perspective enables us to conceptualize an approach to language which can be trusted to provide appropriate indicators of group process as opposed to merely 'average individual' measures. According to this perspective, the educational experience can be understood as mutually constructed out of the shifting, and often retrospectively determined, meanings of face-to-face teacher/pupil talk.

By 'retrospectively determined' it is implied that any social behaviour, verbal or otherwise, is in an important sense tentative. In other words its social 'meaning' is never completely defined until it has been

responded to. As all analysts of language have appreciated, there is no one meaning of an utterance. Hymes (1962) outlines seven:

- 1: expressive/emotive
- 2: directive/conative/persuasive
- 3: poetic
- 4: contact (physical or psychological)
- 5: metalinguistic (focusing on meaning)
- 6: referential
- 7: contextual/situational

These alternatives are a resource which may be creatively exploited both by the initiators of talk and those who respond to them (see Garfinkel, 1967: Wieder, 1974a and 1974b; Zimmerman and Pollner, 1971). Thus we may misinterpret (wilfully or otherwise) the words of others, and even deny the implications of our own previous utterances:

Husband: (angrily) Where are my socks?
Wife: You're always getting at me. I'm going to wash tomorrow.
Husband: I'm not accusing you. I only wondered where they were.

It is this aspect of talk which Goffman (1981) had in mind when he recommended:

'a backward look to the structuring of talk. Each response provides its auditors with an appreciation not only of what the respondent is saying, but also of what he is saying this about; and for this latter intelligence, surely auditors must wait until the respondent has disclosed what his reference is, since they will have no other way of discovering for sure what it will be it is true, of course, that when we examine or present a *record* of a conversation - real, literary, or got up - and read or listen backwards and forwards in it, the indeterminacy I am speaking of will be lost to our senses.'

p. 50.

Goffman notes that in highly structured situations, where the rules are normally well spelt out and closely observed, such retrospective

reconstructions of meaning are likely to be less frequent. However in many of the more problematic low ability classroom situations it was thought likely that such reconstructions might occur.

2: 4: 4 Establishing the sample: the selection of theoretically significant cases

It was considered particularly important that the sample should be established on the basis of 'theoretically significant' cases (see Wells, 1987: Yin 1984). Initially it had been hoped to be able to base the sample on teachers who had been identified as especially successful with low ability groups and who might therefore be compared with less outstanding colleagues. Her Majesty's Inspectors were approached in order to find out whether or not they might be willing to identify such teachers. The Inspectors felt unable to comply: although they were aware of certain outstandingly successful teachers, they felt that to identify them would be to invite invidious comparisons. The researcher was also advised that individual schools were likely to be equally resistant. An alternative basis for the selection of teachers had therefore to be found.

The Hargreaves study

In the early months of 1983 a large-scale study was being conducted by an inner city Education Authority on underachievement in its secondary schools. A committee of enquiry into secondary education had been established under the chairmanship of Doctor David Hargreaves. It had the following terms of reference:

'The Committee will consider the curriculum and organisation of ... secondary schools as they affect pupils mainly in the range 11 to 16, but also those remaining in the sixth form for one year, with special reference to pupils who are underachieving, including those taking few or no public examinations, and those who show their dissatisfaction with school by absenteeism or other unco-operative behaviour.'

Improving Secondary Schools. Research Studies. Introduction.

Three research studies had been commissioned. The first of these was carried out in the spring term of the school year 1982/3 and concerned the attitudes towards school of over 1,200 Fifth Year pupils from nineteen secondary schools. The schools were selected to be a representative sample, and included eight voluntary-aided and eleven county schools¹. Three hundred and eighty two pupils came from single-sex girls schools, 333 from single-sex boys schools and 506 from mixed schools. Information was collected by means of a fourteen page questionnaire which included questions on the pupils' attitudes and feelings towards their schools, their teachers, the curriculum and individual subjects and courses. Pupils were also asked about their long-term aims and plans and their reasons for choosing either to continue at school, or to leave school to go to college, or to seek employment. The subsequent report, which was not of course available at this time, discusses differences between schools in their pupils' attitudes and views.

Pupils had been asked in the questionnaire whether or not they intended to stay on into the Sixth Form. Early data analysis which was made available to the researcher revealed wide variation between schools as regards staying-on rates, which ranged from under 30% to above 70% (see Table 2: 1 overleaf). It was felt that these figures were likely to be diagnostic of the schools' differential success in promoting the value of education particularly for the low ability/achieving children who were the main focus of the research. Pupils from the higher ability ranges had many other reasons to stay on in school and might do so regardless: lower

¹ Voluntary-aided schools (many of which are Church schools) are partially independently funded and have some related freedoms, while county schools are entirely dependent on the Local Education Authority for funding.

TABLE 2: 1 Hargreaves Research: school staying-on rates

Staying-on rate	Number of schools
Under 30%	2
31-40%	5
41-50%	4
51-60%	5
61-70%	1
Over 70%	2
All schools	19

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ability/achieving children were likely to constitute a 'floating population' and their decision to stay might reflect more directly the influence of school and teachers.

Rutter (1979) had also found considerable variation between schools as regards actual staying on rates (as opposed to self-reported intentions): overall some 27% of pupils in his sample returned to the sixth form, but the numbers in individual schools ranged from under 10% to over 40%. Moreover Rutter reported:

'A few children took courses of A levels only, and some stayed on simply to extend their general education, without sitting further exams. The majority, however, stayed on to resit CSE or O levels, or to extend their qualifications at this level'

p. 257

Thus staying on into the sixth form is an option open to all pupils, not only to potential A level candidates. It was therefore decided to try to establish a contrastive sample on the basis of the staying-on rates found in the Hargreaves study.

By studying teachers and low ability classes in what were hopefully differentially successful institutional settings, research findings

would be strengthened in two possible ways. First, if the same kinds of behaviour could be observed both in schools which pupils sought to leave at the earliest opportunity, and in those to which they were willing to return when no longer required to do so, then we could say with greater confidence that these behaviours were typical of low ability groups. Secondly, a contrastive sample of this kind would allow us to explore in how far a school which had pupil support might shelter a teacher from certain kinds of challenges commonly faced in less popular establishments, as well as enabling us to consider how far it was possible for a teacher to compensate for an unfavourable institutional atmosphere.

This approach was consistent with the triangulation principle.

Denzin (1978) notes:

'Not only may observers triangulate by methodology; they may also triangulate by data sources. In a very loose sense, theoretical sampling is an example of the latter process; that is researchers explicitly search for as many different data sources as possible which bear upon the events under analysis..... Basically this would be the use of *dissimilar comparison groups* as a sampling strategy, but it more properly reflects a strategy of triangulation. By selecting dissimilar settings in a systematic fashion, investigators can discover what their concepts (as designators of units in reality) have in common across settings. Similarly, the unique features of these concepts will be discovered in their situated context.'

p. 297.

There was of course no certainty, having fixed upon characteristics of the schools as a criterion for establishing the sample, that we would find teachers in each school with contrasting abilities and approaches in teaching lower ability adolescents. The researcher was prepared to take this chance for two reasons. First, experience in schools during pilot work had suggested that interesting contrasts in teaching approaches were the rule rather than the exception. Teachers had very

different ways of dealing with the challenges of lower ability groups, and in the absence of generally accepted guidelines, variations were common. Secondly, it was expected that differing institutional pressures would in themselves throw up interesting differences in classroom interaction between schools, even in the unlikely event that the teachers within each school were very similar.

The Authority's Research and Statistics Department were extremely helpful in providing access both to the types of information they were gathering and to some of the early unpublished results: this information determined the selection of the four schools within which the research was carried out. The full Hargreaves Report was available when results were being analysed, and provided baseline information about the kinds of differences to be expected between different types of school.

The selection of the four sample schools

Ideally sample schools should have been selected which had the same sex of pupil intake and comparable social class composition, but widely differing histories of success in persuading pupils of the benefits of education (as indicated by self-reported intentions of staying on into the Sixth Form). There was also the schools' status as voluntary-aided or county to be taken into consideration. Since we wished to concentrate upon the effects of different teaching approaches in the classroom, it would have been desirable to match the schools in all these respects. This would have allowed us to concentrate upon how features of the schools as social institutions influenced classroom interaction.

This proved out of the question. Because of the small size of the original Hargreaves sample, plus the fact that not all schools approached consented to take part in the research, it was not possible to select all

four schools on the basis of similar sex composition. Three of the schools finally chosen were single-sex girls' schools whereas the third was a mixed-sex school.

Finally however a fairly satisfactory compromise was achieved: the overall sample consisted of two county schools, (Ridgemount and Maple Grove) ¹ which were situated in the same educational Division, which came second from bottom on the Education Authority's ratings for social deprivation, and two voluntary-aided Catholic schools (St Andrews and St Annes). These schools also came from a single Division, this time second from top of the Authority's list: however their actual catchment area was wider, since they took in Catholic children from other divisions. Each of the four schools was drawn from a different category of the six 'staying-on rate' ranges established by the Hargreaves research:

TABLE 2: 2 Sample schools: percentage wishing to stay on

Voluntary-aided schools	
St Annes	72%
St Andrews	55%
County schools	
Maple Grove	45%
Ridgemount	33%

It proved difficult to establish the social class composition of the schools with any certainty. Although the Education Authority collected information every second year, the resulting figures fluctuated considerably. This was due not only to the changing pupil population but to

¹ The names of the schools have been altered to preserve anonymity.

missing data (in the case of Maple Grove 18% of the sample in 1985 - 86 for example were classed as 'unknown'), and the system of data collection: on each occasion although the whole of the First Year intake was sampled, only random pupils in the other years were selected. As a result, in the four schools finally chosen the percentage of non-manual pupils was recorded as varying considerably between years:

TABLE 2: 3 Sample schools: percentage of pupils from non-manual families

	Voluntary-aided		County	
	St Andrews	St Annes	Ridgemount	Manor Park
1983 - 84	20.1%	10.5%	8.7%	15.9%
1985 - 86	15.7%	21.3%	18.2%	6.6%

The figures for the school year 1981 - 82 were regarded by the Authority as 'unreliable'. It can be noted however that they showed the percentage of non-manual intake as between 5% and 10% in the case of the two county schools, and between 10% and 15% in the case of the voluntary-aided schools. It would seem therefore that there is little reason to suppose that there are substantial and consistent differences between any of the schools. All four have a predominantly working class intake although the county schools, as we would expect from their catchment area, seem to have rather fewer pupils from non-manual families.

As regards the ethnic composition and ability level of the school intake (which will be discussed at greater length in Chapter 5) the two voluntary-aided schools from the available evidence seemed similar to each other and rather different from the two county schools which also appeared comparable in these important respects.

It can be seen therefore that the four schools formed two sub-samples within which the schools can be considered reasonably matched in the important basic respects of social class of intake, organisational type (ie voluntary-aided or county), ethnic composition and ability level of the intake.

Within each sub-sample however the schools had their own interesting contrasts, particularly as regards their approach towards the management of children of different ability levels. Thus one county school (Ridgemount) and one voluntary-aided school (St Andrews) practised streaming from the first year, while the other county school was committed to mixed-ability teaching in the first three years, and the other voluntary-aided school practised a policy of mixed-ability teaching in English and Mathematics and streaming in other subject areas (see Table 2: 4).

Certain comparisons could therefore legitimately be made between the schools within each sub-sample without fear of distortion by the effects of differences in institutional type, ethnic composition or ability level of the school intake. Any differences between the sub-samples, however, could be considered in the light of such influences.

TABLE 2: 4 Background characteristics of the four sample schools

	Voluntary		County	
	St Andrews	St Annes	Ridgemount	Maple Grove
Streaming Policy	Banded	Streamed/mixed	Banded	Mixed
Composition	Mixed-sex	Girls	Girls	Girls
% non-manual*	17.9%	15.9%	13.5%	11.3
Number of pupils	821	990	950	961

* Averaged over the figures from 1983 - 84 and 1985 - 86

Explanatory variables

It should be noted that the voluntary/county distinction, the differences in non-manual intake, the mixed-sex/single-sex distinction and the different streaming policies adopted by the schools have potentially the status of explanatory variables.

If we consider the streaming policies of the schools for example they can be seen as indicators of different underlying philosophies. As the National Association of Schoolmasters' Report put it in 1964 'Comprehensive means different things to different people'. Thus, following Marsden¹ for example we might identify three influential models. First we have the view of the Comprehensive school as a meritocracy, with equal opportunity for all, but where the the objectives of the school are unashamedly academic. Schools which 'stream' or 'band' could be supposed to represent this type. Then there are those who see the comprehensive system as social engineering, where the major aim is to create by the experience of a common educational background a more integrated society. Thirdly there is the Egalitarian model of the Comprehensive system which stresses in the words of Daunt² that 'the education of all children is held to be of equal worth'. Such schools are not opposed to the aims of either the Meritocratic or Social Engineering models but stress that such aims can only be achieved through a fundamental restructuring of the educational ethos within schools.

The mixed-ability policy of Maple Grove would suggest that this school is of the latter type and this was corroborated by the interview

¹ Marsden, D. (1971), *Politicians, Equality and Comprehensives*, T, 411, London, Fabian Society.

² Daunt, P. E. (1975) *Comprehensive Values*, London; Heinemann.

with the Deputy Head'. Following this argument and making the assumption that a school's informing philosophy will be reflected both in the practices and beliefs of those who belong to it, any measure which sets Maple Grove apart from the other schools in the sample may be examined to see whether the difference is explicable in terms of the policy of mixed-ability streaming and the Egalitarian philosophy which this school alone has adopted.

Measures which link St Andrews and St Annes in opposition to Ridgemount and Maple Grove suggest that we should explore the potential relevance of the Catholic background shared by most pupils and staff in the former schools. If St Andrews is found to stand apart from the other three schools on the other hand we should look to see if the differences can be explained in terms of the mixed-sex composition of the school. In all of these respects the findings of the Hargreaves Committee report can be looked to to provide information concerning the expected type and direction of important differences.

Examination performance of the sample schools

In March 1986 the Education Authority published a table which reflected the examination performance of its 152 inner city comprehensive schools. The scores were calculated from the raw results from each school which were then weighted by making allowances for factors likely to distort comparisons. These included disproportionate numbers of children scoring in the top quartile of Verbal Reasoning tests when leaving primary school, the number of girls (who statistically do better than boys at exams) and the number of children entitled to free meals, said to be the best indicator of an area's social deprivation. Thirty seven schools emerged as a 'cause for

¹ see Chapter 4, section 4: 2; 5 for a full account.

concern' and the heads of the ten scoring lowest on the table were called for a personal interview with the Education Officer. Voluntary-aided schools, particularly those which were Church-run, proved to be doing exceptionally well, fourteen of the top twenty schools being in this category.

Examination performance scores for the whole sample ranged between 10.13 and -6.71: the scores of our four schools were as follows:

TABLE 2: 5 Sample schools: examination performance ratings

St Annes	2.87
Maple Grove	0.57
Ridgemount	-0.49
St Andrews	-5.02

One of the two voluntary-aided Church schools selected, St Annes, was in the top twenty while the other Church school in the sample, St Andrews, was in the bottom ten - a contrastive sample indeed. The two county schools, Maple Grove and Ridgemount, ranked 53rd and 83rd respectively. These rankings are compatible with the 'staying on' figures produced by the Hargreaves study (see Table 2: 2) with the important exception of the surprisingly (considering its voluntary-aided Church-run status) and indeed catastrophically low ranking of St Andrews.

CHAPTER 3

Pilot work: the development of research procedures and operationalization of research variables.

Abstract

Section 1

Piloting of the research design in schools suggests some modifications. 'Investigator' triangulation is to be only partly implemented, and indirect methods of ascertaining the teacher's approach to his/her role seem appropriate.

It is decided to study Third Year low ability classes with their English and Geography teachers.

Section 2

At the level of the school, research instruments for the study of the schools as social institutions are developed. Rutter's measure of Pastoral Care is to be used and details of the schools's policies for the allocation of Third Year Option choices and for Library provision documented.

At the level of the class group, discourse analysis techniques are tried out and additional classroom behaviours selected for study. A system whereby classroom behaviours can be attributed to particular pupils, when the observer has no previous acquaintance with the class is developed.

At the level of the individual, instruments for measuring pupils' perceptions of teachers and education are developed and outlines for the Teacher Interview established.

Section 3

Data collection procedures are outlined.

3: 1 Piloting the project

The conceptual framework (symbolic interactionism), key concepts (roles, rules, self concept and socialisation), research focus (the language

of the classroom) and methodological approach (case study, using triangulation techniques) had now been decided upon. Four research questions had been developed which entailed the observation of a core group with at least two teachers, each of whom had to be monitored with another 'preferred' group.

At this point approximately one school year was spent visiting eight comprehensive schools piloting the project. There were three main objectives:

- 1: to finalise details of the research design: this involved testing its practicability, in view of the current teacher strikes in the schools, and fixing upon which subject teachers and low ability groups were to be studied
- 2: to operationalise research variables.
- 3: to determine details of the research procedure.

3: 1: 1 The practicability of the research design

The research was conducted during a very stressful time for teachers, who were involved in painful strike negotiations. In addition, it was noted during the pilot year that many low ability groups presented great problems to their teachers who were seen to be under some strain during observation. It was therefore decided that to attempt full 'investigator' triangulation, in which the researcher discussed the interpretations of classroom process with pupils and teachers was not practicable. If this were attempted, some teachers might drop out of the research. Since it was planned to observe classes at the end of the school year in order to ensure that teacher/pupil dynamics were well established, this could mean having to postpone the work for a full year. A modified form of 'investigator' triangulation was therefore decided upon, in which

teachers and pupils would be asked for their opinions but not confronted with those of others.

For the same reasons, it was decided to adopt an indirect approach to sensitive questions, and to try to minimise the amount of time and effort teachers would be required to give to the project.

3: 1: 2 The subject teachers selected for study

Since classes were unlikely to have two teachers in any one subject area, it was going to be necessary to monitor two different subjects. Although the third research assumption (see Chapter 2, p. 72) was that in all classroom encounters linguistic interaction was crucial, it was nevertheless considered only sensible to fix upon two subjects in which especial emphasis was placed on the importance of classroom talk. It was decided therefore to monitor the 'core' class with their English and their Geography teachers. English lessons are particularly concerned with communication, and therefore likely to provide a great deal of accessible material. In addition the researcher had been an English teacher, and might for this reason be a more accurate and perceptive observer in this subject area. Geography was selected because experience in the schools revealed interesting developments in Geography teaching, which was currently found to place strong emphasis on the importance of classroom discussion. This concern is clearly articulated in the 1978 HMI Series *Matters for Discussion* in which Geography Inspectors advise those who teach Geography in Middle and Secondary schools:

'the development of pupils' linguistic powers, especially in writing and talking, is almost always a substantial subsidiary and often a primary aim of the type of topic and project work in which geographical studies normally figure.'

3: 1: 3 The class groups selected for study

The core low ability group

It was decided to observe a Third Year class which was neither classified as Remedial, nor as the bottom class in the year, but could, however the school's banding system worked, be considered roughly speaking 'second from the bottom'. In this way the groups, although low ability, would still be within the mainstream of the educational system.

The Third Year was chosen because at this stage there was still the possibility of being able to observe the same group with different teachers: after this, pupils choose different options, and it might not be possible to observe the same group of children with two teachers, since it was unlikely that the whole class would have chosen Geography as one of their optional subjects.

The teacher's preferred group

We also wished to have information about the kinds of classroom interaction which teachers preferred (see the third research question, Chapter 2, p. 76). It had been planned to discover this by watching the teacher with a group considered by the teacher to demonstrate optimal patterns of interaction.

When this aspect of the study was piloted it was found that if teachers were asked to identify their 'most successful' class, there was a tendency for them to identify a group which was doing well academically. Since this was not what was intended, it was finally decided, after testing out a number of wordings, to ask them to identify the class they were currently 'enjoying teaching most'.

3: 2 Operationalisation and development of research instruments

During the pilot year methods for data collection and analysis were tried out. Efforts were made to ensure that, where appropriate, objective, 'low inference' indicators were identified (Yin 1984: Wells, 1987).

Data was to be gathered at three levels - that of the institution (the school), the group (the class) and the individual (teacher and pupils). The measures and methods of data collection will be discussed according to these divisions.

3: 2: 1 The level of the school

Since the research interest lay in the schools as socialising agents which could be supposed to have influenced pupils' attitudes to education and to have had an impact upon how they defined and evaluated their own role as 'pupil', and the reciprocal role of 'teacher', the schools were to be studied as social institutions.

A combination of methods and techniques as in McCall-Simmons description of 'participant observation' was decided upon. This was to involve interviewing relevant staff members both formally and informally, examining documents where available, using informants (such as regular visitors to the school who were not staff members) and drawing upon the researcher's own subjective experiences within the school over the period of observation. It was hoped also to be able to use survey methods to tap the teaching staff's attitudes to relevant issues. In the event all such methods except the last were used. Permission was not granted by the Education Authority to conduct a survey of staff attitudes.

During pilot work areas of special interest were sought out, and a standardised form of data collection worked out in order to ensure

greater objectivity through a more systematic approach. Three areas were identified:

- 1: the Pastoral Care system
- 2: the Third Year Option choices
- 3: the Library provision.

Pastoral Care

A scale developed by Rutter et al (1978) to assess the Pastoral emphasis of the school seemed an appropriate measure for our purposes. Although there was no evidence that this measure fulfilled the strict criteria of scalability, or consisted of anything more than ten questions related to the Pastoral emphasis of the school, it did allow comparisons to be made between schools on relevant matters which could be objectively ascertained. Moreover, the Rutter research also provided information about the range of scores we could expect, and the mean score of the schools within his sample. A copy of the scale may be found in Appendix A.

Third Year Option Choices

Third Year Option choices are vitally important decisions which pupils make at the end of the Third Year about the subjects they will study for the next two years. The subjects they decide upon will be those in which they will hope to achieve important examination qualifications and which will, therefore, form the basis for future career aspirations. During pilot work in the schools it emerged that some schools severely restrict the options available to lower ability children, and some are much better than others in offering guidance and involving pupils and their parents in the choice process.

Information was to be gathered on the following factors:

- 1: **Parental involvement.** (While some schools have minimal contact with parents, others not only write to parents, but also invite them into the school to discuss their child's choices with relevant teachers.)
- 2: **Timetabling.** (Some schools use computers, or other methods which maximise pupil choice, others solve problems in ways which are timetable-dictated.)
- 3: **Curriculum information.** (In some schools subject teachers give talks on what is involved in the Fourth Year curriculum, while in others no such care is taken to ensure that pupils are making an informed choice.)
- 4: **Career implications.** (While some schools make no attempt to discuss with pupils the career implications of their choices, others invite outside speakers, and discuss such issues fully)
- 5: **Option choice.** (In certain schools lower ability pupils are given limited choice, while in others the same options are open to all)
- 6: **Counselling.** (In some schools high-hierarchy teachers see pupils individually to discuss the choices they have made, while in others there is no such personal counselling.)

Library Provision

During the year spent in the schools it was noted that the provision for the needs of lower ability children in terms of such things as reading material suitable for CSE project work or remedial reading schemes was often woefully inadequate. In addition, a school's sensitivity in providing attractive reading material for adolescents of different social and ethnic backgrounds and the care shown in providing easily accessible and pleasant surroundings seemed indicative of a generally caring atmosphere in a school. A locked and elitist library seemed unlikely to foster or reflect a supportive educational environment. Consequently, the following details were to be noted about the facilities provided:

- 1: **Accessibility.** (Was the library difficult to get to, or conveniently located?)
- 2: **Opening times.** (Limited or generous?)
- 3: **The quality of provision for higher ability pupils.**
- 4: **The quality of provision for lower ability pupils.**

The factual information gathered in this way was to be used to provide a useful objective check on more subjective and serendipidously gathered information on the four schools as social institutions.

3: 2: 2 The level of the class group

It had been decided that group process was to be studied through analysis of the language of the classroom. During the year in the schools various approaches to the study of classroom language were considered, and the decision was made to use some form of discourse analysis.

Discourse analysis

Although there are many different definitions of discourse analysis (see Brown and Yule, 1983: Coulthard, 1977: Potter and Wetherell, 1987: Stubbs, 1983) all discourse analysts approach language as a symbolic resource which may be creatively exploited by people in the construction of their social worlds. This stance has much in common with symbolic interactionism.

Being a discipline very much in the process of development, a number of very disparate kinds of language study may be included under the title. However, following Stubbs (1983), discourse analysis may be defined in terms of three common features:

- 1: It deals with the spoken as opposed to the written word. The focus is on the interactive nature of the spoken language, in recognition of the fact that speech is (unless in very unusual circumstances) the mutual production of at least two speakers.

- 2: It is concerned with the organisational principles which govern language above the level of the sentence.
- 3: It concentrates upon the functional aspects of speech as opposed to the formal aspects.

No system of discourse analysis can ever hope to be a complete account: each approach must necessarily focus on a particular aspect of the spoken speech which it hopes to elucidate. This helps to explain the immense diversity in the focus and approaches used by researchers who may nevertheless all regard themselves as discourse analysts.

The focus on the function of language means that discourse analysis must inevitably rely upon situational, and contextual knowledge in order to interpret speech. To this extent, it is inferential in a way that grammatical analysis of the written word for example is not, as the analyst must rely upon some access to the subjectivity of the human actors. However, in as far as discourse analysis is able to spell out its interpretative rules beforehand, its methods and conclusions have a claim to objectivity.

Discourse analysts can point to the following advantages:

- 1: Discourse analysis can help us to understand that speech has its own structure and organisation which must be understood before discussing its use as an instructional medium.
- 2: It offers the possibility of a truly interactional analysis, since it is precisely focused on those aspects of dialogue which have implications for, and impose constraints upon, partners in talk.
- 3: Because of the very richness of its data base (transcripts of speech) the researcher need not rely on any single method of analysis. The data can be resubmitted to alternative analyses where appropriate.
- 4: Tape-recordings leave the observer free to supplement his record by other means.

Concerning the last two points, Stubbs (1983) notes:

'It has become fairly frequent for papers on sociolinguistics to insist that different methods be combined in research. For example, Hymes (1962) insists that it is meaningless to study language-use, language functions and attitudes to language as though they were separate, and that different methods are required to study this complex of behaviour and belief.'

p. 232.

This demonstrates that discourse analysis fits well with the decision to use the principle of triangulation to guide the research methodology.

The choice of the discourse analysis system

An important linguistic enterprise in the '70s took as its starting point the language of the classroom, and in so doing showed how a new method of analysis could be applied to the understanding of classroom process.

Sinclair and Coulthard (1975) were originally concerned to develop a comprehensive system for analysing speech which could complement grammatical analysis. They decided to start by developing a system which could deal with a body of transcripts taken from primary classrooms, not because of any special interest in schools, but because they felt success was more likely if they began by trying to deal with classroom talk. From their point of view, since their system was centrally concerned to document how 'turns at talk' (an important topic in discourse analysis) were regulated, the school situation, where the teacher is responsible for assigning the right to speak, was seen as more straightforward than the more chaotic interaction in ordinary conversation, where there is no officially recognised regulator of the talk.

Sinclair and Coulthard were able to produce a system capable of dealing with their classroom transcripts and which analysed classroom talk,

not at arbitrary time intervals, or by concentrating separately on teacher behaviours and the specific behaviours of selected individual pupils as systematic observation schedules usually did, but which treated the text as an integral whole, and elucidated patterns of connectedness between successive utterances. The system was in fact included in *British Mirrors*, and is regarded by its authors as potentially able to distinguish between teachers in their use of different 'teaching exchanges' or ways of controlling classroom talk.

The system describes discourse in terms of twenty two speech acts, which group together at a higher level of organisation to form five types of 'move': 'framing' and 'focusing' moves which signal changes in the direction of the talk and which are monopolised by the teacher, and 'opening' 'responding' and 'follow-up' moves which form the tripartite structure of initiation, response feedback (IRF). These moves in their turn are organised at a higher level into 'teaching exchanges' depending on the type of speech act - 'elicitation', 'directive' 'informative' or 'check'- which forms the basis of the 'opening' move, and who (teacher or pupil) has inaugurated the topic.

Sinclair and Coulthard's work was based upon Speech Act theory as developed by Halliday (1961). Since speech is viewed by Halliday as a kind of doing, discourse analysts who adopt his approach to language are involved in a theory of social action, in which language, action and situation are seen as inseparable. Linguistic interaction is based upon the shared knowledge and assumptions of participants concerning the discourse rules. This approach is in keeping with the symbolic interactionist perspective of the research.

The focus on rule following has important implications for a study which might wish to compare the work of teachers across different classes and subject areas. Analysis in terms of rules makes it possible to compare unique social occasions. The significance of this is brought out by Goffman (1981):

'The notion of ritual constraints helps us to mediate between the particularities of social situations and our tendency to think in terms of general rules for the management of conversational interplay. We are given a means of overcoming the argument that any generalization in this area must fail because every social situation is different from every other. In brief, we have a means of attending to what it is about different social situations that makes them relevantly different for the management of talk.'

pp. 19 - 20.

Such rules are not necessarily either normative or prescriptive, but will always function as 'rules of interpretation' as described by Marsh and Rosser and Harre (1978). They also provide a language in terms of which both disaffection and cooperation may be expressed, and group values reaffirmed or contested.

After trying out the original Sinclair and Coulthard system it was decided that a modified version developed by Deirdre Burton (1981) would be more appropriate for present purposes. A full description of this discourse analysis system can be found in Appendix B.

Burton wished to extend the 'range of convenience' of the model so that it could more easily encompass informal, non-authoritarian and non-collaborative texts. It was felt that her approach might prove more sensitive to potential deviations from the orderly interaction of traditional classrooms and therefore permit a more satisfactory examination of low ability classroom life.

Burton preserves intact Sinclair and Coulthard's general approach, and her coding scheme at the level of the 'act', bar a few additions, duplicates theirs. Her crucial modifications occur at the next interactive level of 'move', where instead of the IRF structure she conceptualises talk as consisting of 'opening' moves which may be either 'supported' by the partner in talk, or 'challenged' in some way. 'Supportive' moves continue the conversational initiative of the person who has inaugurated the talk: 'challenging' moves function 'to hold up the progress of that topic, or topic introduction in some way', although they may not necessarily be hostile in intent.

An example will serve to make the distinction between the two systems of analysis clearer and help to explain why Burton's system was preferred. Consider the following dialogue:

(Dennis comes into the classroom, leaving the door open.)

Teacher: Is the door open?
 Dennis: (remaining in his seat) Yes
 Teacher: (angrily) Dennis!
 Dennis: (gets up and shuts the door)
 Teacher: Thank you

In situations such as this, where classroom rules make it quite clear that the teacher is not asking a question, but asking Dennis to shut the door, Dennis by pretending to take the teacher's directive as an elicitation, is offering cheek. In the system devised by Sinclair and Coulthard, this would be coded in the following way:

Initiating	Responding	Feedback
Is the door open	Yes	
Dennis	<Non Verbal>	Thank you

The two pupil responses are differentiated only in terms of the teacher's withholding of feedback in the first instance. Had Dennis's first reply been the objection 'I didn't leave it open miss, Tom did' or outright rebellion 'Why should I do what you tell me?', the coding would not be altered.

On the other hand Burton's system is sensitive to these differences. Dennis's replies would be 'challenging' moves, but they would also be coded according to the specific grounds of objection, since if a move is to be classed as 'challenging', this must be justified in terms of specified rules of interpretation (see Appendix B). Thus 'Yes' would simply be classed as a break in 'discourse framework' (DF) since the expected non-verbal reaction does not 'support' the teacher's 'opening' move: 'Tom left it open miss' could also be classed as Labov 3 (L3) on the grounds that Dennis denies his obligation to shut the door, and 'Why should I do what you tell me?' as Labov 4 (L4), since Dennis would then be claiming that the teacher had no right to tell him to shut the door.

Since this system was designed to examine how access to talk was controlled, it could give us a language in terms of which we could express the different kinds of conversational opportunities teachers left open for their pupil partners in talk, and a vocabulary in which we might discuss how these pupils responded. Classroom discourse, if it followed traditional lines established by Sinclair and Coulthard, would show, in Burton's system, a virtual monopoly of 'opening' and 'challenging' moves from the teacher, with pupils largely restricted to 'supporting' moves. In low ability classrooms however there might be interesting variations on this normative pattern which Burton's system would describe more meaningfully.

Additional measures of group behaviour

Denzin had stated:

'each [research] method leads to different features of empirical reality no single method can ever completely capture all the relevant features consequently, sociologists must learn to employ multiple methods in the analysis of the same empirical events. This is termed *triangulation*.'

While piloting the discourse analysis system, time was spent observing the classroom behaviour of teacher and pupils in order to discover how other meaningful dimensions of the interaction which would not be captured on a taped record of classroom talk might be recorded. Such additional evidence would have two purposes: first it could serve as an aid to the interpretation of the verbal interaction, secondly it could extend the data base as recommended in the multi-method approach.

Sequences of cooperative classroom behaviour

In schools where things were going well, it was noted that classroom life appeared to reflect skilled cooperative behaviour. Pupils for example had systems for arranging access to the teacher's personal attention, as is necessary in a situation in which one person is trying to respond to the needs of some twenty to thirty others.

The traditional machinery for ensuring this right in the crowded traffic of the classroom has produced for example the 'hand-raising' ritual. Where this tradition is observed, the individual pupil prefaces any bid for the teacher's attention with a hand-raise, which implicitly recognises the teacher's right to refuse or grant permission for the pupil to speak. For example, if the teacher asks a question of the whole class, instead of calling out, those in the class who think they know the answer raise their hands, leaving the teacher to select who is to reply. This provides a

method whereby, if the teacher is alert, he or she can distribute the chance to answer fairly amongst the class, ensuring that this hopefully prized opportunity does not always go to the pupil who shouts loudest or finds the answer first.

Amongst skilled practitioners, this classroom ritual has other advantages. It can allow a teacher to see at a glance how many of the class feel they have grasped the point and can answer the question. If only two or three hands are raised, and the class is well disciplined, the teacher may acknowledge those who are ready with the solution, and then, instead of calling upon them for the answer, may wait for the forest of hands to thicken, or even rephrase the question more clearly before selecting who is to reply. The rest may then keep their hands up, indicating that they have alternative solutions, or something further to add, and a second, third or fourth pupil may be chosen.

There is also a 'body-language' of arm raising which allows pupils to express, and the sensitive teacher to register, a whole gamut of information about individuals without necessarily interrupting classroom business. There is the tentative half-arm raise -(I'm not so sure of what I'm going to say): the finger-clicking, half-out-of-the-seat arm raise -(please, I'm desperate to communicate): the nonchalant leaning-back-in-the-chair arm raise -(this is all too easy for me): the arm half-propped on the desk- (I'm shy, or this is boring, depending on facial expression): the fully extended arm, elbow-propped on the other -(I've been waiting for ages and you still haven't noticed me). Of course it goes without saying that like all other forms of language, hand-raising also opens up possibilities for deceit - exploited for example by the pupil who learns how to hand-raise at just the right time, not so soon as to make himself conspicuous,

not so late as to suggest he's in need of support, and thus avoids being asked at all. However, it does seem to provide for the group a fairly efficient way of solving a difficult logistical problem - how do thirty or so individuals arrange to have relatively spontaneous access to a central person, or bid for 'speaker's rights' without causing chaos?

During the year of pilot work it emerged that there were fashions within schools and within classes, which dictated whether this device was used or not. Some schools and some classes used hand raising uninhibitedly: in others it was almost never done. It seemed that it was in the less smoothly running schools and in the least contented classrooms that hand-raising was out of favour. Although it is an efficient method for regulating classroom traffic, it is also one which emphasises the pupil-status of those who use it: as such, to the disaffected, it may seem a stigmatising childish sort of behaviour.

The call-out seemed to be another classroom phenomenon which would repay closer attention. Indiscriminate mass call-outs were frequent in badly controlled classroom situations. When this happens it becomes impossible for the teacher to identify individual answers. The anonymity of the call-out then becomes at the same time a deep source of frustration to pupils who wish to communicate, but cannot rely upon being heard or acknowledged by the teacher, and an irresistible license for abuse.

On the other hand, the call-out can also be orchestrated in some classroom situations into a highly disciplined group response. Such mass call-outs tend only to happen when the question to be answered is of a routine nature. This kind of mass chant in no way resembles the highly competitive and very disparate bids for attention that mass call-outs in less successful low ability groups often entail.

There seemed to be differences too in the occasions when individual pupils called out an answer. In the more unmanageable lower ability forms, these could occur at any time, even in the midst of a teacher's talking to the class. In the classes which teachers saw as more satisfactory, this rarely happened. Instead the individual call-out unheralded by the raised hand seemed to occur at points where perhaps the teacher had asked a question and no hands had materialised. The anonymous call-out then seemed almost to stem from a sense of modesty - it is after all a very conspicuous thing to put up your hand when noone else is doing so.

The following quantifiable and 'low inference' measures were developed from these behaviours:

- 1: The number of mass 'hands-up'.
- 2: The number of pupils volunteering to contribute on task-related topics by putting up hands outside mass 'hands-up' situations.
- 3: The number of mass 'call-outs'.
- 4: The number of pupils volunteering to contribute by calling out answers, or making verbal 'bids' for speaker's rights outside mass 'call-outs'.

Negative behaviours were also to be noted:

- 1: The number of pupils involved in disciplinary exchanges.
- 2: Number of disciplinary exchanges.
- 3: Type of misbehaviours: inattention, chat, disruption etc.
- 4: The number of children absent or arriving late for class.

It will be noted that these measures are acceptable examples of group behaviour since they are not ascertainable before the group assembles as a

group, and are not 'average pupil' measures. Since they are indications of participation or non-participation in the group educational goal, the underlying intention was through them to tap the level of 'engrossment' in the educational enterprise.

Observational record used to monitor classroom process

During pilot work a methodology was developed and tested for recording these behaviours. A system was developed whereby individuals could be identified, even in situations where the pupil's name was not yet known to the observer.

First checklists based on those used by Rutter (1979), were prepared. These were to be completed at the beginning and the end of lessons and covered such things as the time of day and day of the week, the number of children arriving late, the way in which the children entered and left the room, how seating arrangements were decided upon, whether lessons started and finished early or late and the decorative condition of the room. Observational sheets specially developed for the present research were then inserted between these checklists (see Appendix C). These showed a schematised classroom with squares representing desks. The layout was sufficiently large (6 x 9 desks) to accommodate a variety of differently shaped actual classrooms¹. Groups could be indicated for example by drawing a line round the relevant number of squares. After the children arrived, the occupied desks were identified, and where possible at the top of each 'desk' salient characteristics of the pupil were noted (sex, hair-colour, distinctive clothing). Behaviours were then recorded in the relevant

¹ This was found to be necessary as it was not always possible to ensure that the observer had already had access to the classroom and been given the opportunity to study the layout of the desks.

'desk' square.

As the lesson progressed it was often possible to attach names to the desks, since the teacher and pupils often addressed each other by name. At other times the teacher was asked at the end of the lesson to help identify each pupil. It was often found that details of the seating arrangements could be ascertained from the teacher before the class assembled, as pupils had regular seats.

It was not of course possible to record the interaction for an entire lesson on one sheet. Pilot work showed that satisfactory results could be obtained if six minutes of interaction were recorded on one sheet. To make the observations more accurate, and to facilitate the matching of the observational data with the tape transcripts, each 'desk' was therefore divided into three sections, on each of which two minutes of interaction could be recorded. At the bottom of each sheet there was a larger 'box' where group behaviour (such as mass 'call-outs' or 'hands-up'), or individual behaviour (such as call-outs the source of which could not be identified) might be entered.

Before each lesson a sufficient number of these sheets to cover the time-span of the lesson were assembled and fixed together in a hard-backed loose-leaved folder. This allowed the blank reverse side of each sheet to be used to record things which could not be easily noted on the sheet on which the desks were drawn (for example movement of the teacher within the classroom). This blank side was also divided into three, so that all observations could be attributed to a two minute time interval. A stop watch was set to naught at the start of each observation period, and each sheet was labelled according to the time which would be shown on the stop watch face.

The data from this observational schedule were to be used to expand and clarify the evidence of the transcripts. For example the observational record allowed the voices of individual pupils on the tape recordings to be identified. It could also be used to distinguish contributions which were prefaced by a hand raise (a non-verbal 'bid' in the discourse analysis system). Similarly the transcripts could be used to cross-check some of the data from the observational schedule: for instance the tapes provided further evidence of the number of 'call-outs'. In this way the two types of information gathered to document classroom process could be used to cross-validate each other.

3: 2: 3 The level of individuals

The teacher interview guide

Experience in schools had revealed that the research area was a very sensitive one. For this reason indirect methods seemed to be indicated. It was found that teachers' attitudes towards education, the school and their role could be satisfactorily approached by means of questions such as 'What type of school would you enjoy teaching in most do you think?' 'Why is that?' 'What do you feel should be your priorities as a teacher?' 'What is the most irritating thing about your job at the moment?' 'What gives you the most satisfaction in your job?' and 'How did you come to choose to be a teacher?'

Piloting also showed that if the interview was begun with the open-ended question:

'I'd like to start by asking you to tell me about the class so that I know something about them before I see them. What can you tell me about them?'

teachers' responses, in so far as they showed what was most salient to the teacher about the class, could be most illuminating.

On the basis of these findings a semi-structured interview guide was prepared, covering the following kinds of information:

- 1: Attitudes towards, experiences with and educational aims for the two classes which are to be observed. (Questions 1-26)
- 2: Details of previous teaching experience and training. Career aspirations and attitudes towards teaching. (Questions 27-39)
- 3: Perceptions of relevant aspects of the school with special reference to school rules, and curricular guidelines and the amount of freedom left to individual teachers to establish their own standards within individual classrooms. (Questions 40-43)

The guidelines for the teacher interview can be found in Appendix D.

The pupil questionnaire

During the pilot year selected individual pupils from low ability groups were interviewed. Since it did not seem practicable to expect to interview individually all of the pupils in the research project itself, a pupil questionnaire, which can be found in Appendix E, was developed from the experience gained. This covered the following topics:

- | | |
|-------------|--|
| Question 1: | Optional subjects to be studied in the Fourth Year. |
| Question 2: | Friendship groupings within the class. |
| Question 3: | Opinions about four subjects, including the two monitored. How interesting, and useful are they, and how hard do they work for them? |
| Question 4: | Characteristics of the 'Good Teacher'. |
| Question 5: | How to evaluate the success of a course of lessons. |
| Question 6: | Ratings of the four subject teachers on the 'Good Teacher' characteristics. |

- Question 7: Perceived importance of examinations for future life.
- Question 8: Plans for the end of the Fifth Form.
- Question 9: Perceived wishes of parents regarding the decision to leave school or stay on into the Sixth Form.
- Question 10: Academic Self Concept.
- Question 11: Expected job.
- Question 12: Desired job.
- Question 13: Attitudes to school, teachers and curriculum.

Question 2 was based on a three-criteria sociometric scale taken from the work of Barker-Lunn (1970) and Rushton (1967) and listed in the manual of educational research methods compiled by Cohen (1976).

Questions 3, 8 and 13 were taken from the local Education Authority's Fifth Form Survey.

Question 5, on the relative importance of various criteria for judging the effectiveness of the teaching of a course of lessons, was taken from a questionnaire given by Kyriacou (1982) to secondary school teachers. Originally it was planned to ask the staff in the various schools this question also, in order to be able to compare the replies of teachers and pupils. However this would have needed clearance which was not likely to be available in time, and so this plan was abandoned.

Question 10 is a six-item adaptation of Brookover's original Academic Self Concept scale, which yielded reproducibility coefficients of (respectively) .95 and .96 for the 513 boys and 537 girls tested. Unfortunately however the scalability of the six-item adaptation has yet to be ascertained. However Cohen and Cohen (1974) used this six-item version in a study of 801 primary school children in 28 schools in North Eastern England, and found that children's liking for many areas of their curriculum

was associated with a high self-concept of ability. A factor analysis of the data revealed one factor which was identified as 'constituents of self-concept of ability'. The four highest loadings on that factor were:

Self Concept of Ability	.75
Liking Maths	.68
Liking doing tests	.36
Liking working on my own	.31

The items in questions 4 and 6, concerning 'Good Teacher' characteristics, were developed for the present research project.

The 'Good Teacher' items

First an open-ended question was given to some forty pupils of varying levels of ability from a mixed-sex comprehensive school not finally involved in the research:

'We would like to know more about what you and other people of your age think is most important about a teacher. For someone like yourself, what would the best kind of teacher be like? Could you jot down anything that comes to mind? We would like a list of ingredients please to make up a recipe for your Ideal Teacher!'

This part of the work was undertaken for two reasons. First it was considered important to ask pupils about aspects of the 'Good Teacher' which seemed relevant to them: secondly the researcher wished to word the questionnaire in such a way as to engage the interest of lower ability fourteen year olds and felt that it was important to use a vocabulary, and the kind of phrasing, to which they could relate. A pool of items was to be generated from the freely elicited comments gathered in this preliminary study.

A content analysis of the replies revealed that they could be classified under three headings: the numbers of pupils mentioning the various topics were as follows:

No. of pupils	Discipline	Teaching Skills	Personal Qualities
	27	33	39

The comments on discipline involved mainly the idea that teachers should be strict without being overbearing, or intimidating - they should know when to be strict. The emphasis in Teaching Skills was on the teacher's ability to be interesting, to put variety into lessons and to make sure that everyone, no matter of what ability level, understands what is being taught.

Not only did the majority of children refer to personal qualities of the teacher, in addition by far the largest number of comments were made on this aspect of the 'Good Teacher'. The kinds of qualities, and the numbers of times they were mentioned, were as follows:

Understanding	14
Friendly	13
Sense of Humour	13
Has no favourites	9
Cheerful	7
Helpful	6
Listens to what you say	6
Patient	6

A second questionnaire was constructed and given to some twenty children aged between twelve and sixteen, who were also encouraged to make comments. These pupils were first asked:

'What would the best kind of teacher for someone like yourself be like?
Think of the kind of teacher who would be able to bring out the best in you.
Write down the three things that would matter most to you.'

This question was included as a check on the first study: in the event, very similar qualities were mentioned, and no new aspects thrown up.

Secondly the pupils were asked to complete an assessment of four of their current teachers on thirty two attributes identified by the children in the preliminary study. Eight statements about a teacher's ability to control the class, eight involving a sense of humour, eight concerning the teacher's personal relationships with pupils, and eight about instructional techniques and skills had been selected for inclusion in this 'Good Teacher' profile. In addition to the opinions of the pupils from our first school, the work of Gannaway (1976) who developed a stage model of how pupils evaluate a teacher's performance, was influential in the choice of the four areas of teaching behaviour selected. The format was the same as that eventually used in question 6 of the pupil questionnaire (see Appendix E).

On the basis of these answers the final twenty 'Good Teacher' items were selected, five being chosen from each of the topic areas.

3: 3 The establishment of the research procedure

Arrangements were made with the Local Education Authority for access to the four selected schools and the following research procedure, established during pilot work, was carried out.

The researcher was introduced by the Education Authority as a student doing research on 'Teacher Effectiveness', and the Head's permission to work in the schools gained.

Contact with three of the four schools was made, and some interviews with teachers conducted, towards the end of the Spring Term: in all four schools classroom observation was carried out in the Summer Term

after the teachers had been interviewed. The Pupil Questionnaire was administered at the end of the researcher's time in each school.

Approximately one week was spent exclusively in each school: for the rest of the time the researcher moved between schools.

3: 3: 1 The Teacher Interview

Before the observations of lessons, approximately one hour was spent with each class teacher. Although a detailed interview guide had been prepared (see Appendix D) the order of the questions, apart from the first, was not always adhered to: priority was given to the natural evolution of the conversation, which often made the asking of certain questions unnecessary.

Teachers had been told about the researcher's interest in classroom language and the kinds of differences which might be expected in low ability groups. At the beginning of the interview the discourse analysis system was briefly described, and details provided concerning the kinds of observational data which were to be gathered. Teachers were asked, and all consented, to give permission for their lessons to be taped.

Although each teacher knew that the class was to be monitored with another colleague, the researcher did not emphasise her interest in how things might vary as a function of different teaching approaches. Rather interest was expressed in how things might vary between different subject areas and between the lower ability class and the teacher's own 'most enjoyed' class. It was felt that any teacher who allows an observer in the classroom must be aware that in some sense they are inviting judgement on their performance. In addition the researcher had been introduced into the schools as a student working on 'Teacher Effectiveness'.

It was hoped therefore that any reticence on this point could be interpreted as tactful rather than deceitful.

During the interview each teacher was asked to identify their 'most enjoyed' class, and arrangements were made for the researcher to see the core class on four occasions and the 'most enjoyed' class on two. Teachers were also at this point familiarised with the 'assessment of the lesson' questions (see Appendix F) which they were to be asked to fill in at the end of each lesson. This asked how successful, stressful and typical the lesson had been in their opinion, and whether or not it had been effected by the presence of the observer. Since teachers often had to leave immediately to teach another class, this questionnaire provided a quick and consistent way of recording their views about each lesson.

3: 3: 2 The monitoring of group process

The researcher arrived in the classroom before the lesson started, and placed the tape recorders in position. Teachers had been consulted previously about a convenient place for the researcher to sit. Usually this was at the back of the classroom, out of sight of most of the class.

Each lesson monitored was taped on at least two tape recorders which were strategically placed around the classroom. These tapes were later transcribed, and analysed according to the discourse analysis system (see Appendix B).

While the pupils could see the observer making notes, and sometimes asked questions about this, the tape recorders were hidden, and the class was not told about them, although the teacher's permission to tape had always been requested.

The researcher had considered telling the pupils that lessons would be taped. However, in the first school, the teachers advised against this as they felt that it might inhibit classroom talk. Since all the children could see that notes were being taken during lessons, and were therefore aware that they were being closely monitored, it was felt that the deception involved in hiding the tape recorders from their view was excusable. In two schools, classes were eventually told that they had been taped, and no child appeared to object.

The researcher filled in the observation schedule during lesson time, and afterwards gave the teachers the 'assessment of the lesson' sheet (see Appendix F). Where possible this was supplemented by longer discussion.

3: 3: 3 The pupil questionnaire

Permission was given by the schools for the researcher to have a full lesson with each class at the end of the observation period for the administration of the pupil questionnaire. This was administered after the observation period was at an end for two reasons. First, it was argued that, if pupils had the opportunity to get to know the researcher, a more trusting relationship would have time to develop, and that this might make them more cooperative. Secondly, the questionnaire revealed the researcher's interests, and it was thought that pupils might be influenced by these in some way if they knew about them before their lessons were observed. However each teacher had been asked to introduce the researcher as 'a student who is interested in classroom language', and to tell the class that the researcher would be coming back after sitting in on their lessons to talk to them in more detail about the kind of work she had been doing.

Efforts were made to make the researcher's time with the class as interesting as possible: a brief outline of the kinds of research interests of social psychologists was given, and questions from the class on areas they wished to hear more about were encouraged. It was stressed that the work was a collaborative effort between the researcher and those people like themselves, whose situation was being studied. The need for people who might be involved in trying to change things for the better in schools to have some understanding of what they, the pupils, really wanted, and thought about their education generally, was stressed. One such session was recorded, and the tape confirmed the researcher's impression that the class had been enthusiastic and eager to learn more.

Before finally producing the questionnaires, pupils were assured that whatever they said would be entirely confidential, and their answers would never be seen by any teacher in their school. Although they had been asked for their name on the last page of the questionnaire, they were told that they should feel free to withhold it if they so wished. Only twenty out of over two hundred children in fact did so. All but three of these pupils came from the teachers' preferred classes, with whom the researcher had spent less time. A minimum time of half an hour was left for the filling in of the questionnaire, a copy of which can be found in Appendix E.

PART 2

THE SCHOOLS AS SOCIAL INSTITUTIONS AND THEIR EFFECTS ON PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND EXPECTATIONS

Chapter 4

Background information gathered through interviews with staff members, observation by the researcher in the schools, and examination of documents where available, are presented and a comparative picture of the schools as social institutions is built up.

Chapter 5

Questionnaire responses from pupils in each school are examined. Differences between the schools in the self-reports of pupils concerning their attitudes to school and teachers, themselves as pupils and the aims of education are considered in the light of what has been learned about their schools as social institutions.

CHAPTER 4

The schools as social institutions

Abstract

Section 1

The two voluntary-aided schools are found to have different policies on 'streaming', but are similar in terms of their catchment areas, the VR Band and ethnic composition of their pupil intakes.

The girls' school, St Annes, functions well as a social institution, while the mixed-sex school, St Andrews, has a poor institutional ethos, which adversely affects both teachers and pupils. Low ability pupils in particular are disadvantaged.

Section 2

The county schools are also found to be very similar in terms of their catchment areas, and the VR Band and ethnic composition of their pupil intake, although in all these respects they differ considerably from the two voluntary-aided schools. Like the Catholic schools, they establish class groups in very different ways.

Both schools are functioning well as social institutions, although on the Rutter scale the community-based school, Ridgemount, scores particularly highly. Observation in Maple Grove, the school which practises mixed-ability teaching, suggests that the needs of low ability pupils are a high priority, but that the teachers are under greater stress.

Section 3

It is hypothesised that the voluntary-aided school St Andrews, will have the most adverse effect on pupils' conceptualizations of the educational process, and differences are expected to be most pronounced between the two voluntary-aided schools.

The Egalitarian ideology of the county school, Maple Grove, is also expected to have particular importance for low ability pupils and the way in which they approach their educational experience.

4: 1 The voluntary-aided schools: St Andrews and St Annes

Both voluntary-aided schools had the same history of an amalgamation between an old grammar school and a secondary modern: in addition both were on split sites, and had to deal with the problems of over-crowded Victorian buildings.

4: 1: 1 Background factors

Catchment area

The two schools shared Sixth Form facilities, being members of the same Sixth Form Consortium and lay within the same educational Division. This Division (Division A) was second from top on the Authority's ranking for social deprivation¹. Thus only 11.1% of parents in the area were registered as unemployed (average for the inner city schools being 14.3%) and only 27.6% were eligible for free school meals (average 32.7%). Being Catholic schools however, St Andrews and St Annes took pupils from outside the Division boundary. According to the Third Year Head at St Annes, this resulted in her school being 'the most working class in the Division'. In fact both schools were similar in this respect, since the Division average for non-manual family background was 34.4%, and, over the three occasions for which figures were made available to us, the non-manual percentage at St Annes never rose above 21.3% and at St Andrews above 20.1%.

VR Band composition

Policy dictates that each secondary school's intake should aim to reflect fairly the distribution of scores on a test of Verbal Reasoning (an indicator of educational performance) given to all pupils in their last year at primary school. Thus each school should ideally accept 25% of VR Band 1

¹ ILEA (1985), p. 10

pupils (those scoring in the upper quartile), 50% of VR Band 2 and 25% of VR Band 3 pupils (those scoring in the bottom quartile).

Both voluntary-aided schools claimed to accept no more than 25% of VR Band 1 children. However the VR Band composition of the five streamed classes monitored would suggest that St Andrews may have had a slightly lower complement of VR Band 1 pupils than St Annes. This is consonant with the Deputy Head's statement that St Andrews found it difficult to get the full complement of girls in the higher ability bands since the school was in competition with two local girls' schools of excellent reputation. One of these schools was St Annes which certainly in the Third Year at the time of the research seemed to have less than its full 25% of VR Band 3 pupils.

Ethnic composition

As far as could be established from the pupils in the research sample (St Annes, N = 81; St Andrews, N = 87), the racial mix of the schools was broadly similar, although in St Annes there were fewer white British (ESWI) children and more Catholic European pupils (Other).

The Education Authority's figures¹ show that the ethnic composition was fairly typical for the catchment area:

TABLE 4: 1 Ethnic Composition: LEA Division and voluntary-aided school samples

	<u>Percentages</u>			
	ESWI	Afro-Caribbean	Asian	Other
Division A	62.9	11.9	4.5	20.6
St Andrews sample	66.6	11.5	1.1	20.7
St Annes sample	54.3	14.8	0	30.9

¹ ILEA (1985), Appendix, p. 6

St Andrews being a Catholic school, attracted Spanish Portuguese and Italian families: for the same reason the school also had a large complement of 'second generation' Irish children. According to the Fifth Form Deputy Head there were few pupils in St Andrews with language problems and those who did need help were sent to a nearby language centre. At the time of the research only twelve children from the lower school were attending. Many of the staff were Irish and although the school did admit non-Catholics, the informant considered that approximately one third of the parents were 'non practising' while the rest were 'strong Catholics'. This was later corroborated by the Head of the Theology Department.

The 30.9% of pupils in the 'other' category in our sample from St Annes were likewise drawn from Catholic European backgrounds. Many of their emigrant parents worked in the restaurant business, and the children, as in St Andrews, tended to have been born in this country.

St Annes had a larger complement of Spanish children from families which intended eventually to return to Spain. Presumably because of this some of the girls attended a near-by Spanish school which taught Spanish literature and culture and offered an O-level course in Spanish three nights a week after school. This school imposed a heavy work load which often made it difficult for the girls to keep up with their commitments in St Annes, particularly as some of them worked in the restaurants and cafes also.

Like St Andrews, St Annes had, according to teachers, 'good support' with language problems which the Third Year Head saw as solved by the Third Year, although for many children English was not the language spoken at home. The Catholic emphasis of this school was particularly

strong as it admitted only Catholic children, employed only Catholic staff on a full-time basis and was run by nuns.

Policy for the establishment of class groups

The two voluntary-aided schools operated quite different systems for establishing class groups. St Annes ran mixed-ability classes in the First Year, and thereafter continued to teach English and Mathematics in mixed-ability groups, streaming each of the other subjects on an individual basis. In addition, the children were assigned to Form groups on a purely social basis. At St Andrews the classes from the First Year onwards were banded by ability level, and although the groups had innocuous names based on the initials of the various Form teachers, every noticeboard listed the classes in descending order of ability. Moreover although officially the system was referred to as 'Banding' the teachers regularly talked of the top Band 1 class, the bottom class of the Band 2s and so on.

There was some evidence however that the efforts at St Annes to avoid labelling girls in terms of ability, were not entirely successful. For example, although the English classes were technically speaking mixed ability, one class (not unexpectedly known as 3(5)) had only one VR Band 1 pupil. Since in that year there were at least thirty girls from VR Band 1, this represented a disproportionately low percentage in a five stream system¹. The class was moreover seen as a 'low ability group' by its teacher. Pupils also appeared to categorise in terms of streamed groups. Asked whom she preferred to spend her free time with, one girl in the top Latin class indicated a girl 'from another class' and added:

'Although this girl is in group 5 we are good friends and our different standards don't matter.'

¹ There was also a small remedial class, with about 10 low ability pupils.

It can therefore be seen that the two voluntary-aided schools, although practising different streaming policies, were very similar to each other in the important respects of the social class, ethnic origins and VR Band composition of the pupil intake. How then as social institutions did they respond to the needs of these pupils?

4: 1: 2 The Rutter measure of Pastoral Care

Pastoral Care Heads were interviewed and asked ten questions on the Pastoral emphasis of their schools, following the scale developed by Rutter (1979). In the Rutter sample, school scores ranged from 2.5 to 11, with a mean score of 6.5¹. The voluntary-aided schools in our sample, achieved the same score, 6, slightly below Rutter's average.

Neither school had regular meetings with pupils, neither arranged for free dinner confidentiality and neither had a school policy of stability of teachers from year to year. Interestingly enough however Pastoral Care staff were all on scale 4. Thus the voluntary-aided schools rewarded their staff's Pastoral endeavours both financially and in terms of status, although they did not ensure confidentiality as regards the public identification of especially needy pupils, or give pupils a personal voice in the running of their school - measures which might be supposed to protect pupils' self esteem.

Teachers were however insistent that the role of Pastoral Care was given 'high priority' in their schools and their comments implicitly contradicted some of the assumptions underlying Rutter's scoring system. Regarding for example free dinner confidentiality, the Third Year Head

¹ *Fifteen Thousand Hours*, p. 218

interviewed in St Annes expressed her belief that the pupils were not embarrassed by being publicly identified, although teachers sometimes were on their behalf:

'The girls that get free dinners get given a token by the form tutor. It's quite blase. The girls themselves aren't bothered - it's the staff who do it that tend to get a bit anxious. Whoever registers them simply takes the dinner register and gives out the free dinner tokens. I mean it's taken very much as a matter of fact that girls are eligible for it if they've got a certain number in their family and that's it. That's their right and so nobody blinks an eyelid.'

This teacher believed that her school was especially skilled in matters of Pastoral Care and saw this as a natural consequence of its voluntary-aided status :

'A lot of it in fact is the fact that being a voluntary-aided school we traditionally have had less Educational Welfare Officer contact, less Ed. Psych. contact and less doctor nurse medical things so in fact it's been forced upon us that we have to do it ourselves.'

She challenged the inference underlying the Rutter scoring which sees the stability of teachers as desirable:

Head of Third Year: 'The Head doesn't like a form tutor to have a form for more than two years on the grounds that you can get to know them too well and I can understand that. And also you can lose your effectiveness dealing with the same group all the time - you're going to be doing the same kind of things.'

Interviewer: 'And what happens with the subject teachers? Do they tend to keep the children for consecutive years?'

Head of Third Year: 'Again its very much up to the departments. In terms of my department for example, I kept the same groups from the Second Year to the Third Year except for one and that had to change because of shifting round. There was no other reason for it. It might be that it's not wise to take them, so the Heads of Departments have total freedom to set classes as they wish.'

The clear implication was that a flexible system may be more responsive to individual needs.

4: 1: 3 Third Year Options

At the end of the Third Year pupils must choose which subjects to study for the subsequent two years. The subjects they decide upon will be those in which they will hope to achieve important examination qualifications and which will, therefore, form the basis for future career aspirations. The way in which the school handles the decision process is therefore of considerable interest and importance.

St Andrews

In the year preceding the present research the Deputy Head of Fifth Year at St Andrews had compiled a document entitled *Options, Choices, Channelling or Stereotyping?*. This was made available by the Deputy Head of the school, and showed that at St Andrews until the year in which the research took place the three ability bands had been offered quite separate options. Band 1 children had had fourteen choices available to them, Band 2 thirteen choices while Band 3, which constituted more than a quarter of the year's intake, had only nine possible choices. Only Band 1 children had the chance of Drama or Economics, and, of the nine subjects available to the Band 3 children, only four were also on offer to the Band 1's. Band 3 children had to choose between:

Home Economics	Visual Art	Music
Typing	Technical Drawing	Craft
Social Studies	Sport in Society	Child Development

They could not choose:

Geography	Chemistry	Computer Studies
History	Biology	Drama
Economics	Physics	

The limitations¹ placed by St Andrews on the choice of the lower ability children were probably harder on boys (who made up two thirds of the numbers in this group in the last year in which it operated) since a number of the subjects on offer were unlikely to interest them.

The writer of the report had also interviewed staff members and pupils about their school experiences and transcripts were included in an Appendix. The following extract comes from an interview with the Deputy Head in charge of Curriculum Planning and Timetabling:

Interviewer: What kind of help do people get before choosing their Options? Do they get any interviews or see a career officer or anything like this before choosing?

Deputy Head: Well during the Third Year the Careers teacher is supposed to see every class. We have in the past, on an ad hoc basis - it's not been a regular feature - we had the career's people in to talk to them. We do give the Heads and Heads of Subjects a chance to speak to the Year. There hasn't been, and it's something I would like instituted, a proper regular system.

One of the first things I did when I took over as Deputy Head at the Heads of Department meetings was to ask them to give me a breakdown of their subjects so we could make a booklet. But that has still not been forthcoming. I asked two years ago.

Interviewer: At some other schools they actually all get a talk with the Career's Officer beforehand.

Deputy Head: We do try to get the Careers Officer in at least once or twice. It depends how much time we can get from the Careers people. Then as you know every year except '80 to '82 they have been interviewed personally. That year for some reason they were just handed a form and told to tick what they wanted to take.

An informal interview with a Fourth Year class had yielded the following conversation:

¹ It was interesting later to learn from the Deputy Head of Maple Grove that her Option plans had been made to ensure that all children could study 'the three separate sciences a modern language and Geography since the Central Careers Advisor said these are five subjects everyone should have access to'.

Girl: When I went to the thing about my Options I wanted to do Chemistry, but they said Chemistry would be too hard, y'know, all this working every day and more work, but they said Textiles would sort of let you go a bit. You didn't really have to work your brain so much. I didn't really want to do it, but I just agreed anyway.

Teacher: Do you think there might be some teachers who try to put - off the not so bright people from doing their subject?

Chorus: Yeah!

Girl: They can't be bothered to look after you while everyone else is racing ahead.

Girl: Yeah!

Girl: Really bad right?

Girl: They should stop comparing you.

Girl: They should encourage you so you do better.

At the time of the research project the system at St Andrews was under review following a Quinquennial inspection and although nothing had as yet been finalised it had been proposed that all pupils were to be given the same Option sheet, although Drama and Chemistry were still to be reserved for higher ability children only. However at a staff meeting attended by the researcher at the beginning of May the Deputy Head was still trying to organise the new Option choices and meeting with considerable staff opposition concerning the draft copy she had provided. She had asked for cooperation which had clearly not for the most part been forthcoming:

'The longer we delay the longer it will be till the Third Years get the information. We did say we'll have the booklet and I wanted the information by April 1st. The information didn't come in and there's no booklet'

During this meeting it became clear that the staff were deeply divided on the issue of lower ability children. Asked by one teacher why General Science was not available for them as it was 'in great demand', the Deputy Head replied regretfully:

'I should say the Options should be given to every child but the Heads say no.'

Although some teachers wanted to see wider Option choices offered to lower ability pupils, there were others who clearly felt that this was undesirable:

Art Teacher: 'By the time people have creamed off the best we get left with the sink groups'

Head of Science: 'I can't teach the whole ability range.'

Music Teacher: 'Music has to have a particular kind of pupil.'

Teacher: 'M-- C-- (low ability pupil quoted as representative) shouldn't be advised to do Computer Studies.'

St Annes

The situation was very different at St Annes. While at St Andrews the staff in May were still undecided which Option choices were to be offered to pupils, at St Annes the Third Year had chosen their Options by the end of the second school term.

Great care was taken over all aspects of this choice. A well printed coloured booklet had been produced, in which details of the various courses were laid out, and this had been given to each pupil well before the date on which decisions had to be made. The school was currently considering the preparation of this booklet and initial letters in the

parents' first language, in order that all children could benefit from informed parental involvement.

In addition the same choices were made available to all pupils, regardless of ability level, and a child-oriented system for the allocation of class places was operated. Pupils were first asked for their Option choices and then the results of this enquiry fed into a computer which produced a timetabling scheme which disappointed the least possible number of children.

St Annes also invited outside speakers, and placed considerable emphasis on informing pupils of the consequences of their choices for future job opportunities. This exemplary careers advice had started even before the beginning of the Third Year:

Third Year Head: Actually we started off getting in people in the Second Year to talk to them careers-wise - getting information from various sources even at this stage. Employers - we've had police in, we've had doctors in, the NSPCC in talking about that kind of work. We've had Office work: we've been on the phone to Banks and that kind of stuff. We've built up a careers section in the Library.'

4: 1: 4 Library facilities

St Andrews

The librarian at St Andrews was discouraged enough to confess that she would very much like to find a job elsewhere. She blamed a 'financial crisis' in the school for the fact that she had had 'little opportunity to develop or expand'. Each of the two school buildings had a library but she complained that they contained books requested 'mostly by the Heads of Department who order books of almost University standard which just lie on the shelves'. On being asked for what she believed to be the area of greatest need, she replied that if given the money her priority

would be books for CSE projects. In general the needs of the lower ability children were in her opinion worst catered for. This view gained support from a remark made by the Deputy Head of English who explained the fact that he rarely used books with his low ability Fourth Form, relying instead on photocopied materials, as the school 'doesn't have interesting ones as a large part of the budget gets spent on A level books and there's nothing left over'.

Although the researcher spent some time during lunch hours on the dingy steps leading to the closed library doors on the topmost floor, her only company an abandoned gymn shoe, the library in the main building at St Andrews was never found open. The librarian seemed to split her time between the two buildings and perhaps she was more often to be found in the Annexe, which was the building in which she was originally interviewed, and which was the one most used by the Upper forms. It should in fairness be added that the research took place during the period of teacher strikes, and perhaps in better times things may have been different.

St Annes

The library in St Annes which specifically served the first three years was centrally located and as a irregular visitor the researcher had no difficulty in finding it open.

The librarian in this school felt that finances were fairly allocated by the Head librarian between the Upper and Lower schools and between the needs of all pupils. Upon being asked which area in the library was 'least well covered', she replied:

'In the non-fiction, history - the Middle Ages, Tudors - history that is really the area. It's as specific as that. And obviously computers you need to be building up - but otherwise its a good reference section, provides for the needs.

I think that we've got a good range of fiction. The problem is, talking about lower ability children, the stuff that's available for them - taking into account the different cultures you're dealing with. We actually went out in a book selection in January and we've got some stock coming in on that - but the problem is that the girls in the lower ability range are not inclined to read anyway. The interest is so diverse from the very basic teenage stuff to adventure or horror - it's very difficult to actually cater for the whole section. We're still in the dark as to what to provide...

Thus it would appear that the difficulty lay in knowing how to encourage low ability children to read and where to find suitable material, rather than, as at St Andrews, in an institutional policy which gave priority to the needs of other ability levels.

This librarian also believed in the library's social function as a quiet meeting place during lunch hours and breaks and in the importance of her own role as a sympathetic listening ear in front of whom the girls could air problems they might not feel like broaching with other staff members:

'I wanted them to be able to come if they've got any grumbles. To do it quietly and sensibly and that there's someone on the staff who can listen because I'm not directly involved. I mean it's not putting down any of the teachers at all, but I do do it behind the scenes. Because I'm in this position where I'm as somebody said 'just a librarian' it puts me in this no-man's land you know which is advantageous in some areas and disadvantageous in others. But it does give the girls more room to talk you know about various problems. I suppose one ought to have 'Librarian-stroke-Agony-Aunt!'

4: 1: 5 Observational evidence regarding institutional climate

While the Rutter scale had failed to find differences between the two voluntary-aided schools, consideration of how the Third Year Options were handled and Library resources allocated had shown St Andrews in a very poor light, particularly as regards its provision for low ability pupils. Observational evidence confirmed that the institutional climate in

this school compared unfavourably with that of St Annes, and that this had unfortunate repercussions not only for pupils but for the staff also. Comparisons between the schools will be considered under the following headings:

- 1: Staff tenure
- 2: Leadership
- 3: Management
- 4: Communication

Staff tenure

St Andrews

There was considerable uncertainty concerning St Andrew's future: over the last two years, due to reorganisation of Catholic schools in the diocese, the school had been under threat of closure or amalgamation. Staff and parents had fought against this and those plans had been shelved. However recent changes in the diocese hierarchy still suggested the possibility of change ahead for St Andrews.

St Annes

No threats of closure or amalgamation were mentioned by any staff member at St Annes.

Leadership

St Andrews

At St Andrews the Headship was also of an unsettlingly temporary nature. The Head was an Acting Head who had been promoted from within the school where it was said that he 'was interviewed twice before he got the job'. This informant, a responsible member of staff felt:

'He did well to start with. Then there were a lot of directives from (the Local Education Authority). I imagine Heads get demoralised too'.

Teachers felt that, due to Union commitments, this Head did not spend enough time in the school. In addition, one of the Deputy Heads, who was generally considered the most competent member of the hierarchy, was known to be leaving.

St Annes

At St Annes teachers had few complaints, and such as there were concerned not inadequate and absentee leadership, but intrusive leadership. At least one teacher, the Head of Classical Studies, felt that there was not enough consultation about important matters of school policy:

'The Headmistress and the Deputy Head are nuns and the whole thing is run in a very incestuous fashion - devise a rule and produce faits accomplis and telling you you decided things which you didn't. That sort of thing.'

There was however a general consensus that the Head was dedicated to the welfare of the girls, and prepared to involve herself at every level. During the teachers' strike for example the pupils in St Annes continued to have the use of the school building during lunch-hour, and the researcher was told that the Head personally 'would not contemplate her girls being sent into the streets, even if she had to look after all of them by herself in the dinner hall''.

Management

St Andrews

St Andrews, according to many senior members of staff, suffered from all the ills of incompetent management. The way in which Third Year

'Between the two school sites at St Andrews there lay a Polytechnic which at the time of the research was involved in a heated political dispute with robust picketing and threats of violence. Despite the fact that some of the children came long distances to school and could not be expected to go home, at St Andrews pupils were sent into the streets at lunch time,

Option choices were handled has clearly shown teachers to be reluctant to take on responsibilities or cooperate with each other. Informal interviews with senior staff members confirmed that such problems were wide-spread, and that those in charge were unable to find solutions. The Deputy Head of the Fifth Year noted the difficulties experienced by those with organisational responsibilities because of the staff's unwillingness to cooperate :

'Being the Head of the Sixth Year means being Examination Secretary as well - thankless job - and nobody wants it. When the exams were on everybody knows the hassle he had. Some people gave in exam papers after the exams were meant to start.'

The Head of Theology complained about a lack of direction and continuity in school policy:

'The whole school situation seems completely insecure and fluid. You know you get a different set of teachers in your department the next year and they're taking things at different times and they're using different halls or something like that. You go to meetings where things that you've been sort of building on and that is suddenly being questioned and you know you say 'OK I'll work on that. This is going to be it' and then in two years time the whole structure is questioned again.'

The Deputy Head of English, who had been in the school for three years, saw a lack of consistency in matters of discipline:

'There's been so many staff meetings on this and that's been the main call - for consistency in discipline. I must be frank I don't think there is. I mean I've said several times at a staff meeting that kids are swearing and people are turning a blind eye to it - because they don't just come across and do it in one class without having got away with it in another. There isn't a consistent thing at all and people are just accepting different things. On paper there are rules.'

The lack of organisation and adequate support at St Andrews was also complained of by the supply teachers who were interviewed:

'I won't come here again. It's too difficult: you get no help. You come into the staff room and they leave you to run around and get your own stuff. You end up in a room with no help given by the staff. It's very ill-organised. For example here three different groups were given to me in one room for 'a quiet rest period' - you can imagine what happens.'

A second supply teacher who had been in the school since the beginning of the year was timetabled to teach, in addition to History (his own subject area), Technical Drawing and R.E. He was expected to write examination papers and mark them, things which in his view were not usually done by supply teachers¹.

The way in which St Andrews handled the split site situation once again demonstrated poor planning. At St Andrews only the First Year 'for their own safety' remained in the one building. Otherwise it was the children who moved while staff members much less frequently were forced to commute between buildings. Since the two buildings were ten minutes walk apart in a badly traffic-congested area the results of this policy were far-reaching. For example most lessons had to allow for children arriving late from the other building, and for children leaving five minutes early if they had a building-change for the next period. As a result lessons in St Andrews typically fell far short of the time apparently allotted them on the timetable.

¹ Despite this, this teacher preferred to teach in St Andrews than in some other schools in the area because, he stated, the children were 'not so disruptive'. This he attributed to the fact that the children came from 'Catholic Primary schools which are quite hard on discipline so the kids are quite well trained when they come'. Some of the schools in the inner city he would not go back to 'if they doubled the salary'.

The timetable for the Third and Fourth Years showed that in one week classes changed buildings the following number of times :

Third Year class	3BL	3CY	3HL	3CE	3GE	
N. of moves per week	9	7	9	4	9	
Fourth Year class	4H	4JB	4DE	4MG	4OA	4OY
N. of moves per week	10	8	4	5	4	12

Since there are in this school only five lessons per day, and therefore only twenty possible breaks between lessons per week, the significance of moving ten or twelve times becomes clear. Of course some of the moves occurred during mid-morning break or lunch - but 4OY for example moved six times outside lunch or break time. Since 4OY were a very disaffected low ability group the dangers of losing those who had made it to school that morning to the lure of the streets was considerable.

St Annes

At St Annes observation within the school suggested that it was very well managed and no comparable complaints about inefficiency were made by the staff members.

Confirmation came from the same supply teacher who had complained of the organisation at St Andrews. This teacher had also worked at St Annes and unsolicited made this comment:

'A lovely school. The teachers are extremely helpful - always the Heads of Department greet you - there is work for the pupils to do.'

As regards the split site problem, at St Annes, despite being personally put to more trouble, the staff had agreed that the children should remain in one building or the other, while the staff moved where necessary. This meant that the Lower School was a small, self-contained

and stable community and lessons at St Annes were not typically late in starting or interrupted by late arrivals or early departures. The decision to have the teachers move between the buildings and the pupils remain fixed in fact produced two mini schools-within-a-school and contributed both to the peaceful and studious atmosphere of the Upper school and the intimacy of the Lower school. It also, according to teachers, lent significance to the move into the pre-examination Fourth and Fifth Years.

Communication

St Andrews

St Andrews was a school in which there were many damaging failures of communication. Thus Pastoral Care and Curriculum matters were dealt with separately, and there was a consequent break-down of communication - a point which had been recently noted by the Quinquennial Inspectors. Inadequate communication was also reported, unsolicited, by several Heads and Deputy Heads of Department. The Head of Geography complained that she had been given inadequate information about her Form class:

'One of the things that really shocks me about this school here is that the records are very scanty and difficult to get hold of and when you can get hold of them they're pretty useless. I mean I'm amazed that there's nothing on file that this child was seriously ill in hospital. I find that staggering. And that there's nothing on file - I found out completely informally that this child had gone into care because she started coming in late and it turned out that she was with foster parents in Amersham. So what I know I've picked up really from them.'

The Head of English said of a child on the Register in one of her classes:

'I have an idea John has left the class - an idea.'

Children clearly left without individual teachers always being informed, and new pupils were also observed coming into classes with no introduction.

St Annes

At St Annes on the other hand communications were good. Information concerning new girls, or the special problems of individuals was freely available. For example relevant information was regularly displayed in the staff room on a special noticeboard placed immediately above the electric kettle in front of which staff often waited while preparing coffee. This noticeboard was quite separate from that on which timetabling matters were recorded. Most of the notes concerned First and Second Year girls but for example when a new girl joined the Third Year a note appeared on the board telling of her family's hurried exit from Uganda where they had had to leave all their possessions. The comments were of the following kinds :

'A worrier'

'Parents English is very poor'

'Takes pills to control glandular problems'

'Has had meningitis but OK now. Must not sit in draught.
Needs to be made to work.'

'Impression given at interview that she does not hear'

A content analysis of the subject matter of the comments revealed that Pastoral matters were more often noted than behavioural or academic issues:

Health	25
Academic Issues	7
Family Matters	10
Personality	17
Behaviour Problems	2

4: 2 The county schools: Ridgemount and Maple Grove

Ridgemount was a custom-built community school which shared the facilities within its building with other community-based groups. Maple Grove had a different history and was housed in a very different way. Like the two Catholic schools Maple Grove was the result of an amalgamation between an old Grammar school and a secondary modern. The main building originally housed the Grammar school and when the present comprehensive was established, the accommodation proved inadequate and additional classrooms were built within the school grounds. Some of these were prone to become overheated in summer time but in the main the school environment was very pleasant and sheltered. In particular the classrooms were generous in size even within the original building.

4: 2: 1 Background factors

Catchment area

The two county schools also lay in the same educational Division (Division B) with children having the option when they left primary school of choosing either. Both belonged to a sector of the inner city where at the time of the research approximately one in every two teenagers upon leaving school could expect to be out of work. This Division lay second from bottom of the ten Divisions in the inner city on the Education Authority's scale of social deprivation¹. Thus in 1983 only 11.3% of parents had non-manual occupations (compared with an average over all the Education Authority schools of 21.3%): 43.1% of secondary school pupils were eligible for free school meals (in the inner city as a whole only 32.7% qualified): the parents of 22.6% were unemployed (compared with an average of 14.3%): 27.9% came from one-parent families (average 24%) and

¹ ILEA (1985), p. 10.

23.1% did not speak English at home (average 14.7%). The area however had an extremely 'progressive' Labour council, and both schools seemed very well equipped.

VR Band composition

At Ridgemount VR Banding figures were made available for the Third Year. According to their Year Head, who had been in charge of Pastoral Care for this group since they came into the school, only 15% of the children were VR Band 1 and 50%, double the recommended proportion, were VR Band 3.

The Deputy Head of Maple Grove provided figures for each of the school years: 15% of the Third Year were VR Band 1 and 32% VR Band 3, while the pattern for the rest of the school showed that further up the school there tended to be a smaller number of Band 3 children and lower down the school rather more. In the present First Year for example, 43.2% of the children were VR Band 3.

Large numbers of VR Band 3 children are likely for a variety of reasons to present challenges to educators, and therefore the far greater proportion of pupils in the two county schools who fall within this VR Band should be taken into account in any comparison with the voluntary-aided schools. Teachers however made it very clear that they considered the VR scores as having in many cases at best heuristic value.

The case history of one girl in Ridgemount classified as VR 3 may be seen as instructive. She was Indian, and had spent many of her thirteen years travelling from country to country. She was the eldest of five and was regarded by her social worker as having borne the brunt of bringing up her younger brothers and sisters, as her mother was 'unable to

cope'. She had also been incestuously abused by her father who had left the country after the case came to the courts. This girl had sought help for herself from the school and social workers. Although this case is clearly exceptional, it nevertheless illustrates the difficulty of interpreting test results. The score of a child under such strains at the time of testing cannot be meaningfully compared with that of another child who did not suffer from her multiple disadvantages. However, the VR scores in as far as they are indicators arrived at in the same manner and at the same time for the great majority of secondary pupils, do provide an acceptable way of estimating possible differences between schools as regards the educational problems presented by their pupil intake.

Ethnic composition

In Maple Grove, a language survey carried out by the staff in 1982 found that the number of children whose first language was not English was rising consistently:

TABLE 4: 2 Maple Grove: pupils with first language other than English

	Year					
	First	Second	Third	Fourth	Fifth	Sixth
N. of pupils	55	51	44	32	33	9

This survey indicated that 23.3% of pupils had a first language other than English. This figure almost exactly reflects the Authority's average¹ for the Division which was 23.1%. In all nineteen different languages were noted, although most were spoken by fewer than ten girls: the exceptions were the following:

¹ ILEA (1985), Appendix, p. 4.

Numbers speaking language

Turkish	60
Punjabi	44
Gujerati	36
Urdu	31
Greek	17

On the basis of these figures it was possible to estimate that 12.6% of the girls were Asian, rather more than the 8.5% quoted as average for the Division¹.

The language survey of course gave no indication of the numbers of Caribbean children, although it did show that 0.9% of the pupils were African. However 28.9% of the Pupil Questionnaires were completed by Afro-Caribbean children, which is very similar to the figure of 32% recorded for the Division by the Research and Statistics Department of the Local Education Authority.

At Ridgemount, taking the 62 pupils in our sample as a rough indicator, there were more Asian girls (17.7%) and rather fewer Afro-Caribbean children (24.2%).

The two county schools can therefore be seen to be very different from the voluntary-aided schools in terms of the ethnic origin of the pupil intake. While St Andrews and St Annes also had around one quarter of non British children, these largely came from Catholic European countries. In the county schools around one quarter of pupils came from Afro-Caribbean backgrounds, there was a rising and sizeable proportion of Asians and correspondingly fewer white British-born children.

Policy for the establishment of class groups

The two county schools although very similar to each other in

¹ ILEA (1985) Appendix, p.6.

the important respects of catchment area, ethnicity and VR Band composition, like the voluntary-aided schools, adopted very different ways of establishing class groups. Ridgemount like St Andrews 'banded' children from the First Year. Moreover, as in the latter school, teachers still seemed to expect that within bands the first class would have the brighter children. A cursory attempt was made to disguise this ordering - each year the classes were named after the letters of the local borough, with the top and bottom forms on alternate years being designated by the first letter. There did seem however to be a movement afoot within the school towards a mixed-ability system, at least in the First Year, and there was some talk of it already having been implemented clandestinely in the present First Year by the Year Head.

Maple Grove alone of our four schools had opted for mixed-ability teaching. Both First and Second Years were taught entirely in mixed-ability groups, as was the Third Year for all subjects except the Sciences and Maths which were 'set'. In the year during which the research took place it was planned that the Fourth Year also would be taught in mixed-ability groups for the Core Curriculum subjects. For the Optional subjects the school was presently 'broad banded' into a top group of just over fifty girls who were offered only four Options, but who took the three separate sciences, and the majority of the school who had a wider choice of five Options, but who had an integrated science programme.

This arrangement had been arrived at through debate and 'compromise' amongst staff members, with the pressure for the three science Option coming from the Deputy Head who was concerned for the future of those girls, however few, who might 'wish to do medicine'.

4: 2: 2 The Rutter measure of Pastoral Care

Ridgemount had an exceptionally high score on the Rutter scale, while Maple Grove scored only just above the Rutter average:

TABLE 4: 3 Sample school scores on the Rutter scale

St Andrews	St Annes	Ridgemount	Maple Grove
6	6	11	7

Both county schools respected free dinner confidentiality, but only Ridgemount had successfully operated a school council which met every Tuesday. The pupils brought to this their ideas for charities and 'their grumbles'. Although the Pastoral Head of Maple Grove had been trying for some time to organise something similar a pilot council set up within the Fifth Year some four years previously and a House council set up within the Pastoral Head's own House had collapsed after three years. The reasons for this were twofold: first the Pastoral Head did not have sufficient time to invest, and secondly the pupils became dissatisfied with their lack of real power:

'The meetings were not held on a regular enough basis for the kids to feel really involved. Secondly and probably more important there was very little that I could offer them any powers of decision on really, and they wanted to talk about things that were of great concern to them which I have no power over. I can't say and their powers are limited by what my powers are. I tried to get them to appreciate that it's not just about changing things not just about making decisions but also about airing their views and they thought that well that's OK but she's just offering us a sop really to get rid of our feelings but she's not really going to do anything about it. So I haven't had it for the last couple of years. But it's always on my mind that it's a forum that the children need. They don't have an official forum in the school and they do need one.'

The lower score of Maple Grove was also due to the fact that the Head of Pastoral Care was reluctant to say that her school gave 'high priority' to her area of responsibility because those with Pastoral duties were not rewarded with scale 4 positions.

Discussions showed however that in Maple Grove, as in Ridgemount, those responsible for Pastoral Care had spent a great deal of time preparing programmes, often also meeting in the evenings, in order to help other teachers who were without training in Pastoral matters to make the best use of Form Guidance periods.

In Maple Grove for example the Head of Pastoral Care had developed an extensive programme based on the work done in Lancaster and published in *Active Tutorial Work* and on the work of Lesley Button written up in *Developmental Work with Tutorial Groups*. This teacher talked of expanding the Pastoral curriculum within her school and dispelling the image of the Pastoral brief as merely 'servicing other people' - taking over disciplinary problems - and matters of social welfare. The large difference between the Maple Grove and Ridgemount scores on the Rutter scale was therefore in the researcher's view somewhat misleading.

4: 2: 3 Third Year Options

Both county schools according to our criteria handled the decision process well. Both saw parents in school and interviewed pupils individually. However only at Maple Grove did teachers, as they had done at St Annes, mention plans for preparing letters in the parents' original languages. Teachers in this school had also broached the idea of having other parents, or local helpers in the school on interview days to act as translators where necessary.

Interestingly enough at Maple Grove where Option choices were also computer-assessed, the programme was biased in favour of the lower ability majority, to counterbalance the fact that these children were restricted to a 'four Option' choice, as opposed to the 'five Option' choice of the higher ability children. The 'four Option' children were accommodated first, and the 'five Option' children (the more academic minority) were timetabled to fit in. This disparity was explained and justified to the more academic children on the grounds that they were privileged in being able to choose five subjects and so must have the grace to concede a complementary advantage to the others. Subject teachers at Maple Grove did not however appear to give talks on the Fourth and Fifth Year curriculum to Third Year pupils, although this was the practice at Ridgemount. Career implications were discussed in both schools but only Maple Grove, like St Annes, had outside speakers.

4: 2: 4 Library facilities

Ridgemount

The Ridgemount library was rightly considered one of the school's chief assets. It was situated in the heart of the building and occupied one of its largest and most attractive rooms. It was open from 8.30 in the morning until five at night, and was available for all children to use at every break time and lunch time with the exception of Thursday. At 8.30 in the morning pupils were observed already in the library returning books or browsing amongst them.

When asked how she would spend any additional money available, the librarian replied that her priority would be better shelves - the present ones had small edges and it was difficult to make the books secure - and more chairs. Since the library had already accommodation for fifty

six, the obvious conclusion was that it was exceptionally well used. This library had an annual budget of £3,500, one third of which was spent on fiction and two thirds on non-fiction. A small section housed books in Urdu, Bengali, Greek, Turkish, Chinese, Hindi, Arabic and Gujerati.

When pressed as to which section of the school was worst catered for, this librarian named the Sixth Form - 'the books are so expensive' - and so proportionally they could have fewer of them. The difficulty with CSE project books was that they kept 'disappearing', even if those most in demand were kept in the office. As she explained:

'The more of course they think they will disappear from the library the more they are tempted to take them for themselves.'

Maple Grove

The Maple Grove library was also large, centrally located, and open all day including lunch hour and break time. The librarian made a point of always having displays in the library which tied in with work that the girls were doing in one of their classes. Since the First Year were in the library most often, the exhibitions were very often planned to have relevance for them.

The library's current budget was £3,300 and the librarian felt this to be adequate. On being asked about areas least well catered for, she replied that where there were gaps:

'Mostly it tends to be things where there aren't books for it anyway. It would be an area like that where I can't find much in it. I don't think there are enough multi-ethnic books for the middle sort of range - sort of teenage level. There aren't really enough at that level. And if there are, they're all set in America or in the Caribbean or something or Africa. We haven't got enough where they're set in Britain. But I don't think the subject area - not really. We've never got enough books like 'dogs' or something like that. It's a very popular subject.'

Although there was a shortage of books for CSE work (Social Studies being particularly mentioned), as in Ridgemount the librarian felt that this was because a great deal that was produced in the area was not suitable - 'it's all a bit high level for them'. In addition she blamed the fact that what she might buy one year was not called for again as the topics changed:

'The trouble is the teachers never -will never think of asking, thinking about it in advance'

There was no lack of A level books as they still had the stock inherited from the old grammar school. Also although they did not now tend to buy many, as they were usually so expensive, they made use of the opportunity to borrow any they needed from the Educational Library for Sixth Form Books in the Central Learning Resources Department.

The library also had a selection of books in the minority languages which the librarian had started to build up two years previously. Turkish was the language most in demand and she visited the Turkish book shop once a year.

4: 2: 5 Observational evidence regarding institutional climate

Consideration of the ways in which the Third Year Option Choices were decided upon and the Library resources allocated had shown that, according to our criteria, both county schools functioned well as social institutions. General observation within the county schools of the way in which Pastoral matters were handled confirmed this impression. The Rutter scale, which had failed to reflect the very clear difference between the social support provided at St Andrews and St Annes, would appear therefore to have exaggerated the difference between the two county schools.

Other unique features of the social environment in each school which can be expected to influence the educational experience and expectancies of teachers and pupils will now be discussed. Although the issues of leadership, management and communication, around which discussion centred in the case of the voluntary-aided schools, will be touched upon, the focus in the case of the county schools will be on the repercussions of other factors, such as Ridgemount's 'community-based' status and Maple Grove's policy of mixed-ability teaching.

Ridgemount

Ridgemount was a flourishing modern school with none of the problems of overcrowding or insecurity about the future, which as we saw, afflicted St Andrews. As a result of the school's position as community-based, staff had at their disposal material resources, shared by other users of the building, which were not comparable with anything seen in the voluntary-aided schools, and these were freely available to all children.

There was for example a well-equipped Media Resources Department, and the low ability class monitored during the research had access to expert advice and close-circuit television equipment to film plays which they had written. An enormous pottery room, the doors of which were permanently open, was also available for pupils. In addition the school benefited from its association with an expanding Youth Centre which lay in an adjacent building.

This Centre was well funded by the Council which had just installed a large new sports hall, to which the girls had access. The Head of the Centre saw the girls from Ridgemount as 'very involved'. Both present and former pupils came in the evenings for sports to the Centre which he felt they saw as very much part of their lives. He had been

impressed by the way in which they were 'quite prepared' to approach him if they thought they were not being catered for - for example at that time they were pressing for a Dance group. Recently he had taken a number of girls from the school together with some other Youth Club users on holiday to the Welsh mountains where they got climbing experience with trained instruction. Travel and accommodation had been subsidised by the Council. The girls from Ridgemount had made a film of their experiences and Press coverage had been arranged.

Communication and cooperation between teachers in this school seemed excellent. Within the English Department two teachers were seen on more than one occasion sharing a lesson, something not experienced in any of the other schools, and outside visitors were also routinely invited in. The happy working relationship in the English Department was particularly commented upon to the researcher by an Inspector who regularly visited the school.

There was also evidence of inter-Departmental collaboration. The Geography Department had a superb and truly enormous coloured map of the world drawn on the flat roof of the block which housed their classrooms. This had been drawn for them by members of the Art Department.

Staff also talked of good teacher/pupil relationships. The English teacher whose low ability class was monitored commented upon the fact that he felt he knew all the girls in the school despite its size. This had not been the case in his last school although there were fewer pupils. He attributed this to:

'the organisation of the school. There are a lot of assemblies and meetings where you can get to know each other.'

A supply teacher who was informally interviewed corroborated that the working relationship between teachers and pupils in the school was excellent. This teacher, an ex-actor known as the Story-teller, had originally started visiting schools and encouraging children to tell their own stories on an Arts Council grant, but was now employed as a supply teacher and paid by the Education Authority. He visited four or five schools a term, spending one day a week in each, and had therefore a good comparative basis on which to judge. The Story-teller, who saw a number of classes in Ridgemount, particularly praised the atmosphere in the school, and the receptiveness of the children:

'I think it's great. I don't have problems here. They must respect the teacher. You see what I mean about a perfect audience. I mean it's lovely. They react on the right note. They help you at the right time. They carry the load. They're wonderful.'

If there were any complaints about the management of the school, as in St Annes and by way of contrast to St Andrews, the staff at Ridgemount talked not of incompetence or ideological clashes, but of the fact that management was not democratic enough - staff in their view being asked to implement things without consultation.

Maple Grove

The fourth and last school in the sample, Maple Grove, despite its history as an old grammar school, had an ideological and political commitment to the Egalitarian model of comprehensive education:

Deputy Head: 'the political emphasis of the school if you like is on Egalitarianism, mixed-ability.'

Although this policy was adhered to enthusiastically, it was not uncritically accepted. There was an on-going debate concerning matters of

comprehensive ideology which the researcher did not come across in any of the other schools. However where there was dissention, it did not concern the basic principles of the Egalitarian ideal, but practical matters of how best to implement it and serve the interests of all pupils. There was no evidence of any ideological rift such as separated the staff factions in St Andrews, nor was there the kind of disillusionment which leads to a slackening of effort and withdrawal from institutional commitments. An extended interview with the Deputy Head covering the kinds of issues and problems which were debated, spelt out clearly the repercussions of the mixed-ability policy for both staff and pupils.

This teacher, although she herself believed in mixed-ability teaching in principle, had reservations about its practicality:

'You just get this extremely difficult situation where people's emotional and political commitment overshadows their willingness to admit what they're actually achieving, and the worries stay buried - or you're considered to be reactionary if you say anything. And there's quite a heavy political sell here which makes it very difficult to have the open debate you want.

I mean I personally, given certain controlled parameters, believe mixed-ability teaching can be done, but I think the sort of talent of teacher you need to do it, and the kinds of resources, and the time you need to make them, are such that perhaps its unrealistic to do it.

I wrote a mixed-ability unit for - I suppose I did that some years ago now - for the integrated course on the Greeks, and gave a demonstration lesson to the people who might be going to use it to show what I meant by mixed-ability. People were a bit frightened of it I think because I had written a document saying you will not be able to do 'whole class' teaching because it's written in such a way that you can't. They were very resistant to working in teams which I think is essential - you cannot shut the door on your own classroom and mixed-ability teach. I don't think you can anyway you'd drive yourself into a madhouse.'

Although the Deputy Head was therefore clearly critical of the reluctance of some of her staff to accept the consequences of their ideological beliefs in

as far as they impinged on their own teaching styles, she was very far from being unsympathetic about the reasons for this apparent apathy:

'They almost retrench into some of those middle of the road teaching - classroom teacher - because it's the only way they can survive. Because to take on board all these other things, like real mixed-ability teaching, resource-based learning, requires such a commitment of time above classroom time, it just isn't realistic.

I used to work more hours, but I feel more and more that at the salary people are paid to actually assume that their time is freely available. And in the end I think it's very bad, because there's a group of teachers who become blunted from the real world. Although they're very good at doing what they do, they actually as people have failed to expand their own interests.'

In this school the policy was to aim for smaller classes of around twenty pupils.' This meant that the staff had to have a larger number of contact hours which left less time for lesson preparation, which as the Deputy Head explained is perhaps even more crucial in the mixed-ability class situation:

'You need to monitor what the children are doing. I mean you need to know where they are in your skills structure. Then you have to have a whole network of resources to kind of slot into where they are and then you have to have a big recording system so that you know where they're all going. And lots of approaches for them.

The job of the teacher there is to manage that situation and to be able to pull them off work sheets sometimes to have class discussions, to have group work, to have joint ventures, to have individual - you know ..it's a great planning exercise. You could usefully spend twenty hours a week in the classroom, and twenty hours a week doing other activities'

The Deputy Head believed that, as a result of the failure of most teachers to deal with the mixed-ability teaching situation, in the school only the middle ability range was adequately served:

'I think there's a lot of teaching to the middle. And in fact the middle results are actually quite good - there are problems - but that's OK. You know the results are not bad. They certainly hold up against (the Education Authority's) results. It's the two extreme ends

¹ In state secondary schools the average class size was 24.8 in 1983, rising to 25.5 in 1986 (DES, 1985, 1987).

of the spectrum: and I suspect it's because people are not mixed-ability teaching. They may be mixed-ability classes, but they're not mixed-ability teaching. I'm not sure anybody anywhere really knows anything about it. I mean I'm fairly convinced it's a resource-based activity, experientially-based activity which requires a lot of resourcing, and a lot of managing techniques which I suspect most people just haven't got.'

As regards the more able girls:

'The Richmond tests show that we've got some pretty high flying kids here. They don't high fly in the end for whatever reason, but its again partly I expect teaching attitude - assuming that - well, forgetting what that kind of kid needs to do to be stretched. And so they're not stretched, and so they rest on their laurels and think they're wonderful because they can do everything so easily, and in fact are not really being engaged at the right level'

This self-criticism was voiced despite the fact that the Deputy Head knew the school's overall results to be above average in the inner city (see Table 2: 5).

This teacher also noted problems with lower ability pupils:

'There's the problem that the (slow learners) pick up work avoidance tactics in the mixed-ability situation. They do it in all sorts of ways - by withdrawal, by politely copying out of books and smiling nicely, by being the clown of the class.'

There was, nevertheless, overwhelming evidence of concern at Maple Grove for the welfare of such children. Thought had been given to the problem of non-examination groups who were leaving school without a record of achievement:

'We also actually used the Swindon Project- well, it's now called 'Pupils Personal Records' - which is a record-keeping system, not a teaching system, and we did it because it's a very splendid folder with gold on which the Chairman of the Governors signs. And we gave it to them when they left, for we knew they wouldn't do any exams. We were really looking for an alternative to the exam network, and so we set those things up and we drew up a leaving certificate for them with the

school crest on, and had it all signed properly so they got that even if they got no CSEs.'

The most prestigious staff members had been involved in their teaching:

'One year we took a group of them completely out. But we gave them the same curriculum balance. They still got their Science and their Maths or whatever but they were together as a group to get group identity. And I put a team of high hierarchy teachers in. I taught them for Maths, the Head of Careers had them for Communications, Head of School had them for Literature, the Head of French used to take them out on visits every Friday afternoon.'

However there were signs that the staff's efforts were not always as well coordinated as they might have been. Maple Grove was the only one of our schools which had a House system as opposed to a Year system as its organisational base. This was intended to prevent the narrowing of perspectives which may result when issues are regularly considered from the point of view of one Year only. In practice the system caused organisational difficulties. For example over hotly contested areas like school uniform, some House Heads allowed girls license that was forbidden in other Houses, and this caused resentment:

Head of C House: 'A vast amount of my time as Head of House is wasted carrying on about uniform or who goes in what door. And then you find the Head teaches one of my classes and I walked past the class. Well, I stopped walking because my blood pressure soared. I find that all the does and don'ts of the classroom are being done in there. And nothing is said about uniform and nothing is banned and every don't is being practised. It is very difficult because there is no across the board thing which actually is quite destructive really because it builds up bad staff feeling..'

.....

Interviewer: (re school uniform) You don't seem to enforce it very rigorously do you?

Head of B House: 'No. I mean officially yes.'

Interviewer: 'The Asian girls wear different things anyway.'

Head of B House: 'Well the strict school rule just says they may wear trousers under their skirt. I would like to see the situation where they were allowed to wear their own clothes in the school uniform colours. But we haven't got that far yet. The Administration isn't quite ready to go along with that. Although unofficially I allow the girls in my own House to wear that.'

4: 3 Conclusions

The pupil intake of the county schools was very different from that of the voluntary-aided schools and clearly likely to present far greater challenges to educators.

Teachers in the voluntary-aided schools could rely on the homogeneity of the Catholic background of their pupils, and the majority of foreign children were European. The cultural and religious heritage of the Asian and Afro-Caribbean children in the county schools, being much more diverse and dissimilar, potentially posed far greater problems of integration. In addition the county schools had almost twice as many low ability children. Such factors will obviously have to be taken into account in any comparisons between the two types of school.

Differences were however also noted in the social climate of the schools within each category (voluntary-aided and county). If our hypotheses are correct, these can also be expected to have major effects on the ways in which their pupils approach their education.

The voluntary-aided schools

Although scores on the Rutter scale had indicated no difference between St Andrews and St Annes, observational evidence and consideration of school policy as regards Library provision and Third Year Option choices showed St Andrews to be the least satisfactory of our four schools as a social institution. Low ability pupils were particularly disadvantaged. This would lead us to expect that, if such institutional features have

deleterious effects, this school will show them more clearly than any other in our sample, and that differences in pupils' attitudes towards, and expectations about, education will be most pronounced between the voluntary-aided schools.

The county schools

Observation had suggested that the Rutter scale exaggerated the differences between the standards of Pastoral Care in the two county schools. Although Ridgemount with its less radical approach to comprehensive education appeared to impose fewer strains on its teachers, Maple Grove struck the researcher as an intensely 'caring' school in which teachers willingly set themselves very high standards in Pastoral terms. Four teachers were observed with four classes, and the librarian and three other high hierarchy staff members were interviewed. All eight teachers showed the same depth of explicit commitment to the all-round welfare of low ability pupils in particular. It will be interesting to explore whether the Egalitarian ethos which was such a distinguishing mark of the social climate of this school has any discernible effects upon the ways these pupils approach their educational experience.

CHAPTER 5

The effect of school membership on pupils' attitudes and beliefs about school teachers and education

Abstract

Section 1

Items in the pupil questionnaire which are relevant to 'the criteria and frames of reference pupils use in formulating and expressing any opinions about their schools' are identified.

Section 2

Between-schools differences on measures of attitudes to school and teachers are examined.

Section 3

Following a Maximum Likelihood Factor Analysis, the differences between pupils' evaluations of the 'Good Teacher' profile items are considered in terms of four factors.

Section 4

Differences between schools on the criteria for judging the success of a course of lessons are described.

Section 5

Differences in academic self-concept scores are examined.

Section 6

The effect of differences between the schools in VR Band composition, age and sex of pupils is considered.

Section 7

Although the data base permits no firm conclusions, the evidence suggests that the educational socialisation of the pupils at St Andrews leads them to have the least favourable attitudes. The mixed-ability policy at Maple Grove also appears to have both positive and negative implications for pupils and their teachers.

¹ ILEA (1984) p. 29.

5: 1 Relevant attitudes and beliefs

In order to assess possible differences between the pupils attending different schools in their attitudes towards education, their answers to certain questions in the pupil questionnaire were examined. Four sections of the pupil questionnaire were considered to be relevant:

- 1: The Hargreaves 'Attitude to Teachers' and 'Attitude to School' scales (question 13). These provided an informative general over-view of the way in which the pupils in our sample saw their schools and their teachers.
- 2: The 'Good Teacher' profile (question 4). Here pupils rated on a four point scale, ranging from 'not important' to 'extremely important', twenty items concerning the qualities other pupils of comparable age had suggested were characteristic of the 'Good Teacher'.
- 3: Criteria for judging the success of a course of lessons (question 5). In this section pupils evaluated the relative importance of five different criteria.
- 4: Academic self concept scale (question 10). This tapped the aspect of the pupils' self-concept which was expected to be the most relevant in the classroom situation.

It was hoped that the answers to these questions would help us to understand how the children conceptualised the teacher's role, and evaluated their own educational needs and status. The central issue was whether the children from different schools had different attitudes towards school and teachers (question 13), saw the role of teacher differently (question 4), considered different educational outcomes to be more important (question 5), and whether they evaluated themselves differently as pupils (question 10). If differences were found between pupils from the four schools, these were to be interpreted if possible in terms of the differences between the schools as social institutions.

It was decided because of the small numbers in the core classes to consider the answers of all pupils in each school who had completed questionnaires.

Because of the differences between the voluntary-aided and county schools in VR Band and ethnic composition, interest was to be focussed on comparisons between the two schools within each organisational type. The possible consequences for the reseach findings of relevant differences between the samples from each school in VR Band composition, age and sex, were also to be discussed.

5: 2 The Hargreaves scales

5: 2: 1 Results

'Attitude to School' scale

A summary 'Attitude to School' score was calculated by averaging all seven items in the Hargreaves scale. The difference between the scores of the two voluntary-aided schools was statistically significant:

TABLE 5: 1 Voluntary-aided schools: averaged 'Attitude to School' score

	N	Mean	Std. dev.
St Andrews	56	1.388	.256
St Annes	72	1.257	.289
<u>Difference</u>			
Mean	Std. err.	T	DF
.131	.049	2.68	126
			Prob.
			.008

High score denotes less favourable attitude
Maximum score = 2; minimum score = 1

If we look at the individual items we find that many more of the pupils from St Andrews, in comparison with St Annes, had been 'put off education' (Chi Square = 13.063, $p < .000$), had found their school year boring (Chi Square = 7.209, $p < .007$) and felt that they had had less chance to do things they enjoyed (Chi Square = 5.572, $p < .002$).

TABLE 5: 2 Hargreaves 'Attitudes to School' scale

Statements	Percentage of pupils choosing negative statements					
	Voluntary-aided schools			County schools		
	St And.	St A.	Harg- reaves	Ridge,	M Grove	Harg- reaves
School has often got on my nerves this year,	42	49	52	44	60	43
On the whole this year at school has been boring,	50	** 24	47	36	44	50
I have had little chance to do things I enjoy at school this year,	60	** 37	55	34 *	65	56
This year at school has put me off education,	49	** 17	35	18	29	45
If I had the choice I would have left school this year,	18	8	15	29	30	24
This year I have often played truant,	29	14	21	16	19	25
I feel that I have not been generally successful in school,	26	26	32	17	27	36

* = $p < .05$

** = $p < .01$

Note: The Hargreaves figures are quoted to give some idea of a 'normative' percentage. However it must be remembered that these were based on Fifth Formers, whereas our pupils range from First to Fourth Formers.

St Annes only scored less on the first question 'School has often got on my nerves'. Hargreaves (1984) had also found that schools with the highest staying on rates (of which St Annes was one):

'while they proved demonstrably better than other schools in the way they were rated by their pupils on most items, also had large proportions of pupils who said that 'school often got on their nerves'.
p. 30.

The difference between the two county schools on the averaged 'Attitudes to School' scale was non significant. Although there was a tendency for Ridgemount, the school which scored highest on the Rutter scale, to be more favourably viewed, the only significant result concerned the item 'I have had little chance to do things I enjoy at school this year' (Chi Square = 5.221; p.<.022).

'Attitude to Teachers' scale

When a summary score was calculated from the four items in the Hargreaves 'Attitude to Teachers' scale, there was a statistically significant difference in the attitudes of the pupils from the two voluntary-aided schools, but not between pupils from the county schools.

TABLE 5: 3 Voluntary-aided schools: averaged 'Attitude to Teachers' score

	N	Mean	Std. dev.
St Andrews	54	1.293	.244
St Annes	72	1.188	.247
Difference			
Mean	Std. err.	T	DF
.106	.044	2.39	124
			Prob.
			.018

High score denotes less favourable attitude
Maximum score = 2; minimum score = 1

The non-significant tendency was for the pupils from Maple Grove, the Egalitarian county school, to have more favourable attitudes.

When the four questions were considered separately, St Andrews fared worst on the two statements which reflected personal as opposed to work-based relations with teachers (see Table 5: 4). In particular a very large percentage felt they had been treated 'like a child'.

TABLE 5: 4 Hargreaves 'Attitudes to teachers' scale

Statement	Percentage of pupils choosing negative statements					
	Voluntary-aided schools			County schools		
	St And,	St A,	Harg- reeves	Ridge,	M Grove	Harg- reeves
I have not got on well with most of the teachers this year,	24	18	11	22	11	16
Most teachers have treated me like a child at school this year,	58 *	30	31	30	38	33
I feel teachers expect too little of me this year,	9	6	8	13	14	10
My teachers don't make me hard this year,	25	24	26	30	9	37

* = $p < .01$

5: 2: 2 Discussion

The voluntary-aided schools

The answers to the Hargreaves questions give us good reason to believe that there were important differences between the two voluntary-aided schools in the attitudes of their pupils to both school and teachers,

and that the pupils from St Andrews represented the most alienated school population. This would agree well with our findings as regards this school as a social institution.

The very large number of pupils at St Andrews who felt that they had been 'treated like a child' by their teachers may be especially important in a largely working class school. Hargreaves (1984) found that the only notable difference between children from manual and non-manual families in the reasons given for wishing to leave school early was:

'the seemingly greater emphasis which pupils from manual home backgrounds placed on the fact that life at work was more 'adult' than life at school. Fifty per cent of them, compared to only 35 per cent of the non-manual group gave as one of their reasons for leaving school their view that 'at work you are treated like a grown-up.'

p. 27.

The county schools

Although the fact that the Hargreaves figures applied to Fifth Formers should make us cautious about interpretations, it should be noted that pupils in both county schools on most questions in the 'Attitude to School' scale endorsed negative statements less often than the Hargreaves average for county schools. This is particularly striking in the case of the question 'This year at school has put me off education'. This finding may be seen in terms of the particularly supportive social environments for their pupils which both schools had provided.

Pupils at Ridgemount, compared with those at Maple Grove, tended to endorse negative statements less often in the 'Attitude to School' scale, although differences were only significant in one case - more pupils at Ridgemount stated that they had had the opportunity to do things they enjoyed at school. In view of this community school's emphasis on extra-

curricular activities and the wide range of activities available inside the school, this is not a surprising result.

5: 3 The 'Good Teacher' profile

5: 3: 1 Analysis of the 'Good Teacher' items

The characteristics most commonly mentioned by pupils in the initial pilot study had been found to agree closely with the suggestions of Gannaway (1976) that a successful teacher must be able to fulfil the following pupil requirements:

- 1: Can the teacher keep order?
- 2: Can he 'have a laugh'?
- 3: Does he understand pupils?
- 4: Does he have anything interesting to say?

The twenty questions finally included in the 'Good Teacher' profile had been selected to be representative of these four aspects of the teacher's performance.

Rather than consider all twenty items in the 'Good Teacher' profile separately, it was decided to submit them to a Maximum Likelihood Factor Analysis (see Table 5: 5) in order to be able to handle comparisons between schools in terms of a more manageable number of factors. This would also allow us to test whether a similar structure to that proposed by Gannaway did emerge from our data.

Maximum Likelihood Analysis had the advantage of providing a statistical test of the underlying model since it allowed for a Chi Square test to be carried out between the matrix generated by the proposed Factor solution and the matrix produced by our questionnaire answers. A varimax rotation produced a four factor solution (eigenvalues above 1), and

accounted for a total variance of 41.24%. The Chi-Square value was not significant (Chi Square = 131.85: p.<.15), thus supporting the model.

TABLE 5: 5 'Good Teacher' profile items

<u>Maximum Likelihood Factor Analysis with Varimax Rotation</u>				
	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4
11: Makes lessons interesting	.73			
17: Makes lessons enjoyable	.61			
13: Puts a lot of variety into lessons	.52			
3: Is friendly	.49	.42		
9: Keeps cool in hotted-up situations	.48	.36		
20: Makes it easy to ask questions	.46			.38
7: Explains things clearly	.43			
10: Is understanding	.43			
5: Makes sure everyone understands the work	.42			
1: Listens to what you say	.40			
8: Is able to join in and and have fun		.77		
4: Can have a laugh with the class		.73		
19: Breaks the routine with jokes		.62		
14: Has a good sense of humour		.39		
15: Can be strict when it's necessary			.63	.36
12: Knows what to do when a class gets out off hand			.55	
2: Can control the class			.46	
6: Doesn't let you muck about in class			.45	
18: Cares about pupils as individuals	.39			.63
16: Is someone you can talk to about problems				.52

Note: all loadings above .3 are recorded.

The first factor, which accounted for 25% of the variance was labeled 'Teaching Skills'. Since the following items had factor loadings above .5 on this factor:

- 11: Makes lessons interesting.
- 17: Makes lessons enjoyable.
- 13: Puts a lot of variety into lessons.

this factor can be considered compatible with Gannaway's fourth condition - 'Does he have anything interesting to say?'

The second factor, which accounted for 9% of the variance, was called 'Sense of Fun', and the following items had loadings of above .5:

- 8: Is able to join in and have fun.
- 4: Can have a laugh with the class.
- 19: Breaks the routine with jokes.

It can therefore be seen as representing Gannaway's second condition - 'Can he 'have a laugh?'

The third and fourth factors, named 'Control' and 'Care' respectively, account for 4% and 3% of the variance. The third factor is represented by the following items with loadings of above .5:

- 15: Can be strict when its necessary.
- 12: Knows what to do when a class gets out of hand.

The fourth factor is characterised by the items:

- 18: Cares about pupils as individuals.
- 16: Is someone you can talk to about problems.

These factors can therefore be compared with the first and third of Gannaway's conditions: 'Can the teacher keep order?' and 'Does he understand

pupils?', with, in the latter case, more emphasis on the sympathetic rather than what we might call the cognitive side of understanding.

The stability of the factor solution was upheld when a Principal Components analysis with equamax rotation produced four highly comparable factors accounting for 52.54% of the variance.

In this case the first factor, accounting for 28.98% of the variance had exactly the same four questions with loadings above .5 as the Maximum Likelihood factor 2 - 'Sense of Fun'. The second factor accounting for 12.03% of the variance, was very similar to the Maximum Likelihood 'Care' factor, but in this case another three items had loadings above .5 - 'Makes it easy to ask questions' (loading .63), 'Listens to what you say' (loading .57) and 'Makes sure you understand the work' (loading .52). The third factor, accounting for 6.51% of the variance, matched the Maximum Likelihood 'Teaching Skills' factor, with additional high loadings on the items 'Explains things clearly' (.59) and 'Keeps cool in hotted-up situations' (.55). The fourth factor, accounting for 6.02% of the variance was similar in all respects to the Maximum Likelihood 'Control' factor.

If we examine the means and standard deviations for each item (see Table 5: 6), we find that the item considered the most important is 'Explains things clearly' (Mean = 3.707), and that this is also the item with the smallest standard deviation (.531). Next in importance and with the next smallest standard deviation is 'Makes sure everyone understands the work' (Mean = 3.665; std. dev. = 0.651). Least important are 'Breaks the routine with jokes' (Mean = 2.073), 'Is able to join in and have fun' (Mean = 2.225) and 'Can have a laugh with the class' (Mean = 2.461). These are also items which have a wider standard deviation (1.003, 0.977 and 1.009 respectively).

It would therefore appear that there is a reasonable consensus that the good teacher's teaching skills are his/her most important attributes, and that a 'Sense of Fun' is the least important. This is consonant with the findings of other researchers who have consistently found that pupils are most concerned with their teachers' ability to teach (see Milgram, 1979; Cortis and Grayson, 1978; Musgrove and Taylor, 1969).

TABLE 5: 6 Means and standard deviations of 'Good Teacher' profile items

Item	Mean	Std Devn
7: Explains things clearly	3,707	,531
5: Makes sure everyone understands the work	3,665	,651
2: Can control the class	3,487	,687
11: Makes lessons interesting	3,403	,788
1: Listens to what you say	3,366	,741
10: Is understanding	3,340	,804
12: Knows what to do when a class gets out of hand	3,277	,883
20: Makes it easy to ask questions	3,241	,798
18: Cares about pupils as individuals	3,089	,967
13: Puts a lot of variety into lessons	3,073	,874
17: Makes lessons enjoyable	3,010	,877
16: Is someone you can talk to about problems	2,937	1,029
15: Can be strict when it's necessary	2,932	,857
3: Is friendly	2,874	,886
9: Keeps cool in hotted-up situations	2,817	,964
14: Has a good sense of humour	2,738	,909
6: Doesn't let you muck about in class	2,602	,962
4: Can have a laugh with the class	2,461	1,009
8: Is able to join in and have fun	2,225	,977
19: Breaks the routine with jokes	2,073	1,003

Note: 4 = Extremely important; 1 = Not important

The results of the Maximum Likelihood analysis gave us the opportunity to explore possible differences between schools in pupils' ideas about the 'Good Teacher' in terms of a manageable four factors instead of twenty separate items. Factor scores were therefore computed for forty eight pupils from St Andrews, sixty five from St Annes, forty six from Ridgemount and thirty two from Maple Grove. Twenty five pupils who handed

in questionnaires had to be dropped from the analysis as they had not completed all twenty items of the 'Good Teacher' profile.

5: 3: 2 Results

The 'Care' factor

Pupils at St Andrews considered the 'Care' factor least important, while those at Maple Grove valued it most highly:

TABLE 5: 7 'Care' scores by schools

	St Andrews	St Annes	Ridgemount	Maple Grove
Mean	-.28	.08	.01	.24
Std. dev.	.92	.74	.70	.68
N.	48	65	46	32

The difference between the voluntary-aided schools was once again significant, while that between the county schools was not:

TABLE 5: 8 'Care' scores by voluntary-aided schools

Group 1: St Andrews					
Group 2: St Annes					
Variable	Group	N	Mean	Std. dev.	
'Care' score	1	48	-.279	.932	
	2	65	.081	.741	
			Difference		
	Mean	Std. err.	T	DF	Prob
	-.360	.157	-2.30	111	.023

The 'Teaching Skills' factor

No effect of school membership on the factor 'Teaching Skills' was discovered, although the two voluntary-aided schools rated this factor

more highly than the county schools, and pupils at Ridgemount rated it as least important (see Table 5: 9).

TABLE 5: 9 'Teaching Skills' scores by schools

	St Andrews	St Annes	Ridgemount	Maple Grove
Mean	.08	.11	-.17	-.09
Std. dev.	.98	.80	.84	.87
N.	48	65	46	32

The 'Control' factor

The mean scores for the four schools on the 'Control' factor were as follows:

TABLE 5: 10 'Control' scores by schools

	St Andrews	St Annes	Ridgemount	Maple Grove
Mean	-.18	.19	-.04	-.07
Std. dev.	1.08	.68	.76	.65
N.	48	65	46	32

There was a significant difference only between the voluntary-aided schools:

TABLE 5: 11 'Control' scores by voluntary-aided schools

Group 1: St Andrews
Group 2: St Annes

Variable	Group	N	Mean	Std. dev.
'Control' score	1	48	-.184	1.083
	2	65	.194	.679
		Difference		
Mean	Std. err.	T	DF	Prob
-.378	.166	-2.27	111	.025

The 'Sense of Fun' factor

The mean scores on the 'Sense of Fun' factor showed the pupils of St Andrews to value this aspect of the 'Good Teacher' profile more highly than pupils in any of the other schools:

TABLE 5: 12 'Sense of Fun' scores by schools

	St Andrews	St Annes	Ridgemount	Maple Grove
Mean	.31	-.10	-.04	-.20
Std. dev.	1.00	.79	.80	.91
N.	48	65	46	32

Once again there was a significant difference between the scores of the voluntary-aided schools:

TABLE 5: 13 'Sense of Fun' scores by voluntary-aided schools

Group 1: St Andrews				
Group 2: St Annes				
Variable	Group	N	Mean	Std. dev.
'Sense of Fun' score	1	48	.311	.998
	2	65	-.100	.788
		<u>Difference</u>		
	Mean	Std. err.	T	DF
	.410	.168	2.44	111
				Prob
				.016

5: 3: 3 Discussion

The results from the comparison of the school scores on the 'Care' and 'Teaching Skills' factors are what we might have expected. We could have predicted that pupils from St Andrews, the school which showed the least caring attitudes, would have learned not to associate the role of

teacher with the qualities tapped by this factor, and that consequently differences between the scores in the voluntary-aided schools would be more pronounced. Children from the other schools on the other hand would be expected to attach value to the 'Care' dimension, if they had internalised the attitudes demonstrated to them daily in the organisational features of their schools. In particular the pupils from Maple Grove, with its strongly pupil-oriented philosophy, might be expected to score highly, as indeed they did.

The non-significant result concerning the 'Teaching Skills' factor scores is also unsurprising. It was to be expected that pupils in all schools would put considerable emphasis on this central aspect of a teachers' role.

The results on the 'Control' and 'Sense of Fun' factors are less easy to interpret and merit more extended discussion.

The Control factor

The two Catholic schools exercised the most strict behavioural control over pupils, with St Andrews operating the most stern disciplinary tactics. Pupils typically stood and formally greeted teachers at the beginning and end of lessons: in St Annes they actually thanked them for giving the class. There were formal prayers at each end of the day, and uniform was strictly enforced. In addition the teachers' self presentation was much less informal than in the county schools.

When we examine the scores by school, we find that the girls in St Annes, as we would expect, rated this aspect of the 'Good Teacher' profile more highly than did the children in either of the county schools. Contrary to what we might have expected however, the pupils at St Andrews in fact rated 'Control' as less important than pupils at any of the other

three schools, and the difference between the scores of the two Catholic schools was significant.

One suggestion might be that pupils, if they are alienated from their school in some way, may come to resent and devalue aspects of their classroom experience, and build up their conceptions of the 'Good Teacher' in terms of qualities their own teachers conspicuously lack, and teaching behaviours they never see. This is a very plausible account, and would explain why the ratings of pupils at St Andrews failed to reflect their school's disciplinary emphasis, while those of pupils at St Annes did. Another influence however would also seem to be at work.

If we consider the scores on the 'Control' factor for each of the four classes at St Andrews, we find that the differences between them are significant, with two of the classes valuing discipline highly as hypothesised, while the other two classes gave it a very low valuation (see Table 5: 14).

TABLE 5: 14 'Control' by individual classes in St Andrews

One-way anova	SS	DF	MS
Between squares	9.877	3	3.2923
Within squares	45.206	44	1.0274
Total	55.0831	47	
F = 3.2045	Sign. = .0322		

	Class 1	Class 2	Class 3	Class 4
Mean	-.624	-.523	.394	.211
Std. dev.	.956	1.126	.996	.683
N.	11	17	15	5

Both of the classes which unexpectedly scored low on the Control factor were classes chosen by new and less traditional teachers as their 'most enjoyed' groups. Class 1 was the top ranking and therefore, in the context of St Andrews, highly privileged Fourth Year class which had been chosen by the more recently appointed young Deputy Head of the English Department. Class 2 was particularly interesting in that their Form teacher, a self-reported 'progressive' teacher, who had come from a mixed-ability school, considered the group to have been socialised quite differently by her: she had the class not only for Form period but also for Study Skills and for Geography, and had built up a very special relationship with them:

'(The class is) untypical of this school because they've been treated in a different way by me from all of the rest of the First Year. There are quite strict rules in this school and the most basic one I think is that the children are expected to be silent and I very much challenge that. My classes are not silent. In fact they're extremely noisy and I'm probably a little paranoid about it but I suspect that a lot of people here criticise me because my classrooms are noisy. There's quite - sort of movement and discussion and stuff..'

This teacher then had a very different approach towards classroom control, and, like the young English teacher, did not conceptualise discipline in the same way as most of the other staff members at St Andrews. She described as the 'major difficulty' standing in the way of the achievement of her educational aims with the low ability Third Year class (Table 5: 11, class 3) the fact that 'they think that unless they're writing in silence they are not learning'. Interestingly enough this was the class which gave the highest rating - 0.394 - to the 'Control' factor.

The Sense of Fun factor

Pupils from St Andrews attached more importance to the 'Sense of Fun' factor than did the children from any of the other schools. From what we know of St Andrews it is unlikely that this is because they have been socialised into expecting the educational process to be enjoyable. This finding seems most satisfactorily explained in terms of their alienation.

We have seen from their answers to the Hargreaves questions that pupils from St Andrews were less satisfied with their school experience than pupils from the other schools. Furthermore, if we divide pupils from all four schools into two groups, depending on whether they endorse the positive or negative statements in the Hargreaves scales, we find that, over the sample as a whole, pupils who feel they have not had the opportunity to do things they enjoy at school, who truant, think they have been treated like a child and have been put off education have significantly higher scores on the 'Sense of Fun' factor:

TABLE 5: 15 'Sense of Fun' scores by groups endorsing positive or negative statements on the Hargreaves scales

Group 1: 'have had plenty of chances to do things I enjoy at school'
 Group 2: 'have had little chance to do things I enjoy at school'

Variable	Group	N	Mean	Std. dev.
'Sense of Fun'	1	88	-.117	.855
	2	82	.189	.941
		Difference		
	Mean	Std. err.	T	DF
	-.308	.138	-.2.22	168
				Prob
				.028

Group 1: 'have not played truant'
 Group 2: 'have often played truant'

Variable	Group	N	Mean	Std. dev.
'Sense of Fun'	1	133	-.039	.872
	2	32	.425	.974
<u>Difference</u>				
	Mean	Std. err.	T	DF
	-.464	.176	-2.64	163
				Prob
				.009

Group 1: 'most teachers have treated me like a grown up'
 Group 2: 'most teachers have treated me like a child'

Variable	Group	N	Mean	Std. dev.
'Sense of Fun'	1	102	-.089	.814
	2	61	.264	.983
<u>Difference</u>				
	Mean	Std. err.	T	DF
	-.353	.143	-2.48	161
				Prob
				.014

Group 1: 'This year at school has made me keen to continue my education'
 Group 2: 'This year at school has put me off education'

Variable	Group	N	Mean	Std. dev.
'Sense of Fun'	1	127	-.060	.876
	2	45	.260	.954
<u>Difference</u>				
	Mean	Std. err.	T	DF
	-.320	.156	-2.06	170
				Prob
				.041

Further understanding may be sought in Goffman's work on 'role strain' and the techniques for dealing with this. A teacher's teaching skills, his care and concern for pupils and his ability to exercise control may all be seen as core aspects of his professional role. They are activities which define the job. On the other hand being able 'to have a

laugh with the class' or 'join in and have fun' are not central aspects of the teacher's role but are better understood as ways of dealing with role strain, or as 'role distancing' techniques as Goffman (1959) calls them. A skilful teacher, or any other person in a position of power, by occasionally letting drop the role 'mask' and interacting temporarily on a more equal footing, may ease the social situation:

'Often, when two teams enter social interaction, we can identify one as having the lower general prestige and the other team the higher. Ordinarily, when we think of realigning actions in such cases, we think of efforts on the part of the lower team to alter the basis of interaction in a direction more favourable to them or to decrease the the social distance and formality between themselves and the higher team. Interestingly enough, there are occasions when it serves the wider goals of the higher team to lower barriers and admit the lower team to greater intimacy and equality with it. Granting the consequences of extending backstage familiarity to one's lessers, it may be in one's long-range interest to do so momentarily By sacrificing the exclusiveness of those at the top the morale of those at the bottom can be increased.'

p. 195.

Laughter often marks, and jokes are regularly used to facilitate, such realigning actions:

'It has been suggested that when individuals come together for the purpose of interaction, each adheres to the part that has been cast for him within his team's routine, and each joins with his team-mates in maintaining the appropriate mixture of formality and informality, of distance and intimacy, towards the members of the other team. ...However When two teams establish an official working consensus as a guarantee for safe social interaction, we may usually detect an unofficial line of communication which each team directs at the other. This unofficial communication may be carried on by innuendo, mimicked accents, well-placed jokes, significant pauses, veiled hints, purposeful kidding, expressive overtones, and other sign practices.'

pp.186 - 187.

In *Frame Analysis* Goffman (1974) describes such realignments as 'frame breaks', which are achieved by a process of transcription which he calls

'keying' - a term with many similarities to the concept of 'code' 'variety' or 'register' in linguistics. Although claiming 'in this study, the situational study of playfulness is not attempted' (p. 49), throughout Goffman makes reference to the relevance of Henri Bergson's *Laughter* to frame breaks (pp. 38-39, 89, 357, 442).

If we think about the 'Sense of Fun' factor in those terms, it makes good sense that it should be the pupils in St Andrews who think of it as a more necessary aspect of the self-presentation of the 'Good Teacher'.

Finally it may be noted that when correlations were run between the pupils' ratings of their teachers on the 'Good Teacher' items and outcome measures, such as how hard pupils reported working, and how interesting they found lessons, it was found that at St Andrews the fact that the teacher had 'a good sense of humour' correlated very highly with both pupils' self reports of how hard they worked at Maths (corr. = .559: p.<.000) and with reported interest levels in both Maths (corr. = .558: p.<.000) and English (corr. = .474: p.<.000). The fact that the teacher 'can have a laugh with the class' was similarly correlated with interest in English (corr. = .461 : p.<.000). None of the items associated with the 'Sense of Fun' factor were significantly correlated with work levels or interest ratings by the pupils at St Annes. Such findings would help to substantiate the predictive validity of those 'Good Teacher' profile items for pupils at St Andrews, although they also may reflect the personalities of particular teachers.

5: 4 Criteria for judging the successfulness of a course

Of the five criteria offered for consideration a significant difference emerged for only one: 'the number of pupils who felt they had enjoyed the course'. Once again the significant difference lay between the two voluntary-aided schools (see Table 5: 16). Pupils at St Andrews, the school which emerged with the worst profile as a social institution, considered enjoyment to be a less important criterion than pupils at any of the other schools, whereas pupils at St Annes rated this criterion as more important relative to all the other schools.

TABLE 5: 16 Criterion: 'Number of pupils who felt they had enjoyed the course' by voluntary-aided schools

Group 1: St Andrews					
Group 2: St Annes					
Variable	Group	N	Mean	Std. dev.	
'N enjoying course'	1	38	2.500	.923	
	2	72	3.028	.949	
Difference					
	Mean	Std. err.	T	DF	Prob
	-.528	.188	-2.80	108	.006

Note; 4 = Extremely important; 1 = Not important

5: 5 Academic Self-concept (ASC)

When the six items in the scale were summed and averaged (thus allowing for the inclusion of those who had not answered every question) the highest and lowest scores were found in the county schools (see Table 5: 17 overleaf).

TABLE 5: 17 Academic self concept by school

	St And	St A.	Ridg.	M Grove
Mean	3.496	3.586	3.635	3.282
Std. dev.	.506	.565	.514	.600
N.	59	72	40	38

Note: Maximum score = 5; minimum score = 1

In this case there was a significant difference between the scores of the pupils in the county schools and none between those of pupils in the voluntary-aided schools (see Table 5: 18).

TABLE 5: 18 Academic self concept by county schools

Group 1: Ridgemount				
Group 2: Maple Grove				
Variable	Group	N	Mean	Std. dev.
ASC	1	40	3.635	.514
	2	38	3.282	.600
Difference				
Mean	Std. err.	T	DF	Prob
.353	.126	2.79	76	.007

Before discussing further the interpretation of these findings it would be prudent to take into account other factors which are likely to influence these results.

5: 6 The effects of differences between samples in VR Banding Age and Sex

Clearly there are differences over and above their school membership which can be considered likely to influence young peoples' 'social representations' of themselves as pupils, and their attitudes towards education, schools and teachers.

The intake in each of our four schools was predominantly working class, removing a powerful potential source of difference (see Table 2: 4). Hargreaves had however found some noteworthy differences between the attitudes of pupils attending voluntary-aided schools and county schools¹. In our small research sample there were great disparities between the intakes of the voluntary-aided and county schools as regards VR Banding and ethnic composition which confounded any effect of school type (see Table 3: 4 and Chapter 4, sections 4: 1: 1 and 4: 2: 1). For these reasons we have concentrated on comparisons within each organisational type. However there were further discrepancies caused by the way in which the research samples from each school had been arrived at, which meant that even within each organisational type there were some important differences which have to be considered.

Each teacher had been allowed to select his or her 'most enjoyed' group as the second class to be observed, which meant that the researcher had no control over the age or VR Band composition of these classes. In addition St Andrews was a mixed-sex school, while the other voluntary-aided school with which it was matched, St Annes, admitted only girls. The potential influence of these factors must be taken into account.

5: 6: 1 The effect of differences in VR Banding

Differences in the VR Banding of the sample of pupils from each of the schools arose mainly because teachers, when asked to identify their 'most enjoyed' class, had selected very different ability levels. Further difficulties were caused by the fact that, with so many immigrant children, there were a number of pupils for whom no VR Band records existed.

¹ See ILEA (1984) p. 31 - 32

If we consider the breakdown of Verbal Reasoning scores over the whole sample for the county schools we find nevertheless that they are fairly satisfactorily matched:

TABLE 5: 19 VR Banding of pupils in the county schools answering the questionnaire

		Percentages					
		Band 1	Band 2	Band 3	No Record	N	
Ridgemount	% 42.6 7.4 3	35.2 3	48.1 4	9.3	54		
Maple Grove	% 36.8 7.9 2	28.9 4	39.5 3	23.7	38		
N.		7	30	41	14	92	

The sample match between these schools is likely to be even better than the figures in Table 5: 19 suggest. Seven pupils from Maple Grove classed as 'no record' came from low ability Fourth Year groups: this would suggest that there was likely to have been around 50% of VR Band 3 pupils in the sample and 5% unassignable. These figures would make the sample proportions of low ability pupils in the county schools very close to the statistics for the schools as a whole (see Chapter 4, section 4: 2: 1).

On the other hand there were considerable differences in the VR Band composition of the pupils who answered the questionnaire in the voluntary-aided schools:

TABLE 5: 20 VR Banding of pupils in the voluntary-aided schools answering the questionnaire

		Percentages					
		Band 1	Band 2	Band 3	No Record	N	
St Andrews	2 50.8	1.6 4	49.2 1	25.4 2	23.8	63	
St Annes	1 76.0	35.5 1	39.5 2	7.9 1	17.1	76	
N.		28	61	21	29	139	

The disproportionately large number of Band 1 children in St Annes was due to the fact that both teachers in this school, given the freedom to choose their 'most enjoyed' group, selected high ability classes¹.

However the disparity in the percentage of VR Band 1 pupils was undoubtedly not so large as would appear from the above figures. Since it was not initially intended to use the data from the top Fourth Form at St Andrews, and the researcher was concerned to trouble the staff as little as possible, information about their Verbal Reasoning scores was not sought. As a result, although most are likely to have been VR Band 1, they were in fact all classed as 'no record'. Nevertheless, even after taking this into account, it is unlikely that more than 20% of the St Andrews sample were VR Band 1, and the difference in the proportion of VR Band 3 pupils was also substantial.

Since the majority of the significant differences which we have found were between the voluntary-aided schools, it is crucial to consider whether or not these can be explained in terms of the different VR Band composition of the samples.

Unfortunately because of the small sample sizes, and resultant empty cells, it was not possible to carry out two-way analyses of variance using both VR scores and school membership as independent variables. Instead both were considered separately using one-way analyses of variance, and the distribution of scores according to the three VR Bands within the different schools were compared, although not statistically analysed, in

¹ Initially the researcher was given to understand that the VR Banding of pupils would not be made available, As a result the researcher was not well prepared during observation in the voluntary-aided schools to correct for possible discrepancies.

order to gain some insight into possible interactive effects. This is a far from entirely satisfactory compromise, and it must be stressed that no firm conclusions can be arrived at.

VR Banding and the 'Attitude to School' scale

When the 'Attitude to School' composite scores were examined in terms of VR Banding lower ability pupils were found to have less favourable scores, and the results only marginally failed to reach significance:

TABLE 5: 21 'Attitude to School' by VR Banding

Oneway anova	SS	DF	MS
Between groups	.4463	2	.2231
Within groups	12.2268	158	.0774
Total	12.6730	160	
F = 2.8836		Sign = .0589	
Test of Linearity	SS	DF	MS
Linearity	.4463	2	.4418
Deviation from lin.	12.2268	158	.0774
F (linearity) = 5.7086		Sign = .0181	
F (deviation) = .0585		Sign = .8091	
	VR 1	VR 2	VR 3
Mean	1.222	1.31	1.377
Std. dev.	.277	.280	.276
N	31	84	46

The discrepancy in VR Banding between the samples from St Andrews and St Annes could therefore explain the difference between these schools on the 'Attitudes to School' scale.

There were however some indications that the unfavourable scores of pupils at St Andrews were not likely to have been entirely explicable in

terms of the VR Band composition of the sample. Firstly, more pupils at St Andrews than at either of the two county schools, which had far more low ability pupils, endorsed negative statements about their schools on four out of seven 'Attitudes to School' items (see Table 5: 3)¹. Secondly, at St Andrews all VR Bands were equally critical. At St Andrews 50% of each VR Band claimed to find school 'boring', and 46% of VR Band 2 pupils claimed to have been 'put off education', while between 17% and 21% only of VR Band 2 pupils in the other three schools endorsed these statements.

VR Banding and the 'Attitudes to Teachers' scale

A stronger effect of VR Banding emerged for the composite 'Attitude to Teachers' scale:

TABLE 5: 22 'Attitude to Teachers' by VR Banding

Oneway anova	SS	DF	MS
Between groups	.6605	2	.3302
Within groups	9.7125	154	.0631
Total	10.3730	156	
F = 5.2364		Sign = .0063	
Test of Linearity	SS	DF	MS
Linearity	.6195	1	.6195
Deviation from lin.	.0410	1	.0410
F (linearity) = 9.8231		Sign = .0021	
F (deviation) = .6498		Sign = .4214	
	VR 1	VR 2	VR 3
Mean	1.145	1.202	1.324
Std. dev.	.221	.227	.309
N	31	83	43

¹ The Hargreaves research findings would also lead us to expect that pupils at voluntary-aided schools would have more favourable attitudes towards their schools - see ILEA (1984), p. 31 - 32.

Again this must temper our conclusions regarding the differences between the voluntary-aided schools.

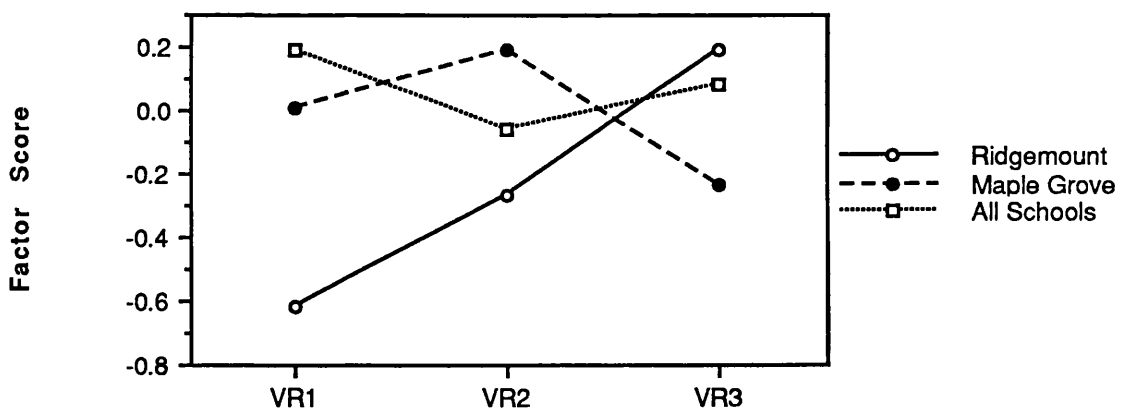
Here again however, St Andrews scored worse than either of the two county schools on two of the four 'Attitudes to Teachers' items (see Table 5: 4). This cannot be explained away in terms of VR Band composition since, as we have noted, there were far more low ability children in the county schools (see Table 5: 19 and Table 5: 20).

VR Banding and the 'Good Teacher' profile

A one-way analysis of variance revealed no effect of VR score on the 'Care' ($F = .41$; $p < .66$), 'Teaching Skills' ($F = 1.28$; $p < .28$), 'Control' ($F = 1.125$; $p < .33$) or 'Sense of Fun' ($F = .24$; $p < .78$) factors.

There was some evidence however of interesting interactions between VR banding and county school membership on two of the factors.

FIGURE 5; 1 'Control' scores X school X VR Band

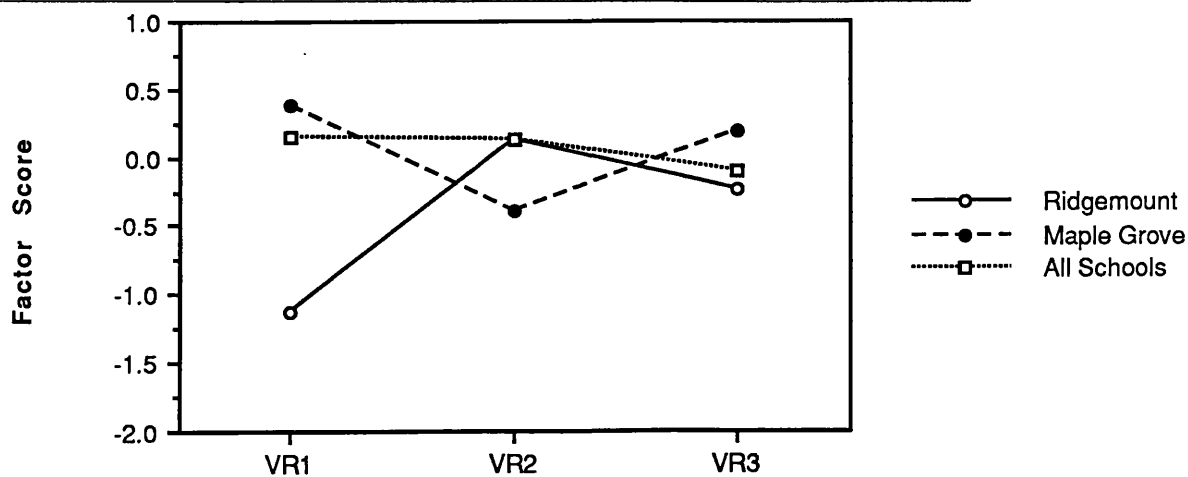


VR 3 pupils in Maple Grove attached less importance than VR Band 2 pupils to the teacher's ability to control the class. In Ridgemount VR 3 pupils attached more importance to this factor (see Figure 5: 1).

A similar difference emerged for the factor 'Teaching Skills' (see Figure 5: 2). In Maple Grove VR Band 3 pupils rated this aspect of the 'Good Teacher' more highly than VR Band 2 pupils, whereas at Ridgemount they rated it as less important. Little can be made of the results for VR Band 1 pupils as the numbers are so small.

The non-significant tendency over the entire sample from all four schools is for VR Band 3 pupils to put less emphasis on 'Teaching Skills' and more emphasis on 'Control' than VR Band 2 pupils. That this is not the case at Maple Grove is interesting in view of the mixed-ability policy at this school and the attention paid by high ranking staff to the problems of teaching lower ability pupils. Their reactions are very much more similar to those of VR Band 1 pupils.

Figure 5: 2 'Teaching Skills' scores X school X VR Band



The indications are therefore that discrepancies in VR Banding cannot explain the differences we have noted between the schools on the 'Good Teacher' factors. There is however some evidence of interaction: schools may effect pupils of different ability levels in different ways.

VR Banding and criteria for judging the success of lessons

No significant effect of VR Banding emerged for the one criterion ('the number of pupils who felt they had enjoyed the course') which showed a significant effect of school membership.

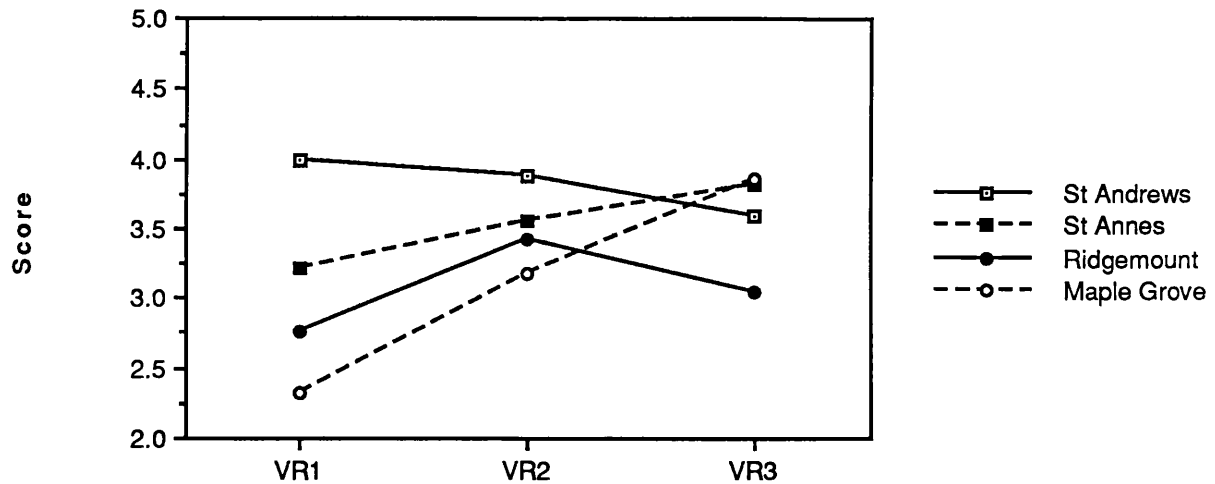
There was however a significant effect of VR Banding on the criterion 'examination grades achieved by the pupils' (see Table 5: 23). VR Band 1 pupils considered examinations least important. There was little difference in the ratings of VR Band 2 and 3 pupils, although there was a significant linear trend.

TABLE 5: 23 Criterion 'Examination grades' by VR Banding

Oneway anova	SS	DF	MS
Between groups	4.0382	2	2.0191
Within groups	91.9995	156	.5897
Total	96.0377	158	
F = 3.4237	Sign = .0351		
Test of linearity	SS	DF	MS
Linearity	2.2147	1	2.2147
Dev from lin	1.8235	1	1.8235
F (linearity) = 3.7555	Sign = .0544		
F (deviation) = 3.092	Sign = .0806		
	VR 1	VR 2.	VR 3
Mean	3.067	3.485	3.459
Std. dev.	.785	.723	.808
N.	30	68	61

Here too there were indications of interaction. VR Band 3 pupils at the mixed-ability county school and at St Annes, where some mixed ability teaching was practised, attached more importance to examination grades (see Figure 5: 3 overleaf).

FIGURE 5: 3 Criterion 'Examination grades' X school X VR Band



At Ridgemount and St Andrews VR Band 3 pupils placed less emphasis on the importance of examination grades than VR 2 pupils. It may be that lower ability pupils in those schools in which they spend lessons together with high ability children as a result lay more store by academic success.

VR Banding and academic self concept

As we might expect there is a highly significant effect of VR Banding on the academic self concept of pupils (see Table 5: 24). It would appear that children are very realistic in their appraisals of their academic potential:

TABLE 5: 24 Academic self concept by VR Band

Oneway anova	SS	DF	MS
Between groups	8.6768	2	4.3384
Within Groups	41.0102	164	.2501
Total	49.6870	166	

F = 17.3493 Sign = .0000

Test of linearity	SS	DF	MS
Linearity	8.6691	1	8.6691
Dev from lin	.0077	1	.0077
F (linearity) = 34.6678		Sign = .0000	
F (deviation) = .0309		Sign = .8607	
	VR 1	VR 2	VR 3
Mean	3.904	3.557	3.238
Std. dev.	.440	.456	.599
N.	31	86	50

Note: Maximum score = 5, minimum score = 1

However the difference in the Academic self concept (ASC) scores between Ridgemount and Maple Grove cannot be explained in terms of the difference in the proportions of VR Band 3 children (see Table 5: 19). There are too few pupils in VR Band 1 to be able to discuss their scores, but we can consider the ASC scores for the other two VR Bands separately.

There is no significant difference between the four schools on ASC scores for VR Band 2 pupils ($F = .3$; $p < .8$). However if we look at the results for pupils in the VR 3 Band, we find a significant difference:

TABLE 5: 25 ASC Score of VR Band 3 Pupils by school

Oneway anova	SS	DF	MS	
Between groups	2.7587	3	.9196	
Within Groups	14.8140	46	.3220	
Total	17.5727	49		
F = 2.8554		Sign = .0473		
	St And.	St A	Ridg	M.Grove..
Mean	3.028	2.917	3.542	3.189
Std. dev.	.512	.935	.602	.358
N.	12	6	17	15

Note: Maximum score = 5, minimum score = 1

VR Band 3 pupils in the two voluntary-aided schools, where proportionately they are fewer in number, have a lower academic self image than pupils of comparable ability in the county schools where they make up between one third to a half of the school population. Within each sub-sample VR Band 3 pupils in the school which followed strict banding or streaming policies (St Andrews and Ridgemount) had higher ASC scores than those in the school which practised some form of mixed-ability teaching (St Annes and Maple Grove).

A tentative explanation may be suggested. Perhaps one of the unlooked for, and undesired, results of the mixed-ability policy is that VR Band 3 children have such accurate perceptions of their relative status academically speaking. In mixed-ability classes, such children are regularly exposed to the experience of sharing lessons with those who are much more academically inclined than themselves. This is likely to be especially so in schools such as St Annes, in which there are comparatively speaking many VR Band 1, and few VR Band 3 children. In Maple Grove the situation is not likely to be helped by the fact that although 'they may be mixed-ability classes they're not mixed-ability teaching' (see Chapter 4, section 4: 2: 5).

On the other hand we can identify another potentially favourable result of this school policy. As we saw ASC scores are closely related to VR Banding. The relatively even distribution of children from the different VR Bands in Maple Grove means that if we consider the mean ASC score for the different classes in this school, we find that there is no significant difference between them: ($F = 2.23$: $p < .1$), whereas the differences in the other three schools are all highly significant ($p < .000$ in every case).

It might be supposed that a low mean ASC score in a class is likely to present a teacher with a potentially difficult classroom climate. In Maple Grove therefore it may be to the teachers' and pupils' advantage that there are no groups which relative to the others show very low ASC scores.

5: 6: 2 The effect of age differences

There were considerable differences between our four schools in the ages of the pupils who completed questionnaires. While at St Annes the whole sample was drawn from the Third Year, at St Andrews 36% came from the First Year, 29% from the Third and 35% from the Fourth Year. The Ridgemount sample had 70% from the Second Year and 30% from the Third, while at Maple grove 47% came from the Third Year and 53% from the Fourth Year.

Since certain age groups were therefore only represented in one school, confounding school membership and age, it was planned, after analysing the results from the whole sample, to check findings by considering only the core Third Year classes, thus holding age constant.

Unfortunately however by considering the 'core' classes separately, we cannot be held to have controlled for VR Banding as well as for age. In the case of the voluntary-aided schools the class at St Annes had fewer VR Band 3 pupils. At St Andrews 48% of the class were VR Band 3: at St Annes the figure was probably nearer 25%. Since however there is no record for 27% of the class at St Annes, it is not possible to be entirely certain on this point. The 'core' classes in the county schools also had a very different VR Band composition. At Ridgemount 84% of the class was VR Band 3, while the 'core' class at Maple Grove was a mixed-ability group with 14% of VR Band 1 and only 32% of VR Band 3 pupils.

The Attitudes to School and Teachers

When the composite 'Attitude to Teachers' score for the 'core' classes in the voluntary-aided schools was examined St Andrews had the worse attitudes, and the difference was statistically significant.

TABLE 5: 26 Averaged 'Attitude to Teachers' scores by core classes in voluntary-aided schools

	Mean	Std. dev.	N	
St Andrews	1.384	.206	18	
St Annes	1.211	.209	19	
<u>Difference</u>				
Mean	Std. err.	T	DF	Prob
.174	.068	2.55	35	.015

Note: High scores denote less favourable attitudes

Pupils had also been asked to rate four of their teachers on the 'Good Teacher' profile items. If these scores are summed and averaged (see Table 5: 27), an alternative index of the pupils' views of their teachers' can be arrived at. This too shows that pupils in the 'core' low ability class at St Andrews thought worse of their teachers than pupils in the similarly ranked class at St Annes.

TABLE 5: 27 Summed score over four teachers on 'Good Teacher' items by core classes in voluntary-aided schools

	Mean	Std. dev.	N	
St Andrews	11.375	28.844	8	
St Annes	37.800	22.010	15	
<u>Difference</u>				
Mean	Std. err.	T	DF	Prob
-26.427	10.726	-2.46	21	.022

Note: Maximum score = 80; minimum score = -80

Differences in the 'Attitude to School' scale, although in the expected direction, did not reach statistical significance.

There were no significant differences in either of the Hargreaves scale scores for the 'core' classes in the county schools. Once again however pupils at Maple Grove on both measures of attitudes to teachers showed more favourable reactions.

The 'Good Teacher' profile

None of the differences between classes on the 'Good Teacher' factors was significant. However for the 'Fun' and 'Care' factors, for which we found the significant differences when the questionnaires from all the classes were considered, the direction of differences was the same in the 'core' classes. Thus pupils in the 'core' class at Maple Grove attached the most importance to the 'caring' qualities in their teachers, and pupils at St Andrews were most concerned with their teachers' ability to 'have a laugh with the class'.

As we noted previously, when the pupils were asked to rate their actual teachers on the 'Good Teacher' items, those which loaded on the 'Sense of Fun' factor were also those which for the core class at St Andrews correlated most highly with self-reported interest and work ratings for English and Mathematics.

Criteria for judging the success of lessons

The ranking of the schools was also maintained for the criterion 'the number of pupils who felt they had enjoyed the course', although once again differences did not reach statistical significance. Pupils at St Andrews considered this criterion least important, and pupils at St Annes valued it most highly.

In addition a significant difference emerged between the voluntary-aided schools on the criterion 'number of pupils going on to study the subject in the Sixth Form'.

TABLE 5: 28 Criterion 'Number of pupils going on to study the subject in the Sixth Form' by core classes in voluntary-aided schools

	Mean	Std. dev.			
St Andrews	3.471	.717	17		
St Annes	2.789	.713	19		
		<u>Difference</u>			
Mean	Std. err.	T	DF	Prob	
.681	.239	2.84	34	.007	

Note: Extremely important = 4; unimportant = 1

It is interesting that the lower ability pupils at St Andrews attached more importance to this criterion in view of the fact that in this school such pupils have had very restricted choices allowed them after the Third Year.

A significant difference was also found between the county schools on the criterion 'number of pupils developing an interest in the subject':

TABLE 5: 29 Criterion 'Number of pupils developing an interest in the subject' by core classes in county schools

	Mean	Std. dev.			
Ridgemount	2.375	.719	16		
Maple Grove	3.000	.840	18		
		<u>Difference</u>			
Mean	Std. err.	T	DF	Prob	
-.625	.267	-2.34	32	.026	

Note: Extremely important = 4; unimportant = 1

Pupils at Maple Grove attached more importance to this non-instrumental goal. This finding is interesting in view of this school's 'progressive' teaching philosophy. The very different VR Band composition of the two groups however suggests that other factors are likely to be influential..

Academic self concept scores

The ASC scores of the two Third Year 'core' classes in the voluntary-aided schools were not significantly different. Nor were those of the two 'core' classes in the county school. This latter finding does not invalidate the differences we noted between the two county schools (see Table 5: 18). We would have expected to find significant differences in the ASC scores of the core classes, if there was no effect of school membership, since ASC scores reflect VR Banding and there were far fewer low ability pupils in the class at Maple Grove.

5: 6: 3 The effect of sex differences

Lastly the mixed-sex composition of the pupil intake at St Andrews must be considered. In how far is it possible to explain the differences we have found between the attitudes of the pupils at St Andrews and St Annes in terms of this sex difference?

Sex differences and the 'Attitude to school' scale

Hargreaves (1984) found that girls tended to be more critical than boys on the first four items of the 'Attitude to School' scale:

'Girls expressed direct negative attitudes more frequently than did boys. For the first four items .. the proportions of girls choosing the negative statements were higher than the corresponding ones for the boys by 3-12 percentage points. However fewer girls than boys 'would have left last year if they had the choice' (18 per cent v. 23 per cent), fewer admitted to playing truant (21 per cent v. 26 per cent) and slightly fewer felt that they had been unsuccessful in school (32 per cent v. 34 per cent).

On the other hand Hargreaves also found that boys and (to a lesser extent) girls in mixed-sex schools tended to choose negative statements more frequently than their counterparts in single-sex schools.

When the scores of boys and girls attending mixed-sex schools were considered separately, then girls had larger proportions (by between 2-12 percentage points) choosing negative statements, and the majority of these differences were statistically significant. Girls therefore were more critical than boys when they were in the same schools.

There would therefore seem to be two factors operating. First, there is an effect of sex, with girls being more critical: secondly there is an effect of mixed-sex schooling, with pupils at single-sex schools being less critical.

Although the picture is somewhat complex, since approximately twice as many boys as girls answered the questionnaire at St Andrews and only girls at St Annes, we might have expected the ratings at St Andrews to have been if anything less critical. Certainly we would expect the girls at St Andrews to have more critical attitudes than the boys.

In fact if we analyse the scores of boys and girls at St Andrews separately, we find that although on the composite 'Attitude to School' score the difference is non-significant, boys have the less favourable attitudes.

Sex differences and the 'Attitudes to Teachers' scale

Although previous studies, such as that of West and Newton (1983) had found boys to have more favourable attitudes, Hargreaves found no comparable differences between boys and girls on the 'Attitude to Teachers' scale.

However differences between girls attending single and mixed-sex schools were considerable, with girls in mixed-sex schools having less favourable reactions on all four items.

This would lead us to expect once again that the scores of the girls at St Andrews would be the less favourable, and that we could explain the differences between the schools in terms of their reactions.

However, although the difference between the scores of boys and girls at St Andrews on the 'Attitudes to Teachers' scale is not significant ($p < .07$), once again it is the boys who have the less favourable attitudes. It is the negative reactions of the boys therefore, more than those of the girls which explains the differences between the schools.

Sex differences and pupils' other 'frames of reference'

No statistically significant differences emerged between the scores of the girls and boys at St Andrews on any of the 'Good Teacher' factors, or on those criteria for judging the success of lessons which had shown significant inter-school differences. Nor was there any difference between the sexes in the Academic Self Concept scores.

5: 7 Conclusions

It was suggested that features of the schools as social institutions might have discernable effects on the ways in which children thought about education, defined themselves as pupils and judged the effectiveness of their teachers.

It was predicted that greater differences would be found between the two voluntary-aided schools than between the two county schools. In particular it was expected that the views of the pupils at St Andrews would be influenced by that school's very poor social climate, and that the pupils

at Maple Grove would be effected by their school's commitment to Egalitarianism.

Research findings were severely limited by the shortcomings of the sample. However, although our sample did not allow us to control for the effects of VR Banding and differences in the age and sex of pupils from the different schools in a satisfactory way, there were some indications that those factors could not by themselves be held to account for some of the most interesting differences that were found.

St Andrews

All the evidence had pointed to St Andrews as the school least supportive of its pupils. Pupils in this school, when compared with those in the other voluntary-aided school, had significantly less favourable attitudes to teachers and school in general. Since these differences were more pronounced in the case of the boys, while previous research showed that girls in the mixed-sex situation are generally more hostile, there is some reason to believe that the special problems in this particular school have influenced results. Although important differences in VR Banding make firm conclusions out of the question, there are also indications that this factor cannot explain findings. All pupils, regardless of VR Banding, have more negative attitudes at St Andrews.

Pupils at St Andrews were also subsequently found to place relatively more emphasis on the importance of teachers being skilled in the practice of what has been interpreted as 'role distancing' techniques in the classroom - that is they attached more importance to their teachers being able to 'have a laugh with the class' and 'join in and have fun'. They placed less emphasis on the importance of the 'Care ' factor - 'cares about pupils as individuals' and 'is someone you can talk to about problems'. In

addition, pupils at St Andrews as compared with those at St Annes thought that 'the number of pupils who felt they had enjoyed the course' was a less important criterion by which to judge the successfulness of lessons. There was no real evidence that differences in VR Banding, age or sex was likely to have directly influenced these results.

St Andrews was in a period of transition and there were radical splits amongst influential staff members, particularly concerning the maintenance of hierarchical role relationships, and the treatment of low ability children. It was therefore interesting that pupils were also seen to have less homogenous reactions when asked to rate the importance of a teacher's ability to control the class. Individual classes whose views were less traditional seemed to reflect the influence of new and more 'progressive' teachers.

Maple Grove

Unlike the two voluntary-aided schools, the two county schools were matched in respect of the sex and ability level of the pupils in the samples: these factors could not therefore be held to contaminate findings. Although both county schools functioned well as social institutions, Maple Grove, because of its commitment to mixed-ability teaching and Egalitarianism, had been identified as a rather special kind of school. In this case it was not seen as worse than, but as different from, the other county school, Ridgemount. In particular Maple Grove was seen to be especially caring about low ability pupils.

Results showed that the pupils from Maple Grove did respond differently to certain questions. For example the 'caring' qualities in teachers were valued most highly by them. The tendency for VR Band 3 pupils in Maple Grove to have views which were rather different from those

of pupils of the same ability level in the other county school was also noted.

There were however interesting indications that the mixed-ability policy might have some counter-productive outcomes for low ability pupils. A lower academic self concept for VR Band 3 pupils was found in Maple Grove. It was tentatively proposed that this could be seen as attributable to the increased opportunity for realistic self-evaluation afforded to low ability pupils in the mixed-ability situation where they shared classrooms with pupils of higher ability.

However, when means were computed for individual classes, it was noted that Maple Grove, the school which practised a fully mixed-ability policy, produced teaching groups which had comparable ASC means. The schools which streamed or banded pupils produced groups whose ASC scores mirrored their position in the VR Band rankings. It may be suggested that teachers are likely to face a particular challenge in groups with lower ASC scores, and therefore different levels of self confidence in academic matters. On the other hand, teachers in such circumstances may be forced into a greater awareness of the problems of lower ability children, who may be submerged in mixed-ability groups.

.....

It is therefore possible to conclude that our findings offer tentative support for the view that schools as social institutions are likely to modify in non-trivial ways the 'criteria and frames of reference pupils use in formulating and expressing any opinions about their schools'. These are likely to have important repercussions for the classroom teacher.

The project can also claim to have suggested ways in which this hypothesis could be explored, although the shortcomings of the present sample allow for no firm conclusions.

PART 3

CLASSROOM INTERACTION

Chapters 6 - 9

Each chapter deals with one of the four schools.

The plan outlined below is followed in each, with modifications in two chapters.

- 1: A profile of the two teachers is established. Interviews and observation of the teachers with their 'most enjoyed' classes demonstrates their approach to teaching and to verbal participation by pupils.
- 2: A profile of the low ability class is drawn up, using information supplied by both the teachers and pupils.
- 3: Both teachers are observed with the low ability class. Linguistic analysis of lesson transcripts, supplemented by information from the observational schedule, is used to describe classroom interaction.
- 4: The pupils' assessment of the two teachers is outlined.
- 5: Written work produced by the low ability class for each teacher is examined.
- 6: Findings are discussed in terms of the four research questions.

CHAPTER 6

St Andrews

6: 1 The teachers

St Andrews was undergoing an institutional crisis which had profound consequences for staff morale. The school's future was uncertain and the transition from grammar school to comprehensive had not been successfully accomplished. Staff were divided about how to respond to the new challenge presented by large numbers of lower ability children. Pupils, compared with those in the other schools under study, had less favourable attitudes to their teachers and education (see Tables 5: 2 and 5: 4). In this school therefore we have the opportunity of seeing how teachers and their pupils fare in the context of an unfavourable institutional climate.

6: 1: 1 The English teacher: Mrs Thomas

Mrs Thomas was a Head of Department with long years of teaching experience. She showed some reticence in revealing exactly how many, but stated that she had taught in all types of school - grammar, secondary modern, comprehensive, boys' and girls' and mixed-sex schools. She had also spent part of her teaching life overseas.

Mrs Thomas's source of greatest professional satisfaction was her belief that 'you are making the future generation'. She talked not of her experience in the classroom, but of former pupils who 'come up and ask

for help or recommendation or counsel. That's something if you've done that with your life, even if you do it for one'.

When asked what caused her the most difficulty in her job, Mrs Thomas replied:

'Lack of parental cooperation in the bringing up of their children. You see they don't bring them up to a sense of responsibility and a sense of work a sense of duty - all these. This is missing and well it's absolutely necessary to education.'

Later she added:

'I think people should recognise how fortunate they are if they have good teachers and they have permanent teachers. Parents as well as children ought to come to terms with this.'

For these reasons Mrs Thomas had preferred teaching overseas, in a society in which 'the attitude to education, to teachers, to authority is so different'. There parents did not question the teachers:

'You do not go home and complain about your teacher to your parents, because your parents would ask you what you did wrong'.

Asked about school rules concerning behaviour in the classroom, Mrs Thomas replied that classroom discipline at St Andrews was left to the individual teacher, but that children were expected 'to be well behaved and well mannered and orderly'.

6: 1: 2 Mrs Thomas and her 'most enjoyed' class: 1TW

ITW, which Mrs Thomas saw for only one reading lesson per week, was the second top ability class in the First Year. There were fifteen girls and thirteen boys in the group: at least three quarters of the children were white and half were from the middle ability band:

Ethnic Composition		VR Banding	
ESWI*	15	VR Band 1	9
Catholic European	6	VR Band 2	14
Afro-Caribbean	3	VR Band 3	-
Unknown	4	No Record	5
Total	28		28

* English Scots Welsh or Irish

Mrs Thomas gave the class maximally favourable ratings on the three measures of enjoyability, difficulty and stressfulness:

Enjoyability	
(1=least, 10=most)	10
Difficulty	
(1=least, 10=most)	1
Stressfulness	
(1=least, 10=most)	1

Each teacher had been asked to provide a list of the pupils in each of the classes to be observed, and to bring it with them on the day of the interview. This list acted as a natural focus, and some teachers actually commented on each name: others selected a few pupils only. Content analysis revealed that teachers' comments could be satisfactorily coded under fourteen headings, with an additional 'grab-bag' category. The latter was not often needed. Comments could then be grouped into two categories, according to whether they were concerned with the personal attributes of the children or with aspects of their behaviour as pupils:

Person oriented

Family background
Ethnic origin
Appearance
Personality
Friendships
Personal relationship
with teacher

Pupil oriented

Quality of work produced
Work motivation
Academic ability
Behaviour in class
Attendance
Reputation in school
Work-related problems (e.g.
language difficulties)

It was then possible to calculate for each teacher the percentage of remarks which were 'person' oriented as opposed to 'pupil' oriented. It was felt that this might point up interesting differences in teachers' ways of relating to pupils.

Mrs Thomas opened her remarks about her 'most enjoyed' class as follows:

'Nothing much to say. They're streaks ahead of (the low ability group). They're the second half of the top band and you have to be quite strict with them because they're little and inclined to be noisy.'

Twenty percent of Mrs Thomas's comments on 1TW were 'person' oriented, and 80% 'pupil' oriented. She had most to say about those with behavioural problems, and identified seven such pupils in the class. One boy was 'a scoundrel' and two girls 'madams' who had to be 'sat on very very hard right from the start'. She had little to say about the quality of their work, but focussed instead on pupils' ability levels and motivation to work. Mrs Thomas was the only teacher monitored who made very fine distinctions concerning the ability levels of her pupils whom she would refer to as 'bottom of the bottom group' or 'middle of the top group'.

Her aims for the class were to achieve for them 'a love of literature and of writing well'. When asked what she particularly enjoyed about the group, Mrs Thomas replied:

'I enjoy being able to control the class the way I do, so you realise they're getting on with something.'

6: 1: 3 Classroom interaction: Mrs Thomas with 1TW

Mrs Thomas as Head of Department had her own large room, which was clean and tidy: the work of First and Second Year classes covered approximately half of the available wall space. Some was from the Art Department, and dated from six months previously.

The observed lesson, like all the others Mrs Thomas took with this class which she saw only once a week, was a reading lesson. She judged it to be 'typical in most respects', completely unstressful, totally successful, and unaffected by the presence of the observer.

The Lesson

(Timetabled for 55 minutes: actual contact time, 49 minutes)

Settling down (6½ min.)

Silent reading from individual library books, while teacher organises the material for the lesson.

Register (1½ min.)

Taking of the register.

Transition (1 min.)

Giving out of class reader.

Stage 1 (15 min.)

Teacher reads aloud to class.

Transition (3½ min.)

Giving out of exercise books and collection of readers.

Stage 2 (1½ min.)

Teacher explains the written work which has to be done.

Stage 3 (16 min.)

Pupils write and teacher monitors progress.

Packing up (4 min.)

Teacher collects books and pupils pack and leave.

Thirty percent of lesson time was spent organising, giving out or taking in books. This was partly explicable because Mrs Thomas insisted on handling everything by herself. She never delegated such tasks to the children. The

rest of the lesson was divided equally between 'whole class' teaching (Stages 1 and 2) and a period in which the children were to write in silence and put up their hands if they wanted the teacher's attention - 'If you need some help put your hand up. I don't want to hear any talking now.'

'Whole class' teaching

Our research methodology entails that we are especially interested in how, during phases of 'whole class' teaching, class and teacher responded to each other's conversational initiatives.

TABLE 6: 1 Mrs Thomas with her 'most enjoyed' class: distribution of moves in 'whole class' teaching episodes

	Stage 1 (15 min.)		Stage 2 (1½ min.)	
	Teacher	Pupils	Teacher	Pupils
Framing	1	0	2	0
Focusing	0	0	1	0
Opening *	4	0	3	0
Chall. open.	2	0	4	0
Reopening	3	0	0	0
Supporting	2	1	0	0
Challenging	0	1	0	3
Total	12	2	10	3

* For the purpose of these tables Opening and Bound-opening moves are classed together,

The paucity of moves from pupils in the fifteen minute lesson stage 1 (compared with the much shorter lesson stage 2) was due to the fact that Mrs Thomas personally did all the reading of the text. At no time did she give any indication that she had any plans for active verbal participation by the class. Previous research (see Flanders *passim*) suggests that pupils normatively have approximately one third of the talk: this was also found to be the case using the present system of linguistic analysis. In this lesson however pupils had much less. In Stage 1 the solitary challenging

remark by one pupil was an unsolicited correction of Mrs Thomas's misnaming of one of the characters in the book, while the single supporting move came in the context of an essentially disciplinary exchange. Noting a restive boy, Mrs Thomas broke off her reading to ask sharply:

		ACT	MOVE
Mrs T:	Now (pointing at John)	Marker	
	why was he wearing a black suit?	Elicit	Opening
John:	He's been working	Reply	Support.
Mrs T:	He'd been to a funeral		
	He was an undertaker -	Accept	
	the job you do to provide coffins		
	and see to the burial of people'	Comment	Support.

Data from the observational schedule showed that although the structure of the above exchange will easily fit into the 'Initiation Response Feedback' pattern described by Sinclair and Coulthard, the teacher's question was in fact a 'pseudo-question' not really intended to check whether John knew the answer, but used merely as a means of controlling his behaviour. The discourse analysis system fails to reveal what is interesting in this strip of talk, since such dual function cannot be handled.

During this lesson stage Mrs Thomas delivered a virtually uninterrupted monologue. None of the pupil talk surfaced into the public arena, although Mrs Thomas's two challenging opening moves and subsequent reopenings record instances where she broke off to reprimand a pupil for whispered talk or inattention before returning to her reading. Where the need for clarification arose, and where another teacher might have asked the class a question, thus admitting them to the public discourse, Mrs Thomas instead added explanatory comment:

Mrs T: (reading) *'He wore a black coat and a Homberg hat'*

They are black hats which have a roundish brim to them.

She interrupted her reading of the text in this way on seven occasions.

When Mrs Thomas announced that she would 'finish there', there were whoops of relief, quickly followed by a chorus of mild boos when she continued: 'you'll do your writing now'.

While the exercise books were being organised in the transition to lesson stage 2, the class's chatter occasioned twelve disciplinary interventions from Mrs Thomas in the space of 3½ minutes. The majority of those involved objections to pupils talking. One of the pupils asked permission to speak, but this request was also abruptly refused.

During lesson stage 2 (see Table 6: 1), Mrs Thomas continued to dominate the talk. Her four challenging opening moves were brief disciplinary interventions directed at unlegitimated whispered talk between pupils:

'Shut up. You don't understand what it
is to be told nicely, so be quiet.'
'Gary, listen.'
'Don't talk now.'
'Stop that noise.'

The other opening moves were 'directives': Mrs Thomas once again gave no opportunities for pupil talk. The three challenging moves made by pupils had no educational relevance:

		ACT	MOVE
Mrs T:	Everyone be silent	Starter	
	Listen to me, don't listen/ (interrupting) Don't listen?	Direct/ Loop	Opening Chall. (DF & K&S 3)*
Pupil:	<u>And</u> listen	Evaluate	Chall. (DF & L6)**
Pupil:	<u>And</u> listen	Evaluate	Chall. (DF & L6)**

* Coded challenging because the pupil has interrupted the teacher, breaking discourse framework expectations (DF), and requested clarification ((K&S 3),

** Coded challenging because the pupil has interrupted the teacher (DF) and rejected what she has said as incorrect (L6),

They arose in the context of what appeared to be a feigned misunderstanding of Mrs Thomas's meaning and were doubtless intended as cheeky witticisms at her expense. Mrs Thomas ignored the interruption.

Written work

During lesson stage 3, while written work was being done, Mrs Thomas patrolled the class keeping order and looking at the books. A striking feature of the lesson transcript was again the number of 'control' statements (4.4 per five minutes) made by Mrs Thomas in her attempts to suppress pupil/pupil talk. The actual number of 'control' incidents was however less noteworthy than their kind and quality. Mrs Thomas's comments were almost without exception harshly expressed and her behaviour punitive. She was for example observed pulling one boy's hair and tweaking the ear of another, with the comment:

'Now I don't want to hear any more out of you. Now that's gentle - next time you'll get a good clout.'

There was however high apparent behavioural compliance from the majority of the class: during stage 3 a head count was made every thirty seconds, to get a very rough indicator of who appeared to be working. Apart from an initial settling down period of approximately four minutes, only two or three pupils regularly appeared to be 'off task'. These were all boys.

6: 1: 4 Discussion

Since each teacher had been told that the researcher's interest was in 'classroom talk', with particular reference to the verbal performance of pupils, it is surprising that Mrs Thomas should have done her utmost to repress all verbal contributions from the class.

The circumstances immediately prior to the lesson partly explain her behaviour on this occasion. Mrs Thomas was seen with her 'most enjoyed' group at the end of the observation period, two days after a rather embarrassing lesson, which will be discussed later, with the core low ability group 3CE, who got totally out of hand. She was therefore undoubtedly especially motivated to give proof of her ability to control the group.

However it should not be forgotten that Mrs Thomas rated this lesson as entirely successful. The teacher interview had suggested that her satisfactions came from the exercise of strict behavioural control: she had given as her reason for selecting this class the fact that she enjoyed being 'able to control them'. Observation had now demonstrated how she was prepared to implement this by suppressing pupil talk in a harshly punitive fashion during all lesson stages. The evidence therefore showed Mrs Thomas to be uninterested in pupils' verbal participation in class, and much preoccupied with classroom control.

6: 1: 5 The Geography teacher: Mrs Grant

Mrs Grant after graduating with a degree in Geography, spent ten years in industry before taking a PGCE course. Her decision to teach had been the result of 'boredom with industry': she was also influenced by a close friend 'who was clearly thrilled and pleased about teaching'. She was happy with her decision, but did not know whether she would continue as a teacher for the rest of her working life. This was the second school in which she had taught, and she too was Head of Department. Her previous school had been a large mixed-sex comprehensive which had a progressive reputation and practised a mixed-ability streaming policy.

Mrs Grant's greatest satisfaction came from seeing her Form class, with which she was very closely involved, 'perform really well'. Although she liked teaching 'all ages and levels of ability', she made it very clear that the classroom situation she liked best was when she was 'teaching a group whose development I've seen right through'.

Her greatest difficulties at the time of the research involved the animosity of certain members of her own Department. Mrs Grant had joined the school at the beginning of the year and had been appointed in preference to an old staff member, thus causing another to become supernumerary. Because of this some of her colleagues regarded her as the 'Headmaster's lackey'. She found the resulting 'personal aggression very difficult to deal with' and was 'very unhappy' about her situation. In addition she felt she was not adequately supported by the Headmaster.

Nevertheless, despite her personal difficulties in this school, and despite the fact that she had felt much more in tune with the objectives and teaching methods in her previous 'progressive' school, Mrs Grant claimed to prefer St Andrews:

'I enjoy more being a radical in a traditional place, i.e. my present place, than being regarded as establishment in a very progressive place. My old school was very much under the control of the Far Left and I felt very personally threatened. I think if you're a teacher and people start actually questioning the very ethos of it. It's just more fun here doing something a bit more progressive but with a whole lot of old-fashioned people.'

Mrs Grant also found teaching in this school much less stressful, which, like the supply teacher already quoted in Chapter 4 (see p. 142), she attributed to the Catholic background of the pupils:

'The children here have a background which is extremely authoritarian most of them.'

She had nevertheless a very poor opinion of the school's educational achievement:

'Exam results in this school are appalling, absolutely shocking. The school has just recently found out that most of its Fifth Year isn't actually attending at all. The top two ability groups think they're all going to get nine O levels and they are not because the modern exams, certainly in Geography anyway, require a great deal of thought and investigation and personal judgement and they have not been trained to do that at all. They learn by rote here.'

This teacher also found herself at odds with the school's policies over class discipline. She felt that there were very 'strict rules in this school, and the most basic one is that the children are expected to be silent'. Mrs Grant herself 'very much challenged that' and thought that many people criticised her because her classrooms were 'noisy, and full of movement and discussion'. Mrs Grant's own rules involved:

'Things like not messing the room up for anyone else afterwards. Things mustn't be damaged'.

6: 1: 6 Mrs Grant and her 'most enjoyed' class: 1GT

Mrs Grant chose as her 'most enjoyed' class 1GT, second of the two middle ability groups in the First Year. There were eleven girls and fourteen boys on the class register: all but a small minority were white and belonged to the middle ability band:

Ethnic Composition		VR Banding	
ESWI*	17	VR Band 1	1
Catholic European	5	VR Band 2	23
Afro-Caribbean	1	VR Band 3	-
Asian	1	No Record	1
Unknown	1		
Total	25		25

* English Scots Welsh or Irish

Mrs Grant rated the class as most enjoyable and as easy to teach 'because I feel enormously confident with them', but as more stressful than the core low ability group with which she was monitored later.

Enjoyability	
(1=least, 10=most)	10
Difficulty	
(1=least, 10=most)	1
Stressfulness	
(1=least, 10=most)	5

Where Mrs Thomas had commented on her class's ability level and the need to be strict, Mrs Grant chose to point out first her extended contact with the group. She was their Form tutor, and in addition took them for Study Skills and Geography lessons. This teacher talked a great deal about the need for mutual cooperation and a class identity, explaining how she hoped to keep the group together and resist the school policy of shifting pupils from class to class following examination results. She also proudly noted that although the class in their first term 'got into a lot of trouble with the Hierarchy', later in the year 'the same teachers all came and told me how smashing they were and how they really felt they had settled down'. She found them for the most part a hard-working group and considered that this was due to their relationship with her:

'This may sound very arrogant, but I think that because they know me well - they have a lot of failure in this school - and I think because they like me they are terribly anxious to do well in my subject, not particularly because they like it, but because they want to do well by me.'

Asked what she most wanted to achieve with the class Mrs Grant replied:

'In the situation here the thing I want most to achieve with them is to boost their confidence so that they can do up to their best, and not feel that because they're bottom end of Band 2 they're going to be written off by about Year Three. They've said they want to move

me next year, but I would like to take them through the school.'

The majority (56%) of Mrs Grant's comments about pupils, unlike Mrs Thomas's, were 'person' oriented: most of her other 'pupil' oriented remarks involved the actual work they produced.

6: 1: 7 Classroom interaction: Mrs Grant with 1GT

Although Mrs Grant was also a Head of Department, her room was much smaller than Mrs Thomas's and somewhat overcrowded. Mrs Grant had arranged the desks not in the usual fashion at St Andrews, in economical neat rows facing the teacher's desk, but in groups around the periphery of the room facing inwards, and in two long rows across the middle. The teacher's desk was to one side of the room. This, as she had intended, created a different atmosphere (the emphasis was more on the class group, and not on the teacher) but as a result it was extremely difficult to get access to the central desks once all the children were established in their seats, and almost impossible for the teacher to walk round the classroom, without having to clamber over bags. The room was clean and tidy, and approximately half of the available wall space was covered with posters.

A Geography lesson which she rated as 'typical in most respects', although 'noisier and less interested than usual', possibly because of 'chaos at lunchtime (closure of school)' was examined in closer detail. Mrs Grant rated the lesson as unaffected by the presence of the observer and unstressful, but only at the midpoint of the Success scale.

The children were to learn about crop rotation and how to plan the layout of a mixed (arable and animal) farm, using a worksheet which allowed them to work out for themselves the farmer's plans over a three year period.

Lesson

(Timetabled for 60 minutes: actual contact time, 61 minutes)

Settling down (4½ min.)

Class assemble and settle down.

Stage 1 (4½ min.)

Discussion of worksheet, and setting of the lesson task.

Stage 2 (48½ min.)

Pupils work individually, and discuss points with their neighbours (39½ min.).

Teacher on three occasions talks to the class as a whole, giving out new instructions (8½ min.).

Packing up (3½ min.)

Packing up and tidying room.

'Whole class' teaching

Although comparatively little time (22%) was spent in 'whole class' teaching, the lesson started in this way, and important features of Mrs Grant's teaching approach were well illustrated in lesson stage 1.

TABLE 6. 2 Mrs Grant with her 'most enjoyed' class: distribution of moves during 'whole class' teaching lesson stage 1

	Stage 1 (4½ min.)	
	Teacher	Pupil
Framing	3	0
Focusing	3	0
Opening	12	8
Chall. opening	5	2
Supporting	11	3
Challenging	1	1
Total	35	14

This was comparable with stage 2 in Mrs Thomas's lesson in that the objective in both was to set the agenda for written work. The more interactive nature of the exchange in Mrs Grant's lesson is immediately obvious from the pupils' greater share of the discourse.

Mrs Grant's plan for this lesson stage was clear:

- 1: 'Focusing' introduction to the task, in which pupils were instructed to read the introductory sentences on the worksheet for themselves.
- 2: 'Eliciting' session, in which pupils were asked to demonstrate that they had grasped from their reading why crop rotation was important.
- 3: 'Directing' phase in which the teacher instructed the class to follow the worksheet and to plan a three-year crop rotation.

However the class's reactions were by no means exemplary. Difficulties arose in the 'Focusing' and 'Directing' phases. For example at the beginning a full minute elapsed and five 'directives' from Mrs Grant were necessary ('bags on the floor' 'stop chattering') before the class settled down. After that, two boys attempted to prolong the talk with questions. This the teacher refused firmly. Those pupils who responded by reading the text and subsequently raising their hands in a 'bid' to contribute were praised, but not immediately called upon, more 'bids' being 'cued':

		ACT	MOVE
	(Two hands go up)	<Bids>	
Mrs G:	well done you two	Evaluate	Support.
	anybody else got the answers	Cue	B. open.
P:	wait	Direct.	
	I haven't read it	Comment	Ch. open. (DF)*
	(More hands go up)	<Bids>	
Mrs G:	Good.	Evaluate	
	more people have got the answers	Comment	Support.
	It's all girls except for Dennis	Starter	
	What's happened to the boys?	Cue	B. open.

* Coded challenging because the pupil's request represents a break in the discourse framework expectations (DF) set up by the teacher's 'cue'.

Thereafter the class settled into a classic 'teacher-question pupil-answer' session, or what Sinclair and Coulthard's system would label a 'Listing

Exchange', in which Mrs Grant was able to select successive pupils to contribute information.

In the final phase Mrs Grant gave directions for the next lesson stage: pupils were to complete a plan for a three-year crop rotation. Once again this produced from pupils a spate of questions which Mrs Grant courteously, but firmly and consistently curtailed:

'I'm not answering any questions. It's quite simple OK?'

Individuals who tried to plead for further instruction were politely refused:

Mrs G:	Well	ACT	MOVE
	I'm sorry	Marker	
	Rachel	P.M.	
	you must learn to listen OK	Summons	
	if you can't hear my words	Starter	
	you'll have to read what it says		
	on the piece of paper won't you?	Direct.	
	It's got instructions there.'	Comment	Ch. open
			DF & L.14)*

* Coded challenging both because of the break in discourse framework expectations (DF), and on the grounds that the teacher objects to giving the pupil the desired information (L14).

Written work

During written work Mrs Grant allowed the class both to move about the room, and to talk freely to each other. She herself either prepared board work or sat at her desk available to be consulted by individuals. Because of the lay-out of the classroom, it was not possible for her to move easily amongst the crowded desks.

The class began the task promptly and during the first six minutes stretch before the teacher interrupted with new instructions, all

appeared to work. Thereafter, with the teacher's tacit acceptance, noise levels rose and movement around the classroom increased, making 'on task' observational judgements impossible. Mrs Clark allowed pupils considerable freedoms. Occasional squabbles between pupils arose, went unremarked, and were quickly resolved by the participants. Individuals consulted the teacher at her desk: occasionally small queues of two or three pupils formed. Some pupils clearly worked hard and enthusiastically. At least one group of three boys near the observer did very little.

6: 1: 8 Discussion

Mrs Grant was observed with 1GT on four occasions - two Geography lessons, one Study Skills lesson and one Form period. It was possible therefore to obtain a very clear picture of her approach to classroom talk, and it can be claimed that the lesson just examined was typical both of her own approach and the class's response during 'whole class' teaching and individual written work.

As she had indicated during the initial interview, this class was not easy to control, and had clearly not been picked because it presented the teacher with a stress-free classroom situation. They were a self-willed and opinionated group. Mrs Grant had pointed out however that she regarded these as positive qualities. Observation in the classroom confirmed that she herself remained poised and calm, never appeared ruffled by the class's behaviour, and rarely raised her voice. At all times she was courteous, and although behaviours were tolerated which more traditional teachers might have objected to, at no time were the pupils rude or grossly disobedient.

On each occasion on which Mrs Grant was observed with her 'most enjoyed' group, turn-taking rules were consistently brought to the class's

attention by the teacher and the familiar procedures of pupil 'bid' and teacher 'nomination' used to structure question-and-answer sessions during periods of 'whole class' instruction. These were used to secure a situation in which pupils first verbalised the important facts and ideas round which lessons were structured - 'tell me why the farmers changed the crops' - while the teacher remained firmly in control of the turn taking.

She also regularly demonstrated a similar reluctance to answer pupils' questions in circumstances in which they could be presumed to have independent access to the answers, making it clear that she would not condone inattention or educational dependency. This firmly structured approach to pupils' contributions in the 'whole class' teaching situation contrasted strongly with her easy acceptance of pupil/pupil talk during individual work time. In both teaching situations Mrs Grant had a common purpose - to maximize pupils' self-reliance in the learning situation.

In Sinclair and Coulthard's system, pupil 'bids' and the teacher's 'nomination' of speakers are taken to be merely preliminary speech acts, which should not be accorded the status of 'moves' but seen rather as 'pre-heads' to the move proper. Sinclair and Coulthard (1975) concede that this point is arguable, but make a sound case for their decision:

'It would be possible to suggest that teaching exchanges actually have a structure of five moves, with both bid and nomination as separate moves. The argument for this would be that a new move should begin every time there is a change of speaker. We rejected this alternative, because it would have created as many difficulties as it solved. When a teacher nominated without waiting for a bid, we would have had to regard this as two moves, one consisting of a single word, and at times even embedded inside the other move. Such a solution would have devalued the concept of move. We prefer to say that a move boundary signals a change in the speaker who is composing/creating the discourse, and therefore that a move boundary is a potential change in the direction of the discourse, whereas a child making a bid must choose from a very limited set of choices.'

pp. 45-46.

This might be considered as implying that these speech acts are relatively unimportant. However this teacher's use of 'cue' 'bid' and 'nomination' would suggest otherwise. Although she retained the right to control access to the talk, her generalised invitation to contribute to the discourse in the opening phase of the lesson stage and the time she spent in encouraging new 'bids' gave salience to the whole sequence: her practice of 'evaluating' the act of hand-raising can also be seen as underlining the significance of the procedure and the pupils' willingness to contribute. Mrs Grant had considerable success in producing the desired behaviour, and massed 'hands up' were common in this class. This allowed for a prolonged sequence of teacher 'elicitations' which in turn permitted the pupils to take charge of the information base of the lesson.

In one of the Study Skills lesson which was observed Mrs Grant explicitly spelt out the importance of the regulative mechanisms for controlling access to the talk. The pupils had requested a class discussion on the provision of a school tuck shop, and suggestions were being shouted out. Mrs Grant without raising her voice reminded the class of the procedural rules:

Mrs G: Do you remember how when we have a discussion because there are a lot of us xxxxxxxx in an orderly way? Do you remember about a particular way

P: yeah

Mrs G: well why don't you then?

The 'meeting', as Mrs Grant termed it, continued, with orderly interaction prefaced by pupil 'bids' for 'nomination', sporadically interrupted by excited and undisciplined chatter. Occasionally Mrs Grant politely reinstated order, but for the most part she encouraged pupils to regulate

their own behaviour, even if this was at the cost of some noisy outbursts. This occurred in the context of a Friday afternoon lesson which Mrs Grant rated at the extreme of the Stress scale and as only 2 on the Success scale (1=unsuccessful, 5=successful).

.....

The interviews with the two teachers and observation in their classrooms showed that they had very different attitudes to teaching, and behaved very differently with their pupils.

Mrs Thomas was much preoccupied with classroom control, which she implemented punitively, and attached little importance to pupils' verbal contributions in class. Mrs Grant's satisfactions involved close contact with pupils in the classroom and she particularly objected to the school's traditionally strict approach to pupil/pupil talk, which she actively encouraged. Where problems in the classroom arose Mrs Grant did not attribute blame to the pupils or their families, as did Mrs Thomas, but questioned her own behaviour and the school policy which did not allow her sufficient familiarity with the class and their needs. Mrs Thomas was a traditional authoritarian, Mrs Grant a self-styled 'progressive' teacher who believed that the information content of lessons should be discovered by pupils rather than revealed by the teacher. Central to her strategy was the considerable emphasis she placed during 'whole class' teaching on traditional turn-taking rules, which she used to retain control of, without monopolising, classroom talk. How then will the core low ability group react to the very different approaches of these two teachers?

6: 2 The low ability class 3CE

6: 2: 1 Background factors

Class composition

There were twenty two pupils on the role¹ - nine girls and thirteen boys. The class was observed on eight occasions and the average attendance was 18.4, with a low of 16 and a high of 20. Five boys and two girls admitted to playing truant 'often'. Truancy was therefore a serious problem: it was especially interesting that in this school over half of the self-confessed truants were not identified as such by either of their teachers.

The majority of the pupils were white and British, and five had Irish surnames. There was no indication that any of the other pupils had serious second language difficulties. As regards ability level, the class was almost equally split between the two lower ability bands.

Ethnic Composition		VR Banding	
ESWI*	13	VR Band 1	-
Catholic European	7	VR Band 2	9
Afro-Caribbean	2	VR Band 3	10
		No record	3
Total	22		22

* English Scots Welsh or Irish

Class history

At St Andrews there was a tradition of moving pupils up and down the streamed classes on the basis of examination results, and so the group

¹ Two other pupils were on the class teachers' lists. One was Spanish and the other Portuguese. Both consistently attended separate classes because of 'second language' difficulties. They have not therefore been included.

had not remained the same since entry into the school. One of the VR Band 2 girls, Jackie, had been demoted from a higher stream at the beginning of the school year. In the last term the class had been joined by two boys. Stewart had come into the class from a boarding school for maladjusted children. His transfer was the result of parental pressure and was according to the Geography teacher initially strongly resisted by the school. Barry, who was deaf, had been referred recently from a school for the physically handicapped.

Social structure

Eighteen of the pupils, seven girls and eleven boys, completed the questionnaire: this showed that there were no cross-sex friendships in the class, which effectively split into two mutually exclusive groups. Within each there was a 'Main Group' in which there was one especially popular pupil, who acted as the hub of the group, an inner circle of more closely affiliated girls and boys, and some hangers-on. These groups have been named after the most popular boy (Davis) and girl (Helen). These pupils were chosen as the most popular on the grounds of their being selected most often as desirable companions during school time by the rest of the class.

There were four social isolates amongst the boys: two were the recent arrivals, Barry and Stewart. There were no real isolates amongst the girls, but one, the only West Indian girl, Diana, preferred her own company although she was offered friendship by others. There was one tightly bonded friendship pair amongst both the girls and the boys. These pupils chose each other exclusively on all three sociometric questions. The majority of the class had no contact with each other outside school.

A full description of the friendship patterns in the group is included in Appendix G.

Group Attitudes to School and Teachers

According to their answers to the Hargreaves questions, the core class at St Andrews had less favourable attitudes towards teachers and towards school than the comparable class in the other voluntary-aided school St Annes (see Tables 5: 27 and 5: 28). Boys had even less favourable attitudes than girls, although the difference was not statistically significant.

Academic self concept

The ASC score for this class was not significantly different from that of the comparable Third Year class at the other voluntary-aided school, St Annes, and was what we would expect from their VR banding. However although there was exactly the same proportion of VR Band 3 pupils in each group, the scores of the girls were lower than those of the boys, although once again the difference was not statistically significant.

6: 2: 2 The teachers' views of the class

Mrs Grant found the class less stressful than Mrs Thomas, one scale point more enjoyable and considerably easier to teach:

TABLE 6: 3 Teachers' ratings of 3CE

	Mrs Thomas	Mrs Grant
Enjoyability (1=least, 10=most)	5	6
Difficulty (1=least, 10=most)	7	4
Stressfulness (1=least, 10=most)	5	3

Mrs Thomas

For Mrs Thomas, who took the class for three lessons each week, the most salient feature of the group was their low ability level. She believed that educational objectives had to be pitched very low:

'Well first of all they are a lower ability group - a very much lower ability group and you've got to go slowly with them. You try to rush anything and there's chaos. Even at the risk of it sounding boring and repetitive or babyish you've still got to do it very slowly.'

Her priorities for the class involved getting them to write and read aloud 'interestingly, understandingly and clearly'. The greatest difficulty obstructing these goals she saw as the class's 'unwillingness to put in an effort'. She found discipline a problem, and thought that a degree of 'nastiness' was necessary to ensure order. Mrs Thomas found that the class responded best when asked to do written work, provided that it was easy:

'If you have a book where you've got quite easy exercises, but say two thirds of the way through the exercise it becomes slightly more difficult, you have quite a problem trying to push them to overcome this.'

Mrs Grant

Mrs Grant began by talking about her lack of familiarity with the class. She was very much against the timetabling which gave her only one lesson a week with the group. She also noted as important the fact that she herself had made many mistakes initially, because of her failure to appreciate how difficult the class found it to adapt to her teaching style, which was very different from the one they had come to expect:

'I was told the syllabus at the beginning of last term was Geology, and I've taught a lot of Geology before, so I had them in groups and I gave them all a pile of rocks each and asked them to draw and observe them and note what they saw, and what they could work out from it. And clearly they had never done anything like that before. For the

first half hour they were very interested and amazed and then they got sort of terribly out of hand and extremely noisy and said they couldn't draw, and they couldn't see anything and were unconfident about doing that .

I tended to give them homework which were things like I mean 'Go and find a tree and draw it and bring a leaf back and talk to me about soils and vegetation' and most of them thought that they wouldn't bother to do that because it wasn't proper homework. And therefore the lesson I organised after that, which was going to be pooling all our resources on this, didn't work, because most of them hadn't done it. So I made lots of mistakes like that.'

When invited to talk about any area which the interview had not adequately covered, Mrs Grant drew attention to the fact that the class had lost their Form teacher, and so had had 'a lack of organisation and structure about their school life for some time'.

Mrs Grant's teaching priorities for the class involved trying to 'give them a genuine interest' in Geography which she would like to make 'something that they really got pleasure out of - never mind if they pass the exam or not'. The greatest obstacle in the way of her success she saw as what we might call the class's educational socialisation - 'they think that unless they're writing in silence they are not learning'. She also saw the class as undervaluing their own capacities. For these reasons Mrs Grant identified as the easiest lessons those in which the class was given a worksheet adapted to their ability level:

'The least stressful lesson I could have would be to sit at my desk and give them a worksheet aimed at about their level: and from time to time at the end of term I do that, but I don't fool myself that I'm teaching them anything and therefore I sort of feel very guilty about it.'

Opinions about individual pupils

Mrs Thomas and Mrs Grant had very different opinions about individuals in the class. For example Mrs Thomas preferred the girls as a

whole and found them more studious. Mrs Grant had greater difficulty with them, and identified them (correctly according to their ASC scores) as 'less confident'.

Mrs Grant made a distinction between those she saw as 'goody-goody' hard workers and those with 'more inquiring minds'. Amongst these, whom she considered 'educationally more sound', she named Patrick and Andrew. Mrs Thomas on the other hand identified those two boys as the 'characters in the class', but did not rate their work highly. Of Andrew Mrs Thomas noted:

'You really have to be careful of him. He's a nasty little piece of goods, but he can be subdued.'

Patrick she viewed rather more favourably, but considered among the weakest academically in the class:

'Patrick is very slow, and works. Takes a great deal of trouble over what he's doing, and therefore is way behind, and then he likes to break out and make a nuisance of himself.'

Mrs Thomas's attitude to Jackie, the VR Band 2 girl recently demoted from a higher class, was interesting. She considered this girl to be far superior to the rest of the class in intelligence and conjectured that she must have been relegated to the group because she had been 'in trouble from elsewhere'. She thought that she 'could be a great mischief maker if she's not kept on the heel'. Jackie stammered and Mrs Thomas used this fact to control her:

'The only way to discipline her is to make her read. She hates to read because she stammers, so if she doesn't be quiet and get on with her work you know I say 'well you have to read'.'

Mrs Thomas insisted that each child brought a library book into class 'they've got to have it on their desk to read, and you know you can be nasty enough and it'll come'. When Jackie got too far in advance of the class Mrs Thomas was in the habit of letting her read this book - 'she loves to read on her own'. Together with Katherine whom Mrs Thomas considered 'a trickster' and 'the nastiest one', Jackie was seen as the most 'troublesome' girl in the class.

Mrs Grant on the other hand named Katherine as a class 'leader', but saw Jackie as one of the 'goody-goody hard workers' who 'sit down and write in neat writing - drivel with their heads down in silence.'

6: 3 Classroom interaction: the low ability group

6: 3: 1 Classroom interaction with Mrs Thomas

Mrs Thomas was observed with 3CE on four occasions. On the first, second and fourth the class task was the completion of a language exercise: on the third, the class had a reading lesson. It is this third lesson which we will look at in closer detail. Since the teacher judged it as 'typical in all respects', uneffected by the observer, totally successful and completely unstressful, it ought to provide a favourable, at least in the class teacher's own view, example of her work.

Lesson

(Timetabled for 55 minutes: actual contact time, 52 minutes)

Settling down (4 min.)

Class enters and waits.

Register (2 min.)

Taking of Register.

Stage 1 (43½ min.)

Reading of text. Teacher (17 min.) and pupils (25½ min.) read alternately.

Other teacher interrupts lesson (1 min.).

Packing up (2½ min.)
Class dismissed.

On this occasion the entire lesson was spent with the whole class as the 'interaction set'. Mrs Thomas's plans for stage 1 were straight-forward. The text was to be read aloud by herself, with interpolated readings from selected pupils, chosen not after pupil 'bids' and teacher 'nomination', but following the teacher's on-the-spot selection of a candidate.

If we look at the distribution of moves in Mrs Thomas's own first turn at reading, we find that although the teacher inaugurated a number of opening moves, pupils rarely contributed:

TABLE 6: 4 Mrs Thomas with the low ability class: distribution of moves in opening phase of lesson stage 1 - teacher reads (3 min.)

	Teacher	Pupil
Framing	0	0
Focusing	0	0
Opening	12	0
Chall. opening	1	1
Reopening	4	0
Supporting	1	2
Challenging	0	1
Total	18	4

Comments addressed to pupils directly had disciplinary or procedural functions only - the teacher took pupils to task for inattention, not having a book, or having turned to the wrong page. In the three minute opening phase Mrs Thomas interrupted the sequence in this way four times: reopening moves indicate resumptions of reading. Pupils' opening moves and supporting responses were without exception occasioned by such matters. Although, as in the lesson observed with her 'most enjoyed' group, Mrs

Thomas regularly interspersed her reading with explanatory comment, pupils were not invited to discuss, or help elucidate, difficult parts of the text. In the whole 43½ minutes of this lesson stage only two such questions were asked by Mrs Thomas: one of these was directed at a troublesome boy, as in the incident with John in the First Year class.

After reading for three minutes, Mrs Thomas asked Helen to continue.

TABLE 6: 5 Mrs Thomas with the low ability class: distribution of moves in opening phase of lesson stage 1 - Helen reads (2 min.)

	Teacher	Pupil
Opening	7	0
Chall. opening	0	1
Reopening	0	0
Supporting	1	8
Challenging	4	0
Total	12	9

Mrs Thomas interrupted Helen's reading nine times to pronounce a word in the text. Only four of these incidents involved corrections of misreadings by Helen, and were therefore coded as challenging moves. The others were classed as opening moves, since Mrs Thomas did not wait for Helen to attempt the words, but preemptively took over the reading as the word presumed in advance to be difficult approached. On occasion this resulted in Helen and the teacher talking over one another as both pronounced the word. Helen's supporting moves reflect her obedient repetition (classified 'accept') of the teacher's preferred word before continuing her reading.

The preponderance recorded in this strip of interaction of challenging moves over supporting ones from Mrs Thomas was also typical. Almost all of Mrs Thomas's evaluations of the quality of pupils'

contributions were challenging. Her supporting moves were generally replies to pupils' questions. She never took the opportunity of thanking pupils for reading aloud, or commended them for their performance in any way. She habitually used merely the formula 'Sit down', to indicate that a pupil should stop.

Mrs Thomas's difficulties with the boys were clearly demonstrated during this lesson. Challenging openings, particularly those which involved a degree of hostility, were frequent:

		ACT	MOVE
Mrs T:	Andrew read	Nom. Direct.	Opening
	(Andrew slowly stands up, turns his back to the teacher and faces the class)		
	Diana sit forward.	Summons Direct.	Opening
	Helen follow your book.	Summons Direct.	Opening
Helen:	I am	Inform.	Ch. opening (L4)*
Pupil:	Boring boring	Aside	
	(Michael drums on his desk, and Mrs T. stops him with a glare. Davis turns to Gennaro and Mrs T. raps his knuckles.)		
Mrs T:	(prompting Andrew) 'In the sky'	Prompt	Reopening
Andrew:	I can read	Inform.	Ch. opening (D.F & L7)**
Mrs T:	Then get on	Prompt.	Reopening
Andrew:	Stop interrupting me then	Direct.	Ch. opening (D.F & L5)***
Mrs T:	Well for a change just do what you're told. Come along.	Marker Direct. Prompt	Reopen
Andrew:	(begins to read.)	React	Support.

* Coded as challenging because the pupil questions the teacher's right to issue the directive (L4) as she is already following the text,

** Coded as challenging because of the absence of the expected 'react' (DF) and because the pupil claims prior knowledge of the information (L7),

*** Coded as challenging because of the absence of the expected 'react' (DF) and because the pupil has questioned the teacher's right to speak (L5),

The following incident demonstrates the boys' reluctance to accept correction from this teacher and illustrates how Mrs Thomas handled the resulting problems. Patrick had just mispronounced 'quay' as 'kway':

		ACT	MOVE
Mrs T:	Key. Will you say key to that word. Patrick. Q U A Y you pronounce this key.	Evaluate Direct. Summons comment	Chall. (L6)* Opening
Patrick:	(as before) 'along the kway'	React	Chall. (K&S 1)**
Mrs T:	(with emphasis) Key	Evaluate	Chall. (L6)*

(Someone laughs.)

Michael:	(mimicking the teacher) Key	Aside	
Mrs T:	Stop it Michael	Direct. Summons	Ch. opening (L5)***
Pupil:	(quietly) Kway	Aside	
Patrick:	'Along the kwee kway'	React	Chall. (K&S 1)**

(Laughter from the class)

Mrs T:	I know you're ignorant. I didn't know you were also deaf Key K E Y.	Starter Evaluate	Chall. (L6)*
Patrick:	(with correct pronunciation) 'along the quay'	React	Supporting

* Coded as challenging because the teacher rejects the pupil's pronunciation as incorrect (L6).

** Coded as challenging because the pupil refuses to give his attention (K&S 1).

*** Coded as challenging because the teacher denies the pupil's right to speak (L5).

6: 3: 2 Discussion

This lesson, rated by Mrs Thomas as totally successful and unstressful, replicates many of the features of her teaching approach with her 'most enjoyed' class. Although pupils on this occasion were allowed to

read, the teacher did not encourage class discussion of any kind. Her invitations to participate were restricted to requests that pupils should read aloud or correct a pronunciation. The elucidation of the text was achieved through the teacher's 'comments' or summarising 'conclusions' exclusively. The punitive approach to matters of control was replicated, but in this class the pupils particularly the boys, retaliated with open cheek.

It may be objected that reading lessons represent a special case, and asked whether Mrs Thomas's approach in other kinds of lesson was any different. The other lessons observed however proved very similar. They also provided some evidence as to why, when asked to identify her 'most enjoyed' group, Mrs Thomas chose to be observed with a class which she only took for reading lessons, and why, in her own opinion, her most successful lesson with 3CE was the reading lesson just examined.

During a reading lesson, the task structure provides for pupil participation of a very predictable and therefore controllable kind. Mrs Thomas from her successfulness ratings of individual lessons was most pleased when the verbal interaction was of this type. One of the other lessons observed showed how Mrs Thomas could lose control over the group when the task did not allow for verbal outlets of this kind.

In this lesson Mrs Thomas was continuing to persevere with a First Year exercise she had initially begun with the class two lessons previously. On this third occasion, although the majority went through the motions of keeping their heads down, there was much collusion between pupils to avoid work, and Mrs Thomas's attempts at control were for the most part effectively disregarded. Three boys had to be sent out of the class for misbehaviour, and another two pupils were kept behind at the end

of the lesson. Unless Mrs Thomas was standing over them, pupils did more or less what they pleased. Some wandered about the room quite freely, which they did not usually do: others were observed passing notes, reading magazines under the desk and throwing pencils to each other across the room. It was interesting that Mrs Thomas reserved most of her wrath for two good-natured boys who did not react adversely. Katherine on the other hand who was totally out of control for the whole lesson got off amazingly lightly. Apart from doing no work, this girl passed notes, made paper aeroplanes, and stage-managed a mock fight with one of the boys, kicking him in the back. She also made a great pantomime about what she claimed to be a 'pussing ear' and throughout the lesson made loud requests to be permitted to go home.

Mrs Thomas noted this as an 'untypical lesson' because 'the class refused to settle down for a long time and even then became noisy again'. She conjectured that they were 'unsettled because of approaching holiday period'. The lesson in fact took place on a Wednesday afternoon a week and a half before the half term holiday. More telling is the fact that Mrs Thomas still rated the lesson at the midpoint in the Success scale, suggesting that she could at least imagine, if she had not actually experienced, worse disasters.

6: 3: 3 Classroom interaction with Mrs Grant

The lesson we are about to consider was rated as 'typical in all respects' unaffected by the observer, unstressful and at the mid-point in the Success scale. In it the class were to learn about the unequal distribution of the population in the British Isles, and the reasons underlying this state of affairs. Mrs Grant spent 42% of this lesson with the whole class as the 'interaction set'.

The Lesson

(Timetabled for 55 minutes: actual contact time, 54 minutes)

Settling down (4 min.)

The class assembles. Pupil's offer to give out books is accepted.

Stage 1 (2 min.)

Teacher discusses with pupils a table in which they are to enter population centres of different sizes.

Stage 2 (4 min.)

The class draws up the table while the teacher takes register.

Stage 3 (4 min.)

The teacher instructs the class to find centres with different numbers of inhabitants and enter them into the appropriate columns in their tables.

Stage 4 (13½ min.)

The class work individually.

Stage 5 (4½ min.)

The teacher discusses the assembled information and gives further instructions.

Stage 6 (18 min.)

The lesson proceeds with alternating periods of individual working time during which the teacher is available for consultation (4 periods totalling 7 min of class time), and intervals of 'whole class' teaching where findings are discussed and the teacher gives further instructions (3 periods totalling 11 minutes).

Stage 7 (1½ min.)

Giving out of homework.

Packing up (2½ min.)

Packing up and dismissal of class.

'Whole class' teaching

In lesson stage 1, in which Mrs Clark instructed the class about their first task, the distribution of moves showed the normative pattern of opening moves made almost exclusively by the teacher, while pupils were restricted to supporting responses:

TABLE 6: 6 Mrs Grant with the low ability class: distribution of moves during lesson stage 1 (2 min.)

	Teacher	Pupil
Framing	1	0
Focusing	1	0
Opening	12	1
Chall. opening	1	1
Supporting	8	15
Challenging	0	0
Total	23	17

A brief focusing introduction inaugurated a series of 'eliciting' opening moves from Mrs Grant which she used to encourage the class to verbalise for themselves the instructional content of the lesson. Two thirds of the teacher's initiating speech acts during this lesson stage were 'elicitations'.

If we sum Mrs Grant's initiating speech acts over all stages of 'whole class' teaching, the preponderance of 'elicitations' and the dearth of 'informatives' in her discourse is very striking. Even 'directives' occur much less frequently despite the fact that all 'whole class' teaching episodes were concerned with instructing pupils about what to do next:

TABLE 6: 7 Mrs Grant with the low ability class: distribution of initiating speech acts in 'whole class' teaching episodes (21½ min.)

Initiating speech acts	
Elicitation	58
Directive	29
Informative	6

Mrs Grant typically asked 'how' and 'why' questions, and answers constituted what had to be learned in this lesson:

'How do you think you're going to find out how big the towns are?'

'Why do you think you've got less on those?' (The smaller settlements)
Do you really think that you've got less of those?'

'Can anybody think of any reasons why those placeshave no large towns?'

'How do certain jobs happen in certain places? I mean why do the towns grow?'

'Why do they choose particular places to build their factories?'

Answers were attributed directly to the pupils who volunteered them:

'If you're a bit stuck, Julie's reading out her list.'

'Think about the places you've written down - the ones that Julie's talked about.'

'John suggested climate might be a reason.'

'Michael has said that one of the reasons that people build factories in certain places is that there was coal.'

'You've been telling me, I've been hearing people say during this lesson that certain places up North are no good the money's all down here.'

When a pupil volunteered a wrong answer the teacher did not reject it outright: a hint was given, usually by the withholding of the expected supportive comment, and the pupil given a chance to try again:

		ACT	MOVE
Mrs G:	Which colour have they used for crowded places?	Elicit.	Opening
Chris.:	White	Starter	
(Mrs G says nothing)			
Mrs G:	Black	Reply	Support.
Mrs G:	Well	Marker	
	look at the key	Clue	B. open.
Pupil:	Red	Reply	Support.

The following extract from lesson stage 3 is typical of the way in which the low ability class responded:

		ACT	MOVE
Mrs G:	put up your hand if you think you can tell me the name of a settlement in Britain that has over one million people in it.	Cue	
P:	(over teacher, without waiting for nomination) London	Elicit./	Opening
P:	London	Reply	Chall. (DF)*
Mrs G:	London	Reply	Chall. (DF)*
	Anything else?	Accept	Support.
P:	Edinburgh.	Prompt	B. open
Mrs G:	Some people think Edinburgh	Reply	Support.
P:	Birmingham	Accept	Support.**
Mrs G:	Birmingham.	Reply	Support.
P:	Liverpool.	Accept	Support.
P:	Manchester	Reply	Support.
P:	Liverpool Manchester	Reply	Support.
Mrs G:	You see that there are lots of settlements in England. Now	Aside	
	would you/ Edinburgh/	Concl. Marker	Focusing
P:	Edinburgh/	Inform.	Ch open (DF)*
Mrs G:	Well	Marker	
	you're going to find out if you're right in a minute. would you turn/ (interrupting) Dublin	Inform.	B. open.
P:	(interrupting) Dublin	Inform.	Ch. open. (DF)*
Mrs G:	(continuing) to page two in the blue atlas/ Dublin	Direct.	Opening
P:	Dublin	Inform.	Ch. open. (DF)*

* Coded challenging because the pupil interrupts the teacher
breaking discourse framework expectations (DF).

** Although the teacher tries to refrain from a rejecting evaluation,
it was clear that the pupil picked up on her differently worded reply.

Written work

Once again the teacher's acceptance of pupil/pupil talk and movement around the classroom made observational judgements of whether pupils were on or off task out of the question. It can however be stated that the whole class got down to the first task of copying from the board

promptly, and that at no time were flagrant breaches of normal classroom behaviour recorded. Obvious lapses of attention occurred sporadically and involved the same group of three boys around Andrew.

6: 3: 4 Discussion

During periods of 'whole class' teaching Mrs Grant was noticeably less strict with this low ability Third Year class in enforcing the rules governing orderly contributions to public talk. In the strip of dialogue analysed on the previous page, although contributing enthusiastically, unlike 1GT, this class did not respond to the teacher's 'cue' by hand-raising and did not wait to be nominated before calling out answers. Only replies which interrupted the teacher before she finished speaking have been regarded as challenging moves because of a break in discourse framework expectations (DF). The teacher by accepting answers without 'bids' or 'nominations' was considered to have altered her usual requirements.

Pupils were however responsive to subtle changes in their teacher's behaviour. The pupil whose answer 'Edinburgh' met with the merest hint of rejection from Mrs Grant, clearly understood the implication of her altered phrasing. He was reluctant to allow the lesson to move on to the next phase without clarification, and interrupted the teacher as she attempted to instruct the class about their next task. Once again, although sticking to the principle of making the pupil judge his own accuracy, Mrs Grant tacitly condoned the interruption by her polite response. Thereupon another pupil tried to prolong the exchange - 'Dublin'.

Due to difficulties in controlling noise levels, the figure for 'control episodes' in the monitored lesson was high - five per five minutes of 'whole class' teaching time. However in Mrs Grant's case such incidents

were brief and reprimands were courteously phrased: usually a firm 'Excuse me' often followed by 'Thank you' to acknowledge compliance. No pupil was ever observed offering 'cheek' to Mrs Grant in the way that they had done to Mrs Thomas and on no occasion did the class get as totally out of hand as it had in the English teacher's Wednesday afternoon lesson. The challenging moves from pupils during the Geography lesson were restricted to breaks of discourse framework expectations (DF), rather than the more hostile challenges to the teacher's authority (K&S 1, L4, L5 and L7) faced by Mrs Thomas. The difference in the behaviour of the boys was particularly noticeable.

Once again it can be unequivocally claimed that Mrs Grant's approach in the lesson examined was characteristic of every lesson she was observed teaching.

For example, another lesson with 3CE concerned revision for the coming examination. First Mrs Grant gave the class time to jot down everything they could remember about rocks. Next they called out their notes which the teacher wrote up on the blackboard. The subsequent revision was centred on demonstrating with the class's help how these disjointed ideas could be organised under headings 'Types' 'Origins' 'Texture' 'Erosion' etc., to give a basis for revision. Here again the emphasis was on starting the lesson with what the pupils themselves could contribute:

'You think for yourself and then we'll get different ideas.'

'As you read through maybe you can add some more words to your diagramme. There's something Mrs Grant forgot - she forgot that we learned about that.'

This was judged by Mrs Grant to have been the most successful of the lessons monitored (4 out of 5 on the Success scale), but was not selected for linguistic analysis since Mrs Grant also regarded it as untypical. The class's greater cooperativeness was attributed by her to the fact that 'examinations were approaching' and possibly to their being 'in a different classroom' - the lesson was held in the traditionally laid out crucifix-dominated room of the Head of Theology.

6: 4 The pupils' view of the teachers

The class reported that they worked harder for Mrs Grant and found her lessons much more interesting:

TABLE 6: 8 Self-reported work levels: the low ability class

	Mean	Std. dev.	N		
For Mrs Thomas	2.17	.86	18		
For Mrs Grant	2.89	.76	18		
	Difference				
	Mean	Std. err.	T	DF	Prob
	-.722	1.127	-2.72	17	.015

Note: maximum score = 4; minimum score = 1.

TABLE 6: 9 Self-reported interest levels: the low ability class

	Mean	Std. dev.	N		
For Mrs Thomas	2.25	1.34	16		
For Mrs Grant	3.89	1.09	16		
	Difference				
	Mean	Std. err.	T	DF	Prob
	-1.625	1.996	-3.26	15	.005

Note: maximum score = 5; minimum score = 1.

Mrs Grant was also viewed much more favourably by 3CE on the 'Good Teacher' items (see Table 6: 10 overleaf).

TABLE 6: 10 Ratings by the low ability class of Mrs Thomas and Mrs Grant on the 'Good Teacher' items

	Mean	Std. dev.	N		
For Mrs Thomas	-13.09	7.61	11		
For Mrs Grant	7.73	9.88	11		
	Difference				
	Mean	Std. err.	T	DF	Prob
	-20.818	9.185	-7.5	10	.000

Note: Maximum score = +20, minimum score = -20

Although Mrs Grant was not regarded by the class as their best teacher, Mrs Thomas was seen as the worst of the four teachers by all but one member of the class, Jackie, who rated her as second worst. Her overall score was also the least favourable we were ever to document in any of the schools.

TABLE 6: 11 Ratings by the low ability class of their four teachers on the 'Good Teacher' items

	English	Maths	History	Geography
Mean	-13.3	7.3	8.3	7.1
Std. dev.	6.9	5.8	7.1	9.7
N	16	12	11	12

Mrs Grant was even more favourably rated by the seven VR Band 3 pupils:

TABLE 6: 12 Ratings by VR Band 3 pupils of their four teachers on the 'Good Teacher' items

	English	Maths	History	Geography
Mean	-13.6	5.3	2.9	8.1

From our earlier findings (see Table 5: 23) we would expect lower ability pupils to view their teachers less favourably than higher ability children.

This was the case in this class for every teacher except Mrs Grant, who was actually rated more highly, and overtook the History teacher as the most favourably assessed of the four.

Answers to the individual questions are instructive: Mrs Thomas was not considered friendly by a single pupil, and only two pupils said that she possessed any of the qualities associated with the Good Teacher:

TABLE 6: 13 Assessment of Mrs Thomas and Mrs Grant on individual 'Good Teacher' items

	Number of pupils (out of 17 agreeing)	
	Mrs Thomas	Mrs Grant
Is friendly	0	13
Makes it easy to ask questions	2	12
Is understanding	1	12
Explains things clearly	1	12
Listens to what you say	1	10
Cares about pupils as individuals	2	8
Can control the class	2	8
Can join in and have fun	0	7
Has a good sense of humour	1	7

All the 'isolated' boys had favourable views of Mrs Grant, as did the disaffected girl, Katherine, who was considered 'a trickster' and 'the nastiest' girl in the class by Mrs Thomas. Davis, the friendly West Indian boy whose ratings of all his teachers were uniformly high, and Jackie, the girl recently demoted from a higher group, were the only two pupils with any positive views of Mrs Thomas.

The case of Jackie, whose evaluation of Mrs Thomas was well above, and rating of Mrs Grant considerably below, the norm for the class was especially intriguing. Jackie was viewed as a potential troublemaker by Mrs Thomas, despite her high regard for Jackie's intelligence and general level of achievement. She also used the girl's embarrassment about

her stammer as a means of controlling her in class. This would seem to make it very strange that Jackie should view her comparatively favourably. Jackie however did not give Mrs Thomas one positive score on the 'Care' or 'Sense of Fun' questions. Her favourable evaluations were almost entirely restricted to the 'Teaching Skills' dimension. She left blank the question as to whether Mrs Thomas could 'control the class' and was undecided about whether she knew 'what to do when a class gets out of hand'.

It was not possible, since Mrs Thomas's 'most enjoyed' class had another English teacher, to ask questions about their 'English teacher', and they were not therefore given the pupil questionnaire: it was felt to be too intrusive to name actual teachers. In the case of Mrs Grant, however, we also have the ratings given by her 'most enjoyed' class. As our first research premise would lead us to expect, these show that the class reciprocated by rating her comparatively highly:

TABLE 6: 14 Ratings by Mrs Grant's 'most enjoyed' class of their four teachers on the 'Good Teacher' items

	English	Maths	History	Geography
Mean	5.6	9.1	-1.2	9.2
Std. dev.	7.1	6.4	12.5	5.1
N	19	19	16	18

6: 5 Written Work produced by 3CE

6: 5: 1 English

Twenty English folders, which dated from the beginning of the Third Term, and represented therefore nine weeks' work, were made available by Mrs Thomas, who was proud of being able to produce so many. This she

attributed to her policy of collecting the books from the children herself, instead of allowing them to hand them in. She added that she knew 'younger teachers are taught to make children independent and take responsibility', but that she knew 'the tricks they get up to' and that she would not get the books if she followed that principle. There was no evidence of a 'rough book' policy, but the folders were loose-leaved, which made the addition or removal of paper an easy matter. The pages were smaller than those in proper exercise books.

Mrs Thomas did not correct spelling, and only one grammatical correction ('ain't' emended to 'isn't') was noted. She had ticked work and added brief comments at the end - 'good', or remarks on the lack of full stops, or about work not having been completed. Three of the exercise books looked at had not been marked at all, and eleven had only one of the exercises corrected. Only Mark's six pages were all marked.

If we consider the amount produced by those pupils who were present for the whole of this period, the girls, apart from Katherine, produced very much more for Mrs Thomas:

TABLE 6: 15 Pages produced by the low ability class for Mrs Thomas during nine weeks in the Third Term

Girls			Boys		
	Pages	VR Band		Pages	VR Band
Jackie	26	2	John	18	3
Julie	22	3	Gennaro	14	3
Lesley	20	-	Patrick	14	2
Matercia	20	3	Steven	12	2
Christine	18	2	Anthony	10	3
Lisa	18	3	Michael	10	3
Diana	14	2	Davis	8	2
Katherine	10	2	Mark	6	2
			Danny	6	3
			Andrew	5	2

The difference between the amount produced by the top and the bottom of the class was considerable. Katherine, Mark, Davis and Andrew who produced least were all VR Band 2 pupils.

Apart from the reading lesson previously discussed, three other lessons were monitored, in which the class worked from a book entitled 'Better English' by Ridout, about which Mrs Thomas commented:

'They don't know of course that this is a Primary School book. It says Book 4, so they think it's for Fourth Year. They wouldn't do it of course if they knew. There's some good stuff in this book though. You get one or two saying 'I did this in my Primary school'. I say 'Let's see if you get no mistakes now'.'

The majority of the class spent three lessons totalling just under three hours of contact time on completing three exercises from this book. Those who had finished the work were asked to continue a story, the opening lines of which were dictated to them by Mrs Thomas. Only five girls attempted this.

Mrs Thomas collected the books after the first lesson as was her custom. The books of two boys, Patrick and Daniel, were missing, but it was possible to monitor what had been completed by the other seventeen pupils who were present in that first lesson. This was then compared with what had been produced at the conclusion of two more lessons.

Evidence from the observational record and the tape transcripts showed that the majority of the boys spent three lessons doing what was accomplished by the girls in little more than one. The first girls had completed the first exercise in eight minutes, and the two exercises within twenty six minutes. A third of the work done for the third exercise had been completed by one of the girls within the last five minutes of the first lesson. It seems fairly evident therefore that a number of the boys

must have done virtually nothing in some of the lessons, and that there must have been a considerable falling-off in output from the girls in the last two lessons. The class's behaviour in the third lesson would confirm that this was indeed the case (see section 6: 3: 2).

6: 5: 2 Geography

Thirteen exercise books were handed in when requested. Mrs Grant saw no need to collect books at the end of lesson time: they were kept for homework. These were proper exercise books, which Lisa Helen Lesley Katherine and Anthony had taken the trouble to cover.

Mrs Grant's marking was also very different. She added not only concluding evaluations, but also grades and explanatory comments throughout. Spelling mistakes were neatly underlined, and at the end of the exercise Mrs Grant wrote out the correct spellings in red, which the pupil then copied a number of times. Comments again stressed her interest in original work. On a scrappy piece of homework from Julie she wrote 'This is not half-an-hour's thought and research'. Andrew, asked to write on 'The Creation of the Earth' had handed in a very neatly copied out transcription of the first few lines of Genesis: Mrs Grant responded 'B. Good research, but try to use your own words instead of copying.' Only two books had more than two exercises unmarked, and half had every piece of work corrected.

Details were gathered concerning the work produced in all the lessons monitored. The lesson on settlements which was examined earlier was typical. In this lesson pupils had been required to draw up a table and make their own lists of towns with different numbers of inhabitants, after consulting their atlases for the relevant information. They had also been asked to name five areas which were underpopulated, and to give

reasons why this might be the case. No pupil appeared to have spent the lesson without a reasonable attempt at completing the work set:

TABLE 6: 16 Work produced by the low ability class for Mrs Grant during the monitored lesson

Girls			Boys		
	Towns	Areas		Towns	Areas
Helen	81	5 + reasons	Davis	48	3
Lesley	80	5 + reasons	John	42	5 + reasons
Lisa	79	5 + reasons	Barry	40	5 + reasons
Christine	76	5 + reasons	Andrew	33	5
Julie	54	5 + reasons	Stewart	32	2 + reasons
Katherine	53	5 + reasons	Anthony	25	3
			Danny	24	5

On the other hand, homework was completed by only half of those pupils whose books were seen.

Once again the girls produced more, but in this case the difference between the work effort of the boys and girls was less dramatic. In particular, Katherine and Andrew produced more, comparative to their classmates, in Geography.

6: 6 Discussion

6: 6: 1 Does the same low ability class behave differently with different teachers?

3CE behaved very differently with the two teachers. The repressively traditional English teacher, who was preoccupied with classroom discipline and who gave pupils little opportunity to contribute in class was considered by the group to have poor control over the class (see Table 6: 13). Observation confirmed that (although they usually complied outwardly to her requests) pupils did little real work: the boys

in particular were often openly rude and on occasion the whole class could get totally out of hand.

The 'progressive' Geography teacher was much less concerned with questions of control, and encouraged verbal participation and pupil/pupil discussion during lesson time. She wished pupils to be independent and take an active role in the learning process. There was consequently a great deal of talk in her classroom. However pupils reported that this teacher had better classroom control, and on no occasion were they seen to offer her cheek or get out of hand.

However the two low ability classes monitored with this Geography teacher, although contributing freely, often showed the same unwillingness or inability to maintain the orderly structure of classroom talk. Pupils for example seemed to find it difficult to respond quickly to changes in the direction of a lesson, or to curb private initiatives which were no longer appropriate. Since these behaviours were found with two different classes, we have found some indication that teachers who wish to encourage pupil participation may face specific kinds of problems in lower ability groups.

6: 6: 2 Does the same teacher behave differently with different classes?

The teaching approach of the two teachers was very similar across classes. The English teacher's behaviour did not alter with the low ability group: she continued as she had done with her high ability 'most enjoyed' class to offer pupils few opportunities to contribute to classroom talk. Her preoccupation with control was demonstrated in an equally repressive manner with both classes. The older low ability class however responded in a more hostile way, and as there was open rebellion from some of the boys, the resultant interaction differed.

The Geography teacher also behaved consistently with her two classes. In her case this meant offering her pupils the opportunity to contribute to the public discourse at important opening stages of the lesson and encouraging pupil initiatives wherever possible, despite some resulting problems of control.

6: 6: 3 What kind of classroom interaction is favoured by teachers?

Interviews and observation demonstrated a close relationship between the teachers' deeply held beliefs about their roles, which had obvious implications for their sources of personal and professional self-esteem, and details of their classroom performance.

The Geography teacher's 'progressive' philosophy informed all aspects of her teaching from details of how she set out the desks in her classroom to the kinds of contact with pupils which she considered essential and the types of classroom interaction which she tried to encourage. Active pupil participation was her teaching priority and resulting high noise levels she believed immaterial.

Despite this 'progressive' approach, the Geography teacher relied on the very traditional methods of pupil 'bid' and teacher 'nomination' for controlling access to classroom talk. Within this framework she was able to offer her pupils a degree of autonomy which they seemed not usually to have experienced in their traditional Catholic school. It is also worthy of note that she herself, despite her very low opinion of this conservative establishment, preferred to work at St Andrews and had found 'radical questioning' of the teaching role extremely stressful in her previous 'progressive' school.

The English teacher's comments demonstrated her preoccupation with status and her belief in an authoritarian approach to the teacher/pupil

relationship. Observation in her classroom revealed an overriding concern with classroom control, which for her seemed to involve the repression of pupil initiatives of all kinds. Her controlling behaviour showed itself in many ways - in for example the details of her handling of classroom talk, in the giving out of books and in her rigid insistence that pupils should occupy particular seats. It seems likely that she gave pupils little opportunity to contribute verbally in class, outside highly structured situations such as reading aloud because of this preoccupation with control.

This would suggest that certain important features of teaching style may not be easily modified. Mrs Thomas after all was very well aware of 'modern views' about encouraging independence in children (see section 6: 5: 1). As long as she maintains her authoritarian conceptualisation of the teacher/pupil relationship and derives her greatest satisfactions from demonstrations of her ability to 'control the class', it is the researcher's view that she is likely to find good reasons for not implementing such approaches in her own classroom.

6: 6: 4 What are the effects of different types of interaction on pupils interest and work levels?

According to their questionnaire answers, the low ability class as a whole, and the boys in particular, found Geography more interesting and worked harder for it. Certainly the evidence of the English books would confirm that little real work was done even in lessons which the English teacher herself considered successful. Thus the class responded better to the teacher whose expectations of them were higher, who related to them in a way which emphasised mutual respect and consideration and who valued pupils' participation in classroom talk. They also behaved better for the teacher who controlled them in a less repressive way. The

teacher's politeness, or lack of it, was mirrored in the behaviour of the class.

There was however some evidence that the Geography teacher's teaching style (which she believed to be very different from that of the majority of the school's more traditional staff) created difficulties for some pupils. Depending upon their educational socialisation, pupils may be very conservative in their classroom preferences. It is especially interesting that it was the girls who seemed to be most discomfited by the Geography teacher's novel approach. The teacher herself attributed this to their 'lack of self-confidence', and we have seen that their ASC scores were indeed lower than those of the boys. In particular one girl, Jackie, whose evaluation of the Geography teacher on the 'Good Teacher' items was surprisingly low and assessment of the rigidly authoritarian English teacher correspondingly more favourable than that of her classmates, had the lowest ASC score in the entire class. It may therefore be the case that this girl preferred the undemanding tasks given her by the English teacher which she could complete with ease, and experienced insecurity in the Geography teacher's more challenging classroom.

The attitudes and behaviour of the English teacher were so extreme, and the quality of learning experience she offered to her pupils so impoverished, that her lack of success is scarcely in need of careful explanation. We can however learn from our observation of her classroom behaviour how such excessive preoccupation with control can deform a teacher's instructional technique, and wharp professional judgement of adequate aims and criteria by which to judge the success of classroom encounters.

The Deputy Head had stated that Mrs Thomas's approach was not 'typical of the new direction' in which the school was moving. Consequently she would have preferred the research to have involved another teacher. Certainly Mrs Thomas seemed a rather isolated figure in the school. She rarely spent time with others in the staff room: she arrived late for the important staff meeting at which the future changes in the Third Year Options were to be decided upon, and was asked nothing and said nothing throughout the animated staff discussion. It is instructive however that a teacher such as this, despite the fact that influential staff members were aware of her attitudes, should still have been holding a school post of considerable seniority.

CHAPTER 7

St Annes

7: 1 The teachers

On the Rutter scale St Annes, like the other voluntary-aided Church school, achieved only an average rating. However, examination of other aspects of school life showed that pupils were consistently well supported, and that standards of Pastoral Care were high. When compared with St Andrews, pupils had significantly more positive attitudes towards their school and their teachers (see Tables 5: 1 and 5: 3). We therefore have the opportunity of observing how teachers and pupils interact in a school of this type with a favourable social climate.

In the first three school years St Annes ran mixed-ability classes in English and Mathematics, but streamed children for other subjects. As a result it was not possible to monitor the same low ability group with two different teachers. However half of the Third Year Geography class which was streamed second from bottom was found to attend the same English class, which, although designated 'mixed-ability', had, according to the Head of the Third Year, a heavier 'tail' of lower ability children, and only one VR Band 1 pupil. It was therefore decided to

monitor these two classes, paying special attention to the reactions of the twelve pupils who belonged to both groups.

7: 1: 1 The English teacher: Mrs Lacey

Mrs Lacey, who was in her seventeenth teaching year, had trained as a teacher after taking a degree in Classics. She would have preferred to be a singer, but had chosen to teach as it was more compatible with marriage and the needs of children. Although presently the Head of the Classics Department in St Annes, due to the ever narrowing opportunities in this field she was now, on the advice of an Inspector, teaching English as she had done in the earlier part of her school career.

Mrs Lacey identified as the source of her greatest professional satisfaction:

'My interaction with the children. I enjoy their company and friendship and their sense of humour. I like it in the classroom very much.'

She emphasised that she enjoyed teaching 'the rough ones', and expressed her lack of interest in the easier life she might have had in a public school. Nor did she feel the ability level of the pupils to be one of her primary concerns:

'I enjoy teaching kids who have a bit of a spark about them, and want to get on. It isn't really anything to do with academic ability, it's the spark they bring to the lesson.'

Mrs Lacey expressed a considerable amount of dissatisfaction with the school and her job, due to the reduced importance being attached to the Classics Department. It was this factor which she returned to when asked later about her 'greatest source of difficulty', describing:

'This feeling that there's not much point in trying outside the classroom because your own subject isn't going to get anywhere.'

She also expressed great irritation at the non-consultative way in which she felt the school was managed, and major policy decisions made, comparing St Annes unfavourably with another comprehensive which she had recently visited, and which was not Church-run. There although the 'teachers were excessively hard worked' she felt there was 'an open feeling of involvement, and that everybody counted and everybody had a say and everybody was informed what was going on'. On the other hand her previous part-time teaching experience had taken her to mixed-sex middle school comprehensives which she had found very stressful.

When asked about school rules governing classroom behaviour, Mrs Lacey talked about the rituals of greeting and leave-taking, with which she was personally uncomfortable:

'The little ones say thank you. It's very embarrassing - takes too long. I don't with the Third Year if they're quiet.'

7: 1: 2 Mrs Lacey and her 'most enjoyed' class: Latin 3(1)

Mrs Lacey chose as her 'most enjoyed' class the top Third Year Latin group, which for the last two years she had taken for three lessons per week. The majority of the class were from the top ability band and many were of Spanish or Italian parentage:

Ethnic Composition		VR Banding	
ESWI	9	VR Band 1	16
Catholic European	12	VR Band 2	7
Afro-Caribbean	3	VR Band 3	-
Unknown	3	No record	4
Total	27		27

Mrs Lacey gave the group the most favourable scores on all the rating measures:

Enjoyability	
(1=least, 10=most)	10
Difficulty	
(1=least, 10=most)	1
Stressfulness	
(1=least, 10=most)	1

She described as the 'joy of the class' the fact that:

'they like being together. There isn't any hassle in this class. We can all relax'.

Mrs Lacey had something to say about every individual, and was aware of their preferences and strengths in other subject areas. Thirty seven per cent of her remarks were 'person' oriented. Her main aim for the class was that they should learn 'Latin that will help their appreciation of English and also actually useful Latin that they will go on to remember'.

7: 1: 3 Classroom interaction: Mrs Lacey with Latin 3(1)

Neither teacher at St Annes was observed teaching in a room which was exclusively theirs, and no work was displayed on any of the classroom walls. The rooms however, like the rest of the school, were spotlessly clean and tidy. The observed lesson took place on the last period of a Friday morning, in a small classroom next the Dinner Hall. The twenty five pupils were somewhat cramped in the room, and especially during the latter part of the lesson subjected to some disturbance from a noisy Drama class in the adjoining Hall.

The lesson was regarded by Mrs Lacey as 'typical in most respects'. She failed to endorse 'in all respects' as 'the general noise level was lower than usual'. She was not sure whether this was due to the

presence of an observer in the classroom¹. She considered the lesson as entirely unstressful and rated it at 4 out of 5 on the Success scale.

Four minutes after the bell the class had assembled. Mrs Lacey arrived three minutes later from the other school building. At her entrance the class rose and Mrs Lacey greeted them in Latin, without formality and without waiting for absolute silence.

The Lesson

(Timetabled for 35 minutes: Actual time, 27½ minutes)

Settling down (4 min.)

Teacher collects project work, and class gets out books.

Stage 1 (9½ min.)

Teacher reads out Latin sentences given for homework, and class volunteer translations.

Stage 2 (1 min.)

Teacher instructs on grammatical point.

Stage 3 (10 min.)

Teacher writes sentences for translation on board and class works individually at translation.

Stage 4 (2 min.)

The teacher explains a grammatical point.

Stage 5 (1 min.)

Homework arranged and class dismissed.

Forty nine per cent of the time was spent in 'whole class' teaching (stages 1, 2, 4 and 5): 15% on procedural matters (Settling down) and 36% on individual work (stage 3).

¹ It is interesting that in this school where both teachers indicated that the observer might have had some effect on classroom interaction, it was always for the better - less noise, more cooperative behaviour. In St Andrews Mrs Thomas had perceived the observer as a possible influence only in situations which she saw as less successful.

'Whole class' teaching

In stage 1, the longest stretch of 'whole class' teaching, Mrs Lacey read out Latin sentences which had been given for homework, and the class provided translations. Examination of the distribution of moves showed pupils' contributions almost entirely restricted to the category of supporting moves (see Table 7: 1). The two challenging moves made by pupils involved a request to the teacher to repeat a question that had not been heard, and the over-eager volunteering of information before the teacher had finished speaking. The challenging moves by the teacher were concerned with evaluations of wrong answers. Pupils had a normative 36% of the interaction.

TABLE 7: 1 Mrs Lacey with her 'most enjoyed' class:
distribution of moves in lesson stage 1 (9½ min.)

	Teacher	Pupils
Framing	0	0
Focusing	2	0
Opening	38	2
Chall. opening	3	2
Reopening	1	0
Supporting	31	44
Challenging	8	0
Total	83	46

The clustering of moves into the three main categories of opening initiations from the teacher, supporting responses by the pupils and supporting or challenging evaluations by the teacher, documents a classic performance of the 'Initiation, Response Feedback' (IRF) pattern described by Sinclair and Coulthard.

During these 9½ minutes on each of the twenty five occasions on which a sentence was offered for translation the response was a 'mass

hands up'. Approximately half of these involved a third of the class. The teacher typically left four to five seconds between asking the question and choosing who was to answer, thus leaving time for the number of hands to thicken and for herself to monitor who was willing to contribute.

At all stages of 'whole class' teaching the group behaved in a similar text book fashion. In lesson stage 2, where the teacher was rehearsing a grammatical point, the class quietly chanted the appropriate response in unison each time Mrs Lacey put a question. During lesson stage 4, in which the teacher was going over difficult points in the translation, Latin 3(1) listened in silence without once interrupting. When homework was set in lesson stage 5, only after Mrs Lacey had finished speaking did the class seek clarification of points they had not understood.

Written work

During the period of written work in stage 3 there was no rule forbidding discussion with neighbours and there was a steady hum of talk and some quiet laughter. Over 85% of the class always appeared to be working, and for the most part the whole class seemed to do so.

After she had finished writing up the questions Mrs Lacey moved round the class talking to the girls. Although she was approached six times in this six minute period with requests for information, these required brief answers only and the teacher was left free to inaugurate most of the contacts herself. When she did so it was noticeable that she talked to groups. During this six minutes the teacher was seen talking with two thirds of the class, but never spent more than a minute with any one individual or group.

The class were finally dismissed without ceremony - 'You can go as soon as you're ready.'

7: 1: 4 Discussion

Mrs Lacey's comments during the interview showed that she had reservations about certain aspects of the running of the school. She particularly disliked the traditional formalities which structured the beginning and end of lessons, and the school's emphasis on hierarchy.

Her behaviour in the classroom has also shown a certain lack of formality. Contrary to school practice she did not insist on greeting and leave-taking rituals which drew attention to her superior teacher status. Nor did she request silence during written work, and indeed mentioned that in her 'most enjoyed' class 'noise levels were often 'unacceptably high' although 'almost all connected with work'.

On the other hand, the behaviour of her 'most enjoyed' class was observed to be extremely traditional: in the 'whole class' teaching situation the interaction could be very satisfactorily described in terms of Sinclair and Coulthard's teacher-centred model. In particular pupils rarely inaugurated interaction, following to the letter the mechanisms of pupil 'bid' and teacher 'nomination' which traditionally underpin the teacher's control of the discourse. Their behaviour was maintained with minimal explicit direction or controlling interventions from the teacher.

This description should not be construed as documenting class behaviour of a soullessly regimented kind. There was a bubbly enthusiasm which led to some faintly comical idiosyncrasies. Thus a particularly eager girl kept her hand up between questions, thus presumably making herself more conspicuous: another, once someone had been selected, did not wait to hear the answer, but started checking with her neighbour on the next sentence to give herself a head start. This was noted by the teacher who remarked:

'If you talk you won't hear. I know you're trying to prepare the next sentence so's you can display your genius.'

This was one of the few 'control' episodes in the lesson.

The performances of teacher and the group were so well coordinated that transitions from one lesson stage to another did not appear to necessitate detailed 'focusing' instructions from the teacher. The class seemed to know what to do with minimal verbal instruction, and to be willing to get down to it without encouragement or coercion. For example, in the opening lesson phase the introductory 'focusing' move by the teacher was one brief sentence - 'Let's have the translation then' - after which a mere thirty seconds elapsed before the class had their books out and the teacher was able to begin asking questions. The transition between Stage 2 to Stage 3 was similarly handled:

'Right. So I've got some sentences - I know it's going to be a bit noisy in there - em for you to practise. You can do them in rough or best.'

The teacher without further explanation then turned her back on the class and wrote out six Latin sentences on the board. The girls did not wait for further instructions, but got down to working on the sentences immediately the first was written up.

7: 1: 5 The Geography teacher: Miss Harris

Miss Harris, the Geography teacher, was the least experienced teacher we have so far monitored. She had a Geography degree and a PGCE, and was in her first year of teaching. Her appointment at St Annes was not permanent, as she was not a Catholic, and the school's policy was to employ only practising Catholics as full-time members of staff.

Like Mrs Lacey Miss Harris also had made the decision to be a teacher after a rational weighing up of alternatives, rather than as the result of vocational calling - 'it's not something I've always wanted to be'. In her case the major influence was her desire to keep up with new knowledge in her field of study:

'At the end of my degree I got to thinking what am I going to do with it? I enjoy Geography and it's a way of keeping up with the subject itself. I didn't want to get into the state where I knew Geography twenty years ago but I didn't know what was happening now.'

Despite this, Miss Harris stated that she 'loved' teaching and enjoyed 'all ages and all ability levels'.

This interest in her subject came through in Miss Harris's replies to other questions: her greatest source of satisfaction for example came from:

'Feeling as if they've learned something and understood something. For them to come up to me at the end of the lesson and say 'We understand that miss'. They say 'We like Geography now. We understand it', and I like that.'

Miss Harris stated that she had no great difficulties at St Annes other than 'trying to keep a straight face sometimes'. She had however experienced troubles in other schools. Her teaching practice had been in a mixed-sex county comprehensive, as a result of which she had decided to try for a post in an independent school. She had been left with the impression that the children in large comprehensives:

'don't learn very much. I don't know if it was the fault of the school or the system or what.'

7: 1: 6 Miss Harris and her 'most enjoyed' class: Geography 3(2)

Miss Harris chose to be observed with the second Geography stream in the Third Year, although she noted that she had a number of classes which she enjoyed teaching just as much. She gave as her reason for choosing this particular group the fact that they provided an interesting contrast with the low ability class.

Almost all the girls were white. There was a sizeable minority for whom no VR Band records were available: the majority of those who could be classified belonged to the top ability band:

Ethnic Composition		VR Banding	
ESWI	15	VR Band 1	13
Catholic European	9	VR Band 2	10
Afro-Caribbean	5	VR Band 3	-
Unknown	3	No record	9
Total	32		32

Miss Harris rated the group, which she saw for one double period per week, as follows:

Enjoyability	
(1=least, 10=most)	8
Difficulty	
(1=least, 10=most)	3
Stressfulness	
(1=least, 10=most)	2

Although these are somewhat less favourable ratings than those given by Mrs Lacey to her 'most enjoyed' class, it should be noted that Miss Harris remarked that she generally avoided the extremes of scales.

Only 19% of Miss Harris's remarks about this class were 'person' oriented. She talked mostly about motivation to work and attendance, confessing ('I'll be honest with you') that she could not 'differentiate some

of them from other ones'. However since she had only been in the school for a term and a half, she had known the class for a very short time (Geography classes meeting only once a week).

Her aims for the group were as follows:

'Because they are of high ability I want them to understand something - a lot will go on to do O-level, so I want to give grounding for next year.'

7: 1: 7 Classroom interaction: Miss Harris with Geography 3(2)

The lesson chosen to examine in closer detail was regarded by Miss Harris as 'typical in all respects', unaffected by the observer, at the lowest point on the Stress scale and the highest on the Success scale. Miss Harris had previously stated 'I never give ten out of ten to the kids, so won't to myself either'. However after this lesson she decided that it would be unfair to rate it otherwise. It took place in the first period on a Wednesday morning in the same noisy room next the Dinner Hall: five minutes after the bell for the first lesson the teacher arrived, together with the last few girls. By this time most of the class had already assembled and one girl had given out the books.

The Lesson

(Timetabled 70 minutes: actual time 66 minutes approx.)

Settling down (1 min.)

Girls put down bags and books and prepare to listen to teacher.

Stage 1 (7 min.)

Teacher questions class about coal.

Transition (1 min.)

Class get books and pencils ready.

Stage 2 (11 min.)

Class copies notes and diagramme from board. The teacher and girls who have finished give out books.

Transition (18 secs.)

Time between teacher asking class to stop colouring and start of next lesson stage.

Stage 3 (6½ min.)

Teacher instructs class on difference between 'concealed' and 'exposed' coal seams.

Stage 4 (23 min.)

Class copies diagrammes from book and explanation from board. (Girls are individually called out for BCG vaccination).

Transition (44 secs.)

Time between teacher's first request to stop work and start of next lesson phase.

Stage 5 (6 min.)

Teacher discusses with class changes in the coal industry from 1935-1975.

Stage 6 (5 min.)

Class copy table documenting changes, and begin to write a paragraph of explanation, to be completed for homework.

Stage 7 (3 min.)

Bell goes, homework reiterated and class dismissed.

'Whole class' teaching

It was during the opening stage 1, in which the teacher questioned the class about what they had already learned about coal, that pupils were given the most opportunity to contribute verbally, and they did so with enthusiasm. When we examine the distribution of moves during this lesson stage we find the familiar pattern of pupil participation restricted to supporting responses, while the teacher initiates conversation and evaluates pupils' replies. Once again therefore verbal interaction in this lesson can very adequately be described in terms of Sinclair and Coulthard's normative model.

TABLE 7. 2 Miss Harris with her 'most enjoyed' class:
distribution of moves in lesson stage 1 (7 min.)

	Teacher	Pupils
Framing	2	0
Focusing	1	0
Opening	17	0
Chall. opening	1	1
Reopen	2	0
Supporting	16	20
Challenging	1	4
Total	40	25

The four challenging moves made by the class were failures to offer bids or replies to a difficult question (prompting the reopening moves by the teacher): the single challenging opening move was a minimal on-topic interruption when a girl offered additional information before the teacher had quite finished speaking.

Although, assessed at the levels of moves, the proportion of the interaction secured by pupils is very much the same as in stage 1 of Mrs Lacey's lesson (38% compared with 36%), when we take into account the number of moves per minute in both strips of interaction it is clear that in Miss Harris's lesson some moves must be much more prolonged. In Mrs Lacey's lesson there were approximately fourteen moves per minute, while in Miss Harris's lesson there were only nine. This is due entirely to the length of the teacher's contributions which were typically supplemented by extended comment.

Miss Harris at all times insisted that pupils should observe the convention of pupil 'bid' and teacher 'nomination':

		ACT	MOVE
Miss H:	Does anyone know what coal was originally	Cue	
	It wasn't always rock	Clue	
	What was it originally	Elicit.	Opening
Chorus:	xxxxx	Reply	Chall. (DF)*
	Plants	Reply	Chall. (DF)*
	Sand	Reply	Chall. (DF)*
Miss H:	Wait a minute	Preface	
	Put your hands up	Cue	
	(Yvette and Natalie put hands up)	<Bids>	
	Yvette	Nom.	Reopening

* Coded as challenging because the teacher expects pupils to 'bid' for the right to reply, and therefore discourse framework expectations have been broken (DF).

She also structured the interaction very clearly and predictably. Every lesson stage was inaugurated by 'focusing' moves which were much more extended than the comparable parts in Mrs Lacey's lesson. Speech acts which outlined the lesson task ('metastatements') were regularly supplemented by precise directions as to what the girls would be expected to do:

		ACT	MOVE
Miss H:	right	Marker	
	what I'd like you to do now		
	is to copy down this whole diagramme		
	and I'll write the title on the board	Metast.	Focusing
	alright	Marker	
	take about half a page for it or		
	in fact if you like you can turn your		
	book around and do it on a whole page	Direct.	Opening

Each lesson stage ended with a 'checking' move which allowed pupils the opportunity to clear up misunderstandings, although in this class noone appeared to have any difficulties.

Written work

Miss Harris patrolled the class during written work, and the class worked for long stretches in absolute silence. All pupils appeared to

work, except during the last minute or two, when some girls had clearly finished. Fifteen approaches were made by pupils in the twenty three minutes of individual work time in stage 4: a third of these approaches were prefaced by the raising of hands. The number and spacing of these requests meant that the teacher was able to answer each promptly.

During the lesson 40% of the pupils were observed at some time raising a hand to attract the teacher's attention. There were also 'mass hands up' in Stage 1 of the lesson where the teacher's questioning made such behaviour appropriate.

7: 1: 8 Discussion

Miss Harris at this early stage in her career was a very traditional 'chalk and talk' teacher. In this lesson, which she judged as highly successful, verbal interaction was predictably structured in the traditional way, and as teacher she remained at all times firmly in charge of the talk. Pupil/pupil talk was not encouraged during written work, although the class was regularly involved during periods of 'whole class' teaching in teacher-question pupil-answer sessions.

However, as this successful lesson proceeded, these opportunities for pupil participation became less frequent. Latterly her questions seemed designed primarily to break the monotony of long 'informative' monologues from the teacher. The following is a typical example of interaction in lesson Stage 3:

		ACT	MOVE
Miss H:	Which of these two areas of coal either exposed or the concealed do you think is going to be easier to get out of the ground thinking about it		
Chorus:	Exposed	Elicit. Reply	Opening Supporting
Miss H:	Yes the exposed is much easiest to get out of the ground And therefore it was this exposed area	Accept	Supporting

	ACT	MOVE
Miss H: of the coal field coal areas which were mined first (pause)*	Comment	
Therefore today in this particular - or in these exposed areas there's very little coal left	Inform.	B. opening
because it's been used over the years because we've been using coal for a hundred two hundred years now in England anyway	Comment	
and so much of this exposed coal is gone it's been used up mined away (pause)*	Comment	
So now the miners and people who want to mine the coal have had to move out and start to mine out get out of the ground		
this concealed coal (pause)*	Inform.	B. opening
now	Marker	
that isn't as easy	Starter	
they have to have machinery dig deep shafts	Inform.	B. opening
they have to manage to prop up the coal face so that miners don't get covered by the coal that's fallen down or rocks falling down on top of them	Comment	
the type difficult to mine is concealed coal whereas in the past it was relatively easy to mine the exposed coal it wasn't that easy it was still very dangerous but it was relatively easy	Comment	

* Sinclair and Coulthard noted the difficulty of distinguishing the speech act 'comment' from 'informative', and suggest that teachers signal by a pause when embarking on a new 'informative'. This suggestion has been used in the present coding.

In this way although there might appear to be a surface similarity, Miss Harris's teacher-question pupil-answer sessions had a very different part to play in the educational process from those of Mrs Grant at St Andrews. Miss Harris questioned the class extensively during lesson stages when she wished to check pupils' levels of understanding about what had already been taught: when new material was to be imparted she preferred to explain

personally, and used questions to break the monotony of teacher monologues and to keep the class on its toes.

Miss Harris unequivocally adopted teacher status in her interactions with the girls. She expected the class to rise at her entrance and waited for absolute silence before the formal exchange of greetings. Unlike Mrs Lacey she accepted the 'Good morning/afternoon, and thank you Miss Harris' at the end of lesson-time. She was at all times very controlling of the class's behaviour: silence was insisted upon during written work or while the teacher talked to the class. The slightest increase in noise levels produced a 'Sh', and any sign of inattention (which often had escaped the notice of the observer) drew a quiet reprimand.

However, although Miss Harris kept a tight rein on the class, unlike Mrs Thomas at St Andrews, she was unfailingly polite and considerate. Her tone of voice was cheerful and her reprimands were delivered firmly but without acrimony or sarcasm. Pupil contributions in class were often acknowledged with a 'thank you'. Instructions and disciplinary interventions were always politely expressed, and reasons for requests regularly offered:

'Would you all put your pens down while I'm talking to you. I can't listen and talk and write all at the same time and I'm sure you can't.'

Nevertheless absolute obedience was insisted upon: shortly after this 'directive' one girl was noted holding a pencil, merely poised ready to write. Miss Harris stopped speaking until it had been laid down.

The class's behaviour was exemplary. During the lesson individuals were called out of the classroom for BCG vaccinations. This they managed with the utmost discretion. Noone used the opportunity to

absent themselves for more than a few minutes: their return attracted no attention, and they got back down to work immediately.

.....

Although not presenting as dramatic a contrast in teaching style as the two teachers at St Andrews, Mrs Lacey and Miss Harris have given evidence of rather different approaches to teaching and have been seen to behave rather differently in the classroom. While Miss Harris was especially enthusiastic about her subject, Geography, and had no particular favourite amongst her classes, Mrs Lacey, a reluctant English teacher, chose as her 'most enjoyed' group a class with which she had extended contact, and had twice as much as Miss Harris to say about the personal characteristics of her pupils. The younger Miss Harris, although in no way punitive, exercised strict, and clearly articulated, control over her class: she also allowed rather circumscribed opportunities for pupil talk, and required silence during written work. While similarly appreciating traditionally obedient pupil behaviour, Mrs Lacey had nominated as her 'most enjoyed' group a high ability class which required minimal direction from the teacher, and expressed embarrassment at rituals which underlined hierarchical teacher/pupil relationships. She was also more tolerant of pupil/pupil talk during written work, and less verbally dominant during 'whole class' teaching episodes.

In the light of this knowledge about each teacher's preferred kind of classroom interaction, we can now go on to consider how each fares when faced with a class of lower ability children.

7: 2 The mixed-ability class: English 3(5)

7: 2: 1 Background factors

Class Composition

Almost all the pupils in the mixed-ability class were white, but there were fewer Spanish or Italian girls than in either of the two teachers' preferred groups. Around half of the white British pupils had Irish surnames. None of the children were without conversational fluency in English.

The majority were VR Band 2 pupils: there was only one girl from the top ability band, although one might have expected five or six had the numbers of such pupils been equally distributed throughout the English classes. Two of the girls for whom no record was available were described by their teachers as producing the poorest work. This would suggest that there were seven pupils (28% of the class) who could be described as of low ability/achievement.

Ethnic Composition		VR Banding	
ESWI	17	VR Band 1	1
Catholic European	3	VR Band 2	13
Afro-Caribbean	4	VR Band 3	5
Unknown	1	No record	6
Total	25		25

On the four occasions on which the class was observed, the average attendance was 21.8 , with a low of 20 and a high of 23.

Eight of the sixteen girls who completed the questionnaire admitted to truanting. In addition there were two others whom the teacher noted as 'away as often as not', and one other, absent on the day of the pupil questionnaire about whom her friends said 'she's never in'. This

might suggest that attendance was as much of a problem in this class as it was with 3CE at St Andrews, and that the staff were equally unaware of it. However some of these confessions concerned relatively minor infringements: two emended 'often' in the question to 'once', another to 'a bit', while Maria, the most popular girl in the class, talks of 'six times', and the low ability girl Angela of 'five times'.

Class History

As we have noted, the girls in this group were not together for the whole school day. They came from five different Forms, and were distributed for example between at least four different Geography classes. A similar, if not necessarily identical, dispersal is likely to have taken place in the other subject areas.

Only one girl, Caroline, was singled out as having unspecified 'problems at home' which caused her to 'run away'. Another, Julia, was pointed out as being anomolous for the group in that she was a 'blatantly middle-class child'.

Social structure

Sixteen of the twenty five pupils, including five of the low ability girls, were available to complete the questionnaire. Unfortunately the others were involved in the rehearsal of a school play, and so were not able to contribute.

According to the pupils' accounts, the largest friendship group, named 'Maria's Group' after the most popular girl, involved a third of the class: among the remainder most had either one or two special friends, while there were three social isolates. Two thirds of the girls had no contact with any of their classmates outside school time. This can be compared with one third of the pupils in the core classes at Ridgemount and

Manor Park and over half at St Andrews. The looseness of the social ties at the two voluntary-aided schools can be explained in terms of their wider catchment area. In the case of St Annes the school policy of constantly shifting class membership must also have played a part.

Pupils were asked about their plans to stay on in school after the Fifth Form, and about their perceptions of their parents' wishes. In each of the core classes in the other schools there was evidence of similar plans being made being made by good friends about what to do at the end of the Fifth Form (stay in school, go to Sixth Form college, look for work etc.), regardless of the children's perceptions of their parents' wishes. However in this class there was no real evidence for the influence of the 'best friend' in the choice of what to do at the end of the Fifth Form. This was perhaps not surprising in view of the very different social experience of this group of girls. They socialised less outside school, and saw each other less often within it.

Once again a full description of the friendship patterns can be found in Appendix G.

Group Attitudes to School and Teachers

Surprisingly, attitudes to school in this mixed-ability class¹ when tapped by the Hargreaves measure, were marginally less favourable than those in the core class at St Andrews, although the difference was not significant.

Only 19% of the class was planning to stay on in school after the Fifth Form, which was fewer than in any other school except Manor Park, and very surprising considering the Hargreaves findings for the Fifth Form

¹ Previous comparisons with the core class at St Andrews have involved the streamed Geography Third Year class at St Annes, which had more favourable attitudes.

sample in this school. However 63% did wish to continue in full time education, which is what we would expect from the VR Band composition of the group.

When the girls' ratings on the 'Attitude to Teachers' scale, and their assessments of their four teachers on the 'Good Teacher' items were considered these were found to be more favourable than those found in 3CE at St Andrews, although once again differences were not statistically significant.

Academic Self-concept

Despite its mixed-ability composition, the ASC of this group was lower than that of any of the core classes in other schools.

Table 7: 3 Third Year English classes: ASC scores

	Mean	Std. dev.	N
St Annes English 3(5)*	3.04	.595	16
Ridgemount	3.16	.19	11
St Andrews	3.28	.302	18
Manor Park*	3.34	.63	18

* These were mixed-ability classes.

Differences between the core classes in the two voluntary-aided schools were not significant despite the very different VR Band composition of the groups.

The low ASC score of this group was the result of two factors: first the whole class's very realistic appraisal of their chances of becoming 'a teacher a doctor or a scientist', and secondly the VR Band 3 girls' poor opinion of their intellectual standing (mean ASC score = 2.6, std. dev. = .64).

7: 2: 2 Mrs Lacey's aims for and opinions about the group

Mrs Lacey took the class for three double periods per week and found the group highly stressful and very difficult:

Enjoyability	
(1=least, 10=most)	6
Difficulty	
(1=least, 10=most)	9
Stressfulness	
(1=least, 10=most)	10

Her comments showed that she did not think of the class as a mixed-ability group: she assumed throughout the interview that they were of low ability. Thus when asked if she could tell the interviewer 'something about the children' she noted of one girl, Pauline:

'She's more serious than most of the others in the class - tries very hard. I think she's a bit anomolous for the group actually. Her spelling is quite poor, but her attitude and most of her achievement would put her in a higher group.'

However she did think that for a low ability group they were 'brighter' than usual. In fact, she felt that 'if something were different they would nearly all be in a higher group'.

Mrs Lacey was very clear about what she saw as holding the class back:

'I feel that if they learned to cooperate with each other - if they piped down and listened, and were more socially aware of each other things would improve greatly for almost all of them, because their written work is actually not bad at all.'

Her aims for the class were directly inspired by this perception:

'I most want them to cooperate with each other, to listen and be aware of other people because I feel that that's what's holding them back.'

Like the two teachers in the other Catholic school she found that the class responded best to 'written work of the most formal kind', although she also mentioned drama as being very popular. Questioned about the kind of work she found most difficult with them, Mrs Lacey had no hesitation in naming discussion. Later she added:

'The worst thing is they never listen. I've tried getting them into fixed groups for discussion and they haven't been happy with those groups. Maybe if we could get the groups they were happy with it would help.'

Mrs Lacey pinpointed the distraction caused by sitting near to friends, or the unwillingness to cooperate with the larger class group as a major cause of difficulty in the class.

7: 2: 3 Classroom interaction

The lesson chosen to examine in detail was considered by Mrs Lacey to be the most successful (4 on the Success scale) and the least stressful (2 on the Stress scale) of the four monitored. This was also the first lesson observed, and Mrs Lacey felt that although the lesson was 'typical in most respects', it had 'a much quieter beginning', although Caroline, the girl previously identified as having 'problems at home', was more attention seeking. She felt that there was a possibility that those two factors were related to the observer's presence, but that 'otherwise the class was not influenced'.

Unbeknownst to Mrs Lacey who arrived six minutes late, one of the teaching sisters had just reprimanded the class for making too much noise. The nuns were held in a great deal of respect by the girls, and this perhaps was the reason for the class's comparative restraint in the opening phase of the lesson.

The lesson was held on the first two periods after the lunchbreak on a Tuesday afternoon and was designed to supplement the class's reading of the 'Diary of Anne Frank'.

The Lesson

(Timetabled for 75 minutes: actual contact time, 69 minutes)

Settling in (6 min.)

Class arrives in time. The teacher enters six minutes after bell.

Stage 1: (5 min.)

The teacher arranges the next day's work, when she will be absent.

Transition (2 min.)

Pupils get their books out.

Stage 2 (13 min.)

Pupils discuss their secret hiding-places.

Transition (2 min.)

The teacher gives out photocopied material and worksheet about Nazi Germany.

Stage 3 (2 min.)

Individual study of photocopied material.

Stage 4 (14 min.)

Class reads aloud photocopied material.

Stage 5 (4 min.)

Class looks at photocopied pictures and discusses them with teacher.

Transition (2 min.)

Giving out of work books.

Stage 6 (24 min.)

Individual written work.
Class dismissed without ceremony.

The book had not proved very popular with the class, and Mrs Lacey hoped to generate more enthusiasm for Anne's story. Anne's enforced secret hiding-place had suggested the written work which was to be read out in

stage 2, while the photocopied material given out during the second transition and the questions on the worksheet about Germany under the Nazis had been planned to provide background information.

Forty five percent of lesson time (a very similar proportion to that spent by Mrs Lacey with her Latin class) was spent in 'whole class' teaching (stages 1, 2, 4 and 5): 16% was taken up in procedural matters (stage 1 and transitions): although this was no longer overall than was spent in Mrs Lacey's most enjoyed group, there were noteworthy differences. For example where Latin 3(1) took 33 seconds to get out their homework books, English 3(5) took 2 minutes. For approximately 38% of the time, as in Mrs Lacey's other class, the girls worked individually.

'Whole class' teaching

During stage 1, Mrs Lacey was involved in giving instructions for work to be done by the class when she was away during their next lesson. Analysis at the level of moves did not show the normative pattern of pupils largely restricted to supporting moves:

TABLE 7: 4 Mrs Lacey with the English class 3(5)
distribution of moves in lesson stage 1 (5 min.)

	Teacher	Pupils
Framing	2	0
Focusing	4	0
Opening	9	9
Chall. opening	2	9
Reopening	3	3
Supporting	9	1
Challenging	4	5
Total	33	27

As was to be expected in such a lesson phase, the teacher's initiating speech acts were either 'metastatements', 'informatives' or 'directives'. The

only exception was a final 'check' question at the close of the stage 'Has everybody got that down then?'. By definition, the teacher therefore had built into the structure of the discourse the opportunity for 'supporting' moves realised by behavioural reactions ('reacts') or possibly brief 'acknowledgements' of the information being handed out. In practice, there was only one supporting move from pupils while they inaugurated topics more frequently than the teacher.

Of these opening statements 43% were classified as challenging based on their breaking of discourse framework expectations (DF). Thus they all represented on-topic interruptions of the following type:

		ACT	MOVE
Mrs L:	I want you to listen Dawn please (4 secs pause while the class settles) I think most of you live somewhere near a street market/ (interrupting) yeah I do	Direct. Summons P. M. Starter Ackn.	Opening Challenging (D.F.)*
P:	yeah	Ackn.	Challenging (D.F.)*
Mrs L:	I'm sure most of you do/ P: (interrupting) I don't	Ackn. Inform.	Supporting Ch B. open. (DF)*
Mrs L:	and if you don't live near one I expect you've been to one/ Samantha: (interrupting) a market then	Starter Elicit.	Ch. Opening (DF)*
Mrs L:	a market yeah	Reply	Supporting

* Coded as challenging because the pupil interrupts the teacher, a break in discourse framework expectatons (DF).

As in the extract above, Mrs Lacey in this lesson usually met such interruptions with polite supporting 'acknowledgements'.

In lesson stage 2 over two thirds of the teacher's initiating statements were 'elicitations' or 'directives' to read aloud their work, to

which pupils would be expected to respond with the corresponding supporting moves. Once again there was an unexpectedly high number of challenging and opening moves from pupils (see Table 7: 4).

**TABLE 7: 5 Mrs Lacey with the English class 3(5)
distribution of moves in lesson stage 2 (13 min.)**

	Teacher	Pupil
Framing	1	0
Focusing	3	0
Opening	57	14
Chall. opening	9	9
Reopening	6	1
Supporting	22	43
Challenging	4	15
Total	102	82

At first pupils were reluctant to read, producing challenging evasions:

		ACT	MOVE
Mrs L:	Donna	Nom.	
	what's yours like	Dir./read	Opening
Donna:	(says nothing. 2 secs.)	<θ>	Chall. (DF & L3)*
Mrs L:	didn't you do one	Check	Opening
Donna:	yeah	Reply	Supporting
Mrs L:	Come on let's hear	Prompt	Reopening
Donna:	(Shaking head) No mine's stupid	Inform.	Ch. B. open. (DF & L 3)*
Mrs L:	Shall I read it	Elicit.	Opening
Donna:	It's stupid	Reply	Challenging (L 10)**
Mrs L:	Shall I read it	Elicit.	Reopening
Donna:	I've only written this	Reply	Challenging (L 10)**

* Coded as challenging because the pupil does not read aloud as requested, breaking discourse framework expectations (DF), and because the pupil does not obey a directive (L3).

** Coded as challenging because the pupil refuses permission (L10).

Of the first four girls whom Mrs Lacey approached, only Julia showed no reluctance to read. It was only when Mrs Lacey abandoned this strategy and asked instead 'Has anyone actually had their own den or playroom place?' that contributions flowed freely. Thereafter challenging openings came from pupils unwanted interruptions and Mrs Lacey's attempts to control turn-taking:

		ACT	MOVE
P:	Miss Josephine's actually got a bomb shelter in her garden	Bid Inform.	Ch. open. (DF)*
Mrs L:	Well we'll get to Josephine right at this moment I'm listening to Christine	Marker Starter Direct.	Ch. open. (L 5)**

.....

Caroline:	(indecipherable because she is talking over others) xxxxxx	Inform.?	Ch. open? (DF)*
Mrs L:	Caroline we'll come to you let me hear Josephine	Summons Starter Direct.	Ch. open. (L 5)**

* Coded as challenging because the pupil has interrupted the teacher;
breaking discourse framework expectations (DF),

** Coded as challenging because the teacher denies the pupil's right to
speak (L5),

Reading aloud

During lesson stage 4, (reading aloud of photocopied material), the class task provided opportunity for pupil participation of a more organised kind and the chance to read was welcomed by the girls, as there were many hands raised in bids to be selected, and noone chosen showed any

reluctance. Six 'turns' to read generated seventeen hand raises. Those 'turns' ranged in length from just over one to just over two minutes.

Only one pupil, Julia, needed no correction. However, unlike Mrs Thomas at St Andrews Mrs Lacey was prepared to wait some time for pupils to attempt a pronunciation. Only with the poorer readers was she more inclined to 'inform' them of the answer immediately.

Mrs Lacey also gave pupils the opportunity to explain the meaning of difficult words. In such situations once again however, although the situation never got out of hand, pupils' reactions were less well disciplined than those of either of the 'most enjoyed' groups. In the following extract only the well-behaved Pauline observed the hand-raising ritual. The others called out their answers, and these were accepted, as were interruptions, by Mrs Lacey. who was noticeably reluctant to reject any answers:

		ACT	MOVE
Mrs L:	what does fanatical mean	Elicit.	
	Lorna	Nom.	Opening
Lorna:	fanatical?	Loop	Challenging (K&S 3)*
Mrs L:	if you're fanatical about something		
	what are you?	Elicit	Reopen
Lorna:	fascinated	Reply	Supporting
Mrs L:	a little bit yeah	Evaluate	Supporting
Pauline:	(puts hand up)	<Bid>	
Caroline:	what's that?	Elicit	Chall. open. (DF)**
P:	excited	Reply	Supporting
P:	mad about it	Reply	Supporting
Mrs L:	you're mad about it	Accept	Supporting
	you're -		
	what's the best word	Elicit	Opening
P:	you enjoy it	Reply	Supporting

* Coded as challenging because the pupil asks for clarification of a question (K&S 3),

** Coded as challenging because the pupil interrupts with an unrelated question thus breaking discourse framework expectations (DF),

		ACT	MOVE
	(In the background one pupil talks to another as the teacher continues)		
Mrs L:	you enjoy it	Accept	
	so much that it's almost too much/	Comment	Supporting
Caroline:	(interrupting) miss	Bid	
	What's that xxxxxxxc	Elicit	Chall. open. (DF)*
Mrs L:	that's on the next page that we're		
	coming to	Reply	Supporting
P:	when you're desparate	Reply	Supporting
Mrs L:	yes you're really desparate	Evaluate	
	you're crazy about something.	Comment	Supporting

* Coded as challenging because the pupil interrupts with an unrelated question thus breaking discourse framework expectations (DF).

It is to be noted that all challenging moves came from the pupils.

Written work

During the twenty four minutes of stage 6 (individual written work), thirty three approaches were made to the teacher by around two thirds of the class: fifteen contacts were initiated by hand raising, and eighteen by call-outs. There were some girls who engaged in both behaviours while others used one method only. Maria always called out, as did three of the other girls noted as the least hard working by Mrs Lacey.

Caroline and Maria were the least attentive pupils as they had been at every other lesson stage. Mrs Lacey made a point of approaching their group when the demands of the rest of the class left her free. They were the only group she was observed making special efforts to approach without being requested to do so.

The observational schedule recorded that for half of the time everyone appeared to work. Only during an initial two minutes of 'settling down' to work and during a further four minutes towards the end of the lesson were more than two or three girls noted as obviously 'off task'. It

should however be noted that since Mrs Lacey permitted pupil/pupil talk and it was not always possible to be sure when that was work related, these latter figures should be treated with caution. Noise levels were however low compared with those in Mrs Clark's lessons at St Andrews.

7: 2: 4 Discussion

The lesson just described illustrated clearly the difficulties which Mrs Lacey had outlined in the interview: these were subsequently replicated in all her other lessons with this class. Each was marked to a greater or lesser degree by uncontrolled and often (from the educational point of view) irrelevant pupil talk during periods of 'whole class' instruction. Pupils typically broke discourse framework expectations by interrupting the teacher or by refusing to answer when questioned (DF), or requested to have information repeated (K&S 2) or clarified (K&S 3) as a result of failure to attend.

When pupils discussed their secret hiding places in lesson stage 2, as Mrs Lacey had complained, they showed little 'social awareness' of each other. Those who were willing to contribute talked in lowered voices which made it clear that they intended to communicate with the teacher and their immediate circle of friends' only, and not with the class as a whole. Mrs Lacey tried on more than one occasion to restore 'whole class' talk - 'Would you like to speak to everybody?' - but particularly the girls round Maria failed to respond. Finally Mrs Lacey drew the episode to a close in exasperation with the words: 'Obviously this is not a profitable line of discussion is it?'. After the end of the lesson she remarked: 'If I hadn't stopped the discussion when I did there would have been chaos'. Stage 5,

¹ During this lesson every girl was seated beside a friend, except Maria who had been banished to the back of the class.

in which the class discussed the pictures with the teacher was very similar.

However, despite her concern Mrs Lacey gave the class no consistently clear signals that their behaviour was unacceptable. Interruptions which broke the discourse framework expectations which she had established were rarely initially challenged by her, although continued infringements eventually drew reprimands.

This teacher disliked status-related classroom rituals and did not take an overtly assertive stance in the power relations between pupils and teacher. In her 'most enjoyed' group, selected because they liked being in the class, she had no need of coercive, or explicitly controlling, tactics. With English 3 (5) she behaved in the same way. Her 'directives' in all lessons were initially expressed in the softened form of statement, request or question:

'Would you like to come and write one of these on the board?'

'Can you do it the other way?'

'Let me hear Josephine.'

'At the moment I'm listening to Christine.'

Unlike her 'most enjoyed' high ability class, English 3(5) did not respond as Mrs Lacey would have wished to this kind of approach.

7: 3 The low ability class: Geography 3(5)

7: 3: 1 Background factors

Twelve girls from Mrs Lacey's English class, including the most popular pupil, Maria, and half of her friendship group, were assigned to

Miss Harris's Geography class. Since there were only twenty two pupils in this group, the twelve represented over half of the class.

Although officially the English class were mixed-ability and the Geography class low ability, there appeared (apart from the inclusion of one VR Band 1 pupil in the English class) to be little difference in VR Band composition. The racial mix of the two groups was also very similar, although there were more Spanish and Italian girls in the Geography class.

Ethnic Composition		VR Banding	
ESWI	12	VR Band 1	-
Catholic European	6	VR Band 2	12
Afro-Caribbean	4	VR Band 3	4
Unknown	-	No record	6
Total	22		22

However Mrs Lacey's two most disaffected pupils, Caroline and Lara, were not members of the Geography class, which included other pupils with more positive attitudes towards education and higher ASC scores. Consequently the Geography class on self report was better disposed towards school, and particularly towards its teachers (see Tables 5: 27 and 5: 28).

7: 3: 2 Miss Harris's aims for and opinions about the group

Miss Harris found her class easier to teach than Mrs Lacey and less stressful, although no more enjoyable:

	Geography Class 3 (5) Miss Harris	English class 3 (5) Mrs Lacey
Enjoyability (1=least, 10=most)	6	6
Difficulty (1=least, 10=most)	5	9
Stressfulness (1=least, 10=most)	6	10

She rated the class as 'average' for a lower ability Geography group, and considered that the easiest work with the group was discussion:

'They like discussing things. They are quite good at discussion work. They enjoy doing Map work, Atlas work, but they only like discussion work.'

Asked about the kind of work she found most difficult with them Miss Harris replied 'most things to do with writing':

'Anything where they've got to think for themselves and do their own piece of work. They need to know exactly what to do every step of the way and every single thing to write down.'

Miss Harris's main aim for the class was directly related to this perceived weakness:

'I don't like it when they just learn things off parrot fashion - you know not understanding it. I like them to try to understand something. I like to get them to learn at least one thing a week and understand what I'm talking about.'

The greatest difficulty in the way of achieving this aim Miss Harris saw as 'keeping them quiet long enough to talk to them'. This was very reminiscent of Mrs Lacey's reply to the same question: 'the worst thing is they never listen'.

Miss Harris's comments on the effect of friendship ties on work levels were very different from Mrs Lacey's. She made a point of allowing particularly the 'slower ones' to sit next to friends, and felt that this improved work levels:

'If I separate them because they're being naughty or something they work less well then. They tend to need the confidence of being near to their friend. Even if they don't copy each other they can't work on their own. They need to know they're with somebody who's their friend.'

7: 3: 3 The twelve girls from English 3(5)

If we consider both teachers accounts of the twelve girls who belonged to both classes we find that, as in St Andrews, they saw individual pupils in a very different light. For example the most popular girl Maria, who was seen as a difficult pupil by Mrs Lacey and amongst the least hard working in the class, and as average for ability, was viewed by Miss Harris as in the top group for both work and ability.

On the other hand Miss Harris talked of being involved in 'a personality clash' with one of the VR Band 3 girls, Donna, largely because of difficulties which centred around her friend in this class, Margaret. Margaret was not in the English class, and Mrs Lacey found Donna 'very eager to please', although in English also her friendship choice was seen as unfortunate - 'she is friendly with Bernadette. They don't always do each other good'.

Julia, the 'blatantly middle class child' was also regarded much more favourably by Miss Harris who saw her as amongst the most hard working in the group. In Geography lessons Julia was separated from her best friend: she consequently sat near the front of the class next to the hard-working Pauline, with whom, contrary to what the girls' self-reports would reveal, Miss Harris saw her as having 'a strong friendship'.

These facts remind us that if certain individuals amongst the twelve girls who were in both classes were seen differently by Mrs Lacey and Miss Harris, this might have been due to the different friendship settings in which they found themselves. Friendship patterns were considerably disrupted in this Geography group which met only once weekly. The number of pupils without any close friends rose to eight, and four of our girls, including Julia, now joined the group of social isolates. The

central group around Maria was halved, and challenged by another group of four friends as the hub of the class.¹

7: 3: 4 Classroom interaction

Miss Harris saw the class once a week in the small noisy room next to the Dining Hall, where both teachers had been observed teaching their 'most enjoyed' class. Since there were only twenty two girls on the role, it was on this occasion less crowded. The lesson chosen to examine was rated by the teacher as 'typical in most respects', unaffected by the presence of the observer, at the midpoint on the Success scale, and 4 on the Stress scale (1 = stressful, 5 = unstressful). The teacher's lesson plan for this class was very similar to that which she had used with her high ability 'most enjoyed' group. Each lesson was built round passages and diagrammes in a text book, which had to be copied up.

The lesson

(Timetabled for 70 minutes: actual contact time 66½ minutes.)

Settling down (1½ min.)

Teacher waits for silence and greets pupils.

Stage 1 (2 min.)

Teacher introduces topic - hill farming - and questions pupils about what they know.

Transition (2 minutes)

Teacher gives out books, and girls read through a unit individually.

Stage 2 (4 min.)

Teacher discusses with class what they have read.

¹ It is interesting to note that in this class as in the English class 3(5) although the majority of the friendship pairs belonged to the same Form, this was not true of the girls who were the objects of the most friendship choices and belonged to the larger friendship groups; they came from all the Forms. It was as if the more assertive and dominant girls were drawn together across the Form divisions, whereas the quieter girls relied on friendships initially made in the Form settings.

Stage 3 (8 min.)

Two girls read aloud next paragraphs and teacher discusses the readings and explains diagrammes to the class.

Transition (2 min.)

Teacher gives out exercise books, and class write date and heading.

Stage 4 (1 min.)

Teacher instructs class to copy passage from book.

Stage 5 (6 min.)

Girls copy from book.

Transition (40 secs.)

Time between teacher first instructing class to stop, and next lesson stage.

Stage 6 (1 min. 20 secs.)

Teacher instructs class to answer a question in the book. A diagramme has to be copied, the three different types of land labeled, and coloured and a key provided.

Stage 7 (22 min.)

Girls work individually while teacher moves round class answering questions.

Transition (30 secs.)

Time between teacher first calling class's attention and class ready to listen.

Stage 8 (4½ min.)

Teacher gives out homework.

Stage 9 (9 min.)

Class work individually once again.

Packing up (2 min.)

Bell goes and girls pack up. They formally take leave of the teacher.

During the longer 'Transitions' the teacher was careful to set a task that pupils could be getting on with while books were distributed. About half of the lesson was spent on individual written work, and a third in six

episodes of 'whole class' instruction. These figures were very comparable with those found in the lesson with Miss Harris's 'most enjoyed' class.

'Whole class' teaching

In the two opening stages of 'whole class' teaching at the level of moves pupils had a smaller than usual share of the interaction and were restricted to supporting responses while the teacher had a monopoly of initiations:

TABLE 7: 6 Miss Harris with Geography 3(5): distribution of moves in lesson stages 1 and 2

	Stage 1 (2 min.)		Stage 2 (4 min.)	
	Teacher	Pupils	Teacher	Pupils
Framing	1	0	1	0
Focusing	2	0	3	0
Opening	8	0	12	0
Chall. opening	0	0	0	0
Reopening	0	0	0	0
Supporting	3	4	5	6
Challenging	1	0	0	0
Total	15	4	21	6

Pupils' contributions were without exception replies to questions which punctuated instructive monologue from the teacher. As such these were mainly either checks on understanding or, as in the extract below, proffered opportunities to help the teacher construct an argument. Miss Harris had just summarised at some length the difficulties faced by hill farmers because of poor soil and the short growing season.

		ACT	MOVE
Miss H:	Difficult to keep animals like cattle	Inform.	B. opening
	What kind of land do cattle like to		
	graze upon	Elicit.	Opening
Chorus:	Flat	Reply	Supporting
Miss H:	Xxxxxx flat	Accept	Supporting
	what else	Elicit	Opening
Chorus:	Grass	Reply	Supporting

Miss H:	Lots of grass on it that's right lots of grass they need grass it's their staple food grass in summer time anyway So in these hilly areas	ACT Evaluate	MOVE
	(Miss Harris continues to speak for another full minute)	Comment	Supporting
		Concl.	Focus.

Miss Harris acknowledged her dominance and promised a larger role for pupils in her focusing introduction to Stage 3:

'I'm going to give up talking and get you to read now. Who would like to read for me?'

Analysis at the level of moves shows that the pupils indeed had approximately a normative one third share of the discourse:

TABLE 7: 7 Miss Harris with Geography 3(5): distribution of moves in lesson stage 3

	Stage 3 (8 min.)	
	Teacher	Pupils
Framing	1	0
Focusing	5	0
Opening	24	3
Chall. opening	2	1
Reopening	0	0
Supporting	7	15
Challenging	2	0
Total	41	19

There were however few moves per minute (less than eight). Once again this was entirely due to the length of the teacher's contributions. For example two girls were asked to read out the text: however the first read for twenty seconds only, while Miss Harris subsequently commented on what she had read for fifty five seconds. The second girl's contribution lasted for twenty three seconds in all, which Miss Harris interrupted twice, with

comments lasting nearly two minutes. Although the class was given the opportunity to answer questions, these required only monosyllabic answers which the teacher herself expanded upon at length in her evaluations.

By the end of stage 3 the major opportunities provided by the teacher for pupils to contribute verbally in the 'whole class' situation had ended. In stages 4 and 6 Miss Harris spelt out instructions while the class obediently listened. It was only during stage 8, where the teacher was giving out homework, and where the majority of her initiating acts were directives, that pupils themselves initiated more often with a flurry of questions. This was also the lesson stage in which there were the highest number of 'control' statements by the teacher (6.7 per 5 minutes).

Written work

During the longer periods of written work (Stage 5 and Stage 7) pupils were not encouraged to talk. Noise levels never rose dramatically, and there were periods of absolute silence. The whole class appeared to concentrate on the work until the last six minutes, when many could be presumed to have finished: 'off task' pupils caused a minimum of disruption. A maximum of four pupils were noted as apparently 'off task' at any one time.

Miss Harris did not sit at her desk as the class worked but moved amongst the desks, or stood with her arms folded watching the class, ready to respond to requests for help. These were forthcoming on thirty five occasions from fourteen girls (around two thirds of the class) during the thirty six minutes of individual work-time. Miss Harris herself made an additional twenty four unsolicited approaches to pupils. Six of these were disciplinary interventions and eleven in all involved those girls who

were observed to be most often off task. On the other hand Miss Harris also approached three girls who never initiated contact.

Thus during written work three quarters of the class had some conversational interaction with the teacher. As with Mrs Lacey, this was of a purely private nature, and the rest of the class were not invited to listen in by the teacher's raised voice level. The number of contacts however showed that these were for the most part necessarily brief. Although there were stretches when the class worked without either requesting or being offered help from Miss Harris, in only one two minute period was the teacher observed talking to a single pupil only. On other occasions the number of contacts made rose to five.

Although two thirds of pupil-initiated contacts were made by call-out rather than the raising of hands, this was largely due to the lack of any need for such behaviour, as pupils had only to wait until the teacher passed their desk as she patrolled the classroom. It was noteworthy that Miss Harris was able to respond promptly to all but two of the approaches made by pupils.

7: 3: 5 Discussion

Once again a noteworthy feature of Miss Harris's discourse was the highly structured type of interaction which she controlled. Transitions were marked by directives which clearly outlined what pupils were expected to do. If they were to listen, then they were explicitly instructed to do so, and Miss Harris did not show Mrs Lacey's tolerance of interruption, although she was careful to explain the reasons for her insistence:

'I do it this way because if I don't say put our pens down and everybody listen I get a hundred pairs of hands all asking me the same question.'

'Shhh! I want you all listening else we'll have twenty five people

asking me what to do.'

Each lesson stage ended with a prolonged 'focusing' move. in which the instructional content of the preceeding discourse was summarised in 'conclusions' and detailed 'commenting' speech acts. Finally a 'check' followed by a longish pause invited those who had not understood to ask for clarification.

On her own terms Miss Harris was very successful with Geography 3(5), and as the observation period progressed she reported becoming increasingly satisfied with the class's behaviour. Their reactions were certainly very different from those of Mrs Lacey's low ability group, and their behaviour closer to that of both teachers' preferred groups. Miss Harris's carefully structured teaching approach seems likely to have been a contributory factor. The evidence previously gathered in St Andrews has suggested that low ability pupils in traditionally run schools expect teachers to structure the interaction in highly predictable and tightly controlling ways. Provided that this is not done in a punitive manner and some opportunity for active pupil participation provided, they may find such interaction easier to respond to in educationally relevant ways.

In St Andrews we heard from Mrs Grant that some pupils were discomfitted by her kind of classroom approach, which emphasised personal discovery, rather than teacher-directed learning. Miss Harris was not at all that kind of teacher. The contrast between her approach and that of Mrs Grant is well illustrated by the difference in their approach to teacher question/pupil answer sessions.

In Mrs Grant's lessons these were used at the beginning of teaching exchanges, and served to encourage pupils to establish the

information base of lessons for themselves. In Miss Harris's lessons by way of contrast 'elicitations' typically occurred not at the beginning of teaching exchanges but embedded within them: they were used to reinforce points initially established by means of teacher 'informatives' and served a dual function - to check upon comprehension, and to provide a necessary verbal outlet for pupils. When Miss Harris felt that she could rely upon the class's attention, then the number of 'elicitations' decreased. In this way the two teachers' use of questions is profoundly different. Pupil participation was not an end in itself in Miss Harris's lessons. The more successful she judged them to be, the less pupils were called upon to participate verbally, and the more they were required to listen to teacher 'informatives'.

7: 4 The pupils' view of the teachers

Of the twelve girls in both classes ten completed questionnaires. These pupils reported that they found Miss Harris's lessons more interesting:

TABLE 7: 8 Self-reported interest levels: girls in both English 3(5) and Geography 3(5)

	Mean	Std. dev.	N	
English	3.4	.51	10	
Geography	4.1	.74	10	
<u>Difference</u>				
Mean	Std. dev.	T	DF	Prob.
-0.7	.823	-2.69	9	.025

The difference in reported work levels, although in the same direction, was not however statistically significant:

TABLE 7: 9 Self-reported work levels: girls in both English 3(5) and Geography 3(5)

	Mean	Std. dev.	N
English	2.8	.63	10
Geography	3.1	.74	10

When we consider their ratings of both teachers on the 'Good Teacher' items, we find that Miss Harris was more favourably evaluated, although the difference just failed to reach statistical significance:

TABLE 7: 10 Ratings by girls in both English 3(5) and Geography 3(5) of Mrs Lacey and Miss Harris on 'Good Teacher' items

	N	Mean	Std. dev.
Mrs Lacey	10	9.5	6.1
Miss Harris	10	13.1	7.6
<u>Difference</u>			
Mean	Std. dev..	I	DF
		Prob.	
-3.6	5.254	-2.17	9
		.058	

The three girls who rated Mrs Lacey the most negatively were all VR Band 3 pupils.

If we look at the ratings for the two classes taken as a whole (that is the ten girls plus their different classmates in each subject) we find an even wider discrepancy between the evaluations. Tests of significance were not applied to these figures in view of the fact that only some of the same girls were rating both teachers:

TABLE 7: 11 Ratings by English 3(5) and Geography 3(5)
of Mrs Lacey and Miss Harris on 'Good Teacher' items

	Mean	Std. dev.	N
Mrs Lacey by Eng. 3(5)	7.4	9	16
Miss Harris by Geog. 3(5)	15.2	5.8	19

When the answers to the individual scale items were considered, the most striking differences involved the following items:

TABLE 7: 12 Assessment by English 3(5) and Geography 3(5) of Miss Harris and Mrs Lacey on individual 'Good Teacher' items

	Numbers of pupils agreeing	
	Mrs Lacey Out of 16	Miss Harris Out of 19
Makes lessons interesting	6	16
Has a good sense of humour	7	17
Makes sure everyone understands the work	9	18
Is someone you can talk to about problems	5	13
Cares about pupils as individuals	6	14
Can control the class	8	16
Listens to what you say	10	18
Knows what to do when things get out of hand	11	19

Major differences were not recorded for the perceived friendliness of the two teachers.

Once again, the group rated 'most enjoyable' by Mrs Lacey and Miss Harris responded by rating them highly on the 'Good Teacher' items, compared with three other class teachers. The evidence of six girls who were in both the Geography and the Latin groups would also suggest that the two teachers were seen in an equally favourable light by their high ability pupils:

TABLE 7.13 Ratings by their 'most enjoyed' classes of Mrs Lacey
Miss Harris on the 'Good Reacher' items

	Mean	Std. dev.	N
Mrs Lacey	16.7	2.2	6
Miss Harris	16	2.2	6

7: 5 Written Work produced by English 3(5) and Geography 3(5)

7: 5: 1 English 3(5)

Mrs Lacey had reported that she could not trust her English class to hand in their work to her locker, as was the custom in the school 'because I wouldn't get it in then'. As a result she collected the exercise books during lessons. She stated that, although work was not always handed in on time, 'in the end almost all of it' was returned: however five girls, including Julia, were mentioned as particularly bad at handing in work.

Three attempts were made to see the class's English books, and finally fifteen out of twenty five were produced.

Mrs Lacey also made available her record of the girls' marks for their work during the Third Term: she had lately been attending a course, and therefore had only kept tally of work handed in at the appropriate time. The eight Third Term marks recorded would show that only six girls had completed each assignment on time: two had apparently completed none and ten had completed less than half.

Mrs Lacey was accustomed to give work a mark out of 10: her evaluations ranged from a low of 5, to an upper limit of 9½. Unfinished work was corrected but not given a mark. She also added comments and corrected spelling and grammar, although in the poorest work not every instance was corrected. If we look at the four pieces of work which were

completed during the period of observation, one month later only six girls had all the work marked and four had had none of the pieces marked.

As in St Andrews there was a considerable variation in the amount of work produced, with the least prolific producing only half as much as those who wrote most.

The end-of-year examination marks for the class ranged from 69% to 33%, with the bulk of the scores (48%) falling within the range 50%-60%. Despite Mrs Lacey's low opinion of Julia her score came within the modal range and she ranked 7th in the class examination. All of the VR Band 3 pupils however fell below the modal range, apart from one, whose score placed her at the bottom of the modal group.

7: 7: 2 Geography 3(5)

Miss Harris followed the school's usual practice of having the girls leave work in her locker, and saw no need to collect work from pupils in class. When interviewed, Miss Harris had reported that the class were 'quite good about homework' as were all the girls in the school in her opinion. Only two, Antonella and Angela, who were amongst the weakest pupils in the class, regularly failed to complete work, because 'they never have their books'.

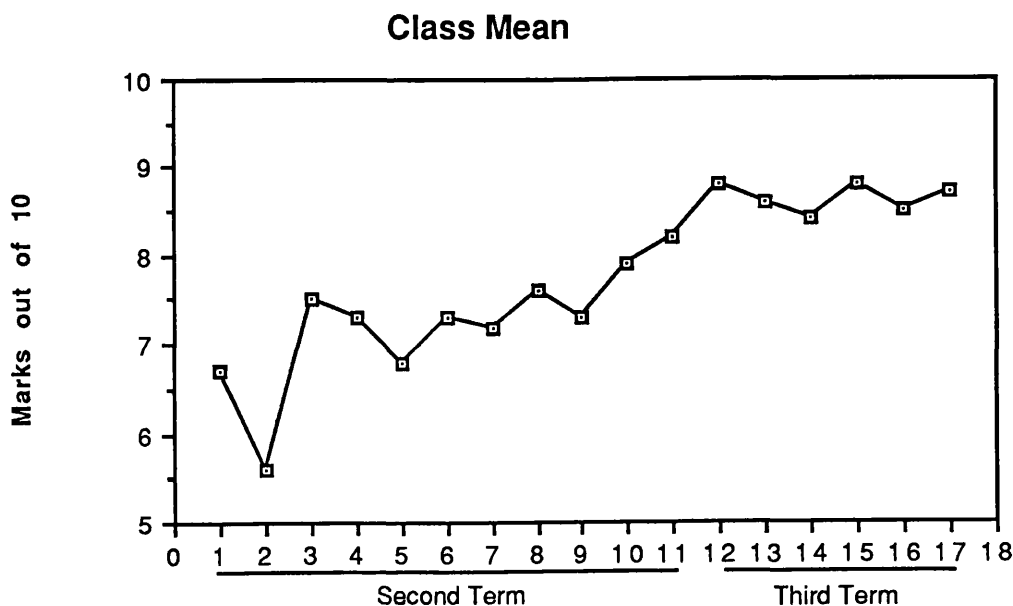
Two attempts to collect exercise books from the teacher produced fifteen out of twenty two (68%). The Geography books were A 4 size and most of the girls had taken the trouble to cover them: the English books were much smaller and uncovered.

Miss Harris like Mrs Lacey gave a mark out of ten, ticked appropriate answers and added comments. She also corrected spelling errors. The range of her marking was wider than Mrs Lacey's: one girl,

Margaret, had been given 0 for a piece of work submitted when Miss Harris first took the class. Every exercise handed in had been marked.

Miss Harris also provided access to her record of the class marks for seventeen pieces of written work produced over the last two terms. The records of only three girls were substantially incomplete. Interestingly enough two of those were the only girls who reported working harder for Mrs Lacey, although neither said that they found English more interesting, suggesting that we are right in taking the pupil's self-reported work levels seriously. However, the third pupil, Antonella, a VR Band 3 girl who handed in only two pieces of work during the Second Term (Miss Harris's first in the school), missed only one assignment during the Third Term, and her work showed a steady improvement. This girl's improved work level was not an isolated phenomenon. Over the two terms, the average marks for the Geography class rose steadily (see Figure 7: 1).

FIGURE 7: 1 Geography Marks



Miss Harris also produced the end-of-year examination marks. Once again the majority of scores (50%) clustered in a 10 mark range, this time between 60% and 70%. However seven pupils did better than this and only three worse: the four VR 3 Band pupils all did well in Geography. Antonella and Wendy in particular were very successful, coming 9th equal and 11th in the class. Julia's ranking was slightly worse in Geography, but once again she scored exactly in the middle of the modal range.

7: 6 Discussion

7: 6: 1 The classroom behaviour of low ability groups

Since we were not able to observe exactly the same group of girls with two different teachers, it was not possible to address our first research question and examine the behaviour of the same class as a function of different teaching approaches. However English 3(5) and Geography 3(5), despite the former's mixed-ability label, were both, in their teachers' eyes and in terms of the distribution of measured intelligence/achievement in the school, lower ability groups. We can therefore look for confirmation of the conclusion reached after observation in St Andrews that 'teachers who wish to encourage pupil participation may face specific kinds of problems in lower ability groups' (see section 6: 6: 1).

Both teachers at St Annes remarked on a central problem with their low ability groups similar to that identified by their colleagues in St Andrews - their reluctance during periods of 'whole class' teaching to listen to each other or the teacher's instructions. Group discussion, if not very firmly structured, tended to degenerate into private conversations between friends or unruly competition for the teacher's attention.

Teachers in both schools also noted that lower ability children preferred unchallenging written tasks and constantly asked to be told exactly what to do. The observational record showed that heavier demands were certainly made on teachers by their lower ability groups during written work. Both teachers at St Annes had approximately twice as many requests for advice directed at them during such lesson stages by the lower ability groups in comparison with their 'most enjoyed' high ability groups. This inevitably led to curtailment of the amount of time which the teacher was able to spend with any single individual, and frustration if pupils could not attract the teacher's attention.

At St Annes particular note was taken of the kinds of contact teachers had with pupils during written work. Individuals at such times had very limited access to conversation with the teacher, supporting the research assumption that 'whole class' teaching episodes potentially provide by far the greatest part of each pupil's experience of being a 'ratified participant' in conversational interaction with the teacher, although some will have only listener status.

7: 6: 2 Does the same teacher behave differently with different classes?

At St Annes as at St Andrews the teachers' behaviour with different groups was very consistent. Lesson plans, types of discourse initiatives, ways of relating to pupils and enforcing discipline were repeated from class to class. It must of course be noted that as Mrs Lacey's experience would illustrate, this does not mean that the interactional outcome was necessarily the same.

7: 6: 3 What kind of classroom interaction is favoured by teachers?

Both Mrs Lacey and Miss Harris preferred situations in which the class obediently supported discourse initiatives set up by the teacher, and

chose as their 'most enjoyed' group a class which responded enthusiastically, but in a very traditional fashion.

However, we have seen that active pupil participation is likely to result in more stress for the teacher - particularly in the case of lower ability groups. Teachers will differ in their ability to tolerate such stress. Some, like Mrs Grant at St Andrews are prepared to meet this kind of challenge, and indeed enjoy groups despite finding them comparatively stressful. Those like Mrs Lacey who are reluctant disciplinarians, and who prefer unstressful classes would seem likely to experience particular difficulties.

The evidence from St Annes would also confirm that there is a reciprocity in the way in which teachers and classes see each other. Very favourable evaluations were given to both the English and Geography teachers by their 'most enjoyed' group. Mutually rewarding interaction occurred in situations in which the teacher's role conceptions and deepest sources of professional satisfaction were met by the group. Thus the English teacher, who valued 'the company and friendship' of the children', chose as her 'most enjoyed' group a class which she had taught before and which 'liked being together'. She disliked the authoritarian trappings of teacher status, and her 'most enjoyed' group could be seen to require the minimum of overt direction. On the other hand she found the low ability group with its uneasy and fragmented friendship groupings and negative attitudes to school life extremely stressful and difficult to teach.

The Geography teacher on the other hand was very involved in her subject area, and her chief satisfactions came from evidence that children 'had learned something and understood something'. She had less extreme

personal reactions to the groups she taught. Of her 'most enjoyed' class she stated:

'I don't get on with these any better than I get on with a lot of other classes - there's a lot of equal classes.'

Since both her marking and her comments showed that Geography 3(5) had also rewarded her by showing increased understanding, it is not surprising that she viewed the class somewhat more favourably (only two points lower on the Enjoyability scale than her 'most enjoyed' group, compared with a difference of four scale points between Mrs Lacey's lower ability class and her 'most enjoyed' group).

7: 6: 4 What are the effects of different types of classroom interaction on pupils' interest and work levels?

At St Annes there was no significant difference in reported work levels for Geography and English, but pupils stated that they were more interested in Geography. The Geography teacher was also observed to control her low ability class well during 'whole class' teaching episodes, while the English teacher experienced considerable difficulty.

The different ways in which the two teachers at St Annes approached control had important implications for the successful management of classroom talk. During the lesson monitored with the English class Mrs Lacey was constantly interrupted by requests that she should repeat instructions (coded challenging K&S 2) or clarify them (coded challenging K&S 3), unsolicited contributions (coded challenging D.F.) and as we have seen, objections to following the teacher's instructions (coded challenging L 14). Yet, unlike Miss Harris, she did not clamp down on such behaviours when they first appeared.

Teachers who lay particular store by good interpersonal relationships may have difficulty with the confrontational aspect of such exchanges, particularly when their relationship with the class is not on a particularly sound footing. We noted at St Andrews that Mrs Grant also was less likely to confront her Third Year class, with whom she had a less intimate and secure relationship. As a result Mrs Lacey, while she attempted to give a larger and more open-ended share of the discourse to the class, failed with the lower ability group to provide clear guidelines or achieve a group situation in which they were willing or able to take up the challenge.

Miss Harris, on the other hand, who provided tightly controlled and less highly personalised openings for pupil participation in all her classes, experienced no such inhibitions and met with no comparable difficulties. The teacher-question pupil-answer sessions which she termed 'discussion' were safe opportunities for the class to contribute and to display their knowledge, and she used them skilfully to control the group by giving them an expressive outlet, particularly at the crucial opening stage of the lesson. Comparisons however with Mrs Grant's very different kind of approach would remind us that although both Miss Harris and her class were satisfied with this kind of interaction, more 'progressive' teachers would undoubtedly find it wanting.

However success is defined for pupils by the schools in which they have been socialised, and Miss Harris's approach was completely in tune with her traditional achievement-oriented Catholic environment. She had moreover replaced a teacher who had failed in her view to give her pupils any real understanding of Geography, and had been able to offer her group a new experience of success in the subject area. She herself stated:

'I know for a fact they didn't understand a lot of what they did before. You know they say 'We like Geography now - we understand it', and I like that.'

All the Third Year groups in St Annes studied the same curriculum, and pupils seemed very aware of their relative achievements: Antonella for example was heard on more than one occasion asking Miss Harris 'Have we caught up now?'. We have noted the steady improvement in marks over the two terms. It cannot perhaps be overstated that all pupils expect and desire to learn, and value the teachers who can ensure that they do (see Musgrove and Taylor, 1969).

Miss Harris's success would therefore confirm the suggestion made (see Chapter 6, section 6: 6: 4) that pupils in traditional schools like St Andrews and St Annes, provided they are treated respectfully, respond well to a formal style of teaching with strict protocol. This teaching approach is after all legitimated by the school as a whole, and teachers who conform to expectations, particularly if they can offer pupils an experience of success, are likely to do well.

It had been hypothesised that different school environments would also have an important impact (see Chapter 2, section 2: 1: 2: third research assumption). Teachers were expected to be greatly helped by a supportive school which fosters good teacher/pupil relationships and maintains good disciplinary standards. St Annes had a good institutional ethos: when we compare the classroom behaviour of the pupils in this school with that of pupils at St Andrews, the ready conformity to a strictly defined pupil role of the majority of pupils, and the limited range of misbehaviours practised by the more alienated was immediately obvious. Even in the low ability groups pupils were clearly used to working in

virtual silence without objections and attracting the teachers attention by an orderly raising of hands. The grosser misbehaviours of St Andrews (horseplay, swearing, flagrant disregard of the teachers' requests) were not seen in any of the lessons with any of the five classes' monitored at St Annes. Work levels, at least on self-report, were less effected by teachers who were considered less interesting and skilled (see Table 7: 9 and 7: 10). The success of Miss Harris who was after all a young and inexperienced teacher who had found it difficult to teach in a county comprehensive, and whose teaching style was still rather stereotypic, was no doubt partly due to this atmosphere of goodwill between pupils and staff.

Another factor associated with institutional support may also help to explain Mrs Lacey's comparative lack of success when compared with Miss Harris. The two teachers experienced very different kinds of support from their Departmental Heads. Miss Harris was in her first year of teaching: Mrs Lacey in her own words was 'a novice teacher' in English. However whereas Miss Harris had the benefit of being given by her Head of Department a detailed curriculum and list of general objectives for her work with the Third Year, Mrs Lacey had not been provided with a curriculum, and very much missed its support. As we have seen she found it difficult to hit upon acceptable reading material for her low ability group. Had guidelines been provided, she might have been able to negotiate an easier relationship with her class.

¹ Besides the three classes already discussed, the Geography class streamed fourth, which was considered a difficult group by its teacher the Head of Department, was also monitored on two occasions.

CHAPTER 8

Ridgemount

8: 1 The teachers

The Rutter scale showed the first of our county schools, Ridgemount, to have the best organisational provision of all four schools in our sample. Examination of the way in which the Third Year Options were handled, and the library funds allocated, showed that lower ability pupils were given good access to school facilities, and treated with consideration. Personal observation and the testimony of outside visitors bore witness to the school's friendly and cooperative atmosphere. More of the pupils than in any of the other three schools felt that they had had the opportunity to do things they enjoyed (see Table 5: 2).

This community-based county school therefore provides us with the opportunity of seeing teacher/pupil interaction in an excellent social environment which however differs in important ways from that of the Church-run schools so far monitored.

8: 1: 1 The English teacher: Mr Doyle

Mr Doyle had an Honours degree in English and History and a PCGE qualification from the same establishment as Mrs Grant from St

Andrews. He had spent all of his eight years since graduation at Ridgemount, which he considered a close social community. In particular he noted that frequent assemblies and meetings of different groups brought it about that members of staff knew the pupils well, and were acquainted with many whom they had not necessarily taught.

Mr Doyle came into teaching because:

'I thought I could do it because I thought I was a good communicator and I like people. I get on well with people and possibly the attraction of teaching was dealing with adolescents because I've always found adolescents interesting because I always found my own adolescence interesting.'

Asked about his greatest source of satisfaction in the job, he answered:

'The pupils themselves. Being in the classroom and getting reactions from the pupils and interacting with the pupils. That's the keenest satisfaction of all.'

Mr Doyle found older pupils particularly rewarding to teach, and gave as his reason the greater possibility of reciprocal personal relationships:

'I find it easier to relate to them on an individual human level, whereas First and Second Years good professionals don't do that because simply the kids can't handle it really. Fifth Year pupils I find that one can relate to them in an adult way and they can relate back in that way if it works properly. So that's probably the most satisfying thing - that they can be treated as people and not just as students.'

His greatest difficulties involved administrative procedures which he tended to give low priority, and he saw as most irritating the requirement to keep detailed records for statistical purposes, which he considered not to have 'much bearing on actual classroom performance and teaching'.

When asked about 'general standards of classroom discipline' expected in the school Mr Doyle stated that noise coming from the classroom should not interfere with 'other people in other classrooms'. He continued:

'I myself - and I think most teachers - have their own very clearly laid down ideas about classroom behaviour - very simply when I'm talking to them I expect everybody to be listening to me. When another pupil is talking I expect every pupil and myself to be listening to her and to let her finish and I expect people to put their hands up and to talk in turn rather than talking together. The main purpose for that which I tell the pupils about and which they accept always is simply that if someone's got something to say then it's worth listening to it - everybody listening properly at the same time. And likewise everybody will have a chance to speak sometime or other so it's all fair in the end if they'll be patient.'

7: 1: 2 Mr Doyle and his 'most enjoyed' class: 2B

Despite his stated preference for older pupils, Mr Doyle chose as his 'most enjoyed' class a Second Year group, which was ranked second in the streaming system. The majority of pupils were white, British and in the middle ability band:

Ethnic Composition		VR Banding	
ESWI	20	VR Band 1	5
Afro-Caribbean	3	VR Band 2	22
Middle Eastern	2	VR Band 3	0
Asian	1		
Turkish	1		
Total	27		27

Mr Doyle rated the class as follows:

Enjoyability (1=least, 10=most)	10
Difficulty (1=least, 10=most)	6
Stressfulness (1=least, 10=most)	4

He had found them since they came into the school the class he enjoyed most, although they were not an easy group to teach, and taxed his abilities in:

'preparing content that was sufficiently challenging and always being on the ball in terms of preparation and in terms of myself as well listening to them and being able to be patient with them.'

They had a reputation with other teachers of being difficult. This had been explained to Mr Doyle by the First Year Head as due to their being a group who 'respond to challenges thrown at them, and to plenty of direct stimulation'. Mr Doyle found that as a group they liked 'plenty of active participation in terms of discussion', and considered that there were 'no disruptive elements', which he attributed to the fact that he had taken them from the First Year.

Asked about 'obvious leaders or characters in the group', Mr Doyle replied:

'There's a spread of them, but I've held them in balance. Nobody dominates, except me probably, but I deliberately don't dominate, so that there's a lovely spread of natural leaders, but they're spread beautifully and I can just swing this way and that.'

His priorities for the class were as follows:

'I wanted to engage their interest and keep it because I saw that as the way to achieve all of the skills that I wanted them to achieve in terms of their writing and in terms of their discussion, in terms of their thinking and development of their thought.'

The group had in fact achieved very well in their end of term examinations which had been assessed by other teachers in the Department.

Mr Doyle had something to say about each girl, and his comments (50% of which were person and 50% pupil oriented) were more extended and enthusiastic than those of any other teacher monitored.

8: 1: 3 Classroom interaction: Mr Doyle with 2B

Mr Doyle had his own smallish classroom in which he often felt crowded, as he had classes of up to thirty children. Pupils sat at three long rectangular tables facing each other and at right angles to the teacher. There were recent examples of the girls' work on the walls, including some from the low ability Third Year group, and although the room was not one of the school's best, it had good light, and was tidy and well-kept.

In the lesson monitored Mr Doyle planned first to hand back homework and then to read and discuss a poem with the class.

The Lesson

(Timetabled for 40 minutes: actual time 34 minutes)

Settling down (6 min.)

Girls arrive in ones and twos from tennis.
Teacher already in classroom.

Register (45 secs.)

Taking of the register.

Stage 1 (6 min.)

Giving back of homework.

Stage 2 (3 min.)

Public reading of a poem.

Stage 3 (2 min.)

Private reading of the poem.

Stage 4 (20 min.)

Class discussion of the poem.
[Pupils give their ideas (13 min.)
Pupil-instigated talk of text (2 min.)
Teacher's questions (5 min.)]

Stage 5 (2 min.)

Plans for next day and packing up.

The lesson, later assessed by him at the top of the Success scale, typical in all respects and completely unstressful, began badly. The girls had just had a strenuous tennis lesson and straggled in wearily over a nine minute period, apologising and complaining of the heat. As the girls waited for late-comers to arrive they chatted and joked freely with Mr Doyle:

- P: What did you do with the brush?
Mr D: Sorry?
what do I go to?
P: The brush and clip from Melek.
Mr D: Oh the things I took from Melek -
I gave it back to her at the end of the lesson.
I didn't keep them overnight.
P: (laughing) Overnight!
P: Put them in your hair!
Mr D: Oh yes I did! You can see my hair's much curlier today.

The start of the lesson proper was indicated by a clear switch of tone from Mr Doyle. With raised voice level he requested, and got, absolute silence, whereupon he quickly ran through the class register.

Thereafter in all lesson stages except stage 3 (the private reading of the poem) the whole class was the teacher's 'interaction set'. Even during stage 1, although he was handing back homework to individuals, Mr Daly's voice projection suggested that all pupils were legitimated participants in the discourse, even if, for the most part, with only observer status. The group listened attentively as work was handed back with evaluative comment to their classmates. Although criticisms were forcefully expressed by Mr Doyle, they were tempered with praise for earlier work, suggesting that the present failures were merely unfortunate aberrations.

In every lesson stage bar one, the discourse was of the normative type seen so often previously: the teacher had the virtual

monopoly of opening moves and dominated with a two thirds share of the talk. However in stage 4, after the pupils had read the poem over to themselves, Mr Doyle inaugurated group discussion of a type not seen previously in any class. Pupils and teacher contributed equally in terms of moves, but the teacher's moves were briefer, and pupils' moves considerably more extended, than those previously documented. Certain educationally relevant challenging moves, which had only been found before in teacher's speech, were made by pupils themselves.

The first phase of this lesson stage illustrates this clearly:

**TABLE 8: 1 Mr Doyle with his 'most enjoyed' class:
distribution of moves in opening phase
of lesson stage 4 (13 min.)**

	Teacher	Pupils
Framing	3	0
Focusing	2	0
Opening	28	7
Chall. opening	11	17
Reopen	4	0
Supporting	10	44
Challenging	13	8
Total	71	76

The teacher controlled the selection of speakers through the procedure of 'bid' and 'nomination', without however shaping the content of their replies by explicit questioning: the class were asked simply 'if they had anything at all to say'. Pupils were eager to talk and unembarrassed about the relative unformedness of some of their contributions. Mr Doyle in such situations refrained from comment, simply legitimating by his nomination the next speaker.

<p>Mr D: OK (pause) right now first of all well I'd rather you take it your way in fact put your hand up if you've got anything at all to say (5 hands go up) right Natalie</p> <p>Natalie: em just about we were talking about the other day because this person is their is the person's friend and they're saying don't go out with anyone else you've got to stay with me and - em I can't remember</p> <p>Mr D: em Michaela</p>	<p>ACT MOVE</p> <p>Marker SS Frame</p> <p>Marker</p> <p>Metast. Focus.</p> <p>Cue</p> <p>Elicit Opening</p> <p><Bids></p> <p>Marker</p> <p>Nom.</p> <p>Reply Support.</p> <p>Inform B. Open.</p> <p>Nom. B. open.</p>
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The teacher's opening moves were consistently shorter than pupils' supporting ones, fifteen for example consisting simply of the name of the next pupil invited to speak.

During this initial lesson stage no pupil's contribution, however fanciful, was rejected out of hand. All except two of the teacher's challenging openings were brief good-humoured moves to control noise levels (shh!): five of his challenging moves were requests that pupils repeat what they had said for the benefit of the rest of the class, (K&S 2) or clarify what they had said (K&S 3). On the single occasion when an idea was objected to as not acceptable (L6), criticism was qualified with praise for originality.

A suggestion had been made by two of the girls that the poem was about the friendship between an old woman and a bird, because of an illustration in the book: Mr Daly felt this was misleading, and untypically rejected the idea:

		ACT	MOVE
Mr D:	well	Marker	
	I think it's a remarkably clever and original idea you know		
	but I must tell you that the pictures in this book have no real connection with - no <u>exact</u> connection with the piece of prose or poetry that's beside them	Starter	
	They're just put there as a kind of general impression but they're not supposed to be - each poem is a piece of writing it's not supposed to be about exactly what is shown in the picture		
	however I still think it's a very good idea	Evaluate	Chall. (L6)*
		Comment	
		Comment	

* Coded challenging as the teacher does not accept the pupil's answer (L6)

The girls however did not relinquish their point easily and the class supported them in opposition to the teacher, worrying away at the issue for six minutes, defending their point of view. Even when Mr Doyle stopped the argument, they made it clear that they remained unconvinced:

		ACT	MOVE
P:	but you're talking about people and it didn't say people either	Inform.	Ch. B. open. (L.6)*
Mr D:	this is very true	Evaluate	Support.
P:	sir	Bid	
P:	sir	Bid	
Mr D:	well	Marker	
	do birds say do birds speak and say 'come with us and come and play for you are our friend'		
P:	but you know but you know they can give you the impression	Inform.**	B. open
		Preface	
		Inform	Ch. B. open. (DF)***

* Coded challenging because the pupil rejects the teacher's explanation (L6),

** Coded as a rhetorical question, whose function is essentially informative, the questioning form being designed merely to prompt an 'acknowledge' in agreement.

*** Coded as challenging because the expected 'acknowledgement' is withheld, a break in discourse framework expectations (DF).

Mr Doyle from his own 'focusing' remarks to the class when, for the last eight minutes of the lesson stage he began to ask questions of his own, clearly indicated that he intended the initial phase to be understood as one where the class had been, so to speak, in charge of the topic:

'I want you to answer some of the questions that I am putting now as distinct from the questions that you are putting.'

8: 1: 4 Discussion

This teacher's reasons for entering the profession, 'I thought I was a good communicator and I like people', and his classroom priorities which explicitly stressed the importance of the rules for maintaining orderly access to public discourse, since 'if someone's got something to say then it's worth listening to it', were very much in agreement with the values implicit in the research.

His handling of classroom talk revealed a flexible switching between a traditional teacher-dominated type of interaction, and episodes when the class were in control of the topic, if not in control of the access to it. On such occasions Mr Doyle was like the conductor of an orchestra signalling when contributions were to be made, and controlling general noise levels: the 'score' was provided by the pupils themselves. With his 'most enjoyed' class, this produced enthusiastic and work-oriented verbal participation of a non-normative type, in that pupils were by no means restricted to a minor or 'supporting' role only.

In lesson stage 4 the first and longest part of the discussion was offered to the pupils as a forum in which they could air their own ideas. This tactic seemed to encourage particular kinds of interaction. In

2B the girls often took up novel suggestions by others and developed them further, as Joanne expanded upon Justina's idea in the following extract:

	ACT	MOVE
Justina: sir it might sound silly but it might be her mum/	P. M.	
Mr D: shh (to some quiet talk)	Direct.	Ch. open (L5)*
Justina: and her child and the mum might have had something wrong with her or something and her child had to xxxx and the mother might be protecting the child because other people might be wanting to take her child away from her	Reply	Support.
P: sir	Bid	
Mr D: it's a possibility	Evaluate	Support.
Joanne: (excitedly) sir sir	Bid	
Mr D: shh	Direct.	Ch. open. (L5)*
Joanne: Joanne	Nom.	B. open.
Joanne: they might be going to take her into a Home or something	Reply	Support.

* Coded as challenging because the teacher denies the pupil's right to speak (L5).

Girls spontaneously offered criticisms of the ideas of others, who were then called upon by Mr Doyle to defend their views, as in the continuation of the dialogue quoted above:

	ACT	MOVE
Mr D: Emma	Nom.	B. open.
Emma: so they wouldn't be friends if there were a mother and a child	Reply	Support.
Mr D: that's what I/ (to Joanne) how are you going to answer that	Starter	
Joanne: (Puts up hand)	Elicit. <Bid>	Opening
Mr D: yes Joanne	Nom.	
Joanne: but people in the Home might be friends with the little girl	Reply	Support.
P: yeah	Accept	Support.

		ACT	MOVE
Lisa:	yeah	Accept*	
	but the girl would probably like the mother more than the people in the Home		
Joanne:	yeah	Accept*	B. open.
	but what I'm saying is that xxxxxx	Inform.	B. open.

* Such 'accepts' which serve as polite introductions have not been accorded the status of moves. This will be discussed at the end of the section.

These extracts also illustrate how the acceptance of the validity of differing view points led to the acceptance by both Mr Doyle and the class of the problematic nature of knowledge. The discussion is not in terms of right or wrong answers, but about probabilities:

Justina: 'the mother might be protecting the child'

Joanne: 'they might be going to take her into a Home'

Emma: 'they wouldn't be friends if there were a mother and child'

Lisa: 'the girl would probably like the mother more'

P: 'they can give you the impression'

Mr D: 'that would seem to suggest'

P: 'but he mightn't mightn't he'

This is important if meaningful debate is to be encouraged: it allows room for manoeuvre, and ensures that contradictory opinions can be aired without fear of the losers being 'wrong' and therefore appearing foolish. It can only take place if the teacher is not seen as having a monopoly of the right answers.

It seemed to the researcher that the way in which Mr Doyle could relate to his pupils on a number of different levels helped to ensure their confidence in 'whole class' discussion. The kind of informal joking

repartee with the group noted at the beginning of the lesson was very typical of Mr Doyle's interactions with both of the classes with which he was observed, and positively valued by him:

'There's plenty of repartee as you'll see with this class. I deliberately encourage them because I want them stimulated. And they're past masters at being on the other end. It's like Morecombe and Wise!'

It established a freedom in dialogue between teacher and class, and extended the boundaries of acceptable interaction.

The discourse of both teacher and pupils was characterised by features more usual in conversation between equals. For example, although Mr Doyle could assume the 'teacher's voice' when called for, he paced his speech less deliberately and much faster than any of the other teachers we have so far monitored, so that the public talk in his lessons, despite the classroom ritual of 'bid' and 'nomination', approximated much more closely to the rhythms of conversational speech.

Certain other speech habits in his class were similar to those encountered outside the school room, but usually dispensed with, or perhaps considered inappropriate, inside it. Both teacher and pupils for example often encouraged and acknowledged each other's contributions or softened disagreement with monosyllabic speech acts (coded 'acknowledge' or 'accept' and indicated by italics in the following extract), which are common in social speech, but less usually met with in formal classrooms. On this occasion Justina was having difficulty in expressing her opinions about the poem:

		ACT	MOVE
Mr D:	that's not very clear	Loop	Chall. (K&S 3)*
Justina:	<i>no</i>	Ackn.	
	there's two girls		
Mr D:	<i>right</i>	Accept	
Justina:	<i>right</i>	Ack.	
	em and one seems like Lisa said		
	a bit of an outcast and noone else		
	likes her		
Mr D:	<i>yeah</i>	Accept	
Justina:	she's just made a friend		
Mr D:	<i>yeah</i>	Accept	
Justina:	the girls want to take her away because		
	they don't like the other girl and they		
	only want to take her for one day		
	because - or just for a little while		
	so the other girl won't have no friends		
	at all and this girl's trying to say		
	don't go because I'll be your friend		
	all the time the others all like just		
	want to use you	Reply	Supporting
Mr D:	(nominating next speaker) Michaela	Nom.	B. opening

* Coded as challenging because the teacher has asked for clarification (K&S 3)

These kinds of superfluous speech acts can be seen as giving an extended opportunity for securing interpersonal reassurance. They can also soften disagreement and signal that what might have been seen as a challenging remark is to be taken simply as a new piece of information. Such speech acts have not been coded as separate moves, on the basis that they can be argued to have a similar status to 'nominations' and 'bids' and do not signal 'a potential change in the direction of the discourse' (see 6: 1: 8).

8: 1: 5 The Geography teacher: Mrs Cross

Mrs Cross had been teaching for five years, and like Mr Doyle had spent her entire time since graduation at Ridgemount. Because of the absence of her Departmental Head on an In-Service Training course, Mrs Cross was presently sharing the responsibility of the Geography Department with another member of staff. She had trained as a Middle School teacher

with Geography as her main subject at a Church college which amalgamated with a Polytechnic during her training.

When asked how she came to choose to be a teacher Mrs Cross replied 'Very bad career's guidance' and added with a smile 'That's not very good is it?'. Nevertheless although she was not certain, she felt she would probably choose teaching if she had the decision to make over again. Asked how she saw her career going in the future, she answered:

'Very much in the academic field. I've got no pastoral aspirations at all.'

Her greatest satisfaction came from:

'the contact with the children - feedback from them. If they actually enjoy it. This year we have quite a high uptake of Geography in the Fourth Year and that is quite rewarding when they do that.'

She preferred teaching 'the less able', and younger children who did not need to be prepared for State examinations. Her greatest difficulties concerned the 'paper work' connected with the job, and her greatest source of irritation 'record keeping' and the fact that so much of the development of new course work, and 'working parties' had to take place in extra time, which was burdensome although the work itself was often interesting.

Later, when talking of the low ability group, she added that she found discussion particularly difficult with all her classes, and considered this the major difficulty preventing the achievement of her educational aims for pupils:

'Generally what happens - you get classes where you actually say 'Well, what do you think about something? and they find that difficult because they're quite used to having 'This is the question, this is the right answer this is the wrong answer', and the teacher is either going to mark it wrong or mark it right. But when you're asking for their opinions, and they've got to give their opinion: or perhaps there are

options and they have to make a decision. If they've done that in a clear way, whether or not the teacher agrees with it, it is going to be marked as right - I think that takes a bit of getting over.'

When asked about 'general standards of classroom discipline' expected in the school Mrs Cross talked of matters of dress and behaviour, and stated:

'the school rules are laid down very clearly for the staff and the parents and the pupils when they originally come to the school and each individual teacher is expected actually to uphold those standards whether it's you know to do with uniform, make-up, jewellery, chewing, smoking, manners.'

8: 1: 6 Mrs Cross and her 'most enjoyed' class: 2E

Mrs Cross's 'most enjoyed' group was ranked fifth of the seven streams in the Second year: over half of the class had ethnic roots outside Britain and were in the lowest ability band.

Ethnic Composition		VR Banding	
ESWI	8	VR Band 1	0
Asian	5	VR Band 2	4
Middle Eastern	4	VR Band 3	14
Afro-Caribbean	3	No record	3
Italian	1		
Total	21		21

Four of the Asian girls had language difficulties, and at least two did not as yet have even conversational fluency in English, being new-comers to the class and the country. Mrs Cross rated the class as follows:

Enjoyability	
(1=least, 10=most)	9
Difficulty	
(1=least, 10=most)	7
Stressfulness	
(1=least, 10=most)	5

Mrs Cross prefaced her comments about the class with a chuckle and began:

'They're naughty. I'm very fond of them. There are really some lovely characters in there. They're very naughty actually you know. They were quite a handful when I first had them. I used to think I'm glad I didn't have them when I first started teaching.'

She considered that when she first took up teaching she had been too inflexible and disciplinarian, expecting for example 'absolute quiet' in certain situations, and making too much of minor misbehaviours which she would still correct but now treat as a matter of unimportant routine.

Asked about her priorities for the class, what she 'most wants to achieve with them', Mrs Cross replied:

'As a teacher generally, not just to do with the subject, I think myself they've achieved it for me because they started off very disorganised, very 'anti', and they have in fact turned out to be a very nice little class. They haven't lost the brightness they were putting into being naughty. They've still got all the enthusiasm, but they put that enthusiasm into wanting to actually work. I'd like to think they go round everywhere and do that, but I don't think they do.'

Mrs Cross when compared with Mr Doyle had much less to say about her classes and only 24% of her comments covered 'person' oriented information.

8: 1: 7 Classroom interaction: Mrs Cross with 2E

Mrs Cross's top-floor classroom was large and very attractively laid out with the chairs clustered round tables arranged in different parts of the room. Glass doors led on to a large flat roof area on the floor of which members of the Art Department had painted a huge coloured map of the world which the Geographers used regularly. There was a sink, and lockers in which the girls kept their books, and a large shelf unit where the Department work sheets were neatly stacked. Colourful examples of the

children's work decorated the walls. None of the spelling errors had been corrected: the work had been mounted carefully.

A morning lesson which Mrs Cross rated as typical in all respects, unaffected by the observer, completely unstressful and at the highest point on the Success scale was monitored.

The Lesson

(Timetabled for 45 minutes: actual time 45 minutes)

Settling down (1½ min.)

Class are admitted into classroom,
and formally greet teacher.

Stage 1 (6 min.)

Mrs C. asks the class questions about soil, drawing upon their memory of First Year lessons.

Transition (3 min.)

Mrs C. assigns the girls to five groups
and organises the giving out of worksheets.

Stage 2 (5 min.)

Mrs C. discusses the worksheet with the class.

Stage 3 (4 min.)

Mrs C. gives out the soil with the help
of one of the girls, and the groups mix
the soil and water.

Stage 4 (4 min. 45 secs.)

Mrs C. discusses with the class how
they should write up their results.

Stage 5 (9 min. 15 secs)

Mrs C. moves round the groups, discussing
what is happening to their jars, and
answering questions.

Stage 6 (1 min.)

Mrs C. asks the groups to inform the
whole class of their results.

Stage 7 (7 min.)

The groups finish their work, wash out
their jars, and leave.

In this lesson as in every other observed, the girls waited outside, and Mrs Cross insisted on silence in the queue before they were allowed inside the classroom. They then entered and took up positions behind their chairs, at which point Mrs Cross again waited for a moment of complete silence before formally greeting the class.

Mrs Cross spent approximately 40% of her time teaching the class as a whole (Stages 1, 2, 4 and 6), while for the remainder of the lesson the children used worksheets and were split up into small groups, which the teacher occasionally joined as she moved from group to group, monitoring progress.

'Whole class' teaching

Analysis of lesson stage 1 gives a representative picture of Mrs Cross's approach and the class's response during 'whole class' teaching :

TABLE 8: 2 Mrs Cross with her 'most enjoyed' class: distribution of moves in lesson stage 1 (6 min.)

	Teacher	Pupils
Framing	1	0
Focusing	2	0
Opening	19	1
Chall. opening	1	2
Reopen	1	1
Supporting	9	18
Challenging	6	7
Total	39	29

Although the class had more than the usual one third of the interaction, the teacher had the familiar monopoly of opening moves. The class was lively and enthusiastic and around half of their challenging moves were breaks in discourse framework expectations (DF), due to the volunteering of answers or information without legitimation by the teacher. The teacher's

challenging moves were evaluations of wrong answers or requests that a pupil repeat a reply (K&S 2).

Pupils did not however have as large a part in the public discourse as Mr Daly's class during the lesson stage analysed at length. Their access to the talk was secured by 'bids' and 'nominations' in conventional teacher-question pupil-answer situations which typically produced lengthier introductions and evaluations from the teacher and only brief replies from pupils:

	ACT	MOVE
Mrs C: first of all let's think about what soil is imagine I was a Martian not difficult I know I've come down from Mars and I hear someone talking about stuff called soil	Starter Starter	
what is it what is this stuff called soil (pause 3 secs. no reply)	Elicit. (Ø)	Opening Challenging (DF)*
what do you do with it Dora: plant things	Elicit. Reply	Reopening Supporting
Mrs C: hands xxxxx hands please	Cue PM	Challenging (L5)**
Dora: (puts up hand) you plant things in it	<Bid> Reply	Supporting
Mrs C: you plant things in it put things in it to grow	Accept Comment	Supporting

* Coded as challenging because the expected reply is not forthcoming, a break in discourse framework expectations (DF).

** Coded as challenging because the teacher denies the pupil's right to speak (L5) without 'bidding' for a legitimating 'nomination'.

The class's verbal participation was however encouraged by Mrs Cross through her consistent use of questions at every stage of 'whole class' teaching. If we consider the entire 16 minutes 45 seconds of such teaching time, the preponderance of 'elicitations' is very striking:

**TABLE 8: 3 Mrs Cross with her 'most enjoyed' class:
distribution of teacher's initiating speech acts
in 'whole class' teaching episodes**

	Inform	6
	Elicit	51
	Direct	11

This was the case even during phases of the lesson where the main objective was to make sure the class understood instructions (see Stage 2), or to inform how an experiment was written up (Stage 4):

**TABLE 8: 4 Mrs Cross with her 'most enjoyed' class:
distribution of teacher's initiating speech acts
in lesson stages 2 and 4**

	Stage 2	Stage 4
Inform	2	2
Elicit	10	23
Direct	3	5

Group work

When initially interviewed Mrs Cross had pointed out that she preferred to teach 'in groups': it was therefore considered important to try to document interaction in such circumstances. The classroom layout allowed three tape recorders to be positioned unobtrusively near different groups - something which had not been possible in the either of the Church-run schools.

The linguistic record in these cases was however much inferior. In 'class teaching' sessions speakers are committed to making themselves audible to the whole class, and the teacher is likely to give legitimating nominations to pupils which help to identify speakers. In the group situation it is not so easy to ascertain who is speaking to whom, and if

pupil/pupil talk is allowed, the noise levels are higher. In addition it is not possible to keep a detailed observational schedule of each group with only one observer: without such contextualisation the dialogue sequence is often ambiguous. A full linguistic analysis was therefore out of the question. Nevertheless the observational data and the tapes did provide material which was suggestive of some interesting differences.

First, pupil/pupil talk which followed upon the splitting up of the class into working groups differed greatly between groups. Some groups were highly work-oriented, whereas others simply took the situation as an opportunity for gossip. One group spent a great deal of its time listening to one girl read aloud extracts from her Library book. This proved quite compatible with the simple group task which occupied the class until lesson stage 4, since it scarcely required the full attention of three or four people. This was done with discretion, and in no way jeopardised the attention of other working groups, or threatened to come to the notice of the teacher. Although Mrs Cross did monitor what was happening by moving between the five groups, it was unavoidable that any individual group was left to itself for around four fifths of the time.

Secondly, although it is difficult to state anything unequivocally without a full linguistic analysis, it would seem likely that the task-oriented talk of the pupils differed greatly in discourse structure from teacher/pupil talk in the 'class teaching' situation. In the small group situation pupils seemed to ask questions mostly about very practical things - 'Can I borrow your pencil?' 'What page are we on?'. They appeared to share ideas not so much by asking questions and requiring answers, but by 'informing' each other about what they were doing or thinking. Individual speakers seemed to be engaged in a number of separate monologues. However,

occasionally this gave rise to interesting confrontations, in which idea was matched against idea, or new problems were perceived. The most interesting teacher/pupil conversations in the group situation seemed to involve instances in which the teacher was called upon to arbitrate in such disputes, or resolve such dilemmas.

Thirdly, in the small group situation the teacher's interactional style with the pupils did not differ markedly between class teaching and group teaching episodes. The audience was smaller: it was easier for certain pupils to make approaches to the teacher and secure individual attention, but the kind of discourse was often very similar. The pupils, on the occasions in which they called the teacher over, were able of course to initiate the talk and control the topic of conversation, which represents an important difference. However the teacher was largely reliant upon the pupils' initiative in this respect. The group situation in itself did not provoke a different dynamic, if the teacher approached a group which did not initiate the conversation, she proceeded with her usual questioning technique.

8: 1: 8 Discussion

Observation during 'whole class' teaching episodes and in the small group situation showed teacher/pupil dialogue in Mrs Cross's class to be conventional: she relied heavily on the traditional teacher-question and pupil-answer technique, clearly seeking through this type of exchange to maximise pupil participation.

Mrs Cross had however volunteered unprompted her concern about her difficulties in stimulating discussion with her classes, pinpointing her pupils' reluctance to voice their own opinions - 'they're quite used to having you know this is the right answer this is the wrong answer'. The

transcript of this lesson provided some evidence of how teacher's questions, if regularly geared to producing particular pieces of information, may encourage this kind of pupil reaction. The following extract was one of a number of such instances:

		ACT	MOVE
Mrs C:	what happens if plants die	Elicit.	
	Eleanor	Nom.	Opening
Eleanor:	when there too many		
	plants they become coal	Reply	Supportive
Mrs C:	well	Marker	
	what happens to them when		
	they die	Elicit	Chall. opening (Labov 6)*

* Coded as challenging because the teacher's tone indicates the answer is not acceptable (L 6).

Mrs Cross by her failure to accept Eleanor's reply had in effect rejected a perfectly valid piece of information, because it was not exactly what was required to further the instructional goal which she had in mind. She wished to draw attention to the function of rotting vegetation for plant life, not to discuss how after centuries it turns into coal. In such circumstances the pupil is being asked to help construct an argument the teacher has already decided upon. The sequence continued:

		ACT	MOVE
Eleanor:	they chan - they -	Starter	
	I don't know	Reply	Challenging (Labov 12)*
Mrs C:	I think you do know it		
	you just can't think		
	how to say it	Evaluate	Challenging (Labov 6)**
	Ann	Nom.	
	what were you going to say	Elicit.	Opening
Ann	they rot	Reply	Supporting
Mrs C:	they rot away	Evaluate	Supporting

* Coded as challenging because the pupil denies that she is able to respond.

** Coded as challenging because the teacher does not accept the answer.

The discomfiture of Eleanor can be felt in her failure of confidence, which the teacher can be held to have instigated, despite her later attempts at face-saving repair - 'I think you do know it you just can't think how to say it.'

.....

In Ridgemount the English teacher showed a particular interest in relating personally to pupils, and demonstrated great flexibility of interactional styles. By handing over control of the topic to pupils while he himself concentrated on regulating turns-at-talk, he was able at certain junctures to promote with his high ability 'most enjoyed' class critical discussion of an impressive and unusual kind.

The Geography teacher related to pupils in a consistently formal way, and provided a clear and traditional structure for class discussion. However this teacher felt that the response of most of her classes to opportunities for discussion in which they might air their own views was inadequate. She preferred to structure lessons around worksheets with pupils working in small groups. Although this worked to her satisfaction with her lower ability 'most enjoyed' class, some groups were observed to be 'off task' without attracting the teacher's attention. This would underline how much in such situations depends upon the teacher's having in some way previously ensured the pupils' identification, to use Kelman's terminology, with the educational task, and not merely their compliance.

How will the core low ability group react to these very different teaching approaches?

8: 2 The low ability class: 3F

8: 2: 1 Background factors

Class composition and attendance

White British children were in a minority in this class and almost all pupils were in the lowest ability band.

Ethnic Composition		VR Banding	
ESVI	8	VR Band 1	0
Afro-Caribbean	8	VR Band 2	2
Asian	2	VR Band 3	16
Turkish	1	No record	1
Total	19		19

During the observation period attendance varied from a low of 11, never exceeded 16, and averaged 14.1. The English teacher, unsolicited, noted nine of the girls as having problems with attendance. Seven of these he described as 'non-attenders' or 'horrific' attenders: the Geography teacher noted three. However only three of the girls named by their teachers admitted to truancy in the pupil questionnaire. Two denied truancy and two were absent on the day the pupil questionnaire was completed.

A new school policy had been instituted whereby 'Second Language' children were being catered for within the school instead of being sent out to a Language Centre. Consequently one of the Asian girls, Dilara, who had recently arrived from Bengal, despite her lack of English currently attended many lessons with the rest of the group.

Class History

The girls had been together since coming into the school, with the exception of the Sudanese girl, Safia, who had been promoted to this class from the class below after Christmas, when Dilara also arrived from

Bengal. This was the first year that the group had been integrated with the mainstream classes, as the class had previously been part of the Remedial Department.

Confidential files existed on four of the girls: one girl had been filed for bad attendance, and another was noted as having been caught smoking. The two remaining files recorded horrific family histories of abuse which had necessitated Court intervention on the girls' behalf.

Social structure

Of the nineteen girls in the class sixteen were available on the day of the administration of the pupil questionnaire: their answers to the sociometric questions revealed a very integrated central group involving the Afro-Caribbean girls, who had close ties both within and outside school. This group was highly sociable: five of them expressed their willingness to 'sit near' anybody in their class during lesson time. Two white girls were linked with this group through strong reciprocal friendship with one of the black girls, and general acceptance by the others.

Another clearly identifiable group emerged which had strong ties within the classroom, but which, unlike the Afro-Caribbean group, had little contact outside school time. In this group Michaela, who was most often named as a desirable companion for hard work, had a central position. She was not one of the VR Band 2 girls, but was a conscientious student according to her teachers.

This leaves four girls who were social isolates: three of these were among the most consistent non-attenders, and one was the new girl Dilara.

A full account of friendship patterns is once again to be found in Appendix G.

Group Attitudes to School and Teachers

Measured on the Hargreaves scales, the truants and the girls in Michaela's group had more favourable attitudes to their teachers than to their school: all except one of the Afro-Caribbean group failed to answer these particular questions. Hargreaves had also found that black pupils were more likely to fail to complete this part of the questionnaire ¹.

The black girls did however complete the ratings of their individual teachers ². Results suggest that their attitudes to teachers were less favourable than those of Michaela's group. This would be in agreement with Hargreaves' findings that working-class Afro-Caribbean pupils had less favourable attitudes to teachers than either of the two other major ethnic groups ³.

Academic self concept

The ASC of the class was in keeping with that of other pupils of their ability level in the sample as a whole. However on one of the six questions they scored more highly. When asked 'What kind of marks do you really think you are capable of getting?', five girls thought themselves capable of getting 'good marks', and two felt they could achieve 'excellent marks', while no one thought themselves capable of achieving 'below average marks'.

¹ *Improving Secondary Schools, Research studies*, p. 6.

² All pupils greatly enjoyed this part of the questionnaire: perhaps since it was more specific, and not phrased in terms of generalities pupils found it easier to answer.

³ *Improving Secondary Schools, Research studies*, pp. 6 & 8.

8: 2: 2 The teachers' views of the class

Major differences appeared in the assessments of the class given by our two teachers. While the Geography teacher rated them as the least stressful and easiest class to teach, the English teacher saw them as approximately in the middle of a scale of 1 to 10 on both measures. Views about how enjoyable they were to teach were much closer, with the English teacher rating the class one scale point more enjoyable.

TABLE 8: 5 Teachers ratings of the low ability class

	English Teacher	Geography Teacher
Enjoyability (1=least,10=most)	7	6
Difficulty (1=least,10=most)	5	1
Stressfulness (1=least,10=most)	5	1

Mr Doyle

The English teacher, Mr Doyle, provided a comprehensive pen-portrait of each pupil, commenting on 'person' and 'pupil' oriented factors equally. He described a lively, and occasionally unruly class with affection, outlining a complex leadership network amongst the Afro-Caribbean group:

'This is a group with a structured hierarchy of leadership with Dawn being the dominant one, Barbara the one whom the others laugh at a lot - not at, with - she's got a terrific self-mocking sense of humour.'

A number of disruptive pupils were identified. One girl was described as tending 'to shout if challenged or withdraw into herself and refuse to do anything': another since her family's recent house removal and consequent term's absence had returned 'a totally changed personality - completely

disruptive in many ways': a third was characterised as 'easily the most disruptive girl in the class' and as having 'horrific home problems' and as 'extremely disturbed psychologically. She doesn't come here very often at all. She never speaks: she shouts all the time'. Interestingly, these three girls were the self-reported truants. Yet another girl on file for bad attendance, was described in the following terms:

'Very very anti-authority in every sense and will for the slightest thing go to a complete extreme. For example the other day I confiscated a magazine that she had in the class until the end of the lesson and she sort of walked out you know. Didn't come back and I had to organise a search party. Other times while say we've been in the library she'd rather chat and when I've taken ordinary measures of discipline like for example getting her to report it for her tutor's benefit she has completely flipped.'

Mr Doyle found the 'traditional English work - getting them to write structured essays, critical work on literature' the most difficult:

'This traditional type work is the work that they most resist because they say 'oh it's writing sir - I hate writing sir - don't want to do writing now.'

He saw them as preferring to be 'with books' in the Library, or 'being with discussion groups'.

His main aim for the class was to 'give them confidence'. He talked of preparing them for 'the exams they will have to do', and of wanting them 'to enjoy' the CSE syllabus they would face in the next two years, and 'to take an active part in the lessons and not to be dictated to, or instructed, all the time by me'. He was hopeful that a number of the girls would do well.

Mr Doyle was emphatic that the major difficulty standing in the way of his success with the class was the level of absenteeism:

'That is the major problem absenteeism and that is the thing which will positively destroy any chance they have in the upper years. So that is the major difficulty.'

Mrs Cross

Mrs Cross on the other hand found the class:

'quite shy. To me they come across very shy. I hear elsewhere they're not, but

They are very quiet and you really need to draw things out of them. They don't - it doesn't come that easily to them to actually question or even answer questions.'

She considered them a 'nice group to teach', but not amongst the most enjoyable because:

'they aren't sort of very enthusiastic and bubbling with questions.'

When asked what kind of work she found most difficult with them, she named 'discussion work', and added that they worked much better in the small group situation. When asked later about her priorities as a teacher with this class - what she most wanted 'to achieve with them and for them', she replied:

'I'd like to actually see them become a bit more confident because at this stage at the end of the Third Year when they're going into the Fourth Year and I can envisage some of them are going to do Geography and they're going to be in fairly large groups doing Geography and we do a lot of class discussion and group discussion and some of them might find it a bit difficult actually with the other girls from other groups.'

Mrs Cross was not optimistic about being able to achieve her aims with the class, and when asked about what was the major difficulty which prevented her from doing so, once again pinpointed their inability to give their own opinions. Mrs Cross, as we have noted, found class discussion where pupils

were asked to come forward with opinions of their own difficult to initiate with all groups: the situation in 3F she saw as merely an exaggerated case of a phenomenon fairly usual in her experience.

Despite these problems, Mrs Cross described the class as 'better than low ability groups usually are at tackling problems', and cited as evidence the results of the Third Year exams, in which 3F's average was only ten percentage points below that of the group streamed second in the school. It is to be remembered that 3F were the sixth of seven groups.

Opinions about individual pupils

The two teachers had very different views about certain individuals. Mrs Cross for example described Safia as the weakest and most timid girl in the group: Mr Doyle talked of her in the following terms:

'She's one of the most interesting girls in the class. Very independent, very in a way competent socially, very intelligent as well. The only thing that holds her back sometimes is the language structure. That's what holds her back though her ideas are first rate - excellent.'

In addition, Mr Doyle has special disciplinary problems with Dawn from the Afro-Caribbean group:

'I have to speak to her more than anyone in the class not because she's malicious but because she's super high energy. Every action she takes is funny even to me. It's a problem sometimes.'

Mr Doyle spoke of this girl whom he called the 'class super star' with obvious affection despite the problems she caused, and saw her as the 'dominant influence in the class'. This contrasted with Mrs Cross who, although she also saw Dawn as 'quite a live wire', found her neither disruptive nor unduly dominant.

8: 3 Classroom interaction: the low ability group

8: 3: 1 Classroom interaction with Mr Doyle

A lesson with 3F was selected which involved the reading of a passage from a novel, followed by discussion and written work. Mr Doyle planned to link the story, which told of the hero's feelings about his favourite teacher, to the girls' own experiences, which he wanted them to use in a piece of creative writing.

Mr Doyle did not rate any lesson with 3F at the highest point on the 'Success' scale, but this lesson was rated only one scale point lower. He considered the lesson as typical in all respects, unaffected by the presence of the observer, and 2 on the Stress scale (5 = most stressful). It took place directly after the lunch break on a Wednesday afternoon: the girls and the teacher arrived in the classroom before the bell for the start of lesson-time.

The Lesson

(Timetabled for 55 minutes: actual contact time 57 minutes)

Settling down (6 min.)

Teacher gives out text books, and gets new rough books from outside the classroom.

Register (30 secs.)

Taking of the register.

Stage 1 (30 min.)

Reading aloud of text (21½ min.)
and discussion of text (2 min.).
Conversation about who is to read next,
why they don't want to read etc. (6½ min.)

Transition: (1 min.)

Teacher notes book numbers, to keep check of who has each copy.

Stage 2 (10 min.)

The teacher begins to explain the written work which has to done. The class unprompted begin to discuss their own experiences.

Stage 3 (6 min.)

Teacher explains the task again and asks the class to begin writing. Public talk continues sporadically. Mr D. answers questions and attempts to control those who wish to continue the public discussion.

Stage 4 (2 min.)

Homework arranged and class pack up.

'Whole class' teaching

Classroom dynamics during 'whole class' instruction were well exemplified in lesson stage 2, in which the class instigated, and Mr Doyle then encouraged, discussion of their personal experiences with teachers.

As with his 'most enjoyed' group (see Table 8: 1), the low ability class and Mr Doyle shared almost equally the number of conversational moves (see Table 8: 6).

TABLE 8. 6 Mr Doyle with the low ability class: distribution of moves in lesson stage 2 (10 min.)

	Teacher	Pupils
Framing	2	0
Focusing	2	0
Opening	28	15
Chall. opening	33	25
Reopening	3	0
Supporting	13	28
Challenging	5	8
Total	86	76

Once again the teacher's challenging openings were good-natured notifications to the class that noise levels were too high, or that talk was inappropriate ('Shh!' 'Can we have just one person at this end. At the moment we've got four people talking.'). Such interventions however constituted more than half of all teacher initiations with the low ability

group, where they had represented only just over a quarter in Mr Doyle's 'most enjoyed' group. Similarly pupils' challenging openings were much more frequent and almost exclusively coded as breaks in discourse framework expectations (DF), occurring when pupils, without the legitimation of a teacher 'nomination', usurped the interaction. Pupils' challenging responses were most commonly 'Don't know' answers (L 12) or failures to participate when invited to do so (DF).

It is noteworthy that in Stage 2 3F did not wait for permission to speak, but took over the talk and inaugurated the discussion themselves:

		ACT	MOVE
Mr D:	OK and that's what the piece of writing that I'm going to give you now is going to be based on it can be real or imaginary it can refer to/	Marker	
P:	xxxxxxx (very quietly)	Metast.	Focus
Mr D:	shh	/	
		?	
Safia:	that about a teacher we like like her?	Direct.	Chall. open. (L5)*
Mr D:	listen wait wait	Elicit.	Chall. open. (DF)**
	it can refer to/ like any teacher?	Direct.	Chall open. (L5)*
P:		Elicit.	Chall. open (DF)**
Mr D:	(continuing over the interruption) teachers in your primary school (Chorus of talk)	Inform.	B. opening
Dawn:	do you know my old teacher did looks like you he used to get hold of us like this and shake us and we used to call him Shaker Baker	RSR Inform.	B. open.
		Comment	

* Coded challenging because the teacher denies the pupil's right to speak (L5),

** Coded challenging because the pupil interrupts the teacher, a break in discourse framework expectations (DF),

The way in which the girls interrupted and anticipated the teacher's instructions, taking over the talk without bidding for nomination (exemplified by the number of challenging opening moves coded 'DF') was quite typical, and very reminiscent of the behaviour of Mrs Lacey's class at St Annes (see Table 7: 3).

The incidence of orderly 'Hands up' turn-taking bids which had been the norm for 2B were exceedingly rare in all 'whole class' teaching stages in 3F, and control episodes correspondingly frequent:

TABLE 8: 7 Mr Doyle with his 'most enjoyed' class and the low ability class: behaviours during 'whole class' teaching time

	2B	3F
N. of mass hands up per 5 min	3.3*	0.1
N. of control episodes per 5 min.	2.5	7.8

* The number of mass hands up in 2B can be considered an underestimation. On occasions the class kept their hands raised for stretches of two minutes or more while the teacher selected for different answers; this was coded as a single 'hands up'. Also the numbers of girls involved was considerable as it was not unusual for over half the class to bid for the right to speak by raising their hands.

Mr Doyle's problems with Dawn, the 'class super-star', were clearly demonstrated in this lesson. Although there were fifteen girls present that day, Dawn was responsible for half of all the verbal contributions which it was possible to attribute to individuals. She also dominated lesson stage 1, reading for longest:

Time spent reading aloud

Dawn:	7 min 45 secs
Barbara:	6 min 40 secs
Carmen:	4 min 10 secs
Safia:	2 min 23 secs
June:	20 secs

Written work

Excited talk continued throughout the last few minutes of lesson time, although some of the girls began to write as requested. The task had been allocated as a homework assignment, and Mr Doyle did not insist that the discussion was curtailed.

8: 3: 2 Discussion

The comparative informality of Mr Doyle's inauguration of lesson-time allowed for conversational chat between pupils and teacher, humorous repartee and topics of conversation which might otherwise never be broached. However whereas 2B seemed to accept the taking of the register and the start of lesson-time proper as a natural break, and easily switched to other rules (access to the floor for example being gained by bidding for the teacher's permission to speak) 3F carried over this informal behaviour into lesson-time and presented problems of control because of it. Mr Doyle was clearly prepared to accept difficulties of this kind if he felt educational benefits could still accrue.

Commenting at the end of the lesson on Dawn's behaviour Mr Doyle stated that he deliberately used her as 'a catalyst' to set the others off, and stressed that he allowed this kind of behaviour because 'when I get that kind of reaction to talk about some kind of written work I know it's going to be good - they are genuinely involved'. Nevertheless he did feel that it was in itself undesirable, and that if he had had the class from

the First Year he would have been 'able to establish a working relationship with them' in which he would have been better able to control them during such class discussion. Observation in other lessons confirmed that when he so wished Mr Doyle could establish total control, for example when he required absolute silence of the class.

Another feature of the public discourse related to 3F's reluctance to obey, or their difficulties with, the simple rules of turn-taking emerged clearly. In contexts where the whole class constituted the interaction set, 2B had demonstrated the capacity to cooperate in the development of themes and ideas. In 3F there was no sign of such an integrated group approach. In class discussion each was in competition with the other for the general ear and above all the teacher's attention. Once again there were great similarities with Mrs Lacey's English 3(5), and on this occasion it was not possible to attribute the behaviour to poor group relationships.

However although the discourse did not always follow the desired pattern, pupils did sometimes exploit the sequencing rules of orderly talk to their own advantage, thus demonstrating that they had a sophisticated, if presumably unconscious, knowledge of their effects. In the following extract Mr Doyle called for 'one person' to speak: this was a reference to the fact that Dawn amongst others was talking while Safia held the floor:.

		ACT	MOVE
Mr D:	can we have one person talking at a time please	Direct P.M.	Chall. open (L5)*
Dawn:	yes sir you know Miss Barber/	Ackn. P.M. RSR/	Support.
Mr D:	(interrupting) Dawn	Summons	

* Coded challenging because the teacher denies the pupils' right to talk (L5).

		ACT	MOVE
Mr D:	let's have one person talking at one time	Direct.	Chall. Reopen (L5)*
	now	Marker	
	I/	/	
Dawn:	(continuing over Mr D.) xxxxxxxx	Inform.?	Chall. open. (DF)**
Mr D:	I'm talking to Safia	Starter	
	Dawn	Summons	
	will you be quiet		
	please	P.M.	
	and listen	Direct.	Chall. Reopen (L5)*
P:	(quietly) for a change	Aside	

Dawn falls silent.

* Coded challenging because the teacher denies the pupils' right to talk (L5).

** Coded challenging because the pupil interrupts the teacher, a break in discourse framework expectations (DF).

** Coded challenging because the teacher denies the pupils' right to talk (L5).

The heroic good temper and patience shown by Mr Doyle as he persistently draws attention to the rules of turn-taking, and Dawn's skill in manipulating social and linguistic conventions in order to monopolise the talk were typical of the interaction in this class and repay closer examination. First Dawn apparently assents to Mr Doyle's courteously expressed directive - 'Yes sir' (a 'supporting' acknowledgement complete with 'politeness marker'). Then comes a disarming 'request for speaker's rights' after which (without waiting for the optional 'accept') she enthusiastically continues. The mutual politeness each partner in talk observed in this minor power struggle was typical of the verbal behaviour of this teacher and class, and can be compared with the very different kind of interaction in Mrs Thomas's classes at St Andrews.

Mr Doyle had talked of using Dawn with her natural enthusiasm and over-eagerness to speak as 'a catalyst'. This lesson certainly provided some evidence that the rest of the class felt vulnerable when called upon to speak publicly. Mr Doyle had to overcome considerable reluctance on the part of most of the girls to reading aloud. Some of their excuses (hayfever, weakness due to fasting) seemed justified, but from later observations it became clear that they probably also reflected the embarrassment felt by readers who lacked fluency. Mr Doyle met such refusals with patience, but did not accept them and his perseverance usually succeeded:

Mr D: June June
will you please read just a little bit
not so much as Dawn just a little
OK
June: what page sir
Mr D: just a little bit - we are on page 21 at the moment
OK
I know it's difficult when you're not feeling terrifically well
just read a little bit and that will be fine

Dawn however, although she made a number of mistakes, experienced no such hesitancies: Mr Doyle in fact twice asked her to stop and she twice gained permission to continue, supported by the class who enjoyed her lively reading (and no doubt the personal reprieve):

Dawn: Can I read a little bit more?
I wanted to read man!
Sir - can I just -
Julie said I could take hers
It's enjoyable man
I'm getting into the story now
Mr D: go on then you little devil

In this way she provided an instructive role model for the others.

Mr Doyle's handling of hesitancies, mispronunciations and his evaluative tactics may also be contrasted with those of Mrs Thomas at St Andrews. Where Mrs Thomas proffered a word before the pupil had even attempted it (see Table 6: 5), Mr Doyle waited to be asked and, particularly where the pupil was more confident, required that she tried for herself:

Dawn: (reading) 'They searched about'
Mr D: They what? Look again.
Dawn: 'They screeched'
Mr D: Wonderful

Where Mrs Thomas never commented on the quality of pupils' performance, or thanked them, Mr Doyle routinely did both:

'Thank you very much. You've read very well.'

It was previously noted with 2B that Mr Doyle was accustomed to hand back work with both written comment and public words of evaluation. There was evidence from the lessons observed with 3F that the low ability girls also expected these two kinds of feedback from Mr Doyle in such situations and were disappointed if it did not materialise. In the following extract Jackie approached the teacher because her work, although corrected, was without concluding comments, since Mr Doyle regarded it as unfinished:

Jackie: Right sir. Can you mark that please cos you didn't mark it.
Mr D: (surprised) Didn't I
Jackie: No - not good or nothing. Just left the page.
Mr D: (looking at Jackie's book) Yes well it's that I corrected it but I didn't put a comment because I - is that all you've done?
Jackie: You only said do a bit.
Mr D: I said do some.
Jackie: What a page?
Mr D: Yes.
Jackie: You want me to do more?
Mr D: Yes

Although Mr Doyle's public evaluations of work were frank and occasionally highly critical, the girls in the low ability class gave clear indications that they valued even this kind of attention:

Mr D: (Giving book back to Jackie) Look at all that, eh?
all those words here. Everywhere you look.
You've got to pay more attention to the details.
(Handing back her book without comment) Tezjan.

Tezjan: Sir!

Mr D: (Handing back her book without comment) Safia.

Tezjan: What have you got to say about my book?
Sir, what have you got to say about mine?

Mr D: (Trying to attract her attention) June June.

P: (Drawing her attention to the teacher) June!

Tezjan: Sir! (pleadingly)

P: (Very quietly to Tezjan) Read it and shut up.

Mr D: (To Tezjan) Yes?

Tezjan: What have you got to say about my book?

Mr D: Er too short and er careless mistakes.
Although I'm quite pleased with some of your ideas there.
You just have to push yourself a little more that's all.

Safia: Sir, am I weak in my spelling?

Mr D: Yes you are. But considering that you've been not/

P: (Over teacher) Sir out of all of us/
(Stops short to listen)

Mr D: (Continuing) very long here, I think you've done pretty well.
You're learning all the time. You're trying. That's what you're
getting results from.

Once again it should be noted that critical comments were generally followed up by some kind of positive evaluation.

8: 3: 3 Classroom interaction with Mrs Cross

Unlike Mr Doyle, who rated most observed lessons with 3F as highly stressful, Mrs Cross rated all her lessons with this class as completely unstressful. A lesson also regarded as typical in all respects and completely successful was selected for linguistic analysis. Mrs Cross on this occasion had been delayed, and the lesson began late.

The Lesson

(Timetabled for 40 minutes: actual contact time 33 minutes)

Stage 1 (2 min.)

Mrs C. begins by recapitulating past knowledge and organising girls to give out the worksheets.

Stage 2 (5½ min.)

Mrs C. discusses what is on the worksheet with the class.

Stage 3 (6 min. 7 secs.)

The girls work in their groups, and Mrs C. moves round monitoring progress.

Stage 4 (2 min.)

Mrs C. discusses with the whole class the next instruction on the worksheet.

Stage 5 (16½ min.)

The girls work in their groups filling in the map. Mrs C. moves round the groups discussing work.

Stage 6 (1½ min)

Packing up and organisation of homework.

'Whole class' teaching

Around one third of the lesson was spent with the whole class as the 'interaction set' (stages 1, 2, 4 and 6). Teacher/pupil talk during lesson stages 1 and 2 showed the familiar monopoly of opening moves by the teacher, who had the normatively larger share of the discourse:

TABLE 8: 8 Mrs Cross with the low ability class: distribution of moves in lesson stages 1 and 2

	Stage 1 (2 min.)		Stage 2 (5½ min.)	
	Teacher	Pupils	Teacher	Pupils
Framing	1	0	2	0
Focusing	1	0	5	0
Opening	8	1	27	3
Chall. open.	0	0	0	0
Reopening	1	0	3	0
Supporting	3	3	13	24
Challenging	0	1	1	7
Total	14	5	51	34

As in Mrs Cross's 'most enjoyed' class, her initiations were largely headed by 'elicitations'. Pupils' contributions were for the most part restricted to supporting moves. Their challenging moves were the result of 'Don't know' answers (L 12) or failures to reply to a question (DF) and, from Dawn, three requests for clarification (K&S 3). The teacher had no need for challenging openings to curb unwanted talk (L 5), and her single challenging response involved the rejection of a wrong answer.

It is again instructive to examine the differences between 2E, Mrs Cross's 'most enjoyed' class, and 3F on some of the behavioural measures which were collected:

TABLE 8: 9 Mrs Cross with her 'most enjoyed' class and the low ability class: behaviours during 'whole class' teaching time

	2E	3F
N. of mass hands up per 5 min.	.6	0
% of class putting hands up outside mass hands up	47.4	13.3
N. of verbal contributions by pupils per 5 min.	25.2	17.3
N. of 'control' episodes per 5 min.	1.2	1.0

It can be seen that in the two lessons which represent (in the teacher's opinion) optimum performances for both groups, Mrs Cross's preferred class, as we would expect from the interview, although they required marginally more 'controlling' comments from Mrs Cross, did contribute more. As with Mr Doyle the difference in 'hands up' behaviour was very pronounced. During the four lessons monitored, only two girls in 3F were noted simultaneously

putting up their hands twice, while on one occasion three girls did so. On no occasion were there examples of the sustained and enthusiastic 'hands-up' involving groups of up to eight children, which were noted for 2E.

Group work

The majority of the class's time was however spent in the 'small group' situation, following worksheet instructions. Once again conversation at individual work tables was recorded. The girls were encouraged by Mrs Cross to talk about work with their neighbours, and there were instances of group discussion of an interesting kind.

In particular, Diane's group, which on this occasion was joined by Sharon, one of the most persistent truants, became very involved in an argument over the positioning on their maps of a plywood factory. They had been instructed to plant trees on the hillsides, and to remember that their factory needed to be near the supply of wood. However Diane wanted to build a factory away from the hills and float down the logs on the river. There was a lively discussion and Diane called in Mrs Cross to settle the matter. Despite the fact that the teacher rejected the solution on the grounds that they were going to be asked to build a dam on the river later, Diane did not easily relinquish her idea, and asked 'Miss can't you break it?'. Mrs Cross was clearly pleased with the initiative and commented:

If you weren't building a dam your theory is right. Are you doing Geography next year? We do lots of work with this sort of thing in it.

The momentum of the lively discussion between the girls carried over into their dialogue with the teacher in a way not seen in any of the question-and-answer sessions in the 'whole class' situation.

Once again however as with 2E there were indications that some pupils were giving little real thought to the work. Thus when two lessons later Mrs Cross asked the class to select two things they had marked on their maps and to give reasons for their choice, Dawn's comments revealed that she at least had failed entirely to grasp the purpose of the exercise.

8: 3: 4 Discussion

If we compare the behaviour of 3F in the lesson just analysed with their behaviour in another lesson on the same subject which Mrs Cross rated less successful, we find the following:

TABLE 8: 10 Mrs Cross with the low ability class: behaviours during 'whole class' teaching time in unsuccessful and successful lessons

	Unsuccessful*	Successful
N. mass hands up per 5 min.	0.2	0
% of class putting hands up outside mass hands up	0	13.3
N. of verbal contributions by pupils per 5 min	14.3	17.3
N. of 'control' episodes per 5 min.	0.5	1.0

* Rated 3 points lower on the 5 point Success scale by Mrs Cross.

The small number of 'mass hands up' involved requests for books, not bids to participate verbally. The drop in even the number of 'control' episodes corroborates that Mrs Cross's problems were not disciplinary. The class was passive and reluctant to contribute, but not in any way ill-behaved.

By comparing Mrs Cross's unsuccessful lesson with the low ability class with her successful lesson with her 'most enjoyed' group, we

can also see how when a teacher meets with a more negative response from a class, she may subtly alter her demands.

Mrs Cross was in the habit of inaugurating lessons with questioning sessions which served to check pupils' understanding, and make connections and emphasise continuity with previous lessons. Both of these lessons begin in this way. At first glance the teacher's behaviour appears identical. At the beginning of the lesson with the low ability group we have the following dialogue:

		ACT	MOVE
Mrs C:	we'll see how much you remember before things started to change in 1949 what sort of land did the ordinary peasant farmers have to farm on	Metast.	Focusing
	(pause 1 sec)		
	who owned the land	Starter	
P:	landlord	Elicit.	Opening
Angela:	the landlord	Reply	Support.
Mrs C:	right	Reply	Support.
	the landlords	Evaluate	Support.

At the same point in the lesson with her 'most enjoyed' class 2E we noted the following dialogue:

		ACT	MOVE
Mrs C:	what is this stuff called soil	Elicit.	Opening
	(pause 3 secs. no reply)	(Ø)	Chall.
	what do you do with it		(D.F.)*
Dora:	plant things	Elicit.	Reopen.
Mrs C:	hands xxxxx hands please	Reply	Support.
		Cue	Chall.
			(L 5)**

* Coded as challenging because the pupils do not answer, a break in discourse expectations (DF).

** Coded as challenging because the teacher denies the pupil's right to answer (L5) without a 'bid' and legitimating nomination.

In both classes Mrs Cross first asks a more difficult question 'what is soil?' 'what sort of land?', and changes to a more specific one 'what do you do with it?' 'who owned the land?'. But while 2E are given three seconds in which to reply, in the case of 3F the pause is too short to give the class a realistic chance of replying before the more challenging question is demoted to the status of 'starter'. When a response comes from the class the teacher's reaction too is different. In both cases a pupil calls out the correct answer, but whereas with 2E Mrs Cross insists upon the correct procedure, and encourages the rest of the class to contribute by giving the cue 'hands up', in 3F the individual call out is accepted.

These two reactions, since they occurred in the opening, and therefore highly salient, moments of the interaction, can be imagined to have had a determining impact. Certainly 3F settled down to allowing Angela to answer the majority of the questions. Mrs Cross remarked later:

'let's have somebody else speaking - don't have Angela do all the work for you'

But when Angela was replaced it was by Diane, who was also allowed by the class to carry the burden of replying more or less single-handed. Between them these two girls answered two thirds of the teacher's questions.

There were other important differences. Sinclair and Coulthard noted that 'very frequently a teacher will use a series of elicit exchanges to move a class step by step to a conclusion.' Mrs Cross was certainly accustomed to use this technique. However where with 2E the main facts were elicited from the pupils themselves, with 3F although the surface form of the series of eliciting moves by the teacher was preserved, the informational content was very differently distributed. The 'yes' or 'no'

answers, which were all she often required of 3E, asked the pupils to provide no new information.

	ACT	MOVE
Mrs C: could the farmers work together very easily	Elicit.	Opening
Chorus: no	Reply	Support.
Mrs C: if they wanted to bring water from the river to the land that was being farmed the farmer on his own couldn't do it it was too big a job	Starter	
but could they get together very easily and help each other	Elicit.	Opening
P: no	Reply	Support.
Mrs C: think about what you read about look at your books	Clue	Starter
what did you write about last time	Elicit.	Opening
Fatima: (reading from her book) time was wasted	Reply	Support.
Mrs C: their time was wasted they found it very difficult to be able to work together (pause)	Comment	Support.
things like irrigating the land or draining it they couldn't do	Inform	B. opening
they were too busy walking all day to their little plots of land farming the land they had to do extra things very easily	Comment	

Mrs Cross's questions were almost rhetorical, and maintain little more than the illusion of her usual instructional technique. The content of her concluding remarks was not built up from the pupils' replies as would normally be the intention. Those replies were in fact little more than acknowledgements of the information provided by the teacher.

8: 4 The pupils' view of the teachers

If we look at the girls ratings of how interesting they found English and Geography, no significant difference emerged, although Geography attracted more polarised judgements. Safia for example, who was considered 'very weak' by Mrs Cross found Geography 'very boring', whereas three of the truants, Tezjan, Sharon, Caroline and Mavis found it 'very interesting'.

There was similarly no significant difference in the work levels reported. However eight girls saw themselves as working hard 'most of the time' for English, as opposed to only two who thought they worked 'hard most of the time' for Geography. Sharon reported that she worked hard 'all the time' for Geography: this is interesting in view of Mrs Cross's remark that Sharon 'when she's around doesn't do much work'.

When we look at the ratings given to the two teachers on the 'Good Teacher' items once again we find no significant difference, although the mean score for Mrs Cross was somewhat higher:

TABLE 8: 11 Ratings by the low ability class of their four teachers on the 'Good Teacher' items

	English	Maths	History	Geography
Mean	6.3	6.7	- .8	8.3
Std. dev.	9.2	9.1	7.3	6.1
N	14	12	13	12

However if we examine the spread of the ratings, which have a possible range of -20 to +20, some interesting points emerge. Mrs Cross inspired less widely divergent loyalties, and was much preferred by those girls who gave the lowest over-all scores to their four teachers, and to Mr Doyle in

particular. For Mrs Cross the ratings ranged from 19 to 1, with 7 of the scores clustered in the range 1-5. Mr Doyle was rated from -14 to 16, with a modal score in the range 6-10. His overall score was sharply deflated by the ratings of two of those he identified as 'non-attenders', Sharon and Dawn C., who were from their answers to the pupil questionnaire the most alienated girls in the group. These girls were also amongst those who rated Mrs Cross the most highly:

	Mr Doyle	Mrs Cross
Sharon	-12	19
Dawn C.	-14	12

It is interesting that it should be the absentees who viewed Mr Doyle so negatively, in view of his preoccupation with the problem of attendance. It was the first thing he mentioned about the class - 'one of the major problems is attendance' - and it will be remembered that in his opinion, absenteeism was the major difficulty he faced in achieving his aims for the group.

It was also the most hard-working girls who favoured Mr Doyle rather than Mrs Cross. A similar polarisation occurred, although in this case the ratings were not so extreme:

	Mr Doyle	Mrs Cross
Michaela	14	4
Fatima	16	5
Barbara	11	2
Angela	16	6

Mr Doyle was regarded very favourably indeed by his 'most enjoyed' class, eighteen of whom completed the questionnaire. Of those

seventeen rated him as their best teacher. In addition their ratings placed him in comparative terms far above their other teachers. The lowest mark he scored was 10, whereas only one girl rated one of her other teachers as highly as 16, the average mark given by the class for Mr Doyle. The unanimity of the class's ratings can be seen in the low standard deviation.

TABLE 8: 12 Ratings by Mr Doyle's 'most enjoyed' class of their four teachers on the 'Good Teacher' items

	English	Maths	History	Geography
Mean	16.1	.41	5.3	6.2
Std. dev.	2.6	5.9	4.9	6.6
N	17	17	18	18

Mrs Cross was also judged very favourably by her preferred class, 2E, although only six rated her best teacher out of the four. Eighteen girls in this group also answered the questionnaire, but four of the girls had language difficulties, and together with some other pupils failed to complete all twenty items: incomplete answers were dropped from the present analysis.

TABLE 8: 13 Ratings by Mrs Cross's 'most enjoyed' class of their four teachers on the 'Good Teacher' items

	English	Maths	History	Geography
Mean	1.9	6.6	12.5	15.8
Std. dev.	11.5	10	6.2	3.9
N	13	12	13	13

8: 5 Written work produced by 3F

8: 5: 1 English

During the lesson with Mr Doyle, after the reading of the novel and the discussion of their own experiences, 3F were asked in the last four minutes before packing up to begin writing in their rough books a 'Description of a Teacher'. At the end of the lesson they were asked to complete this description for homework. Two weeks later the majority, including two girls who were not present for the lesson, had copied up their work into their 'best books'.

The shortest of the descriptions covered thirty lines of A4 size paper (34 lines): four pupils, Michaela Julie and Carmen and Mavis, had covered on average a page and a half. The descriptions were detailed and interesting, if the spelling was somewhat eccentric. Angela, who throughout the lessons had expressed her fear that she had nothing to say, wrote one of the longer and most humourous pieces.

The rest of the work covered a variety of topics: there were letters, stories and poems written by the girls, 'opinions' on topical issues, formal exercises and some critical work on novels that they had been reading. Twenty of the poems were displayed on the walls and had been carefully decorated with coloured pens. Diane, described as one of the weakest in the class by both teachers, had contributed the following (original spelling as in all other quotations):

Market Noises

Friday afternoon
Down the market
People walking
People talking
Heavy shopping bag
People shouting
Shopping trolley Wheels squeaking

Purse is empty
Bus fare in Pocket Jangling
People at the Bus stop
Mourning about the bus
Rain starts falling
Peopl getting wet
Bus arrives
Splash through the puddles
And I'm nearly home

On the topic of Third Year Options there were strongly worded opinions from many girls concerning the undesirability of breaking up their class. Thus Tezjan wrote

'We dont want to mix with different clases and we don't really like much of the other clases becases the're to big headed.'

Sharon wrote:

'mixing up classes is bad. Because you have got used to your own class. And what is the use of spitting up with your class when you have been with them for three years and then you have to split up for two years.'

June's views about the choices made available were very forcefully expressed:

'The teachers think that in the 3rd year picking our opinions is one of the most important and hardest decision we have to make. I don't agree with them. We haven't made no decision they done it for us. We hardly did nothing. All we done is put some numbers by some of the subjects what they have kindly left for us.

The teacher say that the choices we make have to do with are furture. I do agree with them on that.

But I don't agree with the on other things like mixed classes and about you have to choose a science. alright if you want to pick a science you can, but want about the people who don't want to pick science And French If you done French for two years you can't pick it as your opinion I don't think it's right

Anyway we don't have no say in whats going on do we'

Mr Doyle commented at the end of this piece:

'This is very interesting June. Thank you for being so honest. I shall bear this in mind.'

The frankness with which June's views were expressed was typical of all the girls' work. Safia for example wrote about racism:

'In every lessons in the 1st 2nd and 3rd we done about slavery.

Last week in History we were doing story about slavery and we are still doing it. We had homework and they asked us how we feel about being a slavery? How do they accept us to feel. I think its ridiculous question to be asked. It really shows the blacks girls up. Every girl in this school nine out ten will agreed with me. And most of the white girls told the black girls that they beat us. We don't like the way the teachers repeating about slavery. Most of the girls in this school when they heard about the story of slavery they started talking to us if they were prejudiced.'

Again Mr Doyle's comment was:

'I think your opinions are very important, Safia. Thank you for expressing them.'

Mr Doyle had marked everything, and corrected grammar and spelling although on occasion he refrained from correcting every mistake. He added more personal comments also and made a point of using the girls' names. Not all of the comments were favourable. For example on one piece of work from Mavis Mr Doyle wrote:

'You got a lot of this wrong simply because you were not bothering to give it your full attention while you were doing it. I hope you realise that chatting and laughing while you should be working is not what you should be doing if you wish to improve your English work. No full stops, no capital letters, no speech marks no paragraphs! See me urgently.'

8: 5: 2 Geography

The Geography books were not usually taken home by the girls, and every book except that of one of the persistent truants was available to be examined.

The girls in 3F had spent two thirds of the lesson which Mrs Cross considered successful filling in outline maps of a Chinese commune, a task which they were asked to complete for homework. At the start of the next lesson only two girls had done so and the class was given permission to finish their maps off before going on to the written work which Mrs Cross had planned for the day. In the event the girls spent their whole time on the maps, which Mrs Cross now suggested should be 'coloured in'. Two and a half weeks later only two thirds of the books seen contained finished maps.

Written work produced in Geography was very similar from book to book, which was no doubt due to group consultation. Much of the work was also very simple and involved writing little more than six or seven lines, although in addition there were maps, graphs and filled in work sheets which had been carefully glued in by some girls and left loose by others.

The evidence suggested that Mrs Cross attached little importance to the evaluation of her pupils' work. It was now June, and fifteen of the eighteen books which were available to be examined had not been marked since the 28th of September. The three whose work had been corrected, Fatima, Michaela and Tezjan, were friends and sat together in class. These girls were observed asking during the lesson for their work to be marked: presumably had they not done so, their work would have gone uncorrected

like the rest. Moreover such corrections as Mrs Cross had made were limited to ticks, and very brief remarks such as 'unfinished'.

8: 6 Discussion

Observation in this county school has confirmed many of the findings made in the two voluntary-aided Church schools, and has furthered understanding of some of the processes which may be involved.

8: 6: 1 Does the same low ability class behave differently with different teachers?

Once again the low ability class behaved very differently indeed with its two teachers. It was noticeable that in the main 3F responded to the kind of interaction inaugurated by the teacher. Both teachers were regarded favourably by the majority of the class, and their behaviour could be seen as conforming to the demands of their different teaching styles. Thus with Mr Doyle they responded to his invitation to participate in lively talk, while with Mrs Cross they were more inclined to imitate models of traditional 'good' classroom behaviour. At times their reluctance to participate in the type of discussion Mrs Cross tried to encourage seemed to reflect their desire to hasten the next lesson stage - the very predictable splitting up into small work groups, based on friendship networks - which they may have come to anticipate with pleasure.

The readiness of 3F to respond to the different demands of the two teachers can be conjectured to be at least partially attributable to school factors such as the generally good school ethos and the institutional policy which allowed for the building up of a supportive class atmosphere through the continuity of group membership in all lessons.

There was also however evidence that different pupils within the same class had individual needs and preferences and responded therefore very differently to the same teacher. This sometimes, as in the case of Dawn and the persistent truants, had profound effects on group interaction.

3F's behaviour would confirm that in low ability groups there is likely to be some conflict between the maintenance of behavioural control and methods which encourage pupil participation and teacher/pupil relationships of a less structured and traditional kind. Mr Doyle had the same kinds of difficulties with 3F as we saw Mrs Grant at St Andrews and Mrs Lacey at St Annes face with their low ability classes. Those teachers whose approach was prefaced on a less authoritarian kind of teacher-pupil relationship and who tried to encourage a less directed kind of verbal interchange, were undoubtedly faced with problems of control, and of legitimation, since they all expected to remain in some way 'in charge' of the talk.

It is noteworthy that, like Mrs Grant, Mr Doyle who was particularly interested in developing verbal skills in open class discussion outside the teacher-question pupil-answer framework, emphasised the importance of long-term personal contact with classes. Teachers, unless they have had the opportunity to develop such relationships, may have to accept difficulties in controlling the group as the price to be paid for more active participation. Whether a teacher considers the cost too high would seem likely to depend on his or her personal priorities, and ability to tolerate stress. Both Mrs Grant and Mr Doyle had a high stress threshold: each for example named as their 'most enjoyed' group a stressful class. They could therefore tolerate a considerable amount of pressure during discussions which were difficult to control.

8: 6: 2 Does the same teacher behave differently with different classes?

In this school also both teachers were observed behaving in very similar ways with their two very different classes. This did not however mean that all important details or the interactional outcome was the same, as these were powerfully effected by the responsiveness of the class group. Faced by the comparatively unresponsive 3F for example, Mrs Cross's teaching techniques were implemented with less conviction.

8: 6: 3 What kind of classroom interaction is favoured by teachers?

Observation in Ridgemount would confirm that teachers name as their 'most enjoyed' classes groups in which they are enabled to practise successfully those aspects of their teaching role which give them the deepest personal satisfaction. Once again both teachers chose classes which gave maximum opportunity for the exercise of their own particular interests and talents.

Mr Doyle considered himself a 'good communicator' and liked to relate to his pupils 'as people'. Asked about his approach to classroom discipline, he spoke of the need for 'everybody listening properly and everybody will have the chance to speak'. He explicitly stated that he had devised a syllabus which emphasised 'more discussion and verbal work'. Not surprisingly therefore his 'most enjoyed' class liked 'plenty of active participation in terms of discussion'.

Mrs Cross on the other hand had good organisational and disciplinary skills, and structured her lessons in such a way as to deploy them fully. She found discussion difficult with all groups, although she appreciated its importance, and chose as her preferred group a class which needed a firm hand, but were naturally ebullient and communicative - 'its difficult sometimes to get them to stop discussing things'. From the

questionnaire data it emerged that 2E were one of the most self confident of the class groups. On the ASC scale they scored a mean of 3.96 as opposed to 3.74 for 2B and 3.16 for 3F ($F = 10.64, p < .0002$). We can understand Mrs Cross's success with this class in terms of the fortunate conjunction of her particular teaching strengths and the special needs of this low ability but self-confident and undisciplined group.

8: 6: 4 What are the effects of different types of classroom interaction on pupils' interest and work levels?

The pupil questionnaire responses showed that, despite Mr Doyle's success in encouraging pupil participation, the low ability class did not rate him more highly on the 'Good Teacher' items than Mrs Cross, who was much less successful in this respect. Neither was there any significant difference in self-reported work or interest levels. This would suggest that the low ability group did not consider Mr Doyle's ability to encourage their verbal participation in class as particularly important. Indeed, since they rated Mr Doyle especially low on the item 'Doesn't let you muck about in class', perhaps they saw the resultant loss of control negatively, and failed to appreciate that such interaction had educational potential.

On the other hand examination of 3F's written work showed it to be of a standard and quantity which compared well with anything produced by VR Band 3 pupils in either of the Church run schools. In particular the lively and opinionated views of his pupils showed independence of mind and willingness to display it.

The work in Mrs Cross's class was less impressive. Mrs Cross's failure to mark work must have been important here. Mrs Cross was sharing the responsibility of the Department during the absence of the Head of Geography: she was also teaching in an Adult Education College in the

evenings 'to gain more experience': in addition her health was not good. These factors taken together help explain, although they cannot justify, her slackness.

Mrs Cross's indifference to the need for regular evaluative feedback may go some way towards explaining why she was more popular with the confirmed truants whose written work was typically incomplete or missing. Mr Doyle's more personalised approach on the other hand, although it paid dividends in encouraging openness, also led to extreme negative reactions. In the case of the low ability group, two such negatively valenced assessments from persistent truants skewed the group average results.

The views of Mr Doyle's 'most enjoyed' group however were closer to those implicit in the research perspective. He was overwhelmingly favourably viewed by them, and his score on the 'Good Teacher' items was less variable and higher (compared to the assessments of the other three teachers) than that of any other teacher in our sample (see Table 8: 12). The assessment of the work of this group by other members of staff also showed that his approach produced excellent results.

8: 6: 5 Implications for teacher-led class discussion

The work of the two teachers monitored at Ridgemount is of especial interest considering the research focus on classroom talk, since both expressed their belief in the importance of class discussion. However while Mr Doyle had no problems, Mrs Cross admitted to difficulties in all her classes in encouraging pupils' to come forward with their own views.

We have seen from their classroom practice that the two teachers at Ridgemount had very different approaches which can help to explain their different experiences.

Mrs Cross had developed a very traditional teaching style which relied upon teacher-question and pupil-answer to structure classroom talk. From the evidence of the six observed lessons, it would also appear that although content and task were varied, her lessons followed a very predictable pattern, with 'whole class' talk typically serving a particular function - either to check out pupils' understanding, or to prepare them for the worksheet instructions they would subsequently have to follow. The instructional context of such questioning sessions would seem to have made it inevitable that many pupil contributions were seen as digressions, which even if accepted, had to be marked off in some way from the 'lesson proper'. This may help to explain why Mrs Cross found it so difficult to wean her pupils from the expectation that 'this is the right answer this is the wrong answer'.

Mr Doyle on the other hand was seen with his 'most enjoyed' class, 2B, to handle 'whole class' discussion in a very different way. Although on occasion he also used the typical teacher-question pupil-answer exchange, he made a special point at the beginning of the class discussion of providing an opportunity for pupils to express their own views. Most importantly the emphasis was not upon teacher evaluation, but upon the pupils' opinions, which were accepted as valuable in their own right, their expression being seen as an end in itself. The conversational opportunities which Mr Doyle's approach facilitated not only led to the exercise of very different kinds of interactional skills on the pupils' part, but also embodied a very different kind of message about what constituted educationally speaking legitimated knowledge.

In addition a very important point has emerged. It would appear that it is quite mistaken to consider a question either 'open-ended' or

'closed' in terms of content alone. The whole instructional context must be taken into account, and the relationship between the teacher and pupil. Thus we have seen how in her 'class teaching' sessions, the nature of Mrs Cross's overall objectives determined that apparently open-ended questions came to be understood as having a very restricted range of reference. Similarly, in the context of the licence to air views allowed to pupils in Mr Doyle's class, pupils took the initiative and used potentially limited conversational openings to widen the discourse topic:

Mr D: A lot of people agreed with Justina when she said that these girls had only taken the popular girl away because she is popular. Isn't it possible that they could have taken the popular girl away because she is popular and wonderful and they want to be, you know, with her?

This question could easily have been interpreted as rhetorical and responded to with a monosyllabic 'yes': in fact it elicited this response:

Pupil: She might have a lot of money then they're using her.

The pupil felt able to disregard the teacher's suggestion, and pursue an independent line of thought. Repetition of this kind of response was encouraged by Mr Doyle in his supportive evaluation: 'It could easily be that'.

It may be suggested that the subject matter of English lends itself to the acceptance of idiosyncratic opinion, and thus makes it easier for a teacher to encourage this kind of dialogue. It would not however have been out of the question for Mrs Cross to have encouraged a pooling of the class's joint knowledge about soil, as Mrs Grant at St Andrews did with her classes, and subsequently to have found a way to highlight the kinds of information in which she was on this occasion particularly interested. The

essential problem seems to lie not in the type of subject matter, but in the approach to the instructional function of class discussion, and the habitual use of a very directive kind of teacher questioning.

The relationship Mr Doyle had established with his classes is likely to have facilitated their greater willingness to participate. His freely elicited comments on both classes revealed an enormous capacity to enjoy the company of his pupils and to see them as full of potential, and in the round as social beings. Even a problem pupil like Dawn was appreciated as 'the class super star'. He seemed without effort to adapt his expectations to the ability level of the different classes. Of girls like Safia in 3F he could say without affectation:

'Very independent, very in a way competent socially, very intelligent as well. The only thing that holds her back sometimes is the language structure. Her ideas are first rate excellent.'

His comments on Mavis, whom he regarded as 'quite weak' and 'very passive in a way' nevertheless ended on the note 'I think there's quite a long way to go before she shows her own proper potential'. Of the hard-working Michaela he concluded 'an impressive pupil in many ways': even of Diane 'probably one of the weakest in the class' he summed up by noting:

'In the group work on Fridays she is a revelation - she took control of the project the play they were going to film. It amazed me to see her so dominant. I think different situations see all of them acting in different ways.'

By his obvious pleasure in their company and by his more relaxed and informal way of relating to pupils particularly at the beginning of lesson time, Mr Doyle brought it about that his classroom seemed a place where pupils could express the whole of their personalities much more

freely. As we have seen this did create certain problems of control, but it may have had the consequence that pupils low in academic self esteem felt more confident in his class. They could feel appreciated for other aspects of themselves. This would mean that amongst other things any negative criticism of their scholastic ability was less devastating: they had other relevant 'selves' which entered into the equation and could compensate even in this social situation for academic weakness. It is particularly poignant however that his low ability pupils seemed to undervalue this aspect of their mutual achievement.

CHAPTER 9

Maple Grove

9: 1 The teachers

Although Maple Grove achieved only an average score on the Rutter Pastoral Care measure, experience in the school suggested that this was misleading. The staff invested much time and energy in matters of Pastoral Care, and particular emphasis was placed on the sensitive management of lower ability pupils, and an Egalitarian interpretation of the aims of comprehensive education.

On the other hand lower ability (VR Band 3) pupils at Maple Grove had lower Academic Self Concept scores than comparable pupils at Ridgemount: in addition, the demands of the mixed-ability teaching policy placed the staff under considerable daily pressures.

In this school therefore we will be able to examine classroom interaction in the context of a rather different kind of social institution, which may be hypothesised to offer low ability pupils certain advantages, while at the same time presenting both them and their teachers with particular challenges.

.....

Since Maple Grove practised a mixed-ability policy in all subjects until the Third Year, it was not possible to observe a Third Year class which was entirely made up of low ability pupils. Instead a Third Year group with a heavy 'tail' (32%) of low ability girls was chosen as the core class.

This school was the last to grant permission for the research and the observation period was later in the school term when difficulties as a consequence of the teachers' strike were more apparent, and the teachers under greater strain. As a result analysis was restricted to this core class and their two teachers. Neither teacher's work with a different class was analysed. Fortunately however the English teacher identified the chosen class as the group she 'most enjoyed' teaching. For the first time therefore we had the opportunity of monitoring a 'most enjoyed' group with two different teachers¹.

A further modification was necessitated by the fact that the core class's Geography teacher could not take part in the research. The class was therefore observed with their History teacher.

9: 1: 1 The English teacher: Miss Maine

The English teacher, Miss Maine, had an English degree, and a Diploma in Education. She had been teaching for seven years, and was a recent arrival in Maple Grove, having previously taught in a girls' comprehensive in the Midlands.

Miss Maine saw herself as having drifted into teaching 'because my mother was one'. Nevertheless she reported that she had become more

¹ The English teacher was in fact observed once with a class she identified as her 'least enjoyed' group. This teacher was experiencing personal difficulties at the time of the research, and no detailed analysis of the interaction was carried out. Since the stability of teaching style across classes had been well established by the case studies of the six teachers already monitored, this was not regarded as a cause for major regret.

motivated as she had gathered experience. In particular she had enjoyed her Midlands school: she had much less positive feelings about her present school, where she felt people were 'pressurised without reward'. The children in her opinion did not enjoy their work and their 'family situation' was often poor. Most of all she felt the Education Authority:

'pressurises its teachers to an extent that I don't imagine other - well having worked with other local authorities - I mean it has all these initiatives which I think are all well and good but I think require extra time - anti-sexism, anti-racism and working parties - it seems incredibly bureaucratic. There's a lot of bureaucracy here which makes the job more difficult. I find it very aggravating. I never relax here.'

Her greatest difficulties centred round the 'social structure of the school - the way the staff are treated. Being treated like a child.'

Miss Maine did not always think that she had made the right career decision, although she was going to 'stick to teaching' and try for an English headship:

'I sometimes think I've undervalued myself. I don't see teaching as very high status and I think teachers have a very poor self image and so I think I would prefer to have perhaps done something else.'

Her greatest satisfactions came:

'when I have chats with the children, and also when I find good writing. When they communicate with me and when I'm actually pleased and stimulated with what they've produced.'

When talking about the core class, Miss Maine had something to say about every girl, and around half of her remarks were 'person' oriented.

9: 1: 2 The History teacher: Mrs Edgar

Mrs Edgar had a degree in History and a Diploma in Education, and fifteen years teaching experience. She was Head of her Department and had spent her entire teaching life at Maple Grove, having first taught in the comprehensive which amalgamated with the grammar school to form the present school.

Mrs Edgar also saw social pressure as instrumental in her decision to become a teacher: where she was brought up:

'You know they export coal and teachers there.'

She had intended to stay out of the profession for five years, but hated her first job so much that she took up teaching after only two. She would still choose teaching, if she had the decision to make over again, but could not name her major source of satisfaction.

Asked about her 'major difficulty', she named:

'The pressures from all these new initiatives and the lack of time. The work load really. In a way the children become the least important. You've got equal opportunities, multi-ethnic profiling, and skills and this sort of thing. I mean in a way it would be lovely if you didn't have the kids there and you could get on and do it.'

When Mrs Edgar was invited to talk about the core class, she concentrated on matters of Departmental policy and on the group as a whole: about individuals she made less than half as many comments as Miss Maine, and had nothing at all to say about eight of the girls. Two thirds of her remarks were 'pupil' oriented.

9: 2 The mixed-ability class: 3M

9: 2: 1 Background factors

Class composition and attendance

The ethnic composition of the group was very similar to that of 3F in Ridgemount (see section 8: 2: 1).

Ethnic Composition		VR Banding	
ESWI	8	VR Band 1	3
Afro-Caribbean	7	VR Band 2	10
Asian	4	VR Band 3	6
Turkish	1	No record	3
Unknown	2		
Total	22		22

Three Asian girls were reported as having difficulties with English, although none were, like Dilara at Ridgemount, without conversational fluency.

There were three girls from the top, ten from the middle, and six from the lowest ability band. One of those with no record was amongst the poorest academically in the group. The class therefore, although certainly of mixed-ability, had comparatively few high ability children and a large 'tail' (32%) of low ability pupils.

On the eight occasions on which the class was observed, the average attendance was 18.1, with a low of 16 and a high of 20. Four of the eighteen girls who completed the questionnaire admitted to truanting, and two of the girls who were considered truants by both of the teachers interviewed were absent on the day on which the questionnaire was completed. Both the reports of the teachers and classroom observation would therefore suggest that attendance in this class was somewhat better

than in the core low ability group at Ridgemount, although truancy was still a serious problem.

Class History

The majority of the group had been together since coming into the school, but they had lately been joined by a white VR Band 1 girl, Karen. According to the History teacher, on first coming into the school this girl had made 'racist remarks' which were reported to the black girls by their white friends. Mrs Edgar felt that, although the group had 'dealt well with the problem', Karen's erratic attendance in school was a consequence of her subsequent social difficulties with the class.

Social structure

Eighteen of the twenty two girls completed the questionnaire, including all three VR Band 1 pupils and six out of the seven lowest ability pupils.

In Maple Grove, as in Ridgemount, there were two main friendship groups: the larger (Main Group) consisted of the most popular and outgoing girls, while a smaller and (according to the two teachers) more studious group, centred round the Turkish girl, Tijan, generally regarded as the most intelligent pupil in the class. These two groups had friendly contact largely outside school time. Three of the Indian girls formed an isolated friendship cluster: they chose each other as companions both inside and outside school, and were named as friends by noone else in the class. Finally there were six social isolates, including the fourth Asian girl, who did not wear traditional dress, and did not associate with the other Asian pupils. As in Ridgemount lack of acceptance by the peer group and truancy went hand in hand.

The fissure lines in 3M had nothing to do with ability level. In Tijan's Group for example there were two VR Band 1 and two VR Band 3 girls. It was also noteworthy that while the Asian girls were isolated, the Afro-Caribbean girls were to be found in all of the groupings in the class, and did not form an exclusive racial group as was the case in Ridgemount.

Further details of the friendship patterns in the class can be found in Appendix G.

Group attitudes to school and teachers

Despite the difference in ability levels (which might have led us to expect more favourable attitudes at Maple Grove), there were no statistically significant differences between the core classes in the two county schools on either the 'Attitude to Teachers' or the 'Attitude to School' scales.

VR Band 1 girls had the least favourable attitudes towards school, and although favourably disposed to their teachers generally (as tapped by the Hargreaves questions) were quite critical of their individual teachers' skills (as measured by ratings of teachers on the 'Good Teacher' items). This is unexpected in view of previous findings that VR Band 1 pupils tend to have more favourable views (see Tables 5: 22 and 5: 23). Of course, it has to be remembered that there were only three VR Band 1 pupils.

Academic self concept

Although the mean ASC score of this mixed ability class was higher than that of the low ability class at Ridgemount, differences were not significant, despite the disparity in the VR Band composition of the groups.

ASC scores of core classes in the county schools

	Mean	Std	N
Ridgemount	3.16	.19	11
Maple Grove	3.34	.63	18

Note: High score represents a high ASC.

This is unexpected in view of the close association between ASC scores and VR Banding (see Table 5: 25).

As we found was the case for all the pupils from Maple Grove (see Table 5. 26), the VR Band 3 girls in the core class had particularly low ASC scores (mean = 3.01). This is below the average ASC score for VR Band 3 pupils over the entire sample (mean = 3.238).

9: 2: 2 The teachers' views of the class

Both teachers agreed that the class was not particularly difficult, but the English teacher found them somewhat more enjoyable, although also more stressful, to teach:

TABLE 9: 1 Teachers' ratings of the mixed-ability class

	English Teacher	History Teacher
Enjoyability (1=least, 10=most)	9	7
Difficulty (1=least, 10=most)	4	4
Stressfulness (1=least, 10=most)	5	3

The teachers' opinions of the group differed in certain important respects.

The English teacher, Miss Maine

Miss Maine regarded the group as the best she had had in the school, and thought that they had improved throughout the year. She did not see them as typical of other Third Year groups but as:

'much better motivated and sort of a bit more mature and very good humoured. There don't seem to be a great deal of personality problems or unhappy backgrounds. They're just a nice group. They've got a few very advanced kids and it rubs off doesn't it?'

She was nevertheless only aware of one strong friendship grouping, the Main Group, and thought that although the class got on together relatively well:

'They are not particularly integrated. They're not like a great big gang and there's a lot of very disparate personalities in the class - more than I've ever met with before.'

When asked 'Are there any particular kinds of lesson or parts of lessons that you find they respond well to?', Miss Maine replied:

'Well I'm very keen here on encouraging private writing really - seeing me more as a resource rather than a class teacher. I'm not very fond of class teaching - and I think they do seem to respond to that quite well.'

Asked about the work she found most difficult, she immediately answered 'discussion' and went on unsolicited to explain:

'I find discussion difficult with most classes here because I can't have control over it. And so if I do take discussion I often prefer it to be in a group.'

Asked about her priorities for the class, Miss Maine replied:

'Being motivated to like English is the major thing, which I find difficult in this school. It's one of the most distressing things about it that they don't particularly like their work.'

Every teacher was asked at the end of the interview if there was anything they would like to add, or anything that they thought important about the class which had not been touched upon. Miss Maine wished to

draw attention to the lack of time available to get to know the girls individually, which she considered centrally important.

The History teacher, Mrs Edgar

Mrs Edgar agreed that the class was 'a nice group', but where Miss Maine had seen them as 'not particularly integrated' but influenced academically by 'a few very advanced kids' she saw them as 'very much together', but academically 'weaker' than other Third Year groups. Mrs Edgar identified seven girls as 'underachieving', and talked of her surprise in discovering the class's need to be helped with 'basic skills', such as how to calculate a person's age from the dates of their birth and death.

This teacher expressed dissatisfaction with the performance of lower school pupils as a whole ('achievement generally in the lower school is weak') and described how, together with her colleagues, she was presently engaged in some 'radical rethinking' of longer term educational objectives for all classes.

While Miss Maine had noted an improvement during the year, Mrs Edgar reported that the class had got noisier and less disciplined during the Third Term, which she blamed on the excessively hot weather. It should be noted nevertheless that Mrs Edgar's room was quite cool, whereas Miss Maine worked in a stiflingly hot hut in the school grounds.

Asked about the work the class responded best to, Mrs Edgar replied:

'What they like best is any form of History like detective work, when they've got to try to work out something. Who did it? Did the czar really die? Who killed Kennedy?'

Mrs Edgar contrasted this sort of work with the kind when the teacher says 'You read the book'. Although Mrs Edgar did not spontaneously mention the

word 'discussion', when asked specifically how the girls responded to it, she indicated that on the 'two occasions' where class discussion was the method employed, the girls responded with enthusiasm and produced excellent results. Mrs Edgar also noted that 'history like detective work' involved group discussion in her class. She pointed out that the quality of the discussion depended upon the group. The girls were allowed to sit with their friends, and Tijan's group produced a great deal of constructive discussion, while the Asian group in her view talked little.

Mrs Edgar reported that her major difficulty with this class reflected her major difficulty 'across the whole school' - getting them to 'write imaginative historical reconstructions'.

Mrs Edgar's main aim for the class was 'getting them interested really' and 'thinking for themselves'.

Asked if there was anything further she would like to add, this teacher expressed her puzzlement at the girls' slow and piece-meal arrival for lessons.

Opinions about individual pupils

There were some interesting discrepancies in the way the two teachers saw certain individuals.

	Miss Maine	Mrs Edgar
Lola:	'Works pretty hard.'	'An underachiever.'
Dionne	'Sullen to begin with - much better now.'	'The one that I can't cope with at all really. She has no interest in the subject. She refuses to allow you to help her.'
Lorraine	'Dyslexic? Mature - very articulate and thoughtful'.	'Weak but tries hard,'
Karen	'She works hard. A very stimulating child.'	'Underachieving.'

9: 3 Classroom interaction

9: 3: 1 Classroom interaction with Miss Maine

Miss Maine taught in a secluded prefabricated hut in the school grounds. The room was full of flourishing plants which the teacher had supplied herself: on the walls there were examples of the girls' work which were frequently replaced. If the class task was 'private writing' the desks were arranged around the perimeter of the room facing the walls: on other occasions the desks were positioned differently as the needs of particular lessons dictated.

The lesson to be discussed in greater detail was rated by the teacher as the most successful of all those monitored (4 out of 5 on the Success scale) and as 'typical in most respects': she did not consider it typical in all respects as it was 'better organised and quieter than usual'. Miss Maine felt that perhaps the class had been influenced by the observer: in this school as in St Annes, the observer if suspected of having influenced interaction, was never seen as having done so in a negative direction. The lesson was, despite its successfulness, rated at the mid point of the Stress scale.

Miss Maine allowed the girls to come in and take their seats without ceremony. There was in this lesson as in every other observed no formal routine of greetings either at the beginning or the end of lesson time.

During this lesson the girls were set the task of editing a piece of private writing they had been working on for the last few weeks: instructions about how to edit were set out on a worksheet which Miss

Maine had placed on each desk before the class arrived. Those girls who had not finished the story were asked to continue writing.

The Lesson

(Timetabled for 30 minutes: actual contact time 34 minutes)

Settling in (4 min.)

The girls come in laughing and chatting and take their seats. The teacher is already in the classroom. A pupil gives out work folders.

Stage 1 (5 $\frac{1}{2}$ min.)

The teacher reads from the worksheet, and explains the instructions.

Stage 2 (22 $\frac{1}{2}$ min.)

The class work individually. Pupils ask Miss M for help, and she herself approaches others.

Stage 3 (1 min.)

Teacher reads out a good piece of work to the class.

Stage 4 (1 min.)

The class packs up and leaves.

'Whole class' teaching

On this occasion Miss Maine spent only 23% of lesson time with the entire class as the 'interaction set' (stages 1 and 3). Although this is less than was spent by any of the other teachers, it was almost twice as much as Miss Maine spent in the other three lessons with 3M which were observed. This bears out her own statement that she avoided whole class teaching situations.

In the opening phase of the lesson (stage 1), analysis at the level of 'moves' showed the small numbers (approximately six moves per minute) that we have previously seen associated with extended stretches of teacher monologue. Miss Maine did not invite pupils to contribute verbally. Her only questions were 'checks' to establish whether pupils had the

worksheet or had understood instructions. All pupils' opening moves occurred in the first minute of the interaction, and were to do with being too hot, not having a pen etcetera. Thereafter Miss Maine read the worksheet aloud to the class, stopping only to add explanatory comment, and, on one occasion, to reprimand an inattentive pupil. Pupils' supporting moves were restricted to monosyllabic 'acknowledgements'.

TABLE 9: 2 Miss Maine with the mixed-ability class:
distribution of moves in lesson stage 1 (5½ min.)

	Teacher	Pupils
Framing	1	0
Focusing	1	0
Opening	16	4
Chall. opening	0	0
Reopening	0	0
Supporting	1	7
Challenging	0	0
Total	19	11

In the only other stretch of 'whole class' teaching, stage 3, Miss Maine read aloud a good piece of work. Pupils listened quietly, but were at no time invited to discuss the work.

If we compare this lesson with the one previously monitored at Ridgemount with Mrs Cross (who also spent less time in the 'whole class' teaching situation) and her 'most enjoyed' class, 2E, we find additional evidence of the very passive role played by 3M in such 'whole class' teaching situations (see Table 9: 3 overleaf). Miss Maine's class although they required few 'controlling' interventions, contributed less in terms of all the measured behaviours:

Table 9: 3 Miss Maine and Mrs Cross with their 'most enjoyed' classes: behaviours during 'whole class' teaching

	Miss M	Mrs C
N. of mass hands up per 5 min.	0	.6
% of class putting hands up outside mass hands up	0	47.4
N. of verbal contributions by pupils per 5 min.	10	25.2
N. of 'control' episodes per 5 min.	.7	1.2

Teacher/pupil contact outside 'whole class' teaching time

Since, however, Miss Maine attached most importance to contacts with individual pupils outside the 'whole class' teaching situation, efforts were made to monitor teacher/pupil interaction in such circumstances in order to discover what other kinds of opportunities for verbal contact with Miss Maine pupils might have. The teacher's movements round the classroom, the numbers of pupils with whom she was observed talking and the length of time spent in such contacts were recorded: where possible taped conversations were analysed.

First lesson

Although on one occasion, approximately two thirds of the way through this lesson, Miss Maine did move round the whole class, checking progress, for the most part her contact with individuals was made when they called upon her for help. Five girls (around a quarter of the class) made such approaches, and three did so on more than one occasion.

For the most part pupils asked for clarification about corrections, or made requests for evaluation of work. Miss Maine's answering comments were made very quietly and privately to individuals, and

unfortunately therefore were rarely captured fully on tape. However in the observational schedule it was noted that four minutes was the longest time spent on any single contact. Usually the teacher was observed first silently reading the pupil's work and then commenting on it. Her evaluations often involved detailed criticism. For example it was explained at length to one girl how she had mixed her tenses and specific instances were pointed out: her attention was also drawn to her over-use of direct speech - what she had written was 'too like a play'.

Miss Maine also inaugurated conversation with individuals. Interestingly enough, she approached the same five girls who had themselves instigated contact. In addition Miss Maine talked twice to Lola and Dionne: these conversations occurred after Miss Maine had noticed that the two girls were not working, but playing with a hair clip. One other brief contact was made with the two low ability Indian girls, Updesh and Shalma, to check whether or not they had understood the work.

No contact, other than a cursory check during her single circuit of the class, was made with nine girls (almost half of the class). These included all of those in the 'hard-working' group, centred round Tijan.

In this lesson therefore Miss Maine largely responded to contacts made by pupils, and the other approaches that she herself instigated often had a control function.

Second lesson

The next English lesson, which took place two days later, provided an opportunity to observe whether on successive lessons Miss Maine made contact with different pupils.

This lesson was 65 minutes long, and 57 minutes were spent with the girls continuing the work of the previous lesson, while the teacher

called individual girls to her desk to have their work checked. Miss Maine made an especial point at the beginning of the lesson of stating that she would select those whose work was to be looked at:

'I expect you to get on with the writing this lesson and I'll go round the class calling you up to see what you've been doing.'

In the event Miss Maine called up only seven girls, and with the exception of the low ability girl Janice, they were the same girls with whom she had had contact in the previous lesson. Once again the teacher herself inaugurated approaches to three of the lower ability girls and three girls (including Lola) after they had shown signs of failing to concentrate on the work. As before the 'hard-workers' around Tijan did not get individual attention. In fact during this lesson these girls also indulged in a great deal of off-task chat, possibly because they had already completed the assignment, but after briefly walking down behind their desks, the teacher ignored their behaviour. Miss Maine spent between three to six minutes with each girl.

During this lesson¹ Miss Maine had to interrupt her conversations with individuals on a number of occasions to patrol the class because of their behaviour. For example after calling one of the low ability Asian girls, Durdesh, to her table Miss Maine walked away to check on girls who had been noted gossiping, and Durdesh was left waiting at the teacher's desk for eight minutes before she returned.

Although Miss Maine was continually distracted by the need to monitor what was happening in the rest of the room, only obvious misbehaviours drew her attention. Unobtrusive pupils were likely to be

¹ Miss Maine judged this lesson less successful than the one previously monitored and 'noisier than usual due to it being periods 7 and 8 and the heat in the classroom'.

seen as working:

'There's far too much idle chat here. Sara Fahana Michelle Shalma are about the only people who are working quietly.'

In fact Shalma's work was monitored throughout the lesson: she first began to write eighteen minutes after the lesson started and half an hour later had only written seven lines. She spent a great deal of the time passively watching the class, and some time playing with her neighbour's rings. As the lesson drew to its close, she suddenly started to write and in six minutes almost doubled her output by adding five lines.

Third lesson

The third lesson enabled the researcher to monitor more closely Miss Maine's contact with a group of five pupils working together to make a 'photoplay' based on some photographs of themselves taken earlier. Tape recorders were placed near the teacher's and the pupils' desks, and conversations were clearly documented.

Miss Maine first approached the group (who had assembled beside her desk) in order to organise them into putting together some desks around which they could work. Four minutes later she returned to repeat her instructions. The girls were still at her desk exclaiming over the photographs which they were now being asked to mount. Those instructions had to be repeated a third time, as the girls had still not organised themselves as requested. Thereafter Miss Maine approached the group once to inform them that the photographs did not have to be placed in the original order. Subsequently the teacher had brief contact with the group on four occasions, when one of the girls asked a question. These were

called out from across the room, and concerned procedural matters, such as what colours of pencil to use: none involved more than a few seconds of talk. It was also noticeable that in this group of five girls the work was done by only three. The two Asian girls remained largely silent observers. Miss Maine's brief encounters with the group gave her no opportunity to discern this.

As far as contacts with the rest of the class were concerned, Miss Maine on this occasion began by checking on the work of two of the Asian girls, but spent longest with one of the low ability West Indian girls, Janice (7½ min). Lola also initiated contact and had her work looked at. Tijan's group, which during this lesson was observed gossiping frequently, came in for half a minute's attention which was spent with the two low ability girls, Alef and Lorraine.

Fourth lesson

In the fourth lesson monitored, which involved a different kind of task (reading a poem and answering questions about it) in another classroom, Miss Maine's behaviour was very similar. Once again the majority of the class's time was spent working individually answering questions on a worksheet which the teacher had prepared. The class were invited to talk over the work with one partner, and actively discouraged from any discussion involving a wider group:

'Girls the rules don't change just because we're here. It's two to a desk not three.'

The teacher remained at her desk and had no verbal contact with pupils apart from giving additional instructions, and briefly answering a few

procedural questions. Most extended contact occurred when evaluating the completed work of one or two individuals.

9:3: 2 Discussion

In all four lessons Miss Maine's consistent strategy was to begin by giving a brief 'agenda-setting' talk, during which she required only silent attention from the class. In the few brief 'whole class' teaching situations which subsequently occurred 'informatives' and 'directives' were in every case her most frequently used initiations. Miss Maine, when she addressed the class as a whole, simply never used this social situation to develop or encourage conversational opportunities for pupils. They were merely occasions for herself as teacher to convey instructions, give evaluative comment or explanation.

Thereafter she made herself available to individuals, paying particular attention to the needs of the weaker pupils. She spent most of the rest of her time with the 'livelier' and potentially more disruptive pupils such as Lola, or those who made a personal effort to secure her notice. These two categories in fact were often over-lapping, since attention-seekers like Lola were as likely to demand attention as they were to attract it because of their misbehaviour. They were therefore twice as likely to be seen. The hard-workers on the other hand lost out doubly, since even when they were inattentive, their chat was more likely to be ignored since they could be presumed to have finished the work.

Miss Maine therefore even when interacting with groups or individuals had little time for prolonged exchanges of ideas. Often it was a matter of answering simple questions or of issuing procedural instructions. Her most extended times with individuals involved the evaluation of work. Often she sat with them either at their desk or hers

reading or correcting their work, or having them read their work to her. This also therefore was often not the occasion for verbal exchange, or the practise of verbal skills.

9: 3: 2 Classroom interaction with Mrs Edgar

Mrs Edgar's classroom was in the main building, and therefore much cooler than Miss Maine's prefabricated hut. The room was generously proportioned, with the desks arranged in irregular groups. There were no plants but the room was clean and tidy with posters on the walls and examples of the pupils' work, taking up almost a quarter of the wall space.

Two lessons with 3M which took place on the same day as, and are of comparable length to, those observed with Miss Maine will be examined in detail. Both occasions Mrs Edgar regarded as 'typical in most respects' uneffected by the presence of the observer, and relatively unstressful (2 on the Stress scale, where 1 = unstressful and 5 = stressful).

The first lesson was spent entirely in 'whole class' teaching, as was over half the second lesson: during the latter however a period of written work allowed us to compare Mrs Edgar's approach with that of Miss Maine in similar circumstances.

First lesson

The first lesson Mrs Edgar rated at only 2 on the Success scale (1 = unsuccessful: 5 = successful), because she was 'not able to judge yet as this lesson was planned as a part of a larger whole'.

The Lesson

(Timetabled for 30 minutes: actual contact time 31½ minutes)

Settling down (3 min.)

The girls arrive in groups, and teacher waits for them to assemble. Girls instructed to get out their books.

Stage 1 (5 min.)

Mrs E questions class on facts about WW 1 learned in previous lessons.

Stage 2 (22½ min.)

Mrs E reads and comments on the material and asks class questions (11¼ min.).

Two pupils read, and Mrs E. explains text and asks questions (9¼ min.).

Mrs E reads again and continues after pips indicate the end of the lesson (1½ min.).

Packing up (1 min.)

Mrs E sums up the lesson, collects books and calls on the class to line up before they are dismissed.

In this lesson Mrs Edgar was laying the foundations for a piece of 'historical reconstruction work' on trench warfare. This was especially interesting, as Mrs Edgar had mentioned that she found this the most difficult kind of work to get the class to do well. The-entire lesson was spent with the whole class as the 'interaction set'.

If we look at the distribution of moves in stage 1, we find that pupils have a normative third of the interaction and that they play the usual 'supporting' role.

TABLE 9: 4 Mrs Edgar's first lesson with the mixed-ability class: distribution of moves in lesson stage 1 (5 min.)

	Teacher	Pupils
Framing	1	0
Focusing	4	0
Opening	18	1
Chall. opening	0	0
Reopen	2	0
Supporting	9	19
Challenging	3	2
Total	37	22

The class had already had a lesson on trench warfare and in this lesson stage Mrs Edgar used the familiar teacher question/pupil answer technique to check that they remembered the facts. There were only two 'challenging' replies from pupils, both over-eager responses which interrupted the teacher before she had finished speaking (labelled DF, or discourse framework breaks). The teacher's 'challenging' responses were 'evaluations' of wrong answers (Labov 6). The number of moves (around twelve per minute) would suggest a fairly brisk dialogue.

During the longer lesson stage 2 the pupils' share of the interaction measured in terms of the number of moves remained the same:

TABLE 9: 5 Mrs Edgar's first lesson with the mixed-ability class: distribution of moves in lesson stage 2 (22½ min.)

	Teacher	Pupils
Framing	6	0
Focusing	9	0
Opening	51	4
Chall. opening	3	6
Reopening	4	2
Supporting	28	46
Challenging	5	6
Total	106	64

All but two of the pupils' 'challenging' opening moves were breaks in discourse framework (DF) when someone seized the conversational initiative either without the teacher's invitation, or by interrupting the teacher as she spoke. The pupils' turn at reading in stage 2 was in fact precipitated by one such unsolicited interpolation from Lola 'Can I read next?'.
 The number of moves per minute, however, which dropped to less than eight, alerts us to the need to consider also the length of 'turns at

talk'. Pupil moves were typically very brief, a sentence at most, whereas as the lesson got underway Mrs Edgar spoke at increasing length, expanding each point with explanatory comment.

Mrs Edgar consistently interrupted the flow of reading to recast the material in her own words. Such 'informative' strips of discourse were seeded throughout with questions, which allowed pupils a regular, if strictly limited, access to the talk. However her questions were often far from demanding, and sometimes seemed designed to relieve the monotony of teacher monologue and keep pupils on their toes, rather than having any more important educational purpose:

	ACT	MOVE
<p>Mrs E: (reading from text) <i>"In time after the trenches had been fought over a great deal almost all sense of direction was lost to them and they became murderously confused, a standing labyrinth in which the men moved warily and felt little security"</i></p>	Inform.	B. opening
<p>so you can imagine it's not just one trench here, there's a maze of trenches. When you've been in those trenches for a long time you don't know which trench goes to what place it's all going to be very muddy. There's going to be no tree or anything that you can recognise because those are going to have been destroyed so you're living in this sort of a maze.</p>	Comment	
<p>Has anybody been in a maze</p>	Elicit.	Opening
<p>Chorus: yeah</p>	Reply	Support.
<p>Mrs E: which maze have you been in</p>	Elicit.	Opening
<p>Chorus: Hampton Court</p>	Reply	Support.
<p>Mrs E: Hampton Court</p>	Accept	
<p>so that's quite pleasant isn't it. Even if you get lost you know you can get out</p>	Comment	Support.
<p>this is a maze/</p>	Inform.	B. opening
<p>P: xxxxx/</p>	?	Ch. open. (DF)*

* Coded as challenging because the pupil interrupts the teacher.

<p>Mrs E: this is a maze of mud so (2 sec pause until class is silent) right carrying on then quietly</p>	<p>MOVE Inform. Marker Marker Metast.</p>	<p>ACT Reopen Focus</p>
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Second lesson

In the following longer lesson, with which she was especially pleased and which she rated 4 out of a possible 5 on the Success scale, Mrs Edgar continued the preparation for the written exercise in 'imaginative reconstruction'.

The Lesson

(Timetabled for 70 minutes: actual contact time 76 minutes.)

Settling down (5. min.)

Class arrives in groups. Teacher waits for late comers.

Stage 1 (6 min.)

Mrs E. questions the class on facts about trench warfare learned in previous lessons and introduces the topic for written work.

Transition (2 min.)

Mrs E. gives out books.

Stage 2 (25½ min.)

Teacher reads text, stopping to explain points and to ask questions of the class.

Stage 3 (2 min.)

Teacher explains what has to be done for written work, and gives out photographs.

Stage 4 (30½ min.)

Class studies book and photographs and begins to write. Teacher talks to individuals and inaugurates a 4 min. 'whole class' discussion.

End of lesson (5 min.)

Pupils are kept working for five minutes after the bell, as a punishment for being too noisy. Class is dismissed table by table.

'Whole class' teaching

During episodes of 'whole class' teaching Mrs Edgar's behaviour was very similar to that observed in the first lesson. The class were given the opportunity to answer questions both in the introductory lesson stage 1, which once again served to recapitulate what had been discussed in the previous lesson, and during stage 2, the reading aloud of passages from the book. Linguistic analysis at the level of moves in the longer lesson stage 2 shows pupils once again largely restricted to supporting answers to these questions, while opening moves predominate in the teacher's speech:

TABLE 9: 6 Mrs Edgar's second lesson with the mixed-ability class: distribution of moves in lesson stage 2 (25½ min.)

	Teacher	Pupils
Framing	1	0
Focusing	6	0
Opening	71	11
Chall. opening	13	2
Reopen	3	0
Supporting	31	72
Challenging	8	10
Total	133	95

As before pupils have a somewhat larger share of the number of moves than is usual, but the number of moves per minute (barely nine) attests to the lengthiness of the teacher's 'turns at talk'. On this occasion the teacher alone read from the book, commenting extensively as she did so.

In this lesson with which she was more than usually pleased, Mrs Edgar insisted on a formal bidding by raising the hand for the opportunity to reply to questions. On nine occasions within the 25½ minutes of lesson stage 2 Mrs Edgar refused an answer because those rules had not been

obeyed. If we look at the behavioural measures collected it can be seen that she had considerable success with 3M in promoting the desired behaviour.

TABLE 9: 7 Mrs Edgar's second lesson with the mixed-ability class: behaviours during 'whole class' teaching

No. mass hands up per 5 min.	1.5
% of class putting hands up outside mass hands up	26

The number of mass hands up was exceeded in the county schools only in Mr Doyle's 'most enjoyed' class at Ridgemount.

Mrs Edgar was at all times very controlling of the class's behaviour, and there were occasions on which this appeared to cause some irritation. For example, most teachers observed were prepared to accept unanimous mass call-outs for answers to easy questions: Mrs Edgar drew her class up for this, and required formal 'bids' for the right to speak:

		ACT	MOVE
Mrs E:	what's Jerry	Elicit.	
	Jerry's another name for?	Clue	Opening
Chorus:	German	Reply	Supporting
Mrs E:	let's not shout out	Direct	
	let's see that everybody has a chance	Comment	Chall. open (L5)*
P:	(groan)		

* Coded as challenging because the teacher denies the pupils' right to speak without bidding for the right to do so (L5).

Written work

The latter part of this second lesson allowed us to observe Mrs Edgar's handling of individual written work. Like Miss Maine Mrs Edgar permitted the class to discuss their work with neighbours. Unlike Miss Maine however, Mrs Edgar was very intolerant of the resultant noise levels

remarking after the lesson that she would have withdrawn permission to do this had it not been for the fact that she thought the researcher was interested in hearing them talk.

Moreover Mrs Edgar objected to discussion that was not 'on topic' and her definition of this seemed fairly narrow. Thus she cut short a discussion about whether to call the soldiers English or British in this fashion:

- Mrs E: Forget the conversation about English or British and get down to what you really should be doing
P: we are xxxxx/
Mrs E: yes but you shouldn't be discussing that you aren't discussing the right thing

In Mrs Edgar's lessons during individual work-time teacher/pupil contact was largely with the 'Main group' pupils. This was again both because the teacher approached them more often, and because they themselves more frequently initiated contact. If we consider individual work-time during this longer and, according to the teacher, more successful lesson, we find the following:

Teacher/pupil contact		
	Teacher initiated	Pupil initiated
Main group pupils	16	8
Asian group	2	2
Tijan's group	2	0

In Mrs Edgar's class therefore the Asian group, which included two of the weakest girls in the class, was paid as little attention as the girls in Tijan's group. The socially isolated girls who attended this lesson sat with the Main Group or with Tijan's group. Noone was ever seen to choose

to sit near the Asian girls. None of the 'isolates' initiated any contact with the teacher.

It was also noteworthy that twelve of the teacher initiated approaches were either overtly disciplinary or precipitated because the group in question was seen to be off task or heard to be too noisy.

9: 3: 3 Discussion

'Whole class' instruction formed an important part of Mrs Edgar's teaching approach. Both of the thirty minute lessons monitored were spent entirely this way, while in the two double lessons around half of the lesson on one occasion and two thirds on the other was spent with the whole class as the 'interaction set'. At such times the pupils' role was first to listen, and subsequently to demonstrate understanding by answering questions which were regularly embedded within stretches of teacher monologue. Less structured contributions often drew preremptory comment:

		ACT	MOVE
Mrs E:	Have you ever heard of when somebody's lighting a cigarette -	Starter	
	Are you watching? -	Direct	Opening
	and let's say there are three of you who are smoking and I light the cigarette and light yours first, light yours second	Starter	
	and then the third one they often blow it out they don't give you the third light	Inform	B. Opening
	have you ever seen anybody do that	Elicit.	Opening
P:	Yeah	Reply	Supporting
P:	No	Reply	Supporting
Mrs E:	hands up anybody who has ever seen or heard of that sort of thing	Cue	Chall. B. open. (L5)*
	<Two hands go up>	<Bids>	

Pupils begin to talk to each other about lighting cigarettes (9 secs.)

* Coded challenging because the teacher denies the pupils right to talk (L5).

<p>P: (to teacher) why</p> <p>Mrs E: right</p> <p>if you were to give me a chance we could ask if anybody knows the reason and if you don't know the reason I could give an explanation so don't let's discuss whether your mother uses a gas lighter or anything it doesn't make any difference</p>	<p>ACT</p> <p>Elicit.</p> <p>Marker</p> <p>Starter</p> <p>Direct.</p>	<p>MOVE</p> <p>Opening</p> <p>Chall. open.</p> <p>(L5)*</p>
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* Coded challenging because the teacher denies the pupils right to talk (L5).

Mrs Edgar's tone, as in the extract quoted above, was often somewhat abrupt, and 'control' episodes fairly frequent in her lessons. Where Miss Maine had felt uncomfortable and as if she had been 'snappy' during a lesson in which she had been involved in 2.2 'control' episodes per five minutes of lesson time, Mrs Edgar regarded this second lesson as one of her most successful despite 2.3 'control' episodes per five minutes, and an opening stage in which the figure rose to 4.2.

Mrs Edgar appeared to feel under constant time pressure, and her impatience with the class seemed related to this. She regularly gave the impression that there was much to be done and barely enough time available. In comparison Miss Maine's approach was very relaxed: lesson time was allotted according to the pupils' pace of work. By way of contrast, on all four occasions on which Mrs Edgar was seen her opening remarks involved references to the need to speed things up:

18th June

'Get your things out quickly!'

21st June

'Come on we're running five minutes late now. Right we're all here now running five minutes late. We don't want to keep you after school girls so best settle down quickly.'

25th June

'Now we've got a single lesson and time is going on. I said get your books out and if you haven't got your History book with you, get your rough books out quick sharp. Come on quickly.'

28th June

'Right we're now running a few minutes late I don't want to waste any more time please.'

Such remarks were usually sparked off by the class's piecemeal arrival for lessons, which as Mrs Edgar had intimated during the teacher interview she found disturbing and puzzling.

Mrs Edgar appeared totally disinterested in any kind of contact with the group which was not strictly work-related. Her reactions to an incident during an exceptionally hot day provided an instructive example. The girls came in shivering and asking if the radiators were on. Mrs Edgar passed over the astonishing question without comment:

Natalie: Is the radiator on?

Mrs E: Girls, if this class doesn't stop chattering there's going to be trouble.

In fact the girls had had a water fight during the lunch break and although it was not obvious to the casual observer their clothes were soaking wet. A whole by-play concerning the removal of wet clothes and expressions of shivering throughout the lesson was totally ignored by Mrs Edgar, who behaved as if there was nothing remarkable or worthy of comment about the girls' reactions. Mrs Edgar may not have been aware of why the girls were behaving as they did: she certainly gave no public indication, when forced to acknowledge their inattention, and acted as if their apparently ludicrously inappropriate complaints were not interesting enough to enquire into:

Ainy: I'm cold

Mrs E: I don't care if you're cold. If you waste time you're not going to get any warmer.

Despite Mrs Edgar's unsympathetic and often critical approach, at no time did the class offer her cheek or openly disobey her.

9: 4 The pupils' view of the teachers

The class stated that they worked harder for Miss Maine than they did for Mrs Edgar, and also claimed to find her lessons more interesting:

TABLE 9: 8 Self-reported work levels: the mixed-ability class

	Mean	Std. dev.	N	
English	2.77	.81	18	
History	2.33	.84	18	
Difference				
Mean	Std. dev.	T	DF	Prob.
.44	.86	2.14	17	.05

Note: Max. score (work hard all the time) = 4;
min. score (never work hard) = 1

TABLE 9: 9 Self-reported interest levels: the mixed-ability class

	Mean	Std	N	
English	3.22	.81	18	
History	2.33	1.41	18	
Difference				
Mean	Std. dev.	T	DF	Prob.
.833	1.5	2.29	17	.05

Note: Max score (very interesting) = 5;
min. score (very boring) = 1.

Out of the six lower ability girls who completed the questionnaire all reported that they found English more interesting than History and five felt that they worked harder for it.

Miss Maine was also regarded more favourably by the class than Mrs Edgar on the 'Good Teacher' items:

TABLE 9: 10 Ratings by the mixed-ability class of Miss Maine and Mrs Edgar on the 'Good Teacher' items

	Mean	Std	N	
Miss Maine	11.29	4.63	14	
Mrs Edgar	-5.36	9.12	14	
<u>Difference</u>				
Mean	Std. dev.	T	DF	Prob.
16.643	9.621	6.47	13	.000

However whereas we have previously found that a teacher's 'most enjoyed' class reciprocated by judging the teacher most favourably of the four rated, Miss Maine was not quite so favourably viewed by 3M:

TABLE 9: 11 Ratings by the mixed-ability class of their four teachers on 'Good Teacher' items

	English	Maths	History	Geography
Mean	9.6	15.6	-5.5	9.1
Std. dev.	6.8	4.1	8.8	5.5
N	16	15	15	15

Only two girls, Durdesh, the isolated Asian girl considered to be of very low ability by both teachers, and Dionne, the VR Band 3 girl with whom Mrs Edgar had such difficulty, considered Miss Maine to be a better teacher

than any other rated. Twelve considered their Maths teacher best. Tijan's group, who as we have seen came in for little of Miss Maine's attention, rated Miss Maine the least favourably, and the Main group girls, including Lola, Janice and Orel, who generally secured her notice, rated her the most highly.

On the other hand everyone except Michelle P, the girl about whom Miss Maine had the last positive things to say, ranked her as better than Mrs Edgar, whom eleven considered their worst, and none their best, teacher. Not a single girl considered that Mrs Edgar was 'friendly', could 'have a laugh with the class', was a teacher with whom you could 'talk about problems' or who put 'a lot of variety into lessons'. Only on the items relating to the Control factor did Mrs Edgar fare better than Miss Maine.

If we consider the replies from the six girls of lower ability who answered the questionnaire, the rankings remain the same, although the scores were lower:

TABLE 9: 12 Ratings by low ability pupils of Miss Maine on the 'Good Teacher' items

	English	Maths	History	Geography
Mean	7	10.4	-10.2	4.8

9: 5 Written work produced by the mixed-ability class

9: 5: 1 English

As with the English class in Ridgemount, 3M had both a rough book and a 'best work' book. In Maple Grove, after making three attempts, the researcher was able to look at seven of the rough books, and twelve of the 'best work' books. By examining both sets, access was gained to the

work of thirteen of the class over the time period monitored. This included the work of four of the lower ability pupils.

The 'best books' were shorter than those at Ridgemount: length from the beginning of the year varied from Stacey's twenty five pages to Aimy's nine. At Ridgemount the 'best book' production ranged from forty three and a half to a low of sixteen pages over the comparable time span. This was surprising both because the Maple Grove class had a much higher VR Band composition and in view of the fact that Miss Maine's chief emphasis was on 'private writing', whereas Mr Doyle had felt it necessary to point out that he had been throughout the year putting greater emphasis on 'less writing and more reading and discussion and more verbal work'.

The 'rough books' showed four initial pieces of work which called for autobiographical writing of various kinds - 'My Life' 'Description of Someone I know' 'Diary of a Week in School'. Thereafter there was one comprehension, two exercises on poetry, a description of a character in a book, one exercise on the correction of common spelling mistakes, another on speech marks and a third on writing a letter, and a book review.

For two and a half weeks before the observation period started, apart from the library work on Fridays, the girls had been working at their own pace on stories of their own. Some had written two stories, others had preferred to spend all of the time developing one. These stories ranged in length from a twenty page Horror story from Karen to little over five pages from Shalma. The quality of what had been produced was very varied. Thus Shalma wrote shakily:

'Today It Is Going to be my first day at school. I Wake up a 7 o'clock
And stargt Went Into the bath And Had A shair. And I come out of the
bathroom. I dried my hair and I wore my clouse'

while Stacey began in impeccable script:

'Hello, my name is Emma and I live in Cornwall on a little farm called, "Fallen Farm". I live with my mummy and daddy, and the most incredible animal in the world, who is of course Monty. You must of heard of him, after all he is famous. He has been in several films and has been in papers all over the world.'

No marks were given by Miss Maine, but sentence-long comments were added at the end: these were largely, but not exclusively, complementary. Thus for Fahana's first story. she wrote: 'Commended. This is an interesting detailed piece of work; well done!' while for her second the comment was 'Not as well edited as the other, but good try. Now - do the corrections.'. For Karen her praise was high: 'Wow! This is very powerful, especially the menacing advance of the parents, described through their threats. 3 Commendeds. You've got the horror style excellently here, Karen. Well done!': Stacey was told: '3 commendeds. What a lovely story Stacey! It's beautifully written, and the plot is cleverly worked out.'

Miss Maine had corrected spelling, punctuation and grammar carefully throughout the work, and added detailed advice on style. Natalie for example had written:

'She looked at Danny. The blood was running down his body. She quickly ran to the phone. She picked it up and it was dead. She ran to the door, but could not get it open. Joanne ran to a window and opened the curtains to get out, but she saw blood running down the window.'

Miss Maine had ringed the three 'ran's, and written in the margin 'Think of other words to use': 'and it was dead' was emended to 'but it was dead': 'Joanne' was altered to 'She'. A substantial tick in the margin commended the image in the last line.

Corrections of the work of the less able were more complete than is usual in work of this standard, where teachers often tackle only the more glaring errors. Matters of style and places where the plot should be expanded were all considered, and constructive advice provided.

9: 5: 2 History

After the last lesson monitored Mrs Edgar asked for the books in which the girls had been working to be handed in and in this way fifteen were made available: three girls who were present failed to hand in their books.

The 'imaginative reconstruction' work on life in the trenches, begun in class and completed for homework, reflected the wide divergence in ability level. Tijan produced a piece which Mrs Edgar considered up to O-level standard, and praised accordingly: 'Commended. Excellent. A very sensitive and thought-provoking account'. Shalma produced an illegible half page in silver pen, of which the following was a typical example:

'After the War the migth know the there must kill there own realive or friend or people the kNew and will be feeling sorry.'

Most of the low ability children did not appear to have grasped in any way what they were supposed to be attempting. Thus Updesh wrote:

'Male tanks were armmued with heavier guns to knocked out pillboxes, while the machine guns or female tanks deatle with the enemy infantry.'

Her two thirds of a page from which this (uncorrected) sentence was selected drew the comment 'You have really put in a good many details which is excellent but you haven't really tried to imagine what it would have been like for the soldiers.' One VR Band 3 pupil, Janice, did appear to have

grasped the concept, although she persevered only for a sentence or two in the 'imaginative reconstruction' before disarmingly lapsing into a more factual account:

'The day is long and hard with the sun making you tired and the sweat running down your face. While the enemy are running, trying to get away from the other man some of them get hooked up on the barbed wire.

Here's a bit on the trenches. I think on the trenches it every man for himself. While digging his own trench. They get a shuvell and start to dig. They dig a whole in the wall for when they go to sleep. While there in the trenches they have to keep their heads down low or they'll get it shot off. That's the end of my description of being in a trench.'

Mrs Edgar commented:

'See me. Some good points in this piece of work. A great improvement. Keep this up.'

However the most striking thing was how similar most of the work sometimes was despite the clearly enormous variation in scholastic aptitude. Of those books which had been begun at the start of the second term, page numbers for example ranged from Tijan's fifty eight to Updesh's forty eight. There was therefore less difference in amount produced by the top and bottom ability ranges in the class than had been the case in English. There were indications that this was because of underachievement on the part of the high ability girls.

In the third lesson monitored Mrs Edgar had discussed with the class the problems faced by the Allied leaders in deciding on the terms of peace after the First World War. She had dictated a title 'The Treaty of Versailles' and two descriptive sentences. The girls were then asked to write down for the next day what the problems were that the Treaty makers had to solve. Directly after the lesson Mrs Edgar commented:

'That's the sort of lesson where I actually say did I actually teach there or was it my imagination. They don't ever attempt to remember anything you give them.'

Her fears were well founded. Only eight girls wrote down the dictated lines and only Tijan added approximately three lines to the teacher's sentences, and her additions were unfinished. Updesh's heading read 'Write out the terms of the Treaty of their sand': not surprisingly she had added nothing further. In the next lesson Mrs Edgar devoted another forty minutes of 'whole class' teaching to the Treaty, involving her usual diet of reading aloud, informative comment and class questioning techniques. She then allotted twenty four minutes of class time to the girls' writing out (with the help of several visual aids and text books) the terms of the Treaty which they had failed to complete for the previous homework. The task was extremely simple, given that any real attention had been paid to the immediately preceding part of the lesson, and yet at least two girls, Janice and Joanne, had done nothing by the end of the lesson. Moreover very little work was done by the rest. Shalma produced three lines, and even Tijan a mere four terms. Orel worked the most conscientiously to produce eight terms. One was left after looking at the work with the inescapable impression that comparatively little real work had been attempted, although immediately after it had taken place Mrs Edgar had judged the lesson as successful as any she was observed teaching (4 out of 5 on the Success scale).

Mrs Edgar like Miss Maine marked work with ticks and comments. However unlike Miss Maine she made no attempt to correct spelling mistakes or grammatical errors, although she commented sometimes at the end of work 'always check your work for English'. Her comments were less individually

tailored than Miss Maine's, and she did not give constructive advice at relevant points throughout the work, but made general evaluative comments at the end only. For example, the 'imaginative reconstruction' of trench warfare produced minor variants on the same remark - 'but you've not really written about the trenches from the point of view of the soldier'.

.....

Since this class was seen later than 3F at Ridgemount it was possible to compare the end of the year examination results for both English and History. A comparison of the examination rankings showed interesting differences involving the VR Band 1 pupil, Karen, and three of the lower ability pupils in whom we are especially interested. All did considerably better with Miss Maine. Karen in a comment added to her questionnaire gave an explanation for her underachievement:

'Our History teacher is very boring. No variety and puts you off the subject. I used to love it.'

9: 6 Discussion

At Maple Grove the mixed-ability system presented the classroom teacher with enormous challenges. The observed class, 3M, had a library lesson once a week, and records were kept of their choices: the very different levels of ability were perhaps most clearly and simply exemplified by the reading material selected by different girls. This ranged from 'Animal Farm' and 'Nineteen eighty four' (Tijan) and 'Journey to the Centre of the Earth' (Stacey), to Roald Dahl 'Easy Readers' (Updesh) and 'Milly Molly Mandy' (Shalma), with the majority of the class somewhere

between with the Judy Blum, or Grangehill books. Our two teachers responded very differently to this situation.

9: 6: 1 Miss Maine: implications of the avoidance of 'whole class' teaching situations

Miss Maine reported that she avoided 'whole class' teaching and concentrated on encouraging individual written work, while she herself acted 'as a resource rather than a class teacher'. The Deputy Head at Maple Grove had endorsed the value of a resource-based approach to the challenge of mixed-ability teaching, while admitting the difficulties it created for the teacher:

'resource-based learning requires such a commitment of time above classroom time that it just isn't realistic.'

Experience in Miss Maine's classroom would confirm the strain imposed upon teachers who choose such an approach. Of all the teachers who took part in the research she appeared under the most stress. Observation of the group which she found least enjoyable to teach had to be abandoned because of this.

Comparisons with the support experienced by Mr Doyle in the Ridgemount English Department suggest that the school could have done much more to alleviate the situation for Miss Maine. Mr Doyle was able to draw upon an extra staff member to come into his classroom and to take half of the pupils for group work once a week: during the observation period he had the resource of the Story-teller, and the cooperation of the Media Resources Department in sending another staff member to help with the play production. In this way he was seen to be part of a team, while Miss Maine, although she faced a far harder task with her mixed-ability group

seemed to work largely alone. The importance of school wide factors again becomes apparent.

Miss Maine's work may not be fairly assessed because of this lack of necessary support. In addition, because the research methodology focuses on group communication in the 'whole class' teaching situation, which this teacher rarely used, our approach is not well adapted to evaluate her work. Nevertheless the observational schedule produced data which demonstrated incontrovertibly that Miss Maine's individualised teaching approach had its own dangers.

Group or individual work of this kind as we already noted at Ridgemount, relies on a considerable degree of pupil motivation if it is to be successful. This is because the teacher must necessarily leave pupils unsupervised for long stretches of class time. This will be longer depending on the number of teaching units the class is divided into. With an approach like Miss Maine's which attempted to deal with the class as individuals, it became especially difficult. We saw how the need to control the behaviour of others constantly interrupted conversations, and how if a reasonable length of time was to be spent with anyone, many pupils had inevitably to be passed over. This is particularly likely to occur in classes with a fair proportion of dominant or attention-seeking pupils, who may find it easy to monopolise the teacher's time in lesson after lesson. Other pupils may also easily avoid teacher attention they do not desire by keeping a low profile in class and unobtrusively 'opting out'.

We have also seen that there were counter intuitive repercussions involved in a decision such as Miss Maine's to abrogate a central role in the classroom in favour of the more ancillary position of class 'resource'. We have noted how in fact her interactions at the verbal level were reduced

to giving directions or imparting information. There was little time or opportunity to listen to pupils, apart from in the context of evaluating their work. This was scarcely conducive to the establishment of more balanced relationships between teacher and taught, and gave the teacher little opportunity to encourage the pupils' development of skills in spoken English. Miss Maine was herself aware of this lack and commented:

'My main regret with this group as with nearly every other group is that because I suppose the school's quite pressurised we don't get that chance to communicate with them as you'd like and as I think is really important.'

There was also a certain ambiguity about her apparent renunciation of a directive role in the classroom. Although Miss Maine disliked having to explicitly enforce her authority, and experienced considerable stress during lessons in which she had felt constrained to do so, she obviously felt that as a teacher she had to be ultimately in control, since she gave as her reason for avoiding 'whole class' teaching the fact that she had 'no control' over such situations, and therefore did not 'like it'.

This reminds us that there is no necessary contradiction between 'pupil-centred' techniques and the use of instructional approaches which use the whole class as the interaction set. Mr Doyle's management of situations in which pupils shared with him and each other their opinions while he refrained from evaluative comment and restricted himself to the control of turn-taking, provides a case in point. Miss Maine in her interview made it plain that her avoidance of 'whole class' teaching reflected a failure of classroom management rather than a principled choice, occasioned by the limitations of the technique.

9: 6: 2 Mrs Edgar: failure to relate, or limitations of traditional 'whole class' instruction?

Mrs Edgar on the other hand relied on 'whole class' teaching of a very traditional kind, the familiar teacher-question pupil-answer technique being used to provide pupils with regular, if limited, access to the public discourse. We have seen this type of approach work well in her pupils' eyes for the young Geography teacher at St Annes, and there have been indications that low ability pupils in county schools may also welcome the structure it provides. Mrs Cross at Ridgemount, although she herself was not satisfied with her ability to inspire independent discussion, used this approach to not inconsiderable effect in her 'most enjoyed' class. However, at Maple Grove although the class, as Mrs Edgar had herself noted, 'did not take advantage', their self-reports revealed considerable resentment of the History teacher, and the written work examined would confirm that work levels in her lessons were not high.

There are differences in approach which are undoubtedly important. Where for example Mrs Cross at Ridgemount had placed most emphasis on teaching in the small group situation, in which she actively encouraged pupil/pupil talk, in Mrs Edgar's lessons 'whole class' instruction predominated and talk during periods of individual work time was tolerated rather than encouraged, and strict canons of appropriateness enforced. Moreover 'whole class' instruction of the very traditional type used by Mrs Edgar is much less suited to a mixed-ability situation where, if pitched at the level suitable for the majority, teacher's questions are likely to be too difficult for some and too easy for others. However in the researcher's view Mrs Edgar's lack of success was exacerbated greatly by her neglect of interpersonal relationships.

Mrs Edgar was seen by the class as 'unfriendly' and as not 'caring about pupils as individuals', aspects of the 'Good Teacher' profile which were considered very important by the pupils in Maple Grove (see Table 5: 7). Classroom observation confirmed that she showed little interest or skill in the development of good social relations. She seemed exclusively concerned about the communication of the lesson content, and appeared oblivious to the effects of inaugurating lessons with recriminations and of ignoring the social realities of situations. The evidence from the teacher interview is consistent with these findings. She made fewer 'person' oriented remarks about fewer individuals in the core class than Miss Maine, and unlike that teacher and every other in the sample did not mention any kind of contact with pupils as her major source of job satisfaction.

Yet Mrs Edgar did in fact like the class: in her words they were 'a nice lot', and she viewed with a degree of bewilderment their reluctance to arrive in time for her lessons, and was unaware of how deeply unpopular she was with the class as a whole. She did not intend to convey dislike or indifference, but was simply not attuned to the importance of maintaining supportive interpersonal relationships.

Her approach also implied an underlying educational philosophy quite a variance with the 'progressive' 'child-centred' emphasis of the school, which theoretically she accepted. At the level of classroom practice Mrs Edgar's emphasis was not on the learning process, but on the amount of information which could be conveyed by the teacher in a time period she consistently found inadequate. Despite her conscientious questioning technique her handling of classroom talk suggested that she saw active pupil participation as of secondary importance. Teachers who are

relatively disinterested on their pupils as people would seem to be much more likely to have an authoritarian approach to classroom control and to be less interested in active pupil participation.

Mrs Edgar's Maple Grove pupils did not appear to learn well in these circumstances. It is possible that her approach would not have provoked such extreme reactions from pupils in a more traditional school, but the indications are that any teacher seen as uncaring or unfriendly is likely to be negatively evaluated, and that this is likely to be reflected in lowered work levels.

Interesting also in this connection is the way in which Mrs Edgar's pupils were agreed that she offered no variety in her lessons, despite the fact that she used a number of different visual aids, and took care to provide back-up materials of different sorts. The Third Year History curriculum had also been very varied. The girls had looked at the Industrial Revolution, America under Kennedy, Tzarist Russia, and were now studying the First World War. Mrs Edgar had obviously taken care and trouble to provide variety in matters of material provision and curriculum development, which in the classroom climate which she had unwittingly created went largely unappreciated.

9: 6: 3 Conclusions

The relatively favourable evaluations made of Miss Maine as a teacher by her pupils provided a salutary warning against any premature conclusion that 'whole class' teaching is in every circumstance an indispensable teaching technique. Nevertheless there is evidence that the 'whole class' situation may provide for the majority of low ability pupils experiences rarely possible in other circumstances.

Observation suggests that pupils generally are allowed to sit near friends, but are not encouraged to wander round the classroom. Seating arrangements are generally very stable, and teachers often find it difficult to insist on temporary changes. Outside the 'whole class' situation therefore pupils have verbal contact with a very restricted set of classmates. If 'whole class' teaching is abandoned this may mean that the influence of the limited number of motivated pupils prepared to enter into an exchange of educationally relevant ideas is limited to the small interaction set of their close friends.

However much more is obviously involved than simply the switch to 'whole class' teaching. In each of our core classes the more active contributors in all situations have been the attention-seekers, who have consequently figured as often in counts of disruptive behaviours as in tallies of pupil participation of a desirable kind: hard working or more intelligent pupils usually kept a low profile in class. In Maple Grove for example Mrs Edgar with her 'whole class' approach was no more able than Miss Maine to draw upon Tijan's talents to inspire the class in the way that Mr Doyle had tried to do with Dawn. There were problems of interpersonal relations that would have had to be solved. Clearly her low profile in class had a self-preserving function for Tijan and was a way of gaining acceptance in the social group. Despite her generally acknowledged intellectual superiority Tijan had a good relationship with the class which she maintained by the exercise of a certain modesty:

Mrs E: 'They respect and admire Tijan a lot and they're very much aware that she's a lot brighter than them. They don't get resentful when they know that she's got the top mark, because they always ask her what her mark was and she reluctantly tells them.'

Any teacher who hoped to get her to take more of a leading role would have to help her deal with the expected negative consequences of such behaviour.

PART 4: CONCLUSIONS

Chapter 10

The research findings are discussed, and the research approach and methodology evaluated.

CHAPTER 10

Discussion of the research findings and evaluation of the research approach

The evidence gathered in each of the four schools has been examined separately and discussed in detail in the concluding sections of the relevant chapters. The final chapter will present an overview of the cumulative evidence from the four schools. In the first section we will consider in how far this enables us to answer the four research questions (see Chapter 2, Section 2: 3). The implications of findings will be further explored in the second section, in which the research approach and methodology are evaluated..

10: 1 The four research questions

10: 1: 1 Does the same low ability class behave differently with different teachers?

Each of the 'core' low ability classes was observed with two different teachers: differences in the classes' behaviour were more immediately salient than any across-teacher similarities.

Across-teacher differences

Our evidence showed that different teachers related in very different ways to their low ability pupils, set up different kinds of task situations for them and encouraged different kinds of verbal interaction.

Observation and the teachers' self-reports suggested that the differences we noted were stable features of the teachers' classroom performances. Not surprisingly, low ability classes behaved very differently as a function of these different approaches.

This was particularly clear in the case of the core class at the community-based county school. We noted how the class became the quiet 'shy' group for the teacher whose interests and best skills lay in the area of classroom discipline and management, while for the teacher whose priorities involved teacher/pupil communication and pupils taking 'an active part in the lessons', they emerged as a lively if sometimes irrepressible group with a number of potentially rebellious individuals (see Chapter 8, section 8: 4: 1 and section 8: 4: 2). Such contrasts demonstrated incontrovertibly the potential of the teacher to influence interaction.

Across-teacher similarities

However there were also important across-school and across-teacher similarities in the behaviour of the low ability classes which suggested that all teachers, regardless of their different skills and techniques, are likely to face certain recurring problems with such groups.

For example in each of the low ability groups, and in the mixed-ability class also, attention-seeking pupils had 'high visibility'. These attention-seekers monopolised a great deal of their teachers' time in class, both because of misbehaviour and because, when focussed on work, they often crowded out the rest of the class. They were usually members of the main friendship groups, and consequently had considerable influence in the class. The most hard working or gifted pupils, in the other hand, kept a very low profile in class and could not be relied upon by teachers to set the tone for the group.

Secondly the research focus on 'whole class' teaching episodes highlighted the fact that all low ability classes had similar difficulties in handling relatively unstructured group learning situations. For example, particular problems were experienced by those teachers who tried to encourage 'whole class' discussion in which greater freedom to control the topic, or express their own opinions, was given to pupils (see Chapter 6, section 6: 4: 4; Chapter 7, section 7: 3: 1; Chapter 8, section 8: 4: 1). All teachers in such circumstances found difficulty in negotiating acceptance of rules to govern turn-taking, and in getting the pupils to listen to each other. Such difficulties suggested that classes lacked the necessary interactional skills to handle such situations and make the most of the learning opportunities they provided. On the other hand, particularly in the more traditionally-run Church schools (see Chapter 6, section 6: 6: 4 and Chapter 7, section 7 : 6: 4) during such episodes it also often appeared that the class did not accept the interaction as a legitimated 'learning situation'. They behaved as they would have done in the hurly-burly of ordinary conversation, uninhibitedly and egotistically. And yet those same pupils could show themselves quite capable of orderly and controlled classroom behaviour in highly structured teacher-question pupil-answer situations (see Chapter 7, section 7: 3: 5).

These features of our low ability classes' behaviour have important implications for how teachers can improve their techniques for handling such groups, and will be discussed more fully in later sections of this chapter. Thus in so far as difficulties reflect low ability classes' lack of interactional and discourse skills which teachers need to learn how to recognise and foster, they will be addressed in sections 10: 1: 4 and 10: 2: 3. In so far as these behaviours reveal the importance of social

legitimation for particular kinds of instructional techniques, they will be discussed in section 10: 2: 2 and section 10: 3.

10: 1: 2 Does the same teacher behave differently with different classes?

The research design (which was carried through in this respect in three of the four schools) specified that the same teachers should be observed with two classes - the 'core' group of low-ability adolescents - the main focus of the research - and the group which teachers were currently enjoying most. This second group allowed us first-hand access to the kind of interaction which the teacher considered desirable. It also enabled us to observe each teacher in potentially contrastive classroom environments, and to see how they adapted their teaching style to suit the different needs of different groups.

Similarities in the teachers' behaviour across different classes were however more immediately obvious than differences. Where differences in teaching behaviour occurred, they did not take the form of new initiatives, developed to answer the special needs of different groups, but seemed to reflect rather the restrictions imposed upon, or the encouragement provided for, a recognisably stable teaching approach by the different group environments.

Across-class similarities

Four out of the six teachers selected high ability classes as their 'most enjoyed' group, while in the remaining two cases, although the teachers did not select high-flying classes, their 'most enjoyed' groups were ranked higher in ability than the 'core' group. Despite these differences in ability level, the interactional style of the teachers did not differ markedly between groups.

Teachers' ways of relating to pupils, their self-presentation in class and their methods for keeping control of the group were found to be remarkably stable across groups. Where the management of classroom talk was concerned, teachers developed techniques which they tended to deploy in all their lessons regardless of which children were being taught. Thus some (in our sample most) teachers relied exclusively on the traditional teacher-question pupil-answer exchange to structure 'whole class' and small group or individualised teacher/pupil discussion. Others had developed techniques and built up expectations amongst their pupils concerning other kinds of discussion in which pupils had more freedom, within certain parameters, to control the topic and express their views (see Chapter 6, section 6: 1: 7 and Chapter 8, section 8: 1: 3). However in neither case did teachers radically change their approach as a function of the particular class being taught: the same interactional options were offered to all groups. Teachers were in other words recognisably themselves in all their classes, and did not adopt radically different teaching approaches to suit the needs of different groups.

Despite the fact that they were monitored on at least four consecutive occasions with the same class, and on two others with a different class, most teachers in our sample also varied the interactional context of their lessons very little. Some teachers relied exclusively on the 'whole class' teaching situation for instruction and discussion with pupils and made very little use of group work in their lessons. If teachers favoured group work, then the tendency was for the bulk of every lesson to be spent in this way. Lessons followed highly predictable patterns, which were repeated from week to week and class to class. All too often it seemed that variety was seen solely in terms of the subject

matter of lessons, or in terms of alternating sessions of oral and written work.

Across-class differences

Although the same teacher could be seen to behave in very similar ways with different classes, the interactional results were however very different in groups with different needs. This in turn led to some important modifications in the teacher's approach.

For example, focussing once more on verbal interaction, teachers were seen down-grading their requirements with low ability groups, who were allowed to transgress classroom rules to which other groups were asked to adhere (see Chapter 6, section 6: 4: 4, Chapter 8, section 8: 4: 4). Teachers for example paused for a shorter time before giving up on the expectation of a pupil reply, and while retaining the framework of teacher-question pupil-answer, asked ever less challenging questions. However it seemed mostly to be the case that teachers simply did less of things which had proved difficult, rather than radically alter their teaching approach. The ultimate modification had of course been made by the English teacher at Maple Grove, who had given up 'whole class' discussion altogether because she was unable to control it as she wished (see Chapter 9, section 9: 7: 1).

These kinds of lowered expectations about, and restricted opportunities given to, low ability pupils has of course been often noted by other researchers (see Chapter 1, section 1: 2: 5).

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Although consistency in a teacher's behaviour would seem desirable in so far as it is a mark of personal authenticity and a coherent professional policy, the within- and across-class similarities we have noted also suggests that there are considerable dangers of the secondary

school teacher's classroom performance becoming a fairly routinised affair, particularly where teachers work within a limited repertoire of interactional modes.

Teachers in secondary schools, who see any one class for a relatively short space of time, may have less incentive than primary school teachers to develop a variety of instructional techniques, or to explore the potential of different kinds of 'interaction sets' for their classes. This is particularly likely to be the case when work loads are heavy. This would suggest that secondary school teachers need to become more aware of the dangers of an unduly routinised and stylised teaching approach, and, conversely, of the potentially enriching outcome when different kinds of social situations and settings are incorporated into educational tasks.

In low ability groups in which there are particular difficulties in motivating pupils this is likely to be especially important. The English teacher at the community-based county school noted how a change of interactional context could have dramatic repercussions:

'In the group work on Fridays [the weakest pupil in the class] is a revelation. She took control of the project, the play they were going to film. It amazed me to see her so dominant. I think different situations see all of them acting in different ways.'

Chapter 8, p 385.

Our findings would also suggest that teachers will need the active support of their schools. The achievements of the English teacher at Ridgemount were in no small part due to the backing of an exceptionally supportive Department which provided regular input from other teachers, and access to stimulating facilities (see Chapter 4, section 4: 2: 5).

10: 1: 3 What kind of classroom interaction is favoured by teachers?

As has been previously noted, by including in the research design observation of each teacher's 'most enjoyed' class we were able to monitor at first hand the kind of classroom interaction each teacher considered desirable. This evidence was therefore the most important source of information about the kind of interaction favoured by teachers. Findings were validated and refined by also taking into consideration 'success' ratings given by the teachers for all the lessons they were observed teaching.

All teachers chose as their 'most enjoyed' class a group which confirmed their own self-esteem, by responding well to their particular teaching strengths, and/or by remaining unaffected by their professional short-comings. Thus the English teacher at St. Annes with her distaste for explicit teacher-directed methods of control selected a group which were essentially self-disciplining, and required the minimum of controlling directives from the teacher. The Geography teacher at Ridgemount, who had difficulty in encouraging discussion, but was an excellent classroom manager, chose a group which needed all of her skills to discipline their ebullience, but which did not need any encouragement to contribute to classroom talk. The English teacher at Ridgemount, who had chosen to enter the profession because he saw himself as 'a good communicator' chose a class which excelled at discussion and in which pupils were 'past masters at being on the other end'. The English teacher at St. Andrews who particularly valued the ability to control a class, but had considerable problems with discipline, chose a young, easily controlled group with whom her contact was restricted to a once-weekly highly structured reading lesson. The Geography teacher in the same school, who supported a

'progressive' approach, selected a group with which she had extended contact enabling her to socialize them into enthusiastic acceptance of her teaching approach which was viewed with suspicion by other groups in the traditionally-run school.

'Most enjoyed' groups offered additional reasons for self-congratulation. As their ratings for their teachers on the 'Good Teacher' items would confirm (see Tables 6: 14, 7: 13, 8: 12 and 8: 13) these groups held the teacher in high esteem, a state of affairs to which few can remain indifferent.

Examination therefore of each teacher's 'most enjoyed' class showed that teachers experience most unproblematic professional satisfaction in, and consider most successful, situations where there is the closest match between their own professional skills and the class's needs.

All of our teachers also expressed a clear preference for classroom situations in which they felt in charge of proceedings. Like their pupils, who saw the teacher's ability to control the class as the third most important of the twenty items included in the 'Good Teacher' profile (see Table 5: 3) they attached a great deal of importance to their ability to control the group.

This emphasis, while not surprising, did mean that some teachers found themselves in rather an ambiguous relationship with some of their expressed aims. Thus the English teacher at the mixed-ability county school, although claiming to wish to be seen 'as a resource rather than a class teacher', had abandoned class discussion 'because I can't have control over it'. The Geography teacher at the faction-torn Catholic school, while clearly very genuine about her commitment to a 'progressive' style of teaching which laid emphasis on a 'child-centred' approach to learning,

nevertheless admitted that she preferred to teach in a traditional school whose achievements and many of whose customs she deplored, rather than in a 'progressive' school where 'if you're a teacher people start questioning the very ethos of it'.

Our observation of classroom process would suggest that it is often preoccupation with classroom control which leads teachers to curtail 'whole class' discussion, or to restrict it within the routine question-and-answer format. This was the case in our sample with very different teachers in entirely different social situations. Thus the gentle English teacher at Maple Grove and the punitive English teacher at St Andrews had both responded by suppressing 'whole class' discussion, and their teaching styles, although very different, were both dictated primarily by the perceived necessity for greater control. Of course, the kind and degree of control considered obligatory varied, depending on the teacher's conception of his or her role and the teacher/pupil relationship.

Thus teachers who related to pupils on a personal as well as a professional basis, and gained their greatest satisfactions from such contact, were more likely to value active pupil participation during lesson time, rely on less overtly authoritarian kinds of control, and favour more 'progressive' approaches to classroom teaching. Teachers who were more 'work', or as we have termed it, more 'pupil' as opposed to 'person' oriented, by and large were more concerned with the communication of information in the classroom, less tolerant of behavioural infringements and less innovative and more traditional in the kinds of verbal interaction they encouraged.

As has been noted earlier (see section 10: 1: 1), our research findings showed that low ability pupils were in fact most easily contained

by teachers who relied on traditional teacher/pupil relationships and structured classroom talk in conventional ways. There was also some evidence that teachers who combined a benevolent approach with a degree of strictness and a traditional interpretation of classroom interaction (pupil contributions being expected for the most part to be restricted to teacher-question pupil-answer sessions) encouraged higher response rates from more retiring pupils (see the behaviour of Angela and Diane, Chapter 8, p 369). This was no doubt due both to the greater predictability of the interpersonal situation and to the stricter control these teachers exercised over the dominant pupils who tended otherwise to monopolise the interaction. These findings provide good reasons for most teachers' reliance on stereotypic kinds of 'whole class' interaction with such groups.

In our case studies, the two teachers who persevered, and at least partially succeeded, in encouraging less teacher-directed interaction with low ability groups were distinguished by two expressed preferences. First, both emphasised the importance of having had the chance to build up a working relationship from the earliest school years if they were to have unproblematic control of the group. Thus the Geography teacher made it very clear that her greatest satisfactions came from 'teaching a group whose development I've seen right through' and with whom she had had the opportunity to develop a personal relationship (see Chapter 6, p. 222). The English teacher when asked if he had anything to 'say about the class that we haven't discussed', replied:

'Well I didn't have them in the first two years and I think that's a disadvantage to me as a teacher. I think I could have (and you would see this if you saw me teaching some other classes that I have had for the whole time that I've been here) I think I could have instilled or instructed them in methods of working together as a class that they haven't actually got at the moment. If I'd had 3F from the First Year

I don't think Dawn would have ever gone over the top like she usually is sometimes.'

Since these teachers relied on a less overtly authoritarian self presentation in class, this requirement makes good intuitive sense. They needed time to create for themselves a more personal kind of working relationship.

A second important factor characterised the classroom preferences of these two teachers. Each had a high level of tolerance for pupil behaviour which did not fit into the normative obedient Sinclair and Coulthardian model. Both, for example, chose classes as their 'most enjoyed' group which were relatively stressful to teach (see Chapter 6, section 6: 1: 6 and Chapter 8, section 8: 1: 2). Both were prepared to accept, and indeed actively enjoyed, the occasional 'out-of-frame' (to use Goffman's terminology) pupil behaviour:

'I like teaching children who question things really.'
(Geography teacher at St Andrews)

(Speaking of his 'most enjoyed' group) 'If they're just given a nice cosy quiet little lesson then they'll start larking about.'
(English teacher at Ridgemount)

The low ability classroom situation, whatever the skill of the teacher, is likely to remain a potentially difficult one. The experience of stress is however in part at least a function of expectations and interpretation. Results suggest that those teachers who view stressful situations as exhilarating challenges rather than as *dis*-stresses and defeats are likely to be at an advantage in dealing with such groups.

10: 1: 4 What are the effects of different types of classroom interaction on pupils' interest and work levels?

Pupils' self-reports testified that work and interest ratings and evaluation of the teacher on the 'Good Teacher' items were all, as we would expect, interrelated. Where low ability classes had exaggeratedly negative reactions to particular teachers (see Chapter 6, section 6: 4 and Chapter 9, section 9: 4) their objections appeared to have their root in the interpersonal dimension. These teachers were seen as 'unfriendly' by every single pupil in their class (see Chapter 6, p. 254 and Chapter 9, p. 420). Once such extreme negative reactions had been established it appeared that considerable efforts on the teacher's part to provide interesting and varied subject matter and work materials were to no avail (see Chapter 9, section 9: 7: 2). In addition all three teachers for whom pupils reported significantly lowered work and/or interest ratings scored particularly badly on items in the 'Good Teacher' profile such as 'cares about pupils as individuals' and 'is someone you can talk to about problems'.

These findings suggest that the sensitive management of interpersonal relationships will be crucial to a teacher's success with low ability pupils. The classroom, like all other human encounters, is very much the forum for the interplay of personalities seeking the means for validating self-expression. Low ability pupils, unlike the more academically inclined, can expect few rewards from an examination-oriented school system, and are therefore more dependent on the social support and experiences of success that their teachers can provide. It is essential that a teacher unequivocally conveys respect for such pupils as individuals and as potential achievers.

However, the low ability pupils in our schools reported that their work levels varied less than interest levels as a function of teaching approach (see Chapter 6, section 6: 4 Chapter 7, section 7: 6 and Chapter 9, section 9: 4). Nor did low ability students rate those teachers who were most supportive and most encouraging of pupil participation quite as highly as we might have expected. Moreover, on the evidence of their written work, it was not only the teachers who provided the opportunity for novel kinds of teacher/pupil verbal interaction who were successful in producing good work from low ability students. The steady improvement in the work of the low ability pupils in St Annes under their kindly but conventional Geography teacher is a case in point. Teachers whose approach to classroom conversation was strictly traditional were very popular with low ability classes (see Chapter 7, section 7: 6 and Chapter 8, section 8: 5) as long as they provided some scope for pupil talk and did not actively repress pupil contributions in a wounding way. Pupils who were used to more conventional teaching approaches had reservations about teachers who demanded more initiative from them, or gave them greater freedoms in classroom talk (see Chapter 6, section 6: 6: 4 and Chapter 8, section 8: 7: 4). As we have already noted, this may have been influenced by pupils' perceptions of what was 'legitimated' work: pupils did not necessarily perceive such opportunities as having any educational function.

Teachers reported that when low ability groups were given the opportunity to exercise more freedom in less structured forms of 'whole class' discussion, all too often this degenerated into licence, which threatened to jeopardise the educational 'definition of the situation'. This unfortunately encouraged most teachers to restrict 'whole class' discussion to the familiar routine of teacher-question pupil-answer sessions. Their

classes were therefore never given the opportunity to develop other kinds of discussion skills.

Our research however suggests that teachers should persevere while expecting to encounter difficulties. We have seen that a less stereotyped approach to control of the discourse undoubtedly encouraged verbal interaction of a more exciting kind. When the English teacher at Ridgemount was observed with his high ability class, this was seen to have interesting repercussions for the definition of knowledge as problematic and negotiable (see Chapter 8, section 8: 1: 4), and hence for the status of alternative pupil views and the validity in pupils' own eyes of their own contributions even when not endorsed by the teacher's approval. There were also indications that concentration on developing verbal skills in class had valuable spin-off effects for this same teacher's low ability pupils, despite the fact that their response to such opportunities was less controlled, and might indeed have seemed to another teacher unacceptable. This teacher had stressed that his priorities had shifted somewhat from written work:

'When I devised this kind of syllabus for them I was bearing in mind what one of the HMI's had said to me a year or two ago when he came into the school. He said English teachers always feel guilty if they haven't got loads of books filled with writing: and he said what they should be doing is less writing and more reading and more discussion and more verbal work. So I took him at his word and I've sort of changed a bit.'

Nevertheless the volume of written work produced by his class, which had the lowest VR Banding of any group monitored, was greater than that in the other county school, despite the fact that there the core group was a mixed-ability class, and the teacher's emphasis on written work production (see Chapter 9, section 9: 2: 2). In addition, when compared with other

schools, the quality of the work produced was exceptional for pupils of this ability level with respect to the liveliness of much of the writing and the opinionated views expressed. This teacher himself believed that animated class discussion produced good written work:

'When I get that kind of reaction to talk about some kind of written work I know it's going to be good - they are genuinely involved.'

However in less highly structured and less predictable classroom situations the social skills required to successfully negotiate when the traditional rules are obligatory and when they may be ignored are considerable, and it is perhaps not surprising that low ability groups often seemed at a loss.

The kind of interaction which we saw between the English teacher at Ridgemount and his higher ability group allows a glimpse into the kinds of social and interactional skills which are required. In this class pupils showed the capacity to manage a very complex and continually renegotiated balance between observance and flouting of the rules governing orderly classroom talk. The class's awareness and enjoyment of these rule-breaks was often indicated by outbursts of laughter, and humour was the means whereby the teacher and the more socially skilled pupils repaired the breaches.

This teacher consistently used the transformational power of humour to soften the edge of his authority:

'This is not the Houses of Parliament - stop shouting. There are three people talking at once!'

Pupils were also encouraged by him to play their part:

'There's plenty of repartee as you'll see with this class. I

deliberately encourage them because I want them stimulated. And they're past masters at being at the other end. It's like Morecombe and Wise!

His 'most enjoyed' class knew how to use humour to legitimate unacceptable views and assert a degree of independence. Thus they rallied to a classmate's support when she returned yet again to her idea that the subject of the poem under discussion in class was an old woman and her pet birds, a notion on which the group had already spent more than enough time in the teacher's view, and which he had already rejected:

Donna: I still think it's the birds.

(Laughter from the class.)

Mr Doyle: (quietly and seriously) Well don't cos you're wrong. Alright?

P: How do you know though?

Mr Doyle: I know.

P: (teasingly repeating Mr Doyle's own earlier objection) Evidence?!

(Everyone including Mr Doyle laughs.)

Mr Doyle: I'm fool proof.

The joking interruption continued sporadically for a further few minutes and only ended when the teacher offered to concede the point if the class could find another staff member who agreed with them.

The role reversal in this strip of dialogue should be noted, and the good-humoured ambivalence behind the teacher's acceptance of criticism. His teasing and partly self-mocking remark ('I'm fool proof'), which was much enjoyed by the class, was at one level a restatement of his own authority, and at another (being just the kind of reply he would not accept from his pupils) generous proof of its arbitrary grounding.

Goffman's (1974) description of the rules by which serious action is transformed into something playful can be seen to apply perfectly to this piece of dialogue. They demonstrate that, even in the apparent spontaneity of humorous repartee, there are underlying rules and expectations structuring the interaction:

- 'a. The playful act is so performed that its ordinary function is not realised. The stronger and more competent participant restrains himself sufficiently to be a match for the weaker and less competent.
- b. There is an exaggeration of the expansiveness of such acts.
- c. The sequence of activity that serves as a pattern is neither followed faithfully nor completed fully, but is subject to starting and stopping, to redoing, to discontinuation for a brief period of time, and to mixing with sequences from other routines.
- d. A great deal of repetitiveness occurs.
- e. When more than one participant is to be involved, all must be freely willing to play or (if he is a participant) to terminate the play once it has begun.
- f. Frequent role switching occurs during play, resulting in a mixing up of the dominance order found among the players during occasions of literal activity.'

pp. 41 - 42.

In this way humour makes acceptable a modicum of pupil power, which can be exercised without really jeopardising the teacher's authority. We have seen how pupils as well as teachers expect teachers to be in charge. It is not the fact of teacher control which is resented by them, but the manner in which it is sometimes implemented. The use of humour in this context serves to defuse and mark off potentially disturbing 'frame breaks'.

Although the most successful outcomes are likely to occur when pupils themselves have well-developed social skills, Mr Doyle's performance

also demonstrated how the teacher can facilitate interaction for the less knowledgeable. The role of voice production in marking the transition between what Goffman would have called the 'main framework' of teacher/pupil interaction and essentially 'out-of-frame' activities was particularly well documented in the case of this English teacher at Ridgemount. He was very skilled at indicating by tone of voice and subtle use of vocabulary when intimacy and/or licence was to be laid aside and teacherly authority reassumed. His initial contact with a class usually involved light-hearted social chat: lesson-time proper began when he expeditiously and in an authoritative tone took the class register. At other times a change in tone of voice and/or vocabulary sign-posted when the class were expected to adopt a pupil stance more in keeping with strict authoritarian teacher/pupil relations. Opening one such lesson stage with his low ability group, he remarked with exaggerated sternness:

'It's a very important lesson and I want it obeyed.'

The unwontedly solemn word and tone evoked a smile from some of the girls, but it effectively quelled all chatty interruptions and the class listened in total silence until the teacher himself indicated that he had finished what he wished to say.

Findings would indicate that this kind of sign-posting of transitions between different kinds of discourse situations is likely to be very important. Teachers whose approach to the control of classroom talk was understated and inexplicit had serious problems (see Chapter 7, section 7: 3: 2).

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Exploration of the four research questions has demonstrated that teachers can have a dramatic effect on the behaviour of a class (see section 10: 1: 1). It has also been shown that the opportunity to participate more actively in group discussion situations is likely to have valuable educational repercussions (see section 10: 1: 4). However, we have also learned that teachers are likely to face two major difficulties if they try to encourage this kind of interaction with low ability groups. First, such pupils, from the evidence we have gathered in very different kinds of schools, are likely to have internalized a rather stereotypic and traditional set of expectations about the teacher/pupil relationship and appropriate classroom activities and consequently may not view such opportunities as learning situations. Secondly, low ability groups would seem typically to lack certain group skills which would allow them to take advantage, in a cooperative and disciplined manner, of the opportunity to express and share their opinions (see section 10: 1: 1).

The first problem has drawn our attention to the importance of legitimating teaching methods which such pupils may fail to see as having educational relevance. The second points up the need for teachers to acquire understanding of the kinds of skills involved in discourse, which classes must be given the opportunity to practise. Since we have also found that teachers often foreclose discussion with low ability groups because of problems in controlling the interaction (see sections 10: 1: 2 and 10: 1: 3) it becomes clear that teachers must find a way of approaching classroom control which can accommodate some risk-taking, and deal with inevitable breaches of acceptable pupil behaviour in ways which do not crush spontaneity or independence of mind on the part of pupils, or jeopardise the teacher's potential as the ultimate classroom authority.

This is likely to necessitate some restructuring of their reciprocal role relationships by both pupils and some of their more traditionally-minded teachers.

In the following section, in which the research perspective and methodology will be evaluated, these themes - legitimation, classroom control, group skills in handling discourse opportunities, and the involvement of the self-concept in role-relationships - will figure importantly. The advantages of the research approach will be discussed in terms of the way in which it has served to increase understanding of these central issues.

10: 2 Evaluation of the research approach

Case studies in four schools of the classroom experience of low ability adolescents and their teachers had been carried out. The research methodology had been that of 'combined levels of triangulation': information at the levels of the school, the class and individuals had been collected in order to further understanding of classroom interaction. Although full 'investigator triangulation' was not attempted, the views of the teacher, pupils and researcher all contributed to the evaluation of classroom process.

A symbolic interactionist perspective had been adopted and the focus of the research was on the language of the classroom. This was analysed using a discourse analysis system designed to examine how access to talk was controlled. This system had been selected in the belief that it would 'give us a language in terms of which we could express the different kinds of conversational opportunities teachers left open for their pupil

partners in talk, and a vocabulary in which we might discuss how these pupils responded' (Chapter 3, section 3: 2: 2).

It is now therefore appropriate to examine what has been gained from:

- 1: the theoretical perspective, symbolic interactionism, which has been adopted.
- 2: the methodological approach of triangulation.
- 3: the research tool of discourse analysis.

10: 2: 1 The theoretical perspective: symbolic interactionism

The theoretical framework of symbolic interactionism gave structure and direction to the whole research project. The key interactionist concepts of 'self' 'roles' 'rules' and 'socialisation' allowed us to integrate data gathered at different levels: thus the schools were seen as socialising agents which shaped the reciprocal role-sets of teacher and pupil, influencing both self concepts and behaviour. The classroom was the forum in which these roles were enacted and occasionally redefined through the creative exploitation of the rules governing social performance. The symbolic interactionist perspective by providing such 'articulating' bridges, enabled us to integrate very disparate information into a holistic explanation of classroom life.

Four research assumptions which may be seen as having the status of working hypotheses (see Chapter 2, section 2: 1: 2) were derived from interactionist theory, and set out in terms of these key concepts. The relevance of the symbolic interactionist perspective may be conveniently tested by considering in how far research findings have endorsed them.

- 1: It is argued that in face-to-face encounters such as that between a teacher and a class, all participants are centrally concerned with the maintenance and construction of a favourable social and self image.

The symbolic interactionist would claim that the self with its constellation of attitudes and beliefs, is a social construct, maintained and legitimated by socially appropriate role performances. Our research findings demonstrated clearly a connection between the professional self-image aspired to by teachers (and projected by them in their accounts of their teaching philosophies and priorities), and those aspects of the teaching situation to which they paid most attention in the classroom. Teachers' educational philosophies were no mere closet abstractions: they structured beliefs about what it was to be a good teacher and defined the kind of feedback necessary for professional self-respect. In this way ideologies, through their consequence for self-image, informed every aspect of teachers' classroom behaviour and profoundly affected all their dealings with pupils. This interdependence of the self-image and the social role performance would explain the stability and in some cases the rigidity, of teachers' classroom behaviour: much is invested in it.

Using Goffman's (1959) dramaturgical analogy, the social self is:

'a performed character ... a dramatic effect arising diffusely from a scene that is presented, and the characteristic issue, the crucial concern, is whether it will be credited or discredited.'

p 245

As in any other essentially artistic production, it therefore needs only one incongruous action to discredit this performance. This explains why it is not always a simple matter to alter even minor features of teaching behaviour. To change them might risk discrediting the teacher's 'performed

character' and subsequently his or her social credibility. A change of teaching philosophy, and hence of the way in which the professional role is conceptualized, may be necessary before details of role performance may be convincingly modified.

The present research project showed how in the classroom apparently trivial behaviours (such as how books were collected and given out, or the kinds of exercise books which were provided) and other more important matters of pedagogical technique (such as the interactional style of the teacher, and the choice of subject matter) were not separate and unconnected issues. It was no accident that the repressive English teacher at St Andrews controlled every aspect of classroom life from the handing out or taking in of books, to the details of seating arrangements, and dominated classroom talk (sometimes to the complete exclusion of pupils' contributions). Her ability to control the class was her main source of self-esteem and professional pride. Consequently her classroom behaviour was dictated almost exclusively by the need to secure behavioural compliance rather than aimed at any real educational objectives. A profoundly important organizing principle therefore underpinned all these aspects of her social role performance - the need to project what she saw as an acceptable and competent professional self.

This first research assumption - that in social interaction 'all participants are centrally concerned with the maintenance and construction of a favourable social and self image' has therefore been endorsed by observation in the four schools. The implications, as outlined in the preceding paragraphs, are profound. They demonstrate that teaching methods, and even minor details of teaching behaviour, cannot be considered outside the matrix of the social role performance within which they are

embedded. This is particularly important where teaching methods validated in unproblematic social situations are applied in difficult circumstances in which self-esteem is threatened and the acceptance of reciprocal social roles imperfectly negotiated - as is often the case in low-ability classrooms. This underlines the need for teachers to be vigilant in reviewing their teaching philosophies and in seeking to understand how their own needs, as well as those of their pupils, influence how they behave in the classroom.

2: It is accepted that the expectations and options of an individual teacher are powerfully constrained by institutional pressures and the previous educational history of the class he faces.

The influence of the school as a socialising agent was clearly demonstrated by the data.

First, the school as a social institution emerged as a powerful legitiminator for pupils of educational practices. A teacher who challenged established norms was likely to encounter resistance. This appeared to be the case even when the innovations were likely to add interest to classroom routine. At the traditional St. Andrews we have the 'progressive' Geography teacher's own testimony that the low ability class, although initially 'very interested and amazed' soon objected to her novel approach. Although these difficulties were at least partially overcome by this teacher, she herself felt that she had been compelled to modify her own teaching approach, if not alter her convictions. A teacher cannot impose a teaching method on a class which is not ready to accept it: those who are taught must understand and support the teacher's objectives, and concede that the approach is valid.

Nash (1976) suggests that pupils may often be the most conservative force in schools, a fact which he attributes to their internalised expectation that teachers should be authoritarian, and their feelings of being cheated if their teacher does not conform to the stereotype. Schools may however differ in the degree to which they foster such expectations. Although our sample does not allow us to completely discount the influence of the contaminating effects of uncontrolled differences in VR Banding, findings in Chapters 4 and 5 *passim* help us to understand how schools can influence the 'criteria and frames of reference' pupils use to assess their educational experience.

Secondly, if we consider the central issue of classroom control, we can see how without information about the school our understanding of the classroom behaviour of teachers and their pupils would have been greatly impoverished.

Data gathered at the level of the schools as social institutions revealed that the schools themselves had a determining influence on the vocabulary of disaffection. Thus school factors appeared to set the lower limits for misbehaviour for pupils. If we pursue Goffman's (1959) dramaturgical image, performances are learned and require social support and acceptance:

'Thus, when the individual presents himself before others, his performance will tend to incorporate and exemplify the officially accredited values of the society

p. 45.

The evidence from our schools would suggest that there are also unofficially accredited boundaries limiting the expression of alienation. In those schools which provided good Pastoral Care we found individual

misbehaviour was limited to inattention, 'chat' and the infringement of school rules such as 'chewing': outright rebellion at the group level did not occur, even with very unpopular teachers, or in classes with less favourable attitudes to school.

Thus at Maple Grove, where Pastoral Care particularly as regards low ability pupils was exemplary, the mixed-ability class were willing, despite their very unfavourable opinions of their History teacher, to submit with few protests to her strict control of noise levels and content of conversations during individual work time, and responded supportively to the questions through which she allowed them access to a share of the talk (see Table 9: 6). Their disaffection was expressed by their late arrival for classes and their low work levels (see Chapter 9, section 9: 6: 2 and Table 9: 9), but not in gross misbehaviour or flagrant disregard of teacher directives at the group level. Similarly at St Annes, which also had a good social climate, although the core English class had poor attitudes towards school (see Chapter 7, section 7: 2: 1) despite the high stress levels she experienced, the English teacher was never faced with a class situation which got totally out of hand. This was, however, not the case at St Andrews, the school in which we found evidence of a poor social environment. This was the only school in which the complete break down of class discipline was observed (Chapter 6, section 6: 4: 1). It was also the only school in which swearing ('fuck' 'Christ') was heard in the classroom, and noted by a teacher as a specific problem (Chapter 4, section 4: 1: 5): the only school in which scurrilous highly personalised graffiti about staff members appeared on the walls: the only school in which misbehaviours such as fighting in the classroom, dancing in the passageway between desks and the partial removal of trousers during lesson time (to

flash underpants at spectators) was witnessed. It was also the only school in which an experienced teacher reported having been reduced to tears by the behaviour of a class, or in which a senior teacher remarked that his aims for a low ability group involved containment rather than instruction:

'I don't set out to do work in a big way. I set out to contain these children in an atmosphere where they may at least do some writing, reading, see some books and talk about things.'

(Interview with teacher of low ability group)

Such findings show that without the inclusion of school-wide factors in the research design, it would not have been possible to compare fairly the performance of teachers in different schools, as regards their success in maintaining classroom discipline. The possible consequences of failure to control a group in a school like St Andrews would be unthinkable in another social environment where the repertoire of pupil misbehaviours was less fully orchestrated'.

- 3: It is assumed that it is largely through language that social roles and situations are sustained and defined, and through conversational interaction that the educational experience is constructed.
- 4: It is believed that all verbal interaction depends upon the creative exploitation of situationally specific sets of rules and expectations which are largely culturally determined.

Regardless of differences in educational philosophy and ways of interacting with pupils, all of our teachers had adapted their teaching styles in terms of a normative and rule-bound model of conversational exchange, specifically adapted to the classroom situation. The discourse analysis

' Although all of the material has not been included in the present research, the observer did in fact monitor classroom interaction involving five teachers and five classes at St Andrews. The behaviours noted did not occur in the classrooms of particularly repressive, punitive or inexperienced teachers,

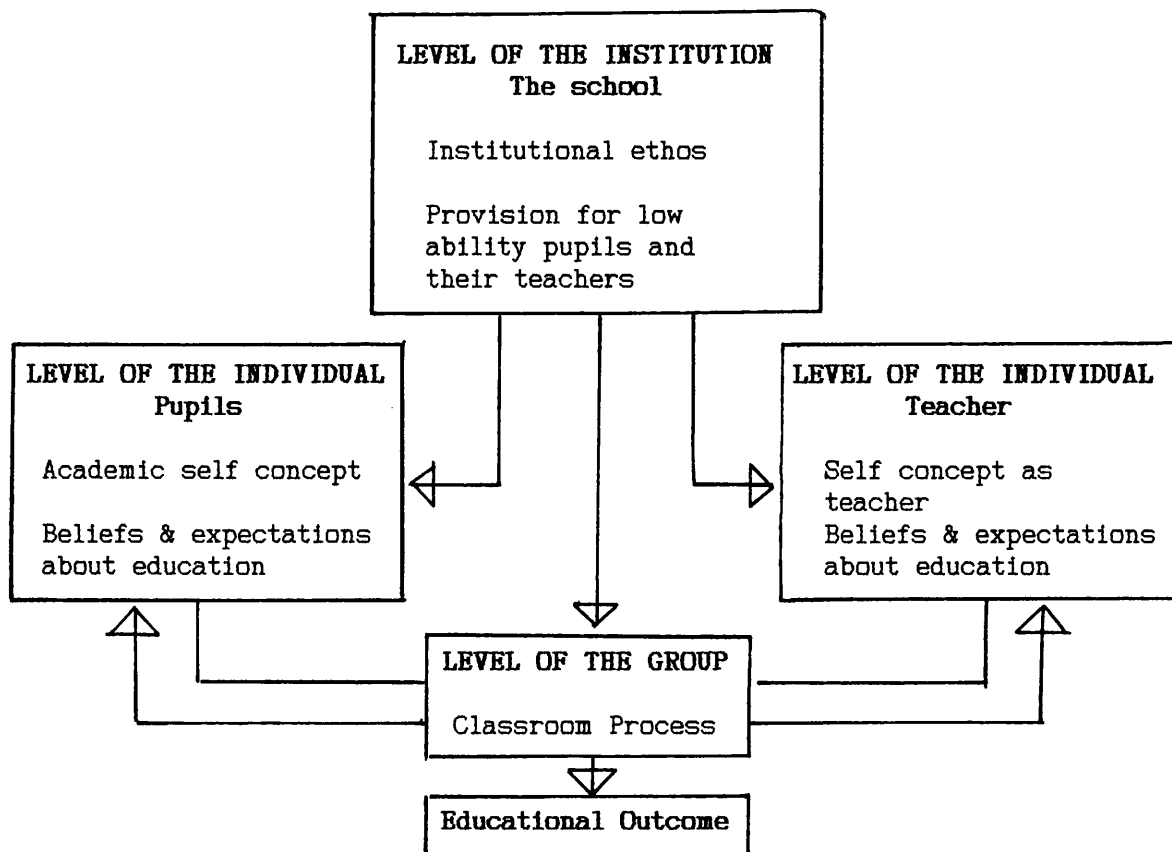
system, being based on a specific set of rules and expectations governing access to classroom talk, could not have been developed had such a model not existed. Despite infringements, it was obvious that most pupils were aware of these rules, and that teachers for their part expected to be able to enforce them. We have also been able to show how, within this overall framework, certain teachers were able to leave open different conversational options for their pupils, and in this way to expand the educational experience of their pupils (see Chapter 8, section 8: 1: 4). Findings would therefore also endorse the third and fourth research assumptions, and by implication, the symbolic interactionist perspective of the research.

10: 2: 2 The method of triangulation

Following a 'combined levels' triangulation methodology we collected data at three levels - that of individuals, the group and the institution. The central focus of the research was however at the group level, 'classroom interaction. What then was gained by the inclusion of information from the other two levels?

Inclusion of the three levels, in conjunction with the theoretical perspective of symbolic interactionism, allowed us to conceptualize classroom interaction as occurring within a social context which may be described in terms of a simple model (see overleaf).

In terms of this model, the school is seen as influencing classroom process directly, in terms of the kinds of opportunities made available to low ability pupils and the support provided for their teachers. The school as a social institution is also represented as having an indirect effect in terms of the way it shapes pupils' self concepts and expectations about education, and reinforces or challenges teachers'



conceptions of their role. The attitudes and expectations of individual teachers and pupils are hypothesised to influence classroom process for example through the way in which they define for pupils and their teachers what are seen as educationally relevant types of interaction. The arrows feeding back from the group to the individual level demonstrate how classroom interaction itself has the potential to feed back into the system and restructure the way in which pupils see themselves, and thus redefine for them their attitudes towards education.

Research findings have amply demonstrated the usefulness of this model for coming to a clearer understanding of teachers' difficulties with low ability adolescent pupils. The effects on interaction of complex issues such as legitimisation, the language of disaffection, and individual

differences in perceptions of appropriate social role performances could not have been properly understood without taking into account information from these three different levels.

.....

The gains due to the inclusion of the teacher's evaluation of each observed lesson (a limited kind of 'investigator' triangulation) should also be noted. The researcher's access to the teacher's assessment of each lesson - whether or not in the teacher's view the lesson was typical, affected by the presence of the observer, successful or unduly stressful - was invaluable. It allowed the researcher to avoid possible personal bias in the selection of which lessons to analyse in depth. Lessons which the teacher in question considered typical and unaffected by the presence of the observer were selected wherever possible, as was the lesson judged to be most successful by the teacher.

Disadvantages

However there were also important drawbacks associated with the methodology which must be recorded. As the research took shape it became very clear that it was probably beyond the means of any single researcher to do justice to the technique of 'combined levels' triangulation, certainly when applied to a complex subject area.

First the approach necessitates keeping an open mind about what may prove to be the most interesting areas to explore. This requires the collection of a vast amount of information. A single researcher however enthusiastic is limited in the amount of information he or she can collect, and risks spreading the enquiry very thin in areas which later may prove to be important. Secondly, if information is available it must be at least

partly analysed, although not all of it is likely to be used. This is very time-consuming.

It was this researcher's experience that when a particular aspect of the classroom situation proved interesting, inevitably one would have wished to have explored it more deeply. Sometimes this was the unavoidable, and therefore acceptable, result of new insights thrown up by the research process. For example, in the present case more information from pupils about how they felt about teachers' marking, and since legitimation appeared to be a central issue, about what kinds of classwork they felt to be 'real work' would have been desirable.

More galling however was the situation in which foreseen relationships produced potentially exciting results which were blighted by the lack of sufficient information. The data in chapters four and five provide a case in point. There we have interesting indications of how institutional factors may influence the ways pupils think about their educational experience. Because of insufficiently controlled sampling in each school however, conclusions can only be tentative. When access was unexpectedly given to the Verbal Reasoning scores of pupils, the researcher was unable because of other commitments to take full advantage of the new situation. Social psychological research of this kind, where the area under investigation is complex, should be a team effort: the limited resources of a single researcher are insufficient.

10: 2: 3 The discourse analysis system

Advantages

The discourse analysis system enabled us to make valid comparisons across different classroom situations by describing classroom talk in terms of generally accepted rules and expectations. By examining

how these rules were observed, and how on occasion they were creatively or destructively ignored we could distinguish between different teaching approaches.

In particular, the system offered a vocabulary in terms of which we could describe the power relations which underpin communication in the classroom. This vocabulary had the virtues of precision and comprehensiveness which gave a certain rigour to the discussion of this aspect of classroom life. By choosing to focus on patterns of verbal interaction and to use a discourse analysis system with an interactive approach to the control of turn-taking, it also became possible to link in a novel way the two central problems teachers have identified in low ability groups - low work-motivation and difficulties in controlling the group. The research aim is then defined as the attempt to understand how constructive control on the teacher's part can help to motivate pupils to take a more active part on their educational experience.

The system also acted as an extremely useful 'estrangement' device which the researcher found very productive of insight. For example it gave a new perspective on, and a potentially new approach to, the important issue of teachers' questioning style. In *The New Teacher in School* (1982) Her Majesty's Inspectors pointed to the need for secondary school teachers in particular to develop better techniques of questioning:

'In view of the fact that questions and answers are one of the most frequently used teaching techniques in both primary and secondary schools, it was disappointing to find that, while the teachers distributed their questions well amongst the pupils in over half of the lessons seen, they varied their style of questioning to suit the occasion in fewer than a third, and made good use of pupils' responses to carry the work forward in only two lessons out of five. In each of these respects primary teachers were rather more successful than secondary teachers.'

The system of discourse analysis highlighted the potentially coercive nature of all teachers' questions: one is reminded of Dr Johnson's remark (reported by Boswell) that 'Questioning is not a form of conversation used amongst gentlemen'.

Disadvantages

There were however disadvantages associated with the use of the discourse analysis system. First, the preliminary exercise of transcribing and coding the data was extremely time consuming, since it was initially carried out on all 'whole class' and group discourse that was comprehensively recorded. This, particularly in the context of the over-ambitious research design, was unfortunate.

Secondly, analysis was for the most part only possible to apply to data generated in 'whole class' teaching situations. The system therefore had restricted usefulness, particularly in the case of teachers who minimised this kind of interaction in their classrooms.

There are however several arguments we may advance to modify this second criticism, and/or defend our concentration on the 'whole class' teaching situation:

- 1: Our results would show that teachers' role performance is very integrated and coherent, and has its roots in stable characteristics which are not likely to vary as a function of 'whole class' or 'group' or 'individual' teaching situations.
- 2: All teachers used 'whole class' teaching in important 'agenda setting' and instructional lesson stages, and only rarely did the proportion of lesson time spent in this way fall below 30%.
- 3: As far as the individual pupil was concerned, by far the greater part of his or her contact with the teacher occurred in the 'whole class' teaching situation.

Thirdly there were inevitable limitations attached to the choice of discourse analysis system. The particular system which had been selected had the disadvantage of not being well suited to the analysis of extended stretches of teacher monologue. Had our research produced teachers who used monologue in interesting ways we would have had to develop an alternative type of analysis to handle this. The supreme advantage of lesson transcripts consists in the fact that a data base would have existed on which we could have carried out just such an exercise.

10: 2 :4 Addendum: Interactive monologue

Not all teachers who monopolize classroom talk are boringly repetitious. Some are 'spell-binders' whose classroom performances are much appreciated by their classes, and presumably therefore have a positive pedagogical function, despite apparently low levels of pupil participation.

Unfortunately none of the teachers in our sample fell into this category: despite his considerable verbal skills even the English teacher in Ridgemount was not this kind of teacher: his strengths lay in a particular kind of interactive expertise, not in his ability to mesmerise an audience.

Earlier pilot work in schools had however produced one teacher who was just such a master of monologue. Although the evidence lies outside the strict confines of the present research, a brief account is now included since examination of his technique allows us to explore another kind of 'pupil participation' which we have not had the opportunity of witnessing in any of the lessons we have so far monitored. This case casts further light on the issue of audience 'participation' and allows us to see how masterly use of monologue can be interpreted as a particular variant of interactive dialogue between an audience and the speaker. It

also shows how this skill can be perhaps unnecessarily negatively evaluated by a teacher with deeply held 'progressive' convictions.

The teacher concerned, like the English teacher at St Annes, was during the observed lesson preparing a low ability Third Year class for a reading of the 'Diary of Anne Frank'. In previous lessons he had discussed with the class the limitations of all attempts at simple categorisation, which he illustrated by the introduction of cardboard shapes of different sizes colours and geometric forms. He then sought to apply this to the racial stereotyping of human beings. Like the History teacher in the Egalitarian county school, he was primarily concerned to build up empathy, in this case with Anne's situation.

This teacher, whom we shall call Mr Darcy, was a 'progressive' with considerable experience in difficult inner city comprehensives: his present school was a mixed-sex, voluntary-aided inner city ex-grammar school in its first year of a fully comprehensive intake. Mr Darcy, like the 'progressive' Geography teacher at St Andrews, found himself very disapproving of the old style staff members' handling of the low ability pupils, whom he felt they underestimated. He found such pupils passive and unmotivated and blamed the way in which they had been taught: he was very much concerned to get them to 'take responsibility for their own learning', and stated that as a result his unaccustomed approach was probably making him personally unpopular with the group. This, from the pupils' self-report was not the case, but his challenging approach in the lesson monitored triggered off generalised disruption. Mr Darcy thereupon abandoned his lesson plan, turned to the end of the book, and proceeded to read out to the class the repressive Nazi laws listed there and to comment upon them extensively. For the remaining twenty minutes of lesson time not a single

opportunity for pupil contributions was provided nor a single question asked: Mr Darcy spell-bindingly held the floor. At the end of the lesson he was personally devastated, as he had ended by suppressing the class in his view in the very fashion he was determined to avoid. He had lost control not of the class, but of his objectives for that lesson: he had in his own words 'gone into automatic pilot'.

From our point of view it is very instructive to examine a stretch of the ensuing monologue, and to compare it with the surfacely very similar approach of the History teacher at Maple Grove. The reader should first turn to page 410, and reread the transcript from her lesson. It will be remembered that she too first read briefly from a text, and then added explanatory comments. The following extract from Mr Darcy's lesson provides an illuminating contrast and was entirely typical of his performance:

'July 25th as of September the 30th 1938 Jewish doctors can only be regarded as medical attendants.'

(Pointing to a pupil) You've studied for five years? You're a qualified doctor? You're not a Jew? Fine you can carry on.

(Suddenly pointing to another pupil) You've studied for five years, you're qualified? Aah!!- but you're a Jew. Pssht. (with accompanying gesture.)

*'July 27th all Jewish street names are replaced.
August 17th'*

Important day.

'As of January 1st 1939 all Jews must have only Jewish first names. If a Jew has a German first name Israel or Sara must be added to it.'

Supposing I were to say to you - (pointing to Ann) Ann - 'That's a nice name. Well, but you're a Jew. Oh well now you'll be called Sara because that means that we can identify you as a Jew.' That's taking away your identity isn't it? Isn't your name your identity?

Mr Darcy, like most spell-binders had an impressive voice, and on this occasion he gave it full rein. However the most interesting aspect from our point of view was the way in which, while silencing the class completely, he nevertheless did offer the pupils a very real role in the proceedings. This monologue is interactive in a fashion which Goffman documents very well in his analysis of the lecture (to which this lesson stage bore more than a passing resemblance).

Goffman (1981) points out that all 'face-to-face undertakings of the focused kind' be they games, joint tasks, theatre performances, conversations or lectures succeed or fail according to the speaker's ability to engross his audience. This is not achieved in Goffman's view because of the speaker's subject matter:

'In fact, there is truth in saying that audiences become involved in spite of the text, not because of it; they skip along, dipping in and out of following the lecturer's argument, waiting for the special effects which actually capture them, and topple them momentarily into what is being said ...'

p. 166

He goes on to point out the importance of interposing within the reading of prepared text stretches of 'fresh talk' which are 'formulated by the animator from moment to moment':

'aloud reading and fresh talk are different production modes. Each presupposes its own special relation between speaker and listener, establishing the speaker on a characteristic "footing" in regard to the audience. Switches from one ... to another, that is "production shifts", imply for the speaker a change of footing, and as will be seen, are a crucial part of lecturing.'

p. 172

Parenthetical remarks are especially noted for the opportunity they provide for 'engrossing' changes of footing:

'Text parenthetical remarks are of great interactional interest. On the one hand, they are oriented to the text: on the other, they intimately fit the mood of the occasion and the special interest and identity of the particular audience It is as if the speaker here functioned as a broker of his own statements, a mediator between text and audience, a resource capable of picking up on the nonverbally conveyed concerns of the listeners and responding to them in the light of the text and everything else known and experienced by the speaker.'

p. 177

The depth and particularity of the monologist's knowledge of his audience is crucially important if he or she is to exploit fully the potential of such situations. Without knowledge of the names and interests of individuals in his class, for example, Mr Darcy's performance would have missed much of its effect.

In passing it should finally be noted how this reading aloud of the Nazi laws served another function. Mr Darcy by personally role playing the Nazi Gauleiter, and casting his pupils into the role of persecuted Jews used identification mechanisms for a double purpose - to gain sympathy for Anne, and to reestablish the threatened power relationships in the classroom in a spectacularly effective way - a classic demonstration of the multifunctional nature of all human communication (see Hymes, 1962). It seems a great pity that Mr Darcy should have been so discouraged by the lesson's outcome. He possessed a skill in his interactional repertoire that was invaluable and should not have been ashamed at having to deploy it. Particularly in poorly motivated low ability classroom situations teachers who try to encourage novel types of interaction are likely to provoke unruly episodes which they must prove themselves able to control. A switch of interactional mode is likely to be one of the most successful tactics.

10 : 3 Implications for the study of low ability groups

The research focussed on the classroom experience of low ability adolescents in working class schools: the aim was to try to understand more about how their teachers could maximise for such pupils the educational potential of lesson time.

There are clear indications that the means do exist, if a teacher is prepared to be sufficiently flexible and creative in exploiting the interactional possibilities of the face-to-face classroom encounter, to extend the educational potential of lesson time for low ability children, even in circumstances where the wider school environment is not supportive. This will require on the teacher's part, interpersonal skills of a sophisticated kind.

Findings suggest that it may be useful to conceptualise the teachers' first task with groups of low ability adolescents as being to secure the emergence of a particular kind of group dynamics - what we may call the phenomenon of 'the Teachable Class'.

The Teachable Class

It will be readily appreciated that a group of children does not become a Teachable Class by virtue of having been allocated to the same slot on a school timetable, and incarcerated for an hour or so between the same four walls with a particular teacher. This concept presupposes some kind of group commitment on the part of pupils to a joint educational enterprise.

A Teachable Class may be recognised by the kind of group dynamics within which pupils are prepared to listen to the teacher and to each other and discuss task-related topics: by the kind of atmosphere in which both teacher and children can rely upon a patient hearing while

difficult ideas or struggles for comprehension are worked out. The Teachable Class will also be characterised by an atmosphere in which disruptions are rare, and individually centred rather than triggering general disorder, and in which the majority of children are 'contributing members', be it by silent support or as more active participants, to whichever task is set by the teacher. All of these aspects of the Teachable Class are potentially measurable through the kinds of information gathered in the present research, or by other methods. This group orientation is a prerequisite for the gaining of any educational objective. Without it, no lesson however well planned, and no subject matter, however intrinsically interesting, can succeed.

In 'easy' classes (and usually, although not always, in higher ability groups) the teacher may rely on this commitment having already been made: pupils come prepared to learn. Of course bad practice can destroy that commitment, but the 'scaffolding' is there - something has to be destroyed before things go badly wrong. In difficult low ability groups on the other hand it is as if this scaffolding has to be erected, sometimes anew in every lesson, before the teacher can begin to teach. To come into the class with a well prepared lesson, with something interesting to explore, is not enough: if you cannot ensure the emergence of the 'Teachable Class' you may never secure a hearing. The main task of the teacher of low ability pupils may therefore be seen as being to secure and maintain this state of affairs.

The concept of the Teachable Class allows us to approach the central problem of low work-motivation in a group not in terms of a relatively enduring personality characteristic (McClelland et al, 1953), nor as a function of the value an individual places upon achievement and the

extent to which he expects to succeed (Weiner, 1974), but as a situationally specific and potentially modifiable group engrossment in the educational activity, measurable in terms of particular types of behaviour. In accordance with theoretical recommendations (see Cattell, 1951; Ruzicka et al, 1979; Jahoda, 1981) the group's commitment to work has therefore been assessed in its own right, and not seen merely as the sum of individual motivations.

Findings would suggest that in low ability groups the state of equilibrium we have called the Teachable Class is likely to be somewhat perilously poised, and that even experienced and gifted teachers working within supportive school environments will find the kind of commitment it implies difficult to maintain with secondary school pupils whom they see comparatively rarely.

There is also a precedent for supposing that this kind of problem may be a more general characteristic of work groups than one might imagine. Bion (1961) for example describes the dynamics in his psychoanalytic groups in terms of the fluctuation between a largely verbally mediated 'work group' process (which may be compared with the Teachable Class phenomenon), and a more primitive 'basic assumption' process which is characterised by a hatred of the process of development, and by the generation of the feeling of group membership through primitive emotional identification mechanisms. It is, in Bion's view, part of man's inescapable heritage that he is 'hopelessly committed to both states of affairs'. There are obvious parallels with the behaviour of low ability groups, who as we have seen although they will often do everything in their power to disrupt lessons and avoid getting down to work, feel cheated if

they achieve nothing and have little respect for teachers who cannot help them overcome their reluctance. ✓ OK

Our research suggests some pointers for teachers in the attempt to maintain the threatened equilibrium of the Teachable Class.

First, teachers are advised to pay attention to the sensitive management of interpersonal relationships. The most consistent findings of the research have involved the overwhelming importance of interpersonal relationships and expectations. Reciprocal regard characterized the relationship between teachers and pupils in those classes in which teachers were happiest and where they felt they were succeeding best. There would also seem to be no doubt both from the self-report of pupils and from the written work examined that classes worked harder for teachers whose expectations of them were higher, and who were perceived as friendly. In situations which potentially threaten self-esteem, such as the educational environment for low ability pupils, the teacher must float the educational enterprise on the raft of interpersonal goodwill. Coercive methods, although they may secure outward compliance, are, as we have documented, unlikely to succeed.

Our research would also suggest that teachers who introduce new techniques should expect to encounter a certain amount of resistance, and that training establishments should prepare teachers for the difficulties they may face, particularly if they find themselves having to teach in schools which may have socialised pupils into very different kinds of expectations. Teachers cannot deploy to advantage any educational approach, however well attested, without taking into account the social context. Unfamiliar methods may need first to be validated in some way for pupils. If this is not appreciated, then potentially valuable approaches

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may founder and as a result be prematurely abandoned by the bewildered teacher. Our findings would confirm that teachers should be prepared to take some risks, and accept a number of set-backs as fairly inevitable. ✓

Thirdly it is recommended that teachers should appreciate the importance of helping pupils to develop group communication skills in 'whole class' teaching situations. It is in this forum that the teacher can shape a work-oriented group identity for pupils, and in the majority of cases it is in such situations that individual pupils will experience most of their contact with the teacher. Too many teachers restrict this type of contact to teacher-question pupil-answer sessions, which although a valuable instructional tool, limit pupils' contributions and inhibit the development of pupil/pupil interaction. Pupils can be expected to benefit enormously from the occasional opportunity to interact on a more equal footing, provided that the educational 'definition of the situation' is not jeopardized. By withholding evaluative comment, and by moderating rather than instructing, skilled teachers can retain control over the group while at the same time leaving pupils free to develop the discussion in creative ways. Such episodes are the yeast whose invisible workings may restructure the whole meaning of the educational encounter.

It is increasingly appreciated that the ability to hold one's own in discussion is an important educational end in itself. A recent Government working group headed by Professor Cox, co-editor of the first *Black Papers* in the late 1960s, has made recommendations for English teaching in the national curriculum which emphasises this point. The report, which is now the basis for proposals made by the Secretary of State for Education and Science (see DES, June 1989), includes suggestions that a not negligible 20% of examination marks should be given for 'speaking and

listening'. There are moreover indications that this percentage is envisaged as likely to increase:

'We believe however that speaking and listening skills have been growing in prominence and will continue to do so, as teachers of all subjects become more accustomed to promoting and assessing them; and that technological change and social trends may reinforce demands for these skills in adulthood and employment. We therefore recommend that NCC and SEAC should keep this aspect of our proposals under close review.'

14. 40

The writers strongly support the research focus on verbal interaction:

'Our inclusion of speaking and listening as a separate profile component in our recommendations is a reflection of our conviction that they are of central importance to children's development.

The value of talk in all subjects as a means of promoting pupils' understanding, and of evaluating their progress, is now widely accepted.'

15.1 and 15.2

The report points out the importance of oral skills in obtaining employment:

'Recent surveys have drawn attention to the importance of talking and listening both in obtaining employment and in performing well in it.

The surveys report the significant finding that in interviews employers attached importance to candidates' answers to open questions which invited them to express and develop ideas in a sustained way, and their ability to engage in discussion and to exchange views. Conversely they attached little value to questions to which there were simply short right or wrong answers.'

15. 5 and 15. 6

Interestingly enough surveys also stressed the importance of interviewees being able to establish interpersonal rapport with the interviewer:

'Employers also identified the ability to relate to the interviewer as a key factor.'

15. 6

The report states that the average 14 year-old will be expected to 'contribute to and respond constructively in discussion or debate, advocating and justifying a particular point of view'. They should also be able to 'contribute considered opinions or clear statements of personal feelings to group discussions and show an understanding of the contributions of others' (see section 16. 21). By legitimizing this aspect of their education in this way, such requirements may do much to help convince pupils of its importance. The present research however suggests that it may be extremely problematic to give individual assessments for pupils' discussion skills, if, as is argued, successful class discussion is a function not of individual, but most importantly of group skills.

In the Secretary of State's proposals, the section on speaking and listening concludes with the statement:

'We wish to stress that what we have suggested in this chapter treads some new ground. It will undoubtedly need further refinement and modification in the light of consultations and experience. We recommend that teachers should be given training in the assessment of speaking and listening and in moderation methods. We also recommend that there should be a central bank of specially compiled examples for training in the moderation process'.

15. 44

Findings in the present research offer suggestions and examples which may be useful in helping teachers develop such methods for facilitating constructive debate amongst their pupils.

APPENDIX A

THE RUTTER SCALE

This scale was constructed by Rutter et al (1979) from the replies of the Head Teacher to ten questions on the Pastoral emphasis of the school (see *Fifteen Thousand Hours*, p. 218). The items included are:

1. **Use of special units.** 0=none, 1=one, 2=more than one.
2. **Regular meetings with pupils.** 0=none, 1=informal (e.g. lunch hour), 2=school council.
3. **Arrangement of free dinner confidentiality.** 0= none, 1=some, 2=positive attempt.
4. **Topics discussed at last cabinet meeting.** 0=not pastoral, 1=pastoral.
5. **Allocation of form teachers.** 0=reasons other than to maintain continuity, 1=continuity.
6. **Reasons for class changes.** 0=reasons other than social or at pupils' request, 1=social or pupils' request.
7. **Topics discussed at last staff meeting.** 0=not pastoral, 1=pastoral.
8. **Stability of teachers from year to year.** 0=not school policy, 1=class teachers only, 2=class teachers and tutors.
9. **Scale points allocated to pastoral heads.** 0=none on scale 4, 0.5=some on scale 4, 1=all on scale 4.
10. **Role of pastoral care in school.** 0=minor emphasis, 1=to support the curriculum, 2=a high priority in the school.

School scores ranged from 2.5 to 11.0, with a mean score of 6.5.

APPENDIX B

THE DISCOURSE ANALYSIS SYSTEM

This system is based on the work of Deirdre Burton (1981), who modified the descriptive model originally developed by Sinclair and Coulthard (1975). Extensive use has been made in this appendix of the work of these two authors. Since the emphasis in the following outline is upon enabling the reader to understand the principles which govern coding decisions, and not primarily upon issues of linguistic theory, the interested reader is referred to their work for more detailed information.

The discourse analysis system is hierarchical: the basic units, or 'speech acts', are grouped together according to specifiable rules into 'moves', which constitute the next level of organisation¹. 'Moves' are made by individuals, but have specific repercussions for their conversational partners, who are expected, if not constrained by them, to respond in particular ways.

¹ In Sinclair and Coulthard's system 'moves' are organised at the next level into 'exchanges', to which several speakers may contribute. Exchanges are seen as ultimately controlled by the person who has originally proposed the conversational topic. Finally 'exchanges' are grouped together into transactions, and at the highest level of all the 'lesson' is conceptualised as the sum of all 'transactions'. In the present research which uses Burton's modified system, only two levels - 'act' and 'move' - are considered.

Speech acts

The speech act corresponds most nearly to the grammatical unit 'clause'. However whereas grammar is concerned with the formal properties of an item, discourse deals with its functional properties - with what the speaker is using the item to do.

There are three major speech acts: elicitation, directive and informative. An elicitation is an act the function of which is to request a linguistic response. A directive functions to request a non-linguistic response. An informative passes on ideas, facts, opinions or information, and an appropriate response is simply an acknowledgement that one is listening.

The lack of necessary fit between grammar and discourse must be appreciated. Elicitations directives and informatives are very frequently realised by interrogatives imperatives and declaratives respectively, but there are occasions where this is not the case. Thus a directive in discourse terms may be realised by an imperative (Shut the door!) but it may also be realised by a declarative (The door is still open.) or an interrogative (Can you shut the door?).

To deal with discrepancies between grammatical form and discourse function, discourse analysts propose that we consider two intermediate areas - situation and tactics.

Situation

Situation in this context includes all the relevant factors in the environment, social conventions and the shared experience of the participants. Knowledge about schools, classrooms, or even one particular moment in a lesson may be used to reclassify items already labelled by the grammar. Thus the interrogative 'What are you laughing at?' is

interpretable either as a question or as a command to stop laughing. Inside the classroom it is usually the latter. This type of 'situational reassignment' requires a degree of subjective judgement. However Sinclair and Coulthard have suggested three rules which predict the correct interpretation of teacher utterances most of the time:

Rule 1

An interrogative clause is to be interpreted as a command to do if it fulfils the following conditions:

- a) it contains one of the modals *can, could, will, would* and sometimes *going to*.
- b) the subject of the clause is also the addressee.
- c) the predicate describes an action which is physically possible at the time of the utterance.

e.g. Can you come here John? Directive
 Can John play the piano? Elicitation
 Can you swim a length John? Elicitation

The first example is a directive because it fulfils these three conditions. The second is an elicitation because the subject and the addressee are not the same person. The third is also an elicitation because the children are in a classroom and the activity is not possible at the time of the utterance.

Rule 2

Any declarative or interrogative is to be interpreted as a command to stop if it refers to an action which is proscribed at the time of utterance:

e.g. I hear someone giggling. Directive
 Is someone giggling? Directive
 Why are you giggling? Directive

The declarative command in the first example is very popular with many teachers. It is superficially a statement, but its only relevance at the time of utterance is that it draws 'someone's' attention to the fact that their giggling has been noticed in order that they will stop.

Rule 3

Any declarative or interrogative is to be interpreted as a command to do if it refers to an action which teacher and pupils know ought to have been performed and hasn't been.

e.g.	The door is still open.	Directive
	Did you shut the door?	Directive
	Did you shut the gate before you came in?	Elicitation

The first example states a fact that all already know: example two is a question to which everyone knows the answer. Both serve to draw attention to what hasn't been done in order that someone shall do it. The interrogative is only an elicitation when, as in the last example, the teacher does not know whether the action has been performed.

Tactics

The discourse value of an item also depends on which linguistic items have preceded it, what is expected to follow, and what does follow. Such sequence relationships are handled in tactics.

Speakers inevitably make mistakes and change their minds about what they want to say. A teacher for example may ask a question and then realise that it is inappropriate. The spoken word cannot be erased, but the teacher may then signal to pupils that the question is not to be answered. In this way a speech act which may have started out as an elicitation may be demoted by what follows to the status of a 'starter' speech act:

e.g.	What is the name of his job?	Starter
	What kind of things does he do?	Elicitation

.....

The present system describes discourse in terms of twenty eight speech acts. These are listed overleaf.

Classes of speech act

For the sake of clarity speech acts are listed as follows:

- 1: Pre-topic speech acts which are used to mark the boundaries in the discourse, or changes in the direction of the talk.
- 2: Pre-topic speech acts which negotiate for the right to speak and an appropriate audience.
- 3: Topic-carrying speech 'acts'.

Pre-topic speech acts marking boundaries and changes

- 1: **Marker** Realised by a closed class of items - 'well', 'OK', 'now', 'good' 'right' 'alright', or expressive particles such as 'Hey'. A marker is often followed by a silent stress. Its function is to mark boundaries in the discourse.

Individual teachers often use the same markers consistently to punctuate lesson stages, which presumably facilitates their pupils' recognition that a new lesson phase is about to begin.
- 2: **Silent Stress** This functions to highlight a marker, and is realised by a pause, lasting for one or more beats.
- 3: **Metastatement** This is realised by a statement, question or command which refers to a future event in the ongoing talk. Its function is to make clear the structure of the immediately following discourse. Its purpose when used by a teacher is to help pupils see where the lesson is going.
- 4: **Conclusion** This is the converse of metastatement, and its function is again to help pupils understand the structure of the lesson, but this time by summarising what the previous piece of discourse was about. It is realised by statement, usually accompanied by a slowing of speech rate. It is often introduced by 'so' or 'then', and repeats the content of previous talk.

Pre-topic speech acts negotiating access to talk

- 5: **Summons** This is an attention-getting item, and occurs when one participant uses the name of another in order to establish contact.

- 6: Request for speaker's rights** Like summonses these requests for speaker's rights occur at the beginning of moves, and are variations on the classic 'you know what' formulae of young children or others with restricted speaker's rights. They can also take the form of statements or questions including 'tell' or 'ask':
 e.g. A: You know what I told her?
 or
 A: Can I ask you a question?
- 7: Bid** Particularly adapted for the classroom the function of a bid is to signal the pupil's desire to contribute to the discourse, and it may be realised by either verbal items - 'Sir', 'Miss', the teacher's name, or non-verbal items such as finger clicking or raised hands.
- 8: Cue** The sole function of this speech act is to evoke an appropriate 'bid' to be allowed to contribute to the discourse. It is realised by items such as 'Hands up' 'Is John the only one' 'Don't call out'.
- 9: Nomination** The function of nomination is to call on or give permission to someone to contribute to the discourse. In the classroom it is realised by a closed class of items consisting of the names of all the pupils 'you', 'anybody', 'yes'.
- 10: Preface** For our purposes one general category 'preface' covers the three types of act Stubbs recognises in his work on committee data. These are:
 1: misplacement prefaces which point out that the utterance following them will in some way be out of sequence
 2: Personal point of view prefaces in which the speaker gives a clear indication that the view he is about to express is his own - 'Personally I think'.
 3: interruption prefaces which are described as a particular type of misplacement preface. These show surface markers such as repetitions or standard words like 'can I' or 'let me', which precede items designed to break into the flow of talk:
 A: Look look let me make it clear

Topic-carrying speech acts

- 11: Elicitation** Its function is to request a linguistic response, and it is usually, but not always, realised by a question. For example:
 Teacher: I would like to know what you think. Elicit.
 Pupil : I think it goes here. Reply

- 12: Check** This can be seen as a special instance of elicitation. The function of a check is to enable the teacher to ascertain whether the lesson is going according to plan, or whether there are any problems standing in the way of its successful progress. A check is realised by questions concerned with being finished or ready, having difficulties, being able to see or hear. They are real questions, in that the teacher does not know the answer. If a teacher does know the answer for example to a question such as 'Have you finished?', it is not a check, but a directive, ordering the pupil to get back down to work.
- 13: Loop** Again this is a special form of elicitation, occurring when for some reason someone requests that the previous speaker repeats or clarifies what he or she has just said. Its function is to request a very specific type of linguistic response, that of returning the discourse to the stage it was at before the last speaker spoke, in order that talk can proceed normally. It is not therefore succeeded by a 'reply', but by the repetition of the previous speech act. A 'loop' is realised by a closed class of items such as 'what' 'eh' 'again?', or questions beginning with 'Did you say' 'Do you mean' or some such equivalent.
- 14: Reply** Its function is to provide a linguistic response which is appropriate to the preceding elicitation. It can be realised by non-verbal surrogates such as nods.
- 15: Directive** Its function is to request a non-linguistic response:
Teacher: Turn to page 3.
It is typically realised by an imperative.
- Where a teacher requests a pupil to read aloud, this is classified as a directive, since the pupil is not being invited to use his own words.
- 16: React** This is realised by a non-linguistic action. Its function is to provide the appropriate non-linguistic response defined by the preceding directive.
- When, at a teacher's request, a pupil reads aloud in class this is also classified react.
- 17: Informative** This is usually realised by statement. It differs from other uses of statement in that its sole function is to provide information. The only required response is the giving of attention and understanding.
- Where a teacher reads aloud to a class this is classified as an informative. Rhetorical questions are also classified as in this way.

18: Acknowledge This is realised by 'yes' 'OK' 'cor' 'mm' 'wow' and other non-verbal gestures and expressions. Its function is simply to show that the initiation has been understood.

19: Comment This is subordinate to the main speech act in a move, and its function is to expand, exemplify, justify or provide additional information.

Sinclair and Coulthard admit that it is difficult to distinguish from an informative, but suggest that teachers signal paralinguistically by a pause when they are beginning a new initiation with an informative speech act.

Sub-categories of comment may be discerned:

- 1: repeat: these are acts which repeat the exact words or some of the words of an earlier informative.
- 2: restate: these restate an earlier informative.
- 3: Qualifier: these modify the general applicability of the previous statement.

Where a teacher reading aloud breaks off briefly to recast a passage in his or her own words this is classified as comment.

20: Starter This is realised by a statement, question, command or moodless item. Its function is to provide information about, direct attention to, or thought towards an area, in order to make a correct response to the coming initiation more likely:

e.g. Some words describe actions. Starter
Do you know what we call them? Elicitation

Sometimes a speaker will begin to say something, change his mind, and say something else. His first remark will then be demoted and coded 'starter'.

e.g. Words like that are called Starter
What do you call words like that? Elicitation

21: Prompt This is realised by such phrases as - 'go on' 'come on' 'hurry up' 'quickly' 'have a guess'. Its function is to reinforce a directive or elicitation by suggesting that the teacher is no longer requesting a response but expecting or even demanding one.

22: Clue This functions to provide additional information which helps the pupil to answer the elicitation or comply with the directive. It is realised by statement,

question, command or moodless item:

e.g. Teacher: What does the next word mean? Elicitation
Think of the Latin root. Clue.

23: Evaluate

This speech act comments upon the quality of a reply, react or initiation, and is realised by statements, tag questions and phrases such as 'good' 'interesting' 'well done', and by 'yes' 'no' 'good' 'fine' with a high fall in intonation. Sometimes a pupil's reply will be repeated with either a high-fall (positive evaluation) or a rise of any kind (negative evaluation).

24: Accept

The function of an 'accept' is to indicate that the speaker has heard and that what has been said or done by the other was appropriate. The repetition of a pupil's reply by a teacher, if it has a neutral, non-evaluative low-fall intonation is coded 'accept',

Summonses and requests for speaker's rights are often seen as requiring some kind of 'go-ahead' signal from a co-participant. These are also coded as 'accept':

A: Do you know what I told her? RSR

B: What? Accept

25: Accuse

This occurs when the speaker uses a statement command, question, or summons that requires either an apology or an excuse/explanation or justification or change of behaviour. This can vary from mild criticism to serious attack.

26: Excuse

This follows an 'accuse', and its function is to offer an excuse/explanation or justification for the behaviour which is objected to by the accuser. Sometimes an 'excuse' will be offered before an 'accuse' has been levelled, if the behaviour is appreciated by the speaker to be in some way out of line.

27: Aside

This category covers items where the speaker is really talking to him or herself. 'Where did I put that chalk?' It is realised by a statement question or command and is usually marked by a lowering of the tone of voice.

**28: Politeness
Marker**

These speech acts oil the wheels of social interaction, and are realised by a closed category of comments such as 'please' 'thank you', and in the classroom by pupils' use of 'miss' or 'sir', when not serving an attention-getting function.

Moves

Speech acts cluster together to form moves. Moves, as the word implies, are gambits in the speech 'game' which fulfil certain functions in the interaction between speakers. They are concerned essentially with the way in which turn-taking is organised, and control of the topic of conversation maintained.

Moves are not co-terminous with utterances (or what is said in one 'turn' at talk). Different parts of an utterance may fulfil different functions in the conversational interaction. Often this is sign-posted by speakers with a pause:

Teacher:	Why do animals have fur?	Elicitation
Pupil:	To keep them warm.	Reply
Teacher:	To keep them warm. Yes.	Evaluate
	(pause)	
	What about fish?	Elicitation

The pause indicates a significant break in the middle of the teacher's second utterance. The first half - 'To keep them warm. Yes' - links back to what the pupil has just said. The second half - 'What about fish? - initiates a new question and looks forward to what the pupil will say next.

The present discourse analysis system conceptualises conversational moves in the following common-sense way. A speaker may initiate conversation (in the classroom this is usually the teacher) either with an attention getting pre-topic speech act (such as a summons - 'Girls and boys!') or by talking about what is going to happen (metastatement - 'Today we're going to look at Poland') or with a topic-carrying speech act (such as an elicitation - 'What do you know about Poland?'). When a speaker initiates or 'opens' a conversation in this way, this sets up expectations concerning the response of the partner in talk. The second

speaker may however be assumed to have a choice: he or she may decide to 'support' the first speaker by behaving in the expected and appropriate fashion, or to 'challenge' the first speaker by failing to comply. So far then we have five possible types of move:

- | | |
|--------------------------|--|
| Framing moves | These sign-post changes in the direction of talk, and are realised by speech acts such as markers and summonses. |
| Focusing moves | These inform pupils about what is going to happen or what has happened in the lesson, and are realised by speech acts such as metastatements or conclusions. |
| Opening' moves | These are topic-carrying moves and are realised by informatives, directives or elicitations. |
| Supporting moves | These function to support a preceding initiatory move. |
| Challenging moves | These function to hold up the progress of the topic presented in a previous utterance. |

Recognition of supporting moves

Recognition of supporting moves depends on the concept of discourse framework.

Discourse framework

Discourse framework concerns the presuppositions set up in the initiating move of an exchange, and the interactional expectations dependent on that move. The discourse framework set up in an initiatory move has two aspects which, loosely following Halliday (1971), Burton labels:

- 1: ideational + textual
- 2: interpersonal

¹ Opening moves may be further subdivided into bound-opening, re-opening and challenging-opening moves (see the end of this Appendix).

The first of these, the ideational and textual, is defined lexico-
semantically and can be retrieved from the lexical items used in the topic
component of any initiating move. The potential discourse framework
dependent on that move then includes all items that can be categorised as
cohesive with that move, using the notions covered in Halliday and Hasan
(1976) - substitution, ellipsis, conjunction and lexical cohesion.

The second aspect, the interpersonal, concerns interdependent or
reciprocal acts, where certain initiating acts set up the expectations for
certain responding acts. Both pre-topic speech acts (such as markers,
summonses and metastatements) and topic-carrying acts (such as
elicitations, directives and informatives) induce such expectations. If the
appropriate second-pair parts are added to these initiatory acts then the
outline for the interpersonal aspect of the discourse framework is as
follows:

Marker	:	Acknowledge (including giving attention and non-hostile silence)
Metastatement	:	Accept
Informative	:	Acknowledge
Elicitation	:	Reply
Directive	:	React
Accuse	:	Excuse

Given this concept of discourse framework, a supporting move is any move
which maintains the framework set up by a preceding initiatory move.

Within the traditional classroom there are certain interesting
variants on this pattern of expectations. Pupils' replies for example are
commonly followed by some kind of acceptance or evaluation from the
teacher (the Initiation Response Feedback pattern described by Sinclair and
Coulthard). As a result pupils often phrase their replies, especially if
they are uncertain, in the interrogative mode:

Teacher:	What is the capital of Poland?	Elicitation
Pupil:	Is it Warsaw?	Reply
Teacher:	That's right	Evaluation

Recognition of challenging moves

According to Burton (1981) there are different types of challenging moves whose recognition depends on three different concepts:

- 1: discourse framework [as outlined above]
- 2: discourse topic steps [as presented in Keenan and Schieffelin (1976)]
- 3: rules of interpretation [expanded from suggestions of Labov (1970)]

Challenging moves and discourse framework

A simple kind of challenging move is made by withholding an expected or appropriate reciprocal act, where the expectation of that act was set up in the preceding initiatory move. This is known as a break in discourse framework expectations (DF). For example the absence of a reply after an elicitation, or a react after a directive is seen as challenging (see Sacks, 1972; Turner, 1970; and Schlegelhoff, 1968 on the notion of justifiable absences). Similarly a challenging move can be made by supplying an unexpected or inappropriate act where the expectation of another has been set up.

		ACT	MOVE
Teacher:	What do you think is the answer?	Elicitation	Opening
Pupil:	What do I put here?	Elicitation	Challenging opening DF

Some challenges, as in this example, filter upward in the system and effect the opening of a new exchange, and are therefore in the present research known as a 'challenging openings'.

Once again there are differences between expectations within the classroom and those accepted in conversation outside it. For example teachers commonly exercise the right not to answer pupils' queries:

		ACT	MOVE
Pupil:	What do I put here?	Elicitation	Opening
Teacher:	What do you think is the answer?	Elicitation	Opening

In this case therefore the teacher should not be seen as breaking discourse framework expectations, although in similar circumstances the pupil is certainly to be seen as doing so.

It is important to note that a challenging move does not necessarily indicate hostility, but may divert the ongoing talk in a quite amicable way.

Challenging moves and Discourse Topic Steps

Keenan and Schieffelin (1976) suggest that the following four steps are required in order for the speaker to make his topic known to his hearer:

- 1: The speaker must secure the attention of the hearer.
- 2: The speaker must articulate clearly.
- 3: The speaker must provide sufficient information for the listener to identify objects, persons, and ideas included in the discourse topic.
- 4: The speaker must provide sufficient information for the listener to reconstruct the semantic relations obtaining between the referents in the discourse topic.

The listener may challenge the speaker by claiming that one or other of these necessary steps has not been fulfilled. He may therefore respond to the speaker in one of four 'challenging' ways:

- 1: He may refuse to give his attention.
Teacher: What is the capital of China?
Pupil: (ignores teacher) **Challenging K&S 1**
- 2: He may ask for a repetition of the utterance.
Teacher: What is the capital of China?
Pupil: What? **Challenging K&S 2**
- 3: He may ask for clarification of information about the identification of objects, persons, or ideas in the discourse topic.
Teacher: What is the capital of China?
Pupil: Did you say China? **Challenging K&S 3**
- 4: He may ask for more information concerning the semantic relations between referents in the discourse topic.
Teacher: What is the capital of China?
Pupil: Do you mean the most important city? **Challenging K&S 4**

Challenging moves and rules of interpretation

Labov, amongst his other rules of interpretation linking what is said to what is done, offers a general rule for interpreting any utterance as a valid request for action (a directive):

Preconditions for interpreting any utterance as a valid directive

If A requests B to perform an action X at a time T, A's utterance will be heard as valid only if the following conditions hold: B believes that A believes that:

- 1: X should be done for a purpose Y.
 - 2: B has the ability to do X.
 - 3: B has the obligation to do X.
 - 4: A has the right to tell B to do X.
-

Labov's data is interesting in that it shows speakers challenging various of these preconditions.

On the basis of these rules Burton proposes four criteria for classifying a move as challenging a directive:

- 1: If B claims that X should not be done for purpose Y
Teacher: Open the door and let
 some air in.
Pupil: It would be better to
 open a window. **Challenging L1**
- 2: If B states that he or she does not have the ability to
do Y
Teacher: Open the window and let
 some air in.
Pupil: I can't move it. **Challenging L2**
- 3: If B does not accept that he or she is obligated to obey
Teacher: Open the door and let
 some air in.
Pupil: Why should I always
 have to do it? **Challenging L3**
- 4: If B claims that A does not have the right to tell B to
do X

Teacher: Open the door and let
 some air in.
Pupil: You can't tell me what
 to do. **Challenging L4**

Burton adds to these four criteria, which deal with responses to a directive, five others governing responses to elicitation and five governing responses to informatives.

Preconditions for hearing any utterance as a valid informative

If A informs B of an item of information P, A's utterance will be heard as a valid informative only if the following preconditions hold: B believes that A believes that :

- 5: A is in a position to inform B of P.
 - 6: P is a reasonable piece of information.
 - 7: B does not already know P.
 - 8: B is interested in P.
 - 9: B is not offended/insulted by P.
-

In the classroom situation however precondition 7 will not apply to the teacher, who will of course generally be in the position of knowing the answer.

Each of these preconditions may be challenged:

- 5: B may not accept that A is in a position to inform B of P
Pupil: I went to the zoo yesterday.
Teacher: I haven't asked you to speak. **Challenging L5**
- 6: B may reject P as unreasonable
Pupil: Shanghai is the capital of China.
Teacher: No it isn't. **Challenging L6**
- 7: B may claim to know P
Pupil: Miss Maine wants to see you..
Pupil: I know that already. **Challenging L7**
- 8: B may claim not to be interested in P
Pupil: Emma's not done her homework miss.
Teacher: I'm not interested in Emma at the moment. **Challenging L8**
- 9: B may be offended/insulted by P
Pupil: Sharon's a slag.
Teacher: Don't use words like that. **Challenging L9**

These preconditions can be considered to apply not only to informatives, but also to information-carrying speech acts such as replies. Thus if a teacher rejects a pupil's answer as wrong, this will be coded challenging on the grounds that the information is not considered reasonable (L6).

Preconditions for hearing any utterance as a valid elicitation

If A asks B for a linguistic response concerning a question M, it will be heard as a valid elicitation only if the following preconditions are met: A believes that B believes that:

- 10: B hears M as a sensible question.
11: A does not know M.
12: It is the case that B might know M.
13: It is the case that A can be told M.
14: It is the case that B has no objection to telling M to A.
-

Once again the teacher's situation is a special one: precondition 11 does not apply to teachers, who are expected to know the answers beforehand.

Each of these preconditions has its corresponding challenging move:

- 10: B may deny that the question is sensible or reasonable.
 - Pupil: Can I go to the toilet?
 - Teacher: You've just been five minutes ago. **Challenging L10**

- 11: B may claim that A knows M.
 - Teacher: Were you late again this morning?
 - Pupil: You know I was. **Challenging L11**

- 12: B may claim not to know M.
 - Teacher: What is a cosign?
 - Pupil: I don't know. **Challenging L12**

- 13: B may claim that it is not possible to tell M to A.
 - Pupil: What's going to be in the exam miss?
 - Teacher: I'm not supposed to tell you that. **Challenging L13**

- 14: B may object to telling M to A.
 - Teacher: What did you just call Emma?
 - Pupil: I don't want to say miss. **Challenging L14**

.....

The structure of the seven classes of move is described in detail overleaf.

Classes of Move

Framing moves

These (together with focusing moves) are explicit markers of boundaries in the discourse, and involve acts that are essentially attention-getting, pre-topic items. Framing moves comprise:

- 1: a head (realised by a marker or a summons)
- 2: a qualifier (realised by a silent stress)

e.g.

<u>Class of Move</u>	<u>Text</u>	<u>Structure of Move</u>	<u>Class of Act</u>
Framing	<i>Right</i> (<i>pause</i>)	Head Qualifier	Marker Silent Stress

Following Burton and Sinclair and Coulthart, this identifying structure may be represented in a table:

<u>Elements of Structure</u>	<u>Structures</u>	<u>Classes of Act</u>
Head (h)	hq	h: marker, summons
Qualifier (q)		q: silent stress

The table above states that there are two elements in the structure of framing moves, called head (short symbol h) and qualifier (short symbol q). In the next column there is a composite statement of the possible structures of this move. We see that both head and qualifier are necessary. Had the qualifier been optional, this would have been indicated by placing the q within brackets - h (q). In the third column the elements of the move structure are associated with the speech acts which realise them.

Focusing moves

Framing moves are frequently but not always followed by focusing moves whose function is to talk about the discourse, to inform pupils about what is going to happen, or what has happened. Focusing moves represent a change of plane - the teacher steps outside the discourse for a moment and comments upon what has been said or what is about to be said. Focusing moves comprise:

- 1: an optional signal (realised by a marker or summons)
- 2: an optional pre-head (realised by a starter)
- 3: a compulsory head (realised by a metastatement or conclusion)
- 4: an optional post-head (realised by a comment)

Class of Move	Text	Structure of Move	Class of Act
Focusing	<i>Now think what we did yesterday</i>	Signal	Marker
	<i>Today we will continue with that quiz</i>	Pre-head	Starter
	<i>We won't take the whole lesson to do it though.</i>	Head	Metastatement
		Post-head	Comment

The identifying structure of focusing moves may be represented as follows:

Elements of Structure	Structures	Classes of Act
Signal (s)	(s)(pre-h)	s: marker, summons
Prehead (pre-h)	h (post-h)	pre-h: starter
Head (h)		h: metastatement or conclusion
Post-head (post-h)		post-h: comment

Opening moves

Opening moves are recognised by the presence of informatives, directives or elicitations. They are essentially topic-carrying moves which are recognisably 'new' in terms of the preceding talk.

Class of Move	Text	Structure of Move	Class of Act
Opening	<i>Read us what you have written Joan</i>	Head Select	Directive Nomination

The identifying structure of opening moves is as follows:

Elements of Structure	Structures	Classes of Act
Signal (s)	(s) (pre-h)	s: marker summons
Pre-head (pre-h)	h (post-h)	pre-h: starter preface
Head (h)	(sel)	h: informative
Post-head (post-h)	or	directive
Select (sel)	(sel)(pre-h)	informative
	h	accuse
		Post-h: comment
		prompt clue
		Sel: nomination cue

Challenging opening moves

Burton (1981) recognised that certain challenging moves could 'filter upwards' in the system to become opening moves. In the present research, since we are especially interested in challenging responses, any opening moves of this type - i.e. any opening move which taken in the context of the previous utterance breaks either discourse framework expectations, or challenges Keenan and Schieffelin's discourse topic steps, or the expanded Labov rules of interpretation (see pp. 495-500) are classified as challenging opening moves.

Bound-opening moves

Bound-opening moves occur after a preceding opening, bound-opening or re-opening move has been supported. They enlarge the discourse framework by extending the ideational-textual aspect of the original opening move, employing the various types of informative and comment acts. They may also have no head but consist of nomination, prompt or clue.

Class of Move	Text	Structure of Move	Class of Act
Opening	T: <i>What is this?</i>	Head	Elicitation
Supporting	P: <i>A right angle</i>	Head	Reply
Bound-opening	T: <i>David?</i>	Select	Nomination
Supporting	P: <i>An acute angle</i>	Head	Reply
Bound opening	T: <i>Right angles have ninety degrees don't they</i>	Head	Informative

The identifying structure of bound-opening moves is as follows:

Elements of Structure	Structures	Classes of Act
Select (sel)	(sel)	sel: bid nomination
Pre-head (pre-h)	(pre-h) (h)	cue
Head (h)	(post-h)	pre-h: preface starter
Post-head (post-h)		h: informative
		post-h: comment
		prompt clue

Reopening moves

Reopening moves occur after a previous opening, bound-opening or reopening move has been challenged. They reinstate the topic that the challenge has either diverted or delayed.

Class of Move	Text	Structure of Move	Class of Act
Opening	T: <i>Why -use a semi-colon?</i>	Head	Elicitation
Challenging	P: <i>I don't know</i>	Head	Reply
Re-opening	T: <i>Anybody? Why is it used here?</i>	Select	Cue
		Head	Elicitation

Reopening moves may be identified by the following structure:

Elements of Structure	Structures	Classes of Act
Select (sel)	(sel)	sel: bid nomination
Pre-head (pre-h)	(pre-h) (h)	cue
Head (h)	(post-h)	pre-h: preface starter
Post-head (post-h)		h: informative elicitation directive accuse
		post-h: comment prompt clue

Supporting moves

Supporting moves occur after all the other types of move: frames, focuses, openings, challenges, bound-openings and reopenings. Chains of supporting moves often occur, but essentially the notion of a supporting move involves items that concur with the initiatory moves they are supporting. This means that in these chains, each supporting move can be related back to one of the other six types of move. This being the case, while a supporting move may follow another supporting move, functionally it serves to support a preceding initiatory move. Recognition of supporting moves depends, as has been discussed previously, on the concept of discourse framework (see p. 493).

Class of Move	Text	Structure of Move	Class of Act
Opening	T: <i>Read us what you've written.</i>	Head	Directive
Supporting	P: <i>'The main part is Shanghai.'</i>	Head	React (read)

The structure of supporting moves is as follows:

Elements of Structure	Structures	Classes of Act
Select (sel)	(sel)	sel: bid
Pre-head (pre-h)	(pre-h) h	pre-h: marker starter
Head (h)	(post-h)	h: acknowledge
Post-head (post-h)		accept reply react evaluate excuse
		post-h: comment

Challenging moves

Challenging moves function to hold up the progress of the topic presented in a previous utterance in some way. They may occur after any other move, except in two-party talk, after the second speaker has supported the opening move of the first. As discussed earlier (see p. 495) there are three different types of challenging moves whose recognition depends on three different concepts:

- 1: discourse framework
- 2: discourse topic steps
- 3: rules of interpretation.

Class of Move	Text	Structure of Move	Class of Act
Opening	T: <i>What is this?</i>	Head	Elicitation
Supporting	P: <i>A right angle.</i>	Head	Reply
Challenging	T: <i>Wrong.</i>	Head	Evaluate

The structure of challenging moves is as follows:

Elements of Structure	Structures	Classes of Act
Select (sel)	(sel)	sel: bid
Pre-head (pre-h)	(pre-h) h	pre-h: marker starter
Head (h)	(post-h)	h: loop reply evaluate react
Post-head (post-h)		post-h: comment

APPENDIX C

THE OBSERVATIONAL RECORD

Each 'desk' on page 510 was used in the following way:

Helen	
TA	HU
	CO
TD	Chat

At the top, space is left for the pupil's name or other identifying characteristics. The rest of the 'desk' has been divided horizontally into three parts, each representing two minutes interaction. The vertical line divides the 'desk' into a left-hand portion in which the teacher's behaviour to the individual pupil can be noted (TA=teacher accepts bid: TQ=teacher asks question: TD=teacher disciplines pupil: TR=teacher replies to pupil's question). In the right-hand side pupil behaviours are noted (HU=hand up: CO=call-out: Chat etc.) Usually where a call-out was recorded a key word in the pupil's speech was noted at the side to facilitate coordination with the tape transcript.

At the bottom of the sheet the larger boxes provide space for group or 'whole class' behaviour to be recorded. These boxes were also used to note individual behaviours (such as call-outs) which it was not possible to assign to particular pupils.

¹ Note that the sheets on pages 509-511 have been photo-reduced for inclusion in this Appendix.

CLASSROOM OBSERVATION SCHEDULE

- 1 NUMBER
- 2 UNIFORM
- 3 ANORAKS
- 4 CHAIRS
- 5 WINDOWS
- 6 PENCILS
- 7 CONDITION
 - CLEAN
 - TIDY
 - PLANTS
 - POSTERS
 - PICTURES
- TOTAL
- 8 WORK ON WALLS 0 1 2 3 4
- 9 GRAFFITI 0 1 2 3 4
- 10 LATE

START

<u>OUTSIDE</u>	MILL	0	1
	ENTER ROOM	0	1
	LINE UP	0	1
<u>INSIDE</u>	MUDDLE	0	1
	SIT	0	1
	STAND	0	1
<u>SEATING</u>	CHOSEN BY CHILDREN	0	1
	T DIRECTS SOME	0	1
	T DIRECTS ALL	0	1
	N/K	0	1
<u>RESOURCES</u>	BROUGHT BY CHILDREN	0	1
	ON DESK	0	1
	DISTRIB. BY MONITORS	0	1
	DISTRIBUTED BY T	0	1
	COLLECTED BY CHILDREN	0	1

TIME TO START OF WORK :

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

CALL OUTS	HANDS UP

GROUP

P. MIS.	T. R.

GROUP

% O.T	ACTIVITY

CLASS

END

TIMING	T FINISHES EARLY BUT KEEPS CHILDREN	2
	T DOES NOT FINISH IN TIME LESSON OVERRUNS	0
	DISMISS BEFORE BELL	3
	GOOD	1

STAND BEHIND CHAIRS	0	1
SILENCE	0	1
FAREWELL,	0	1
LINE-UP.	0	1
OFF TASK CHAT TO T	0	1
TIDY ROOM	0	1
DISMISS BY ROW/ SEX / GROUP	0	1

RESOURCES	COLLECTED BY T	0
	COLLECTED BY MONITOR	1
	REPLACED BY CHILDREN	2
	KEPT BY CHILDREN	3

HOMework SET	0	1
HOMework RETURNED	0	1

REPORTS.	INDIVIDUAL	0	1
	CLASS	0	1

APPENDIX D

GUIDELINES FOR THE TEACHER INTERVIEW

Questions about the low ability class

- 1: I'd like to start by asking you to tell me about the class so that I know something about them before I see them. What can you tell me about them?
- 2: Sometimes teachers talk of their classes as naturally falling into groups. Do any groupings occur to you when you think of this class?
- 3: (If such a group not spontaneously mentioned) If I were to suggest a group of children who usually are prepared to work in class, and a group who are not usually prepared to work, could you tell me which children would fall into these groups?
- 4: (If not already mentioned) What about different ability levels? Which children fall into the high ability level for this class? Which are the children in the lowest ability group?
- 5: Are there any obvious characters or leaders in the class?
- 6: Are there any strong friendship groups in the class?
- 7: How, if at all, does belonging to these friendship groups effect their work in the class?
- 8: Do you control seating in the class?
- 9: Do they sit in the same places for all your lessons? (If they do ask for a seating plan.)
- 10: Have you taught any of the children before this year?
- 11: What, if anything, had you been told about the class before you took it over?

- 12: Do you have any contact with the class or any of the children in it outside lesson time?
- 13: (If answer is yes) What effect, if any, does this have on what happens in lesson time?
- 14: If I were to ask you to imagine a scale of 1 to 10 where 10 represents the kind of class you most enjoy teaching and 1 the kind of class you least enjoy teaching, which point in the scale would best represent this class?
- 15: If 10 on the scale represents the most difficult class to teach and 1 the easiest, where would this class come on the scale?
- 16: If 10 represents the class that is most stressful and 1 the least stressful to teach, how would you rate this class?
- 17: Are there any particular kinds of lessons, or parts of lessons, that this class responds well to?
- 18: What sort of work do you find most difficult with them?
- 19: Do you give homework? How many minutes of homework do you give per week?
- 20: What sort of return rate do you get?
- 21: Is this class fairly typical in your opinion of a Third Year group of this ability level?
- 22: With a class such as the one we have been discussing, what do you feel should be your priorities as a teacher? What do you most want to achieve with them and for them?
- 23: How possible do you see this as being?
- 24: What is the major difficulty to be overcome?
- 25: Is there anything else about the class that strikes you as important that we haven't covered?

Questions about the 'most enjoyed' class

- 26: What made you choose this class as your most enjoyed class?
- 27-51: Repeat questions 1-25

General questions

- 52: Now I'd like to ask you some general questions about the school and your teaching experience. First how long have you been teaching now?
- 53: Can you tell me something about your training?

- 54: How did you come to choose to be a teacher?
- 55: Which subjects are you teaching? Did your training especially prepare you to teach (these/this) particular subject(s)?
- 56: Would you make the same decisions if you could choose your career again?
- 57: How would you like to see your career go in the future?
- 58: What gives you the greatest satisfaction in your job?
- 59: What causes you the most difficulty?
- 60: What is the most irritating thing about your job at the moment?
- 61: Have you always taught in this school? (If not) Can you tell me about the other schools you have taught in? What type of schools were they? Single sex or mixed sex? Private or State schools? Comprehensive or grammar/secondary modern etc?
- 62: What type of school would you enjoy teaching in most do you think?
- 63: Why is that?
- 64: Are there any special kinds of children that you enjoy teaching more than others?
- 65: Are there any general standards of classroom discipline expected at the school? Are discipline standards based on general expectations set by the school (or department) or are they left to the individual teacher?
- 66: How much freedom did you have (or, if talking to Department Head, how much freedom do teachers in your Department have) to plan the Third Year courses they teach?
- 67: Is there any check on whether staff set homework?
- 68: If an individual child in your class was worried about a school or personal problem, when could they come to talk to you about it?

APPENDIX E

THE PUPIL QUESTIONNAIRE

We would like to know more about how young people feel about their schooling and would be very grateful if you could help us to find out by filling in this questionnaire.

There are no right or wrong answers - it's what YOU think that matters.

This questionnaire is completely confidential and will not be shown to anyone who knows you.

Thank you for your help.

1. Please write in, in the box below, the names of the OPTIONAL SUBJECTS you will be taking in the Fourth Year.

<u>OPTIONAL SUBJECTS</u>	
1
2
3
4
5

Are there any subjects which you would have liked to take next year, which you will NOT be studying ? If there are, please name the subjects and explain why you will not be taking them.

.....
.....
.....
.....

2. Whom do you like to sit near you in class? Please give a name or names.

.....
.....

In your class are there any people whom you like to spend your free time with?

.....
.....
.....

When you have to get down to some hard work in class, whom do you like to have sitting near you?

.....
.....

3. PEOPLE FEEL VERY DIFFERENTLY ABOUT THE SUBJECTS THEY STUDY IN SCHOOL.

How interesting do YOU find the four subjects named below at the moment?

Please tick the column which expresses best how you feel.

	Very interesting	Interesting	Neither interesting nor boring	Boring	Very boring
ENGLISH					
HISTORY					
MATHS					
GEOGRAPHY					

How hard are you working for these subjects?

	I work hard all of the time	I work hard most of the time	I work hard some of the time	I never work hard
ENGLISH				
HISTORY				
MATHS				
GEOGRAPHY				

How useful do you think those subjects will be for your future life outside school?

	Very useful	Useful	Neither useful nor useless	Useless	Totally useless
ENGLISH					
HISTORY					
MATHS					
GEOGRAPHY					

4.

Below are some things that other pupils have said about the teachers they felt were able to bring out the best in them at school.

Different things are important to different people, and we would like to know how YOU feel.

HOW IMPORTANT IS IT IN YOUR OPINION FOR A TEACHER TO BE LIKE THIS?

Please tick the column that describes your views best.

A GOOD TEACHER ...	Extremely important	Very important	Important	Not important
1. listens to what you say				
2. can control the class				
3. is friendly				
4. can have a laugh with the class				
5. makes sure everyone understands the work				
6. doesn't let you muck about in class				
7. explains things clearly				
8. is able to join in and have fun				
9. keeps cool in hotted-up situations				
10. is understanding				
11. makes lessons interesting				
12. knows what to do when a class gets out of hand				
13. puts a lot of variety into lessons				

A GOOD TEACHER ...	Extremely important	Very important	Important	Not important
14. has a good sense of humour				
15. can be strict when it's necessary				
16. is someone you can talk to about problems				
17. makes lessons enjoyable				
18. cares about pupils as individuals				
19. breaks the routine with jokes				
20. makes it easy to ask questions				

5. How would you judge the success of a course of lessons? Below are some of the things which people have suggested we should consider.

HOW IMPORTANT DO YOU THINK THESE THINGS ARE?

Put a tick in the box which shows how YOU feel.

	Extremely important	Very important	Important	Not important
1. examination grades achieved by pupils				
2. number of pupils developing an interest in the subject				
3. number of pupils going on to study the subject in the sixth form				
4. number of pupils developing a good understanding of the subject				
5. number of pupils who felt they had enjoyed the course				

6. We would like to know how you see some of your teachers. There are, of course, no right or wrong answers as we all see people differently.

HERE IS AN EXAMPLE:

	PHYSICS TEACHER			FRENCH TEACHER			ART TEACHER			BIOLOGY TEACHER		
This teacher...	True	Neither true no nor untrue	Untrue	True	Neither true nor untrue	Untrue	True	Neither true nor untrue	Untrue	True	Neither true nor untrue	Untrue
1. is helpful	✓					✓		✓		✓		

In this example the ticks show that the pupil feels that the PHYSICS teacher and the BIOLOGY teacher are helpful (the column marked TRUE is ticked);

The FRENCH teacher is not seen as helpful (the column marked UNTRUE is ticked).

The ART teacher is seen as neither helpful nor unhelpful (the column marked NEITHER TRUE NOR UNTRUE is ticked);

Now turn over the page.

PLEASE TICK THE COLUMN WHICH SHOWS HOW YOU FEEL ABOUT THE FOUR TEACHERS WHOM YOU HAVE THIS YEAR FOR THE SUBJECTS NAMED BELOW.

THIS TEACHER...	ENGLISH TEACHER			MATHS TEACHER			HISTORY TEACHER			GEOGRAPHY TEACHER		
	True	Neither true nor untrue	Untrue	True	Neither true nor untrue	Untrue	True	Neither true nor untrue	Untrue	True	Neither true nor untrue	Untrue
1. listens to what you say												
2. can control the class												
3. is friendly												
4. can have a laugh with the class												
5. makes sure everyone understands the work												
6. doesn't let you muck about in class												
7. explains things clearly												
8. is able to join in and have fun												
9. keeps cool in hotted-up situations												
10. is understanding												
11. makes lessons interesting												
12. knows what to do when a class gets out of hand												
13. puts a lot of variety into lessons												
14. has a good sense of humour												
15. can be strict when it's necessary												
16. is someone you can talk to about problems												
17. makes lessons enjoyable												
18. cares about pupils as individuals												
19. breaks the routine with jokes												
20. makes it easy to ask questions												

7. How important do you think examinations are for you in your future life outside school?

Put a tick in the box opposite the statement which describes best what you think.

- Very important
- Important
- Neither important nor unimportant
- Unimportant
- Totally unimportant

8. What are you hoping to do at the end of the fifth form?

PLEASE TICK ONE BOX ONLY.

- Stay on at this school
- Leave school at Easter and look for work
- Leave school in the Summer and look for work
- Leave school and go to a FE college
- Other (Please say what)
-
-

9. How much do your parents want you to stay on in full-time education after the fifth form?

Please tick the box which best describes HOW YOU THINK THEY FEEL.

Use DON'T KNOW only if you really can't decide.

- Very much
- Quite a lot
- Not much
- Not at all
- Don't know

10. We would like you to tell us something about the way you see yourself and your ability to do your work at school.

We would like to know what YOU YOURSELF think.

Put only ONE tick against one statement in each section.

1. How do you rate yourself in school ability compared with your close friends?

I am the best	<input type="checkbox"/>
I am above average	<input type="checkbox"/>
I am average	<input type="checkbox"/>
I am below average	<input type="checkbox"/>
I am the poorest	<input type="checkbox"/>

2. How do you rate yourself in school ability compared with others in your class at school?

I am the best	<input type="checkbox"/>
I am above average	<input type="checkbox"/>
I am average	<input type="checkbox"/>
I am below average	<input type="checkbox"/>
I am the poorest	<input type="checkbox"/>

3. Think of all the other classes in your year at school. Where would you place yourself in terms of your school ability?

Among the best	<input type="checkbox"/>
Above average	<input type="checkbox"/>
Average	<input type="checkbox"/>
Below average	<input type="checkbox"/>
Among the poorest	<input type="checkbox"/>

4. To become a teacher, a doctor, or a scientist, you have to go to College or University and pass difficult examinations. How likely do you think it is that you could do this?

- Very likely
- Somewhat likely
- Not sure either way
- Unlikely
- Most unlikely

5. For a moment, forget how teachers mark your work. In your own opinion, how good do you think your work is?

- My work is excellent
- My work is good
- My work is average
- My work is below average
- My work is much below average

6. What kinds of marks do you really think you are capable of getting?

- Excellent marks
- Good marks
- Average marks
- Below average marks
- Poor marks

11. What job do you expect to do when you leave school?

12. Just supposing you could do anything you wanted - what job would you choose for yourself?

13. Below are 28 statements arranged in pairs. For each pair, tick the statement which is closest to how you feel.

1. If I had a choice I would have left school this year.

2. If I had a choice I would still have stayed on at school this year.

3. This year at school has made me keen to continue my education.

4. This year at school has put me off education.

5. I have had little chance to do things I enjoy at school this year.

6. I have had plenty of chances to do things I enjoy at school this year.

7. Most teachers have treated me like a child at school this year.

8. Most teachers have treated me like a grown up at school this year.

9. School has often got on my nerves this year.

10. School has only occasionally got on my nerves this year.

11. My teachers have discussed with me what it is like to be unemployed.

12. My teachers have not discussed with me what it is like to be unemployed.

13. I have got on well with most of the teachers this year.

14. I have not got on well with most of the teachers this year.

15. On the whole this year at school has been boring.

16. On the whole this year at school has been interesting.

- 17. My school concentrates too much on preparation for exams.
- 18. My school should concentrate more on preparation for exams.
- 19. This year I have often played truant (bunked off).
- 20. This year I have not played truant from school.
- 21. I feel my teachers expect a lot from me this year.
- 22. I feel my teachers expect too little from me this year.
- 23. My teachers don't make me work hard enough this year.
- 24. My teachers make me work hard this year.
- 25. I feel that I have been generally successful in school.
- 26. I feel that I have not been generally successful in school.
- 27. At school there is too much book learning and not enough practical work.
- 28. At school there is not enough book learning and too much practical work.

NAME

Please tick the appropriate box:

MALE

FEMALE

AGE (years) (months)

APPENDIX F

TEACHER'S ASSESSMENT OF THE LESSON QUESTIONNAIRE

CLASS :

SUBJECT :

DATE :

1 a) In your experience of this class, how typical was their behaviour today ?

Typical in all respects

Typical in most respects

Typical in some respects

Untypical

IF THE CLASS'S BEHAVIOUR WAS TYPICAL IN ALL RESPECTS, PLEASE MISS THE FOLLOWING PART OF QUESTION 1 AND GO STRAIGHT TO QUESTION 2.

b) If the class's reactions were in any way untypical, do you feel that that this was likely to be due to the presence of an observer ?

YES

NO

c) Could you please jot down in what way the class's reactions were untypical, and any reasons that occur to you to explain their different behaviour ?

2 How stressful was this lesson for you as a teacher ?

STRESSFUL : _____ : _____ : _____ : _____ : _____ : UNSTRESSFUL

3 How successful do you feel the lesson was ?

SUCCESSFUL : _____ : _____ : _____ : _____ : _____ : UNSUCCESSFUL

THANK YOU FOR YOUR HELP.

APPENDIX G

FRIENDSHIP NETWORKS IN THE CORE CLASSES

1. Friendship networks in the low ability class at St Andrews

Isolated Boys

Barry#
Stewart
Danny†*
John#

Independent Girl

Diana#

Davis's Group

Patrick(*)=*Davis*=Andrew(*)
Michael*
Antony†
Steven
Gennaro†(*)

Helen's Group

Jackie=Julie(*)=Christine
Helen
Lesley
Katherine(*)

Friendship Pairs

Joseph(*)=Mark#

Natercia#=Lisa

Note:

- 1) Position on the same line denotes closer association,
- 2) Reciprocated choice on at least two of the sociometric questions is indicated by =,
- 3) Italics indicate West Indian origin,
- 4) † indicates Italian origin,
- 5) # indicates Spanish or Portuguese origin,
- 6) No symbol beside name or italics indicates ESWI origin,
- 7) * indicates truants, or consistently poor attenders according to at least one teacher,
- 8) (†) indicates self-reported truant, not named by either teacher as being a poor attender.

2. Friendship networks in the mixed ability class at St Annes

Isolates

Josephine Kelly*

Francoise

Pauline

Maria's Group

Angela†(*)=Maria†#=Christine Noonan

Sara

Caroline*

Barbara†((*))

Natalie=Samantha Gill(*)

Friendship pairs or triplets

Bernadette=Donna

Julia=Christine O'N

Josephine F(*)=Catherine O'B#

Josephine H=Dawn L

Lorna=Lara#=Aine

Joanne(*)=*Lorraine*=Samantha

- Note:
- 1) Position on the same line denotes closer association.
 - 2) Reciprocated choice on at least two of the sociometric questions is indicated by =.
 - 3) Italics indicate West Indian origin.
 - 4) † indicates Italian origin.
 - 5) # indicates Greek Cypriot origin.
 - 6) No symbol beside name or italics indicate ESWI origin.
 - 7) * indicates truant, or consistently poor attender according to at least one teacher.
 - 8) (*) indicates self-reported truant, not named by either teacher as being a poor attender.
 - 9) ((*)) indicates pupil reported by another pupil as being poor attender, although not noted as such by either teacher.

3. Friendship networks in the low ability class at Ridgemount

Michaela's Group

Angela
Michaela = Fatima^
Tezjan## = Sharon*

Afro-Caribbean Group

Associated Friends

Julie = *Dawn* *June* = Dawn C*
Mavis = Caroline*
Barbara *Diane* = *Carmen*
Safia◊

Isolates

Tracey* Eileen*
Dilara^
Jackie*

Note:-

- 1) Position on the same line denotes closer association,
- 2) Reciprocated choice on at least two of the sociometric questions is indicated by =,
- 3) Italics indicate West Indian origin,
- 4) ^ indicates Asian origin,
- 5) # indicates Turkish origin,
- 6) ◊ indicates Sudanese origin,
- 7) No symbol beside name or italics indicate ESWI origin
- 8) * indicates truant, or consistently poor attender according to at least one teacher.

4. Friendship networks in the mixed ability class at Manor Park

Asian Group

Shalma^=Updesh^=Fahana^

Tijan's group

Tijan#=Lorraine=Alef#
Stacey

Main Group

Natalie=Joanne
Terry(*)=Dionne*
Lola°=Aimy°
Janice
Orel(*)
Michelle D.*

Isolates

*Michelle F**
Durdesh^*
*Sara**
Karen*
Joanna
Susan^*

Note:-

- 1) Position on the same line denotes closer association
- 2) Reciprocated choice on at least two of the sociometric questions is indicated by =,
- 3) Italics indicate West Indian origin,
- 4) ° indicates Nigerian origin
- 5) ^ indicates Asian origin
- 6) # indicates Turkish origin
- 7) ? indicates origin unknown
- 8) No symbol beside name or italics indicates ESWI origin.
- 9) * indicates truants, or consistently poor attenders according to at least one teacher
- 10) (*) indicates self-reported truant, not named by either teacher as being a poor attender.

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