

**Are You Listening to Me? Responding to and
Constructing Meaning from Children's
Accounts in Forensic Interviews**

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**Centre for Language and Communication Research
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**Thesis submitted in part-fulfilment of the degree
Doctor of Philosophy
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**This thesis is dedicated to the memory of
my beloved uncle Jean Marie Aime
(1934 – 2003)**

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I would like to thank Faculty of Languages & Linguistics, University of Malaya for offering me the scholarship to pursue doctoral studies in the UK. I would also like to record my appreciation to Polis DiRaja Bukit Aman, Malaysia, Rtd. Chief Constable of Police, Dr. Anthony Butler and the Child Support Unit of UK Police for all the help rendered in obtaining data for this research.

I am also grateful for the opportunity to work with three outstanding academics, Michelle Aldridge, Janet Cotterill and Joanna Thornborrow, whose critical comments have been valuable in shaping this thesis.

I wish to thank especially all staff at the Centre for Language and Communication and Research, who always made time to discuss my ideas. Carol and Julia, for making the Centre a home away from home with their cheerful banter.

A special thanks is due to Professor Celia Kitzinger and Professor Paul Drew of York University for providing me with the opportunity to be acquainted with the conversational analysis method.

This journey would not have been possible without the unstinting support of my colleagues and friends: Anila, David, Evelyn, Fauziah, Sathia, Nesamani, Sam, Silke, Soo Siang and Veronica.

My appreciation also goes to Professor Elaine Morais for believing that I could undertake this feat.

Finally but not least to God for giving me the grace to finish this race.

Abstract

In the UK, it has been the practice since 1992 to use video recordings of forensic interviews with child witnesses as evidence in criminal proceedings dealing with sexual or violent offences. The guidelines for these interviews emphasise the importance of actively listening to the child. However, these guidelines provide little empirical evidence as to how active listening is practised.

This study seeks to fill this gap by examining the listening practices of police interviewers during forensic interviews with children. Using selected examples, I explicate the 'discursive listening' practices of the police interviewers in this data corpus of 11 videotaped interviews with children ranging from the ages of 4 to 8 years old. Drawing upon the CA method, this study examines how police officers respond to and construct meaning from children's accounts in these interviews.

The findings suggest that the turn-taking organisation within the forensic interview offers many opportunities for the child to take up speakership in order to promote the progressivity of talk. In terms of managing the progressivity of talk, the findings show that the interviewer's inherent preoccupation to pursue institutional goals can obliterate the opportunity to attend to the local interactional competence of the child. Additionally, the findings show the police interviewer can orient to occasions of 'non responsiveness' in the interview interaction in three differentiated ways (1) as an index of developmental inability, (2) as resistance to talk and (3) as a reflection of the child's differing cultural world.

The study concludes by offering recommendations to incorporate the child's point of view during the interview interaction in order to establish a more child-centred listening practice.

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Appendix A Transcription Notation

Chapter 1 Introduction

1.1 Chapter Summary

In this chapter, I will provide the background for police interviews with children and then provide the rationale for undertaking practice-based research in this area. I introduce the concept of 'discursive listening' to systematically study both the actions of the police interviewers in their role as listeners as well as the complexities involved in the interview interaction.

1.2 Background of Police Interview with Children

It has been the practice in the UK, since October 1992, to use video recordings of investigative interviews with child witnesses as evidence-in-chief in criminal proceedings dealing with sexual or violent offences. These interviews, conducted by police officers, have been used to replace the child's live examination-in-chief at trial. The main purpose of video recording the child's testimony is to spare the child the trauma of giving evidence in a formal trial.

In order to provide a relaxed and comfortable environment for the child during the interview, a set of guidelines to conduct investigative interviews was set out in the 'Memorandum of Good Practice on Video recorded Interviews with Child Witnesses for Criminal Proceedings' 1992 (henceforth Home Office/Department of Health, 1992). These guidelines were later built upon and expanded as 'Achieving Best Evidence' 2001 (henceforth Home Office 2001). The revised guidelines extended the existing special measures for child witnesses (e.g. live closed circuit television links (CCTV) and video-recorded evidence-in-chief) to vulnerable or intimidated adults. In addition, Home Office 2001 included guidance on the pre-trial treatment of witnesses

and their appearance in court, in order to ensure that all parties in the criminal justice system work together for the benefit of the witnesses. A notable aspect of Home Office/Department of Health (1992) and the revised Home Office (2001) is the recommendation on the use of age appropriate language by the interviewers in order to elicit best evidence from the child witness. Both advocate extensive use of open-ended questions in order to allow the child witnesses to provide their own account.

Such measures and guidelines are meant to be helpful in reducing the stress experienced by the child witness in these difficult circumstances, and at the same time, increase the level of forensically relevant information provided by the child about the alleged incident. However, this does not mean that the difficulties experienced by the child during the interview can be completely eliminated.

The child is still required to recollect details of a traumatic experience and this can be highly distressing. Being interviewed by a stranger - the adult police interviewer - can also be an unpleasant experience for the child. Furthermore, research has found that children may be exposed to a directive communication style in the home environment (Corsaro, 1977; Ochs, 1988; Tarplee, 1993). Thus, the non-directive interview style may be somewhat perplexing for the child who may not have encountered such a style before.

However, more importantly, for the present research, there exists a lacuna between the adult interviewer and the child in relation to their understanding of the organisational relevance of the interview.

1.3 The Aim of the Forensic Interview

The purpose of the forensic interview is fundamentally to elicit as much detail as possible about the alleged incident from the child. During the interview, the child is asked to take part in an interaction format that is not part of her usual routine. Not only does the child have to provide information that is very embarrassing and possibly traumatic but she also needs to present this 'in an unordinary way' (Wattam, 1989: 34). For example, in providing disclosure about the alleged incident, the child may also be required to describe the location of the alleged incident and the relative position of the child and the alleged perpetrator during the abusive activity. The child might not be aware of the relevance of providing such details. As far as the child is concerned, it is the alleged incident itself, and not details of its location, that is of relevance. The elicitation of such details might also cause the child to think that the interviewer does not believe her.

In the eyes of the law, however, these descriptive details are deemed important because they add credence to the evidence. They show that the child is a competent witness and can remember the events accurately. It is also perceived by the legal system that the child has a higher likelihood of telling the truth if such details are described accurately (Wattam, 1989).

Furthermore, the police interview is clearly designed to facilitate a rapid exchange of information (Glasgow, 1989). This involves asking a series of questions that require the child to provide specific and relevant information about the alleged incident or the alleged perpetrator that would assist in bringing about a conviction. Such a design

largely ignores the child's general incognizance of such question-answer formats and takes for granted that the child understands the flow and the organisation of these questions. Although these questions are designed to elicit information in a friendly and non-hostile manner, they still involve testing the accuracy and reliability of the information the child discloses. This means whatever the child says during the interview is not going to be accepted unreservedly during the interview. The talk by the child does take on a 'forensic' status in that it is subjected to the same scrutiny as medical or physical evidence (Blagg, et. al., 1989). For example, the child's answer that the alleged incident occurred at seven o' clock may be followed by a verification question such as 'So how do you know it was seven o' clock?' Such questions might be bewildering for the child who might not be aware of the significance of such questioning in the larger context of the interview. Instead, it could indicate to the child that the interviewer is sceptical of her answers.

As such, it is likely that children go through the interview itself largely unaware of its organisational relevance in terms of evidence presentation in the court.

The mismatches in terms of the interviewer's perception of the organisational relevance of the interview and the child's perception of the same can give rise to interactional difficulties. This situation calls for the interviewers to be more child-centred and to be aware of the child's own understanding of the interview process.

In line with this, it has been recommended that the police officers adopt a child centred approach to the interview (Home Office/Department of Health, 1992). It has been advocated that interviewers listen to the child on her own terms. In the next

section, I discuss the notion of 'discursive listening' that underpins this research undertaking.

1.4 Listening and Discursive Listening

Listening, as defined by the International Listening Association, is the active process of receiving, constructing meaning from, and responding to spoken and/or non-verbal messages. It involves the ability to retain information as well as to react empathetically and/or appreciatively to spoken and/or non-verbal messages (ILA Listening Post, 1995 p.1).

This definition suggests that there are at least two aspects to listening: (1) the covert or the unobservable response where messages are received, interpreted and understood in the mind of the listener and therefore not perceivable to others and (2) an observable overt response which is perceivable to others and therefore, makes it amenable to further investigation into the nature of its occurrence. This is mainly evident through the responses given by the listener in a conversation. The responses and the way in which they contribute to the overall meaning in the interaction play an important role in any encounter, be it in everyday conversation or in an institutional setting. The role of the listener, therefore, is crucial in negotiating meaning in the interaction. This is very much in line with Erickson and Schultz's (1982) assertion that listening is "an activity of communicative production as well as one of reception"(p. 297).

Listening can be considered a discursive practice on top of being a psychological construct. Steil, Barker and Watson (1983) argue that the response aspect of listening

“is especially crucial for judging the success of the listening act as a whole”(p.77).

They point out that until the person in the role of listener makes a response, it is often difficult to determine whether a person in the role of speaker has been successful in getting his point across.

In order to differentiate the two aspects of listening - the overt and the covert - I propose the term ‘discursive listening’ to encapsulate all elements that relate to the observable response aspect of listening. Goodwin (1981) advocates the “systematic study of the actions of hearers” (p.205). In line with this, I suggest that the notion of ‘actions of hearers’ is consistent ‘discursive listening’. This notion of ‘discursive listening’ is different from Winslade and Monk’s (2001) use of the same term that refers to externalising the way conflict is talked about in a conflict resolution context.

Although it is conceivable that participants are acting out the role of hearer in all types of interactions, studying ‘discursive listening’ within all contexts of interactions may not be possible. This is because in certain contexts it is impossible to distinguish the role of listener from that of speaker. A further discussion of studying ‘discursive listening’ within various speaker and listener roles is provided in Chapter 2 Section 2.2.

At this stage, it is sufficient to point out that the study of ‘discursive listening’ is amenable to certain types of interactions only. These are interactions where one participant is clearly acting out the role of listener while still speaking. Such actions would certainly encompass the relevant cognates of ‘active listening’ such as reformulating (paraphrasing), summarising and asking open-ended questions. More

generally, 'discursive listening' also includes the broader process of constructing meaning in which the hearer is involved.

The specific focus in the research on discursive listening, as opposed to general communication or interaction, is the way the hearer or listener orients to the speaker's utterances through his responses. In this sense, listenership is oriented to as "an active engagement with one's interlocuter that expresses more than just 'hearer-ship'" (Goodwin, 1981:103).

In the forensic interview context, the engagement with the child constitutes the way in which the interviewer displays his attentiveness to the child or exhibits 'child-centredness'. An important goal of 'discursive listening' in the forensic interview is the promotion of relevant talk by the child. The police interviewer's role, as hearer, involves getting the child to provide as much detail as possible about the alleged incident. This leads to obtaining an account of the alleged incident in the child's own words, which is "spontaneous and free from the interviewer's influence" (Home Office, 2001: 29).

In the forensic interview, there is great emphasis on ensuring the progressivity of talk by the child. Progressivity of talk by the child involves prioritising the production of turns by the child and making opportunities to offer speakership to the child. This research adopts the perspective that discourse in the police interview involves three main projects. First, it is engaged in *promoting* the progressivity of talk. This involves offering up speakership to the child whenever possible. Second, it entails *managing* the progressivity of talk. This deals with eliciting as much forensically relevant

information in the talk by the child as possible. Third, it involves *restarting* the progressivity of talk. This occurs when the child is not forthcoming with information or details and the progressivity of talk by the child is halted. The interviewer then engages in getting the child to take up speakership again through the design of the follow-up questioning turns. It follows, then, that discursive listening is engaged in the business of *promoting, managing* and *restarting* the progressivity of talk in the interview interaction.

In the next section, I present the rationale for undertaking a research on listening in forensic interviews.

1.5 Rationale for Research on Listening in Forensic Interviews

1.5.1 Prescriptive Nature of Current Guidelines

Walker (1999) acknowledges in her research that there is a need to listen in forensic interviews. She suggests that listening to the child's answers is essential and proposes that the interviewers check whether the child's answers were responses or answers to the questions. Such a distinction emanates from the proposition that the child can be literal in her interpretation of the language. Therefore, if the police interviewer asked, for example, 'Tell me why you are here', the child may reply 'Because you brought me here in your car'. While the child has responded to the question, she has not answered it by giving the reason for her presence at the interview. Such literal interpretations form a fundamental part of the interview interaction. However, the exact nature of listening to the child remains largely unaddressed. While there have been studies (Walker, 1999; Aldridge and Wood, 1998) that have focussed on the way in which children frequently interpret questions literally and therefore lead the

intended trajectory of interaction askew, the interactional environment in which such literal interpretations occur have not been examined in depth and at length. This has resulted in little understanding of the differentiated ways in which children are making sense of the interview process. By ignoring the interactional environment where the literal interpretations occur, we are missing the opportunity to understand the child's perspective and her role in the interview process. I suggest that we need to probe further to obtain an understanding of what this 'literal interpretation of the language' actually entails and what it actually tells us about the child's interpretative framework in a specific piece of interaction. In fact, by focusing on the fact that the child has 'literally' interpreted the question, we are emphasising what the child *is not* doing. I suggest that there should be shift in focus to what the child *is* doing rather what she *is not* doing. This can be done if we focus on the sequential environment of the interaction and examine the action that the child is performing through her interpretations of the questions.

Previous research in police interviews with children has largely focused on children's linguistic development (Aldridge & Woods, 1998; Ceci & Bruck, 1995; Davies et. al., 2000; Fritzley & Lee, 2003; Sternberg et. al., 1996; Walker, 1999). However, such research poses a contradiction. On the one hand, it serves the purpose of providing useful guidelines by which to question children appropriately. It provides summarised tendencies of question forms and types in order to help police interviewers ask appropriate questions during the interview. On the other hand, such a focus overlooks the variability of activities going on in the interview interaction, which is a crucial factor in negotiating meaning (Schegloff et. al., 1982). The aspect of 'appropriate questioning techniques' only serves to tell one side of the story, as it were. We need

to be able to construct new knowledge and understandings based on the emergent nature of the discourse rather than make determinations based on *a priori* notions such as the child's lack of understanding of the questions (Hutchby & Moran-Ellis, 1998). Only if we shift the focus thus can we discern the useful means of listening actively to the child. At present, there is a dearth of research into matters related to listening to the child in various contexts, let alone listening to the child in the police interview context.

While it is important to hail listening to the child as an important practice, it is equally important to recognise that what this can and might mean is variable, especially in terms of professional viewpoints and institutional concerns (Blagg et. al., 1989). Faced with the absence of specific research findings, the very best that the police interviewer can be expected to do is to use her commonsense knowledge of what listening means and follow her instincts. This, of course, also means that interviewers can have their individual views of what listening means and entails. In this respect, there is a pressing need to address the issue of how police interviewers do and can actively listen to the child.

I suggest that previous calls (Home Office/Department of Health, 1992) to listen to the child have been very prescriptive in nature and at best have acted as "well meaning slogans, as empty adornments to practices which are being carried on in much the same way as before" (Blagg, et. al., 1989:6). Police interviewers and policy makers at large have very little idea of what exactly 'active' listening in a forensic context entails.

1.5.2 Probabilistic Nature of Current Research

Previous research (Aldridge & Woods, 1998; Ceci & Bruck, 1995; Davies, et. al., 2000; Fritzley & Lee, 2003; Sternberg, et. al., 1996; Walker, 1999) has attributed many of the problems inherent in the forensic interviews to 'poor questioning techniques'. These have to do with both the types of questions that are being asked of very young children as well as the sequencing of such questions during the interview. Such attributions are based on the assumption that certain question types are more predisposed to obtaining the relevant answers from children compared with other types of questions.

For example, there are suggestions that 'why' questions have to be avoided during the interview as very young children are not able to understand the concept of reasoning (Aldridge & Woods, 1998; Walker, 1999). It is suggested that 'what' questions are asked instead as these questions are considered cognitively more suitable for a young child to understand and provide an answer to. It cannot be denied that such suggestions have been very useful in enabling the interviewers to focus on asking age appropriate questions. There will be less confusion for the child in terms of having to cope with questions that she is not able to understand.

Additionally, there are other studies in the field of developmental psychology that focus on the question types and styles that yield more forensically relevant information from the child (Davies, et. al., 2000; Fritzley & Lee, 2003; Gee, et. al., 1999; Lamb, et. al., 2003a). Such research focuses on the classification of questions into categories such as open-ended invitations, directed questions, prompts or closed yes-no questions. These studies then make suggestions based on experimental

statistical analysis about the relative predispositions of these question types in terms of eliciting the relevant answers from children.

All such studies have one commonality. They seek to enhance the production of talk by the child as well increase the amount of forensically relevant information in this talk. By asking the right type of questions, it is presumed that the child will be able to understand the questions better and hence provide answers that are relevant to the case. Thus, asking the right questions is considered to increase the propensity of the production of appropriate answers from the child.

However, these studies largely ignore the notion of collaborative achievement in interactions. Given the capricious nature of forensic interviews with children, there can be a large number of variables that interact within each interview. For example, there may be personality differences, age differences, social background differences among the children. Similarly, the interviewers may have differing styles in the manner they interview the child. It is, obviously, difficult to capture the interactional effects of all of these factors in the interview interaction.

However, examining the occurrence of these questions in their context of use rather than as discrete and disparate items of analysis can provide insights into some of the complexities involved within these interactions. Furthermore, it may take a combination of questions to achieve a common goal in the interview interaction and the answers to the questions may be built up over a series of questioning turns (Button, 1992). Therefore, ignoring the sequential environment within which these

question types are produced does not serve to provide a holistic account of their occurrence.

Levinson (1992: 69) defines an activity type as a category where the members are “goal-defined, socially constituted, bounded, events with constraints on participants, setting, and so on, but above all on the kinds of allowable contributions”. The forensic interviews can be considered such an activity type and in this respect require research of the contextual environment. Research that centres on the statistical summaries of tendencies and general patterns of question types and categories tends to be one dimensional and inattentive to the multifaceted nature of the forensic interviews.

With reference to the classroom, Salomon (1991: 11) asserts that the context is “complex, often nested conglomerates of interdependent variables, events, perceptions, attitudes, expectations and behaviours and thus their study cannot be approached in the same way that the study of single events and single variables can”. I suggest that forensic interviews can be viewed similarly and require research that is robust in its approach. Research into discursive listening in the forensic interviews, I suggest, is capable of providing this added dimension.

1.5.3 Lack of Systematic Research on Listening in the Forensic Contexts

Current applications of ‘active listening’ are largely centred within fields of psychology, counselling and business (Bonet, 2001; Helgesen, 1996; Hutchby, 2005a; Pachet, 1999). However, police interviewers cannot be expected to adopt the ‘active listening’ strategies that abound in literature from these fields. This is because such contexts have their own set of relevances that are, to some extent, asynchronous to

relevances in the forensic interview context. For example, one of the active listening strategies in the counselling context is to paraphrase what the child might be feeling or provide a 'formulation' that demonstrates understanding of the child's prior talk in the sequence of interaction (Hutchby, 2005a). Such formulations are used to transform the child's talk into a therapeutically relevant concern. This includes the counsellor making comments such as 'That sounds a bit odd' or 'That doesn't sound like a very nice thing'. However, the police interviewer certainly cannot use such evaluative or sympathetic comments, as it would be tantamount to leading the child witness and therefore increasing the suggestibility of the child. This can lead the video recording to be rendered inadmissible as evidence in the court.

On the other hand, if indeed active listening is a useful and necessary technique as has been found in these other fields, then the question of what actually constitutes 'active listening' in the forensic interviewing context needs to be addressed. Only then can we begin to unpack the issues related to making the practice of active listening relevant in the forensic interviewing context. Furthermore, understanding the nature and limits of 'active listening' in the forensic interviews can contribute to the overall efficacy of the interviewing task.

1.6 Research Goals

In the previous sections, I have dealt with the rationale for embarking on research to study listening in the forensic interview context. I have sought to establish that there is a need for listening to be studied in the forensic interview context in its own terms. Research has to be undertaken to discover what exactly listening entails – how listening is done and what listening does. This involves obtaining an understanding of

the interactionally relevant factors that contribute to the outcome of the forensic interview itself in terms of empirical evidence of actual interview settings. I have also introduced the notion of discursive listening as actions of hearers that can be systematically studied.

In this section, I will present the research goals of this study. The present study examines the listening practices in police interviews with children and the ways in which police interviewers respond and construct meaning in this interaction. It is important to make the point that this research does not seek to make evaluative comments and assign blame or criticisms on current practices of listening in police interviews. It seeks to go beyond making such comments to understand the intricacies of the interaction between the adult interviewer and child and find possible means to enhance the outcome of this interaction.

In Section 1.5, I have outlined the nature of current research in police interviews with children as being largely rooted in developmental psychology. The link between communicative and professional competence in the forensic interviews in such studies can generally be characterised as 'reductionist and situation-external general listing of communicative features' (Kovarsky, Duchan, Maxwell, 1999). The present research offers as a contrast a more contextualised, differentiated and situated accounting of communicative behaviours as evidenced in the practice of forensic interviews.

In this regard, this research has a two-pronged focus. The first is to provide a much-needed practice-based dimension to supplement current research in this field. This will enrich existing accounts of the phenomena that underlie the police interviews

with children. The second is to provide an account of 'discursive listening' that is practised in the interview interaction in so far as it aids the progressivity of talk by the child.

The research goals are to:

- examine the discursive listening practices of police interviewers to *promote the continuity of talk* by the child. Using the whole data corpus, I show the structure of turn-taking in the forensic interviews which allows the child more opportunities to take up speakership.
- examine the discursive listening practices of police interviewers to *manage the continuity of talk*. Using selected examples only, I will explicate the kinds of actions that can be undertaken by the police interviewers in response to the child's answers.
- examine the discursive listening practices of police interviewers to *restart the continuity of talk*. Again, I shall use selected examples to show the kinds of meaning that police interviewers can construct when the child is 'non-responsive' in the interaction.

Specifically the research question will ask, why (what action) did the police interviewer ask that question (the linguistic form) after that answer (in the point of the sequence) in order to discover the responsive actions or 'discursive listening' that underlie the forensic interview.

I would like to emphasise that this study offers a relatively gross overview of the basic features of the discursive listening practices and does so with the intention of providing a 'take-off' point for more in-depth research in listening practices. Also, while the police interviewers did exhibit significant individual differences in the way they listened in these interviews, comparisons of these are beyond the scope of the present study.

In Part I (Chapters 1-4), I provide the background for the analysis of the interactions in the police interviews with children by (1) providing the rationale for studying listening as a discursive construct and its contribution to a practice-based approach in professional discourse, (2) relating discursive listening to the emergent knowledge and skill within the local and the wider social context of the differing adult and child sociocultural competencies and (3) outlining the theoretical framework for my approach and explaining the methods of data collection and the analytic tools that will be employed.

In Chapter 1 (this chapter), I have provided the rationale of the research and a brief outline of the chapters in the study. I explicated the definition of listening and propose the notion of 'discursive listening', which is a discursive orientation to listening as opposed to the psychological orientations that dominate current literature. I have argued for a practice-based research that provides empirical evidence to account for the interactional complexities of the forensic interview interaction.

In Chapter 2, I relate 'discursive listening' to the emergent knowledge and skill within the forensic interview interaction. I suggest that the way police interviewers listen to

the child in the police interviewer-child interaction is important to provide epistemological and ontological understandings for practice-based research. I then introduce various constructs related to listening: (1) the role relations between speaker and listener, (2) responding and its corollary - the construction of meaning, and (3) empathising with the child. I situate the research on discursive listening within the paradigm of social competence by firstly, offering a critique of the developmental view and secondly, proposing a sociological perspective which takes into account the active role of the child in the interaction. In this way, I position the child in the forensic interview as an able participant who displays her own interactional competencies. This viewpoint, I argue, is crucial to understanding the particularities of the interaction in the forensic interview context. I point out that this shift in perspective would enable the research to be more centred on what the child is doing rather than what he is not doing and propose that this is fundamentally important to understand the discursive listening practices that take place within the forensic interview setting. I further explicate this notion based on existing theoretical models. Finally, I review current research on interactions, both institutional and conversational, that have focused on aspects of 'discursive listening'.

In Chapter 3, I describe the institutional factors that influence the discursive listening activity. These factors consist of two aspects. The first is the interview protocols that provide the context for the types of questions and comments that should and should not be used during the interviews. I discuss how these constrain what the interviewer can and cannot do during the interview interaction. And finally I use Goffman's (1981) participation framework to discuss how the nonpresent overhearers can have an effect on the interview interactions.

In Chapter 4, I describe the methodology adopted in this research. I present my data collection methods and provide some background information about the data corpus. I also discuss the anonymisation procedure used in the study. I provide the rationale for using a conversational analytic approach and show how the various tools involved such as turn-taking, sequence organisation, repair and membership categorisation work to explicate the notion of 'discursive listening' or the responsive actions taken by the interviewers in the face of the various forms of 'answering' provided by the child.

In Part II (Chapters 5-8), I present the detailed analysis of interactions in the forensic interview. I examine the way in which police interviewers respond or listen to the child in these interactions. The first analytic chapter focuses on the turn initial response provided by the interviewer – the response token. Each of the subsequent analytic chapters focus on a different type of 'answering' provided by the child with regard to how the answers relate to the presuppositions and preferences contained in the interviewer's prior questions.

In Chapter 5, I investigate the environment in which a response token is chosen by the listener/police interviewer, what follows the tokens and what kinds of turns make such tokens the relevant next response. I explore three different functions of response tokens as they are used in the forensic interviews. I examine the role of response tokens, firstly, as a turn yielding device, secondly as a show of minimal affiliation and thirdly as a phasing device for the non-present overhearers.

In Chapter 6, I will focus on the way the interviewer responds to the child's extended turn answers or what I term as 'telling'. This involves answers that contain more than two turn constructional units (TCUs) and contain information both in the narrative (e.g. narration of the alleged incident) or non narrative (e.g. descriptions of alleged perpetrator, etc) form. Using four selected examples, I show how the interviewer's responses show an alignment to the institutional goals of forensic interview rather than to the projected outcome of the telling by the child. I also show that when there are competing institutional goals in the interaction then the alignment is towards the goal that is more topically relevant in the interaction. I conclude by suggesting that in order to display attentiveness to the child, the interviewers need to accommodate to the projected outcome of the child's telling.

In Chapter 7, I explore the way the interviewer responds in interactions which require the child to produce a display of abuse. I show how the interviewers pursue the global agenda of displaying abuse for the benefit of the non-present overhearers. I also show how the answers provided by the child can be a display of her interactional competency rather than a developmental deficiency or lack of understanding of the question asked. I suggest that in order to practice child-centred listening, it is important to acknowledge the child's local interactional goal within the context of pursuing the global agenda of the interview.

In Chapter 8, I examine the way the interviewer responds to the child's 'non-responsive' answers. I loosely define 'non-responsiveness' as occasions where no details or information are forthcoming from the child and the progressivity of talk is halted. Such 'non-responsiveness' can be manifested by short silences, long

withdrawn silences as well as utterances disclaiming knowledge such as 'I dunno'. I show how the interviewers can treat such 'non-responsive' answers in three ways: 1) treating them as an attribute of child development, 2) treating them as a form of resistance to talk, and 3) treating them as a reflection of the cultural gap between the adult's and child's world.

In Part III (Chapter 9), I provide my recommendations and conclusions. I assess the discursive listening practices that have been presented in the analytical chapters and highlight the inherent dilemmas faced by the interviewers. I suggest that the lack of attentiveness to the child's competence is due to the preoccupation of current practice and research on the interview protocol or 'protocol mentality'. I argue for the conduct of more practice-based research and feedback for the interviewers to develop their skills in understanding the child's display of interactional competence and to help them make the leap of imagination necessary to place themselves in the shoes of the child. I also provide implications for further academic research into discursive listening in forensic interviews. I suggest different directions for future research in this field. I conclude by highlighting the insights provided by this research in forensic interviews by drawing out larger themes of cross-cultural communication and practice-based research.

Chapter 2 Police Interviews with Children: Listening as a Discursive Practice

2.1 Chapter Summary

Erickson and Schultz (1987) suggest that there are two kinds of knowledge and skill that participants bring to any interaction, the emergent (locally judged and negotiated) and the institutional (the linguistic and the sociocultural). Following this distinction, the literature review chapters will be organised into two parts. Chapter 2 will deal with the aspects relevant to the emergent aspect of the interaction. This will essentially examine the “public face” (Roberts & Sarangi, 1999) of the forensic interviews. In Chapter 3, I will outline the relevant aspects related to the institution namely the guidelines as contained in Home Office (2001) as well as the courtroom context, both of which have a significant impact on the interview interaction. I seek to relate discursive listening in the forensic interview to both the emergent and institutional factors. The former is public and relatively structured and seeks to present itself as a rationale process of eliciting and providing information. It gives a sense that the interview interaction is being ‘acted out’ for an audience. It involves the observable aspects in the video recording of the police interview with the child. The latter is much more informal but it is where the benchmark for the interview interaction and its associated decisions are set. It involves the parameters that are set for the interview interaction (i.e. the requirements of the interview protocols) as well as the way in which the video recording is viewed and evaluated after the interview interaction ends (i.e. the activities of courtroom which impinge on the interview interaction). A discussion of both the emergent and institutional knowledge will provide the local and wider social background of the interview setting.

In this chapter, I will go on to examine the various interrelated facets of discursive listening related to the emergent knowledge of the forensic interview. Firstly, I will identify the various types of listener and speaker roles in general interactions. Then I will put forward my case for researching discursive listening by explicating the two meaning making constructs that are central to discursive listening: *responding* and *empathising*. I also present the forensic interview interaction as a cross-cultural setting by highlighting the sociological perspective of child development. Next, I position research on discursive listening within an ‘interactionist’ model and provide the theoretical underpinnings of such a position. And finally, I review research that has been grounded on the elements of discursive listening which I have explicated.

2.2 Speaker and Listener Roles in the Forensic Interview Context

Viechnicki (1997) suggests that “speakers become hearers as hearers become speakers” as they take turns to talk. (p.105). This is one reason why research in listening has been limited – it is very difficult to differentiate the role of the speaker and the listener (McGregor, 1986; McGregor & White, 1986; 1990). In most conversations in daily life, such roles are inextricably intertwined.

However, the forensic interview presents a unique interactional context. There exists a clear differentiation of roles between the police interviewer and the child by the way in which the speaking and listening activities are situated.

In order to delineate these roles, it is necessary to look at the various types of listener and speaker roles in interactions. According to Goodwin (1981), listener-speaker roles can be realised in three ways. The first is where the speaker plays an active role and

the listener passively receives the information from the speaker. This is evident in contexts such as lectures, classroom teaching, etc. where the teacher/lecturer may have the sole speaking role and the students, the sole listening role.

The second is where there is a complementary relationship between the speaker and the listener and both take turns being one or the other respectively. Such roles abound in talk shows, news interviews, political interviews, physician consultations etc. The study of listenership in these contexts has included reciprocity design radio in talk shows (Heritage, 1985; Hutchby, 1995), evasive answering in political interviews (Bull, 1994; Bull and Mayer, 1993; Harris 1991), displaying perspective-alignment in medical consultations (Maynard, 1989; Maynard, 1991) and displaying neutrality in news interviews (Clayman, 1988; and 1992).

Listening has also been identified within various notions such as silences (Schegloff, 1995; Tannen & Savile-Troke, 1985), backchannels or continuers (Duncan & Fiske, 1977; Goodwin, 1986; Schegloff, 1982), repair or dealing with breakdown in understanding (Jefferson, 1987; Schegloff, et. al., 1977), formulations (Heritage, 1985; Hutchby, 2005a), collaborative turn construction (Lerner 1987; Sacks, 1992), list construction (Lerner, 1994), coconstruction of storytelling (Mandelbaum, 1987) and substantive reciprocity (Waring, 2002).

In such contexts, it has been noted that listening and speaking roles are not distinct and separate but reciprocal and collaborative (Bavelas et. al., 2000)

The third type of listener, Goodwin suggests, “is a party performing acts in his own right relevant to the position of the hearer” (p.5). This is similar to what Bublitz (1988) refers to as the secondary speaker who “makes minor speaker contributions to the topic” without performing “topical actions” (p.161) that would change the direction of talk. Essentially, this means that one participant has the primary listener-secondary speaker role and the other participant has the primary speaker-secondary listener role. While both are listening and speaking during the interaction, there is clear delineation according to the dominance accorded to such speaking and listening roles. The role of the primary listener is to address the concerns of the primary speaker relevant to a common goal. This common goal is achieved by being attentive to the ongoing topic as opposed to introducing a new topic (Tracy and Moran, 1983).

Such listening roles may typically be found in institutional contexts such as counselling and psychotherapy sessions where “the counsellors seek to show responsiveness and empathy towards the child as he or she is encouraged to talk about issues and concerns in their family life” (Hutchby, 2005a: 303-304).

This type of listener role follows through from the definition of listening described in Chapter 1. It imbues the sense that the listener has a ‘speaking’ role in the interaction but only in so far as addressing the concerns of what the previous speaker has said. In everyday conversations, such notions of listening are frequently realised when we hear the lamentations ‘You’re just not listening to me’. Such lamentation demonstrate not only that listening is a speaking activity but that it is possible to discover whether one has been ‘listened to’ or not through the display of the other participant’s utterances.

2.3 'Discursive Listening' in the Forensic Interview

Due to the inherent difference in the participant status of the police interviewer and the child in the forensic interview, there is a distinct delineation of roles between the interviewer and the child. While the child can be given the status of 'speaker' by virtue of being the primary contributor of information, the interviewer can be designated as the 'listener' by virtue of not just passively receiving the information but also actively making sense of the information provided by the child by asking follow-up questions. However, the interviewer cannot put forward her own propositions or reformulate the child's answer as this can contaminate the evidence given by the child (Wattam, 1989). The police interviewer's role is, as Goodwin (1987) asserts, to perform actions which are "relevant to the position of the hearer" (p.5). Guided by the organisational relevance of the interview, the follow-up questions that the interviewer asks would constitute actions performed to steer the production of evidence in a way that is acceptable and admissible in the court of law. It is such responsive actions that 'discursive listening' in this research will be concerned with and seek to address. It provides an interesting avenue to not only study how police officers listen to the child but also to understand the mechanisms by which they are seeking to make sense of the child's responses.

I will discuss two important aspects in relation to discursive listening which are (1) responding to the child and its corollary - the construction of meaning and (2) expressing empathy.

2.3.1 Construction of Meaning and Responding to the Child

In the police interview with a child, both the child and the interviewer are involved in a special kind of communication that is intentional and goal oriented. For the interviewer, the goal is to elicit information from the child in a version or form that will stand up in the court of law. For the child, this goal may not be so readily clear but it can be assumed that the child understands that she is there to talk about the alleged incident.

Simply put, the child's role as a listener involves listening to the questions asked by the interviewer and providing an appropriate reply to them. The interviewer's role as a listener involves monitoring the child's responses to gauge whether or not the child has understood the question correctly and whether or not the organisational relevance has been met and then to formulate further questions to either reinforce, clarify the answer in the prior turn or elicit further details from the child.

This generalised view of listening can be realised within the conversational analysis perspective (Sacks, et.al., 1978). According to this perspective, the organisation of turn-taking in an interaction provides an inherent motivation for listening. Further, the questions (or the first pair part of the adjacency pairs) set up the constraints for the answer (the second pair parts). In other words, the first pair part makes relevant the kind or some kind of second pair part. The use of the term 'makes relevant' suggests that a turn of talk is 'oriented to' but not determined by its position in an interaction sequence (Schegloff, 1995). This distinction is an important one as in the interview with children it is always difficult to categorise the child's answer as 'right' or 'wrong'. However, based on the sequential organisation, it can be ascertained whether

the answer was 'sequentially relevant' to the questioning turn or not and in what sense.

Doing a relevant second pair part is the main way in which the child can show her understanding of what the prior turn was doing and what it made relevant to be done next. The second pair part also provides a basis for the prior turn's efficacy as an action. In effect, two issues are at stake here. First, if the child provides a sequentially relevant answer, then the interviewer can determine that the question has achieved its desired goal. Subsequently the interviewer can design the next turn to elicit further details. Second, if the child does not provide a sequentially relevant answer, then the interviewer can determine that the prior question has not achieved its desired goal. She can then proceed to design the next questioning turn to reformulate the question in order to further pursue this goal. More importantly, however, an answer that is not sequentially relevant also provides an understanding of what the child has heard the question to mean.

Talk after a question invites hearing for how it could be answering and invites it from those who can bring all the particulars of the setting to bear, rather than by some general rules of interpretation. (Schegloff, 1995, p.12)

The answer that the child provides, though not sequentially relevant to the prior question, can be heard as relevant to some other activity in the interactional sequence when it is examined within the sequential organisation in which it is uttered.

Waldenfels (1994, cited in Jacobs & Coghlan, 2005) argues that while answering has traditionally been considered a verbal reply to a verbally stated question, each question holds a claim beyond its verbal content. Thus, he distinguishes between that to which we verbally reply (namely the speech act of the question) and that to which

we respond (namely the claim as perceived by the listener). Waldenfels (1995: 121, cited in Jacobs & Coghlan, 2005) stresses that it is important to distinguish:

Between the answer which we give or do not give and the giving of the answer itself: the response. The response is a speech-event that is never absorbed by what is actually said. We begin with a situation in which another addresses me, with or without words, such that a demand or request arises to which I cannot but respond. How should I answer, or what I give as an answer, depends on me; whether I answer does not depend on me. Not to respond is to respond. Watzlawick's 'We cannot not communicate' could be reformulated as 'I cannot not respond'.

This claim is similar to Goffman's (1981) distinction between response and reply. He proposes four features of responses: (1) "they are seen to originate from an individual and as inspired by a prior speaker, (2) they tell us something about the individual's position or alignment in what is occurring, (3) they limit and articulate just what the 'is occurring' is, establishing what it is the response refers to, (4) they are meant to be given attention by others now, that is, to be assessed, appreciated, understood at the current moment" (p.76). A reply, on the other hand, is one type of response in which the alignment implied and the object to which the reference is made are both conveyed through words or substitutes (Goffman: 1981:77).

The fragment below, taken from the present data corpus, provides an example of a sequence of interaction where such an alignment is implied.

Fragment 2.1

((In7-Female, Ch7- Female Aged 8))
((Refer to transcription conventions in Appendix 1))

01 In7: Nnny's got a dog, has she?
02 (2.5)
03 Mhm?
04 (2.8)
05 What's his name now
06 Ch7: °Lucky°
07 In7: Lucky:: oh:: that's a cute name

In the example above the question, ‘what’s his name now?’ elicits information about the dog’s name. The child’s answer in line 06 not only provides a name but also provides a name that is recognisable as one which generally belongs to a dog. In this way, the child’s answer responds to the question asked. Accordingly, the child’s answer here can be categorised as a ‘reply’ i.e. it is sequentially relevant to the action embodied in the first pair part question.

Alternatively, the child’s response can also address only particular aspects of the question. It can be regarded, therefore, as not sequentially relevant to the action embodied in the first pair part question and classified as a response and not a reply.

Fragment 2.2

((In5-Female, Ch5- Female Aged 6))

18 In5: Alright, so how d'you know Tom then.
19 Ch5: I dunno what he loo:ks like.
20 In5: How d'you kno:w him.

In this example, Ch5’s answer in line 19 can be said to be ‘out of frame’ in that it does not address the claims contained in the question. The question is designed to elicit information regarding the nature of the relationship between Tom and Ch5. Although Ch5 does articulate a response, it does not provide an attribute relevant to relationship. Rather, she disclaims knowledge concerning Tom’s physical appearance. Ch5’s awareness of the turn-taking organisation is apparent in that she takes up the turn after the question to design her answer. However, this answer can be considered a response and not a reply to the question asked.

Further, the acknowledgement of the answer as a response or a reply is also oriented to in the interviewer’s next turn after the answer. The interviewer formulates the

follow-up question according to her perception of the claims (or the lack thereof) in the child's response. The follow-up question is constitutive of the interviewer's judgements about the adequacy of the child's responses in terms of its institutional relevance.

In Fragment 2.1, In7's next turn in line 07 is designed not only to affirm the answer as appropriate but also to provide an assessment of this answer with 'oh that's a cute name' (line 07). In Fragment 2.2, however, there is no such assessment, and it is followed by a repeat of the initial question with emphasis and stretching on the lexical item 'kno:w'. In5 treats Ch5's answer as a mishearing and therefore repeats this question to redirect the topical focus on the relationship attribute rather than the physical attribute.

This perspective of question-response transforms listening from a unilateral activity to one that is multifaceted and in which sequential organisation has an important role to play. This perspective also suggests that listening can be conceived as an 'event' of its own right and meaning making becomes an interpretive process.

Thus, through the interaction between the question, the response and the follow-up questions, the child and the police interviewer acknowledge one another (or not as the case may be) and this enables meaning to emerge as a jointly constructed, intersubjective phenomenon.

This also suggests that discursive listening needs to be studied within the interaction in order to elucidate the complexities involved in its practice. Listening has to be

localised and contextualised, that is, for the details of such listening to be displayed systematically as products of participants' orientations to specific features of the interaction.

Next, I turn to the notion of empathy which can be seen to be a crucial element in displaying 'child-centredness' in the interview interaction.

2.3.2 Empathy and Forensic Interviews

Expressing empathy can be described as actively seeking to hear the other person's thoughts, feelings, tones and meanings as if they were our own (Rogers, 1957).

Empathy can be expressed in a variety of settings such as personal relationships (parent-child, husband-wife, etc) as well institutional settings (doctor-patient, teacher-student, etc.). Its nebulous nature often makes it a difficult concept to comprehend.

Walker (1997) suggests that empathy involves three main aspects (1) an active communicative emotional commitment by the listener, (b) the capacity to take the role of the other, and (c) identification with the other party.

Evidently, then, empathy does not only mean the ability to feel sympathy for the child who has been through a traumatic experience. It transcends the boundaries of superficial affiliation and seeks to understand the way in which the child not only feels but also views the world.

In forensic interviews, this means that attention should be paid to the child's context, and the ways in which the child may be trying to make sense of what is happening

within the context of the interview. It also needs to consider that the interview has a particular social meaning for the child. While an adult witness may be able to anticipate interview situations and the degree of 'performance' required, the child's view of the interview may be rather different. The child has probably never experienced an interview situation before in her life and therefore may not be aware of the conventions involved.

For the adult police interviewer, empathy will involve trying to see the child as responding to the particularities of her own life, what is happening in it and how she is making sense of it. Blagg et. al. (1989) advocate listening to the child on her own terms, and always keeping in mind that children, like adults, are not all the same, not all homogenous members of the category 'child'. This, they suggest, involves the ability to see the particular children as social actors, just like adults, "trying to make sense of a world which can be alien, mysterious, strange yet sometimes malleable, clear and obvious, a world in which mistakes can happen, tragedies occur, success can be achieved, disappointments felt, and not children as representatives of some theory" (p.12). It will involve trying to recover the cultures of children by treating them as authentic representatives of what is, after all, their culture.

In the forensic interview, there appear to be two interacting cultures. One is the dominant and pervasive adult-police culture and the other is the evolving child's culture. The adult's and the child's worlds can be conceptualised as two different cultures, each with its own relevances, concepts, meanings, experiences etc. Each cultural perspective makes its own claim about what the world is like and each culture

has an authentic voice (Blagg et. al., 1989). Such a conceptualisation is particularly important to the present research as a means through which the behaviour of the interviewer and the child in the interview interaction can be accountable. Although the contributions of the developmental perspective cannot be denied, it is important to further develop the social competence viewpoint and discuss its possible implications to the interview interaction.

In the next section, I will explicate limitations presented by the developmental perspective and suggest how these limitations can be overcome by developing the social competence viewpoint.

2.4 Developmental Perspective of Child Language

Historically, children's discourse has been studied mainly from either psychological or developmental perspectives and based mostly on elicited rather than naturally occurring talk. Piaget's (1955) classic work on children's discourse, centring on egocentric speech as well as Vygotsky's (1962) work on the social development theory of learning both focus on internalisation of language rules and procedures. Following these two theoretical orientations, many developmental studies have proceeded to document children's development in terms of form and functions of language. More recent works on language development have included social and contextual factors in language learning. The role of input (Snow, 1996), discourse organisation (Hickmann, 1996), bilingualism (de Houwer, 1996) and the influence of language and context on socialisation (Ely & Berko-Gleason, 1996) as well as methodologies focusing on individual differences (Bates, et.al., 1996) have given a more social orientation to research on language development.

However, much of the research still focuses on how children acquire competence in their native language so that we can understand better the nature of language itself. Sealey's (2000) review of these studies identifies three main features: (1) they centre on the phenomenon of language acquisition rather than the activity of acquiring the language, (2) they focus on quantifying and generalising features of the acquisition process and (3) the child is viewed as a site where the processes occur rather than an agent that promotes their occurrence.

Therefore, although such research has enriched current knowledge about general characteristics of the language acquisition process, such developmental paradigms present the child's language as being impoverished and lacking in conversational orderliness. According to MacKay,

there is an implicit notion that full membership of society only comes with the attainment of 'adulthood'; children are 'immature, irrational, incompetent, asocial' while adults are 'mature, rational, competent, social (Mackay, 1973: 28).

Similarly, Finnish sociologist Leena Alanen (1990: 25) argues that in such research "children are negatively defined". She points out that they are mainly defined by what they are going to be and not by what they currently are.

It is arguable, then, that the developmental view of child language is not able to account for the sense making mechanisms that occur in interactions between the adult and the child. It positions the child as passively internalising the social processes rather than taking an active part in constructing such processes. This invariably overlooks the inventive, creative and complex nature of the child's participation in

her social world. It follows then that the developmental view does not give credit to the child's competence in accomplishing particular goals in a particular interaction.

A study conducted by Dore (1977) suggests that children's general intentions in an interaction were not in agreement with the research coder's interpretation of the linguistic message and its illocutionary force. He states:

in general it seems clear that utterances which we have been calling non-sequiturs are related to the situation and the overall discourse, if not to the local sequence (Dore 1977:158).

Similarly, Halliday (1978) also observed that children communicate primarily with a desire to participate in social situations rather than for an exchange of information. In order to understand the way in which children answer questions in the forensic interview, it is important to look beyond the local sequence of the interaction or the pragmatics of question and answer sequence. This can only be done if language is viewed as being interactive and constitutive of social action. In addition, this cannot be done by just looking at the interaction from a linguistic standpoint. The pragmatic study of interaction needs to be able to transcend the linguistic concerns and look at the larger context of interaction. To quote Bruner:

Pragmatics for all its linguistic pedigree probably can never be exclusively a linguistic concern. It is too rooted in principles of human action and interaction. As Fillmore (1977) puts it: 'whenever we pick up a word or a phrase, we automatically drag along with it the larger context or framework in terms of which the word or phrase we have chosen has an interpretation' – The 'context or framework' is most certainly broader than the language (1980:41)

Looking at the child's development of grammar or speech acts, even within different social contexts, does not provide an understanding of how the child is using language in the forensic interview context. It does not help us to understand the sense making

mechanisms that the child is using to answer the questions asked. In order to explore how the child is making sense of the questions in the forensic interview context, it is essential to look at the social uses of linguistic knowledge and how linguistic knowledge serves to convey social information within particular segments of interaction.

Wells (1981) and Ochs et. al. (1979), in analysing speech acts of children's language, have shown that there is a complex relationship between the social function of an utterance, its linguistic form and the social context. They have pointed out that in order to understand a speaker's actions it is important to have additional knowledge of their understanding of the context of the interaction.

Hutchby (2005b) provides an important distinction between the psychological and sociological perspectives. He points out that psychologically based research focuses on the development of linguistic and cognitive skills that children acquire while becoming members of the adult community to which they belong. Sociologically based research focuses on the conversational competence that children exhibit as part of their membership of the culture of childhood and this "can be more or less independent of adults" (p. 71).

This has important implications for the forensic interview with children. How the children perceive the forensic interview setting, their knowledge and perception of the goal of the interview become necessary considerations in order to obtain understandings of their responses/answers in the interview. Following Cook-Gumperz (1986), I suggest that it is not the knowledge of the world (i.e. the knowledge of how

children learn the language) but the knowledge of activities in the world (i.e. the child's own conception of the interview interaction) that we need to address in research the area of police interviews with children. While it is acknowledged that studies on child development have contributed towards improving interviewing techniques, a study on the child's own view of the interview interaction will make a further contribution to understanding why the child provides the answer in the way that she does during the interview.

In order to understand the applicability of language socialisation in the context of the forensic interview, I will discuss a few fundamental concepts involved. These concepts will be illustrated with examples drawn from children's everyday lives.

2.5 Sociological Perspective of Child Language

2.5.1 Language Socialisation

According to Cook-Gumperz (1986), communicative competence requires more than the cultural ability to select the appropriate linguistic forms to suit a particular social context. It consists of various 'embodied' meanings and unstated understandings. Such meanings and understandings play an important role in the orderliness of conversational interaction and the mutual comprehensibility of talk between participants. These understandings, however, are not provided for through pre-patterned rules but instead are negotiated through day-to-day interactions. This is what makes the social world that we live in one that is constructed by us, the participants, through our use of language.

For the child then, learning the language does not merely involve learning a set of rules for language and use and then progressively learning to extend these uses to the particular social contexts. From the language socialisation point of view, the growth of social understanding and the capabilities for the maintenance of social relations develop throughout childhood and this can best be seen in the interactions between the children's reactions to the adult world and the requirements of that world taking shape for children (Cook-Gumperz, 1986). Such socialisation is, of course, ongoing throughout the period of childhood and can be seen enacted in various different aspects of their lives, in school, at play and at home (Corsaro, 1997).

In this sense, adults may be required to use different interpretive reasoning to understand the child's world. Corsaro (1997) provides an example of where a child once asked him, 'Do you remember the good old days?' by which he was very much surprised and taken aback. He then replied by saying 'Well, let's see, the good old days. Do you mean-well, like when I was kid?' The child then says 'Ah, the good old days,' and turns and walks away, as if any response was acceptable and the question was not really intended to elicit any specific information at all.

This example represents a typical piece of interaction with a child, where the adult, whose conversational procedures are very much orderly and purposeful, is left wondering what is going on in that interaction. From an adult's perspective, the child's response is odd and not part of the 'orderliness' of conversation that adults take part in. At the same time, it would be a misrepresentation to attribute the child's actions here purely to her lack of competency in using the language and subsequently claim that she has not learned the systematics of conversational procedures of the

adult world. There is a purpose behind this question and this purpose would only become evident if the context within which this interaction takes place is considered. Therefore, although, the purpose and intent of this question may escape the adults, it does not mean that it does not have any function for the child. The child's enactment of such cultural practices needs to be studied and understood in their context of occurrence in order to provide an interpretive framework for adults to communicate more effectively with children.

In line with this, it is important to acknowledge the forensic interview context as a site for such language socialisation to take place. Just because the child is in a special video suite does not mean that the child is going to stop understanding and enacting her cultural practices. It becomes relevant to consider how the child distinguishes, frames and enacts her reality within the interview context.

2.5.2 Interpretive Approach to Language Socialisation

According to the competence view, the approach to language socialisation is largely interpretive. The child is viewed as being someone who searches for meaning in the world around her. This takes Piaget's (1955) view further in that it sets the child as actively participating in the search for meaning rather than passively receiving and contemplating this meaning in her private world. In other words, children help to shape their own learning experience by their interactive responses. The contribution of the child's immediate social network, the family, peers, school, etc. is not relevant to the study of language socialisation. It is the process of 'becoming' or how the child 'acts out' her development that is the centre of understanding.

The following example taken from a study conducted by Hamo et. al.(2004 : 85)

illustrates the point further.

One of four team members was observing the preschool yard when a child came up to her and asked, “Are you good or bad?” Drawing on her adult notions, she took his question as referring to her personality traits and hesitantly started to formulate a candid answer (“sometimes ...”).

But listening to a repeat followed by a brief exchange between the child who initially has posed the question and another child (—“Are you good or bad?”—“I’m bad”—“Great, then I’m going to ...”) made her realize that the question addressed to her actually required a local, momentary estimate of her “goodness or badness” needed to assign her role within the pretend play frame underway and not a moral estimate of her character.

So the misunderstanding here has arisen out of the different interpretive frameworks employed by the child and the researcher. For the child, the question ‘are you good or bad’ serves the purpose of assigning role for a game while for the adult it encompasses a whole moral framework. This example also shows how the concept of ‘moralising’ happens and played out in childhood. The child does not merely accept such roles as prescribed by an adult world but rather the child is assigning and reassigning such roles within her own culture. In this way, the child is actively interpreting the meaning rather than passively accepting the normative code assigned to it.

Corsaro (1997) suggests that through the children’s participation in such cultural routines in their immediate surroundings, with their parents, peers and siblings, they initiate their own evolving membership in their culture. This is an ongoing process that occurs throughout the childhood and it is especially important in the peer cultures where childhood knowledge and practices are progressively transformed into

knowledge and skills necessary to function as full fledged members of the adult world.

Another relevant feature is the way in which the verbal interactions are organised in the family environment. Ochs (1988) noted that in middle class families in the United States, American adults are always 'guessing' what the children are trying to communicate in situations of ambiguity. In such cases, the interactions typically involve the adults offering up reformulations of unclear speech for children to confirm or disconfirm. Corsaro (1977) had similar findings in a study of clarification requests used by adults to three children whose ages ranged from 2 years 8 months to 5 years 2 months. He found that with the younger child, the adult used clarification requests to make acknowledgement using partial repetition of the child's prior utterance. With the older child, he found that the most frequent function of the clarification request was to mark surprise. Such interactions also had marked absence of back-channel behaviours (Duncan, 1972) which indicate acknowledgement in adult-adult interaction. This suggests that the clarification requests are used as acknowledgement markers with children as these are more explicit means of getting the child to acknowledge the adult's preceding utterance. Corsaro suggests that such use of clarification requests can expose children to the necessity of providing cues and guide them to produce solutions to communicative problems. Stokes (1977) notes that children respond to their mothers' clarification requests not with simple repetitions but with corrections and elaborations.

This type of interaction is very different from the typical forensic interview interaction that instead calls for a 'minimal-grasp' strategy (Ochs, 1988) in which the

adult interviewer initiates clarifications using wh- questions to elicit from the child a reformulation of all or part of the unclear utterance or gesture. The preschool child may be unfamiliar with this type of communication strategy and this can pose problems during the interview interaction.

Tarplee's (1993) work on mother-child interaction has suggested that in adult-child talk there are frequent other-repair initiations (where the adult offers up reformulations of unclear speech) that are characteristic of 'doing instructing' during picture labelling with books. Such activities inevitably "reduce the responsibilities left with the child for a self-monitoring of the adequacy of the talk produced" (p.330). However, in the forensic interview, it is the child who is asked to produce further elaborations of details in order to eliminate any contamination of the evidence by the interviewer. Again, this presents a novel interactional pattern for the preschool child to cope with during the interview interaction.

Mehan's (1979) study on classroom interaction suggests that students are restricted in their right to initiate topics in the classroom. Mehan also points out that children gain mastery of recognising the appropriate point in the flow of talk for the introduction of a new topic or for an attempt to gain the floor over the course of their school years. Thus, although the school going child may be more familiar with the 'minimal grasp' strategy, this is still constrained within the instructional activity where the 'right' answers are encouraged and 'wrong' ones are evaluated negatively (McTear, 1985).

Ochs & Schieffelin (1996) point out that participants in verbal interactions draw on linguistic and sociocultural knowledge to create and define what is taking place in

any given interactive event. Children, who are constantly creating and interpreting meaning within their family, school and peer culture, can be somewhat bewildered when confronted with the interview context that consists of a different style of verbal interaction. The types of conflict that arise, again, need to be studied in the context where they occur in order to bridge the abyss of understanding of the complex nature of interaction in the forensic interviews.

In sum, the forensic interview context is a site for the child to perform or enact her socialisation experience. This research does not focus on the causal relationship between the child's immediate surroundings, language ability and her ability to provide a good narrative in the interview. Rather the focus is on the interplay between the differing sense making paradigms belonging to the adult interviewer and the child. It attempts to provide an account of how this is socially constituted in the interaction itself.

In recent years, studies have moved to a broader focus on children's development of communicative competence through their involvement in everyday cultural routines in families with both parents and peers (Ochs,1988). This perspective argues for the context of the child's culture as "a potentially unique contextual interpretative frame for understanding" (Hamo et. al., 2004:85). This might mean that we as adults lack the necessary framework to view the child's cultural practices as a legitimate participation in the adult world. As Blagg, et. al. (1989) put it, the child's world is "a world we have lost" (p.9). When we look at children and their experiences, we do so from an adult perspective. Hence, it is important to become (re)acquainted with the

child's world and the elements associated with it. One way to do this is by exploring childhood practices within the view of social competence.

2.5.3 Children as Active Social Agents

According to the social competence view, children are viewed as active social agents. There is no dichotomy between children as apprentice adults waiting to mature into competent adults as there is in the developmental paradigm. Children are considered in their own right as active participants in the interaction. They are actively constructing their own learning and creating their own learning opportunities. According to Lave & Wenger (1991), children's membership into the adult world is a process in which children refine and expand their place in the culture over time and with experience.

As Cook-Gumperz (1986) points out, children's efforts to make sense of the social world that they live in involve both learning to understand interpersonal relations and a growing realisation of the way in which language as a system of shared meaning is normatively organised. The ownership of language socialisation surely belongs to the child. Moreover, language socialisation does not occur en masse among all children across cultures. There will be variations according to individual cultures as there are bound to be among individual children. Fronès (1993) argues:

There is not one childhood, but many, formed at the intersection of different cultural, social and economic systems, natural and man-made physical environments. Different positions in society produce different experiences (p.61).

Children then are looked upon as social actors and as having agency. Looking at children not as outcomes of social processes but as actors within them has gained widespread acceptance as the following example illustrates.

Fragment 2.3

Do Chips Have Blood on Them?

((This is an everyday interactive routine between a two and half year old boy, Buddy and his mother which is video recorded in their home. Buddy and his mother talked every weekday at this time as she prepared lunch. In this conversation, Buddy is still curious about "blood" from his cut finger the day before))

01 Mother: What?
02 Buddy: Chips [potato chips] have blood on them? Do they have
03 blood on 'em?
04 Mother: No, I don't believe so.
05 Buddy: Kids and people do.
06 Mother: Um-hum
07 Buddy: And monsters.
08 Mother: Yeah.
09 Buddy: Like Grover has blood on him
10 Mother: Well, Grover's a pretend monster. He's really a puppet,
11 you know?
12 Buddy: Yeah.
13 Mother: So he wouldn't have any blood on him.
14 Buddy: But Harry does.
15 Mother: Well, they're just like your puppets. Your Big Bird
16 an your Cookie Monster.
17 Buddy: Yeah.
18 Mother: They're made out of cloth and furry things.
19 Buddy: Yeah, like-
20 Mother: Somebody made them-
21 Buddy: Harry has blood.
22 Mother: I don't think so. Pretend blood maybe.
23 Buddy: Yeah, maybe-may be Grover an Cookie Monster an Harry
24 have pretend blood. Maybe they do-maybe they have
25 real blood.
26 Buddy: Mommy, someday I wanna go to Sesame Street and we can
27 see if those monsters have blood.
28 Mother: You do?
29 Buddy: Yeah.
30 Mother: I don't know. We'll have to see about that. But you
31 What? Sesame Street is really a make-believe land.
32 Buddy: Oh, I didn't notice that.
33 Mother: You can pretend a lot of things about Sesame Street.

(Extract taken from Corsaro, 1997: 20-21)

In this example, we can see that Buddy is actively seeking to make links between what happened to him earlier when his finger bled and other things in his life. By initiating the topic, Buddy is showing evidence that he is in control of this topic. He wants to know whether chips bleed or not. He then goes on to relate this to other significant 'members' of his life, namely members of Sesame Street. By doing this, Buddy is taking an active role and is not merely being guided by his mother in discovering about things that can bleed and things that cannot. Secondly, he also does not passively accept his mother's answers as right. His statement that he wants to go to Sesame Street to find out if the monsters have blood or not indicates that he is not entirely convinced of his mother's answers.

Such findings of children's active sense making activities have also been found in research dealing with media and children. Buckingham (2000) demonstrates how children are actively making sense of the television programmes they watch and are not passively just receiving the messages. Similarly, Griffiths and Machin (2003) illustrate how children reproduce the adult culture while they are asked to give their opinions about a few television advertisements. Both the girls and the boys in the study reproduce society's stereotyped view of boys' admiration for female pop stars and the girls' show of distastefulness for such admiration.

Similarly, Thornborrow (1997) shows that in television interview settings, children demonstrate communicative skills that have much more to do with being proficient participants within their own culture, than learning how to become competent members of an adult speech community.

Examples like these show that children do take ownership of their language socialisation. Although members in their immediate surrounding can play a role in the language socialisation process, the role played by the child herself has to be acknowledged.

This simply means that just because the child is in a special video interview suite, she is not going to stop making sense of her environment. There are two broad implications that arise from this perspective.

Firstly, the child witness in the forensic interview is not going to provide information passively based on the questions asked. The child will be actively making sense of the interview interaction and providing answers that are relevant to what she perceives to be the aim of the interaction. This means that when the child does not provide an answer or provides an irrelevant answer to a question, it should not be automatically attributed to her lack of language development. It would be more useful to understand what activity the child is orienting to with her response (or non-response, as the case may be).

Secondly, the individual child's cultural practices will pervasively influence the interaction. So how and what the child views the world to be will become an important part of the interview interaction. This is invariably so as the forensic interview seeks to draw out very private and personal details of the child's life and such details are inextricably linked to the child's social world.

Thus far, I have set up the case for why the child's world has to be recognised as

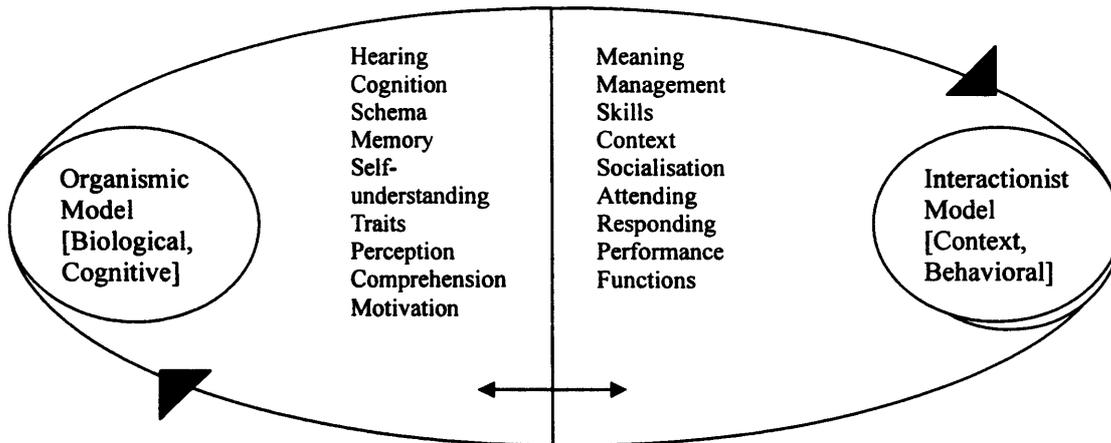
distinct and self-contained with its own set of social organisation and not just as an undeveloped subset of the adult world. If the child's world can be acknowledged as such, then we can come to view interactions between the adult and the child, and specifically the interaction between the adult police interviewer and the child witness, as a kind of cross-cultural communication. 'Culture', in this sense, can be viewed as a set of objects such as ideas, knowledge, beliefs, ways of acting, roles, institutions, norms, activities (Stokes and Hewitt, 1976). Culture consists of "recognised and preferred ways of thinking, feeling and acting that can be designated by and acted toward by those who are participants in a given culture" (p.289). It is useful to recognise these preferred ways of thinking, feeling and acting by the adult interviewer and the child as different and whose interactional import will be manifest during the interview.

In order to explicate such a research focus, a model that takes into account situational factors rather than cognitive and biological factors, becomes necessary. In the next section, I will explicate the research model and theory that underpins the discursive practice of listening.

2.6 Listening as a Discursive Practice

In the previous sections, I have explicated how listening can be considered a discursive practice rather than psychological construct. McKenzie and Clark (1995) present a reflexive model of listening research, which consists of sub-sets of 'organismic' and 'interactionist' models. This model, shown in Figure 2.1, illustrates how both these perspectives may be viewed.

Figure 2.1 A Reflexive Model of Listening Research



While the organismic model focuses on the biological and cognitive aspects of listening, the interactionist model emphasises the interpretive meaning that is generated in interactions. It focuses on functions of listening and what listening accomplishes in various individual contexts. In this regard, the interactionist model resonates with the discursive practice of listening described in the previous sections. It presents discursive listening as an interpretive process rather than a static one. Meaning then becomes part of a joint action between participants (Stokes & Hewitt, 1976) where context plays an important role. The act of listening is no longer ‘contained’, as it were, within domains of intelligence and cognition but is itself a generative process that may differ from setting to setting. The context in which listening occurs, the individuals involved, the relevances that the participants orient to all help to shape listening practices.

This has important implications in the forensic interview setting where both the interviewer and the child bring to bear on the interaction their own set of relevances. As listening, understanding and responding are all selective process, what is heard, seen and understood in this interaction are all done in terms of what is considered

relevant to each participant (Wattam, 1989). For the interviewer, the relevance is linked to evidence presentation in the courtroom i.e. to obtain evidence that will help the prosecution of alleged perpetrator in court. For the child, on the other hand, the set of relevances may not be as categorical and may even vary from child to child.

In considering these differing, and possibly even conflicting, relevances, it becomes necessary for this research on discursive listening to examine the sort of relevances both the child and the interviewer are constructing in the interaction. And as far as child-centred listening is concerned, it is important to examine whether the police interviewer has taken into account the child's display of relevances and if so how. Finally, it becomes necessary to ask how the interviewer manages the task of accommodating the multiple relevances that permeate within this interaction. Although this orientation places the responsibility of listening squarely on the police interviewers' shoulders, when listening is inevitably a joint construction, its ultimate aim is to provide an understanding of the procedures within which 'child-centred' listening can be practised. It is only by examining the tension that exists within this interaction and the steps taken to address this, that the enormity of the task faced by the interviewers can be understood and recommendation for best practice be suggested. Without such a research focus, it is impossible to enhance the interviewer's understanding of the practice of active listening in the forensic interviews. The present study seeks to address this point.

An ancillary factor in discursive listening relates to accommodation to the talk between participants. I will next explicate the basis for accommodation in talk as

presented in the Communication Accommodation Theory (CAT) and introduce interrelated aspects within this theory.

2.7 Theory for Listening

Communication Accommodation Theory (Coupland et al, 1988) specifies that speakers (and listeners) would practise various sociopsychological orientations when involved in an interactional situation.

In order to actively listen to the child during the forensic interview, the interviewer would be likely to adopt accommodative strategies to attend to both the child's comprehension abilities as well as conversational needs. In the CAT model, conversational needs are facilitated by discourse management strategies consisting of field (ideational content construction), tenor (management of interpersonal positions, roles and faces) and mode (formal procedural-textual dimensions of interaction)

According to Coupland et. al. (1988) the discourse management component emphasises the fact that "a psychologically convergent orientation to one's interlocuter is indexed by and implemented through talk designed to intermesh positively at a variety of discorsal levels with a conversational partner" (p.27).

Hence, accommodative talk is not necessarily talk wherein participants share any obvious speech characteristic such as dialect and speech rate but rather where the interlocuters are able to "achieve a high degree of fit between their typically different but potentially attunable, behaviours" (p.28).

In a similar vein, Stokes and Hewitt (1979) had introduced the concept of aligning action, which they offered as a bridge between interactional and structural perspectives. Aligning actions, they suggest, are “largely verbal efforts to restore or assure meaningful interaction in the face of problematic situations of one kind or another...” (p.838). The role played by such aligning actions, they claim, is an integral part of sustaining a relationship between culture and conduct, in maintaining an alignment between the two when there are actions that deviate from cultural expectations or definitions of what is situationally appropriate.

Conceived in this way, both these notions of aligning action and accommodative talk typify the nature of discursive listening in the forensic interview which is set within two intersecting cultures. There is, on one hand, the child’s cultural world (as explicated in Section 2.5) and on the other hand, the adult world within which the legal framework is much sedimented.

In this way, the tenor, content and management of contributions are tailored to the perceived needs, and state of readiness of the child witness at particular points in the interaction. Following Candlin & Candlin (2003), I suggest that the effectiveness of an interview would depend entirely on factors such as the appropriate monitoring by the police interviewer of the interaction, flexible adjustment in response to the child’s uptake and the appropriately timed reinforcement of mutual knowledge. This matching of response to recipient contribution is characteristic of discursive listening that has been described here.

Similarly, Sacks, et.al. (1978:44) suggest that interlocutors ‘fit’ their current utterances

to the utterance of the prior speaker. Topicality, therefore, is to a certain extent constituted in the procedures the interlocuters use to display understanding and to achieve one turn's proper fit with a prior turn.

When a current utterance is unrelated to the talk in prior turns and thereby results in a series of utterances constituting different line of talk, then this is called topic change. In the forensic interview, topic changes may not be accommodative to the talk in the prior turn but may be accommodative to other concerns such as the organisational relevance. Candlin (2000) states that skilful topic management is the key resource in the achievement of comprehensive coherence. In the case of nurse-patient interactions, she suggests, there is gradual making sense to both participants the nature of their common professionally defined goals.

The common assumption in all of these perspectives is that talk is directed towards a universal goal that is shared between parties in the talk. The obligation for doing so is placed equally on both participants in the interaction. However, for the purpose of the current research, I shall be examining the role played by the interviewer in accommodating talk in the forensic interview in order to provide understanding of 'child-centred' listening. This is done with the intention not to undermine the role played by the child, but on the contrary, to enhance the way the child's role and actions are viewed in these interactions.

2.8 Implications for Forensic Interviews with Children

Schultz (1972) has suggested that we live in a world of 'multiple realities' and this is reflected in the forensic interview context. The realities of the interviewer and the

child are very often very different. Not only does this pertain to the organisation relevance of the interviews as perceived differently by the adult interviewer and the child but it also relates to their possible differing socioeconomic background. In addition, the adult interviewer would tend to view the world from a 'mature' adult perspective while the developing child is still making sense of the world around her. The differential factors that potentially condition the forensic interview context can be described as follows:

1. Different perceptions by the interviewer and the child about the purpose of the interview (a young child may not even consider the purpose).
2. Different conceptions by the interviewer and the child about what the answers to the questions should contain.
3. Different perspectives taken by the interviewer and child in terms of relating the alleged incident and related events.
4. Different ways of speaking about the alleged incident and the details.

However, it is the adult interviewer's view of the world that is acknowledged to be the 'credentialled' version in the court of law (Wattam, 1989). For example, an inconsistent answer given by the child during the interview gives rise to questions about the child's ability as a competent witness in providing evidence. Such inconsistencies, or 'reality disjunctures' as Pollner (1975) calls them, appear when people differ in their interpretation of events.

In the case of the forensic interview, the child is required to produce an account of not only how the alleged incident happened, but also of the description of the crime scene and other peripheral details which are required to 'strengthen the evidence'

(Matoesian, 1993:26). The child's version of events, then, would only achieve authority if it can be displayed as valid in the adult framework.

2.9 Research on Listening as a Discursive Practice

In order to understand the discursive listening or 'actions of hearers' as practised in the forensic context, it is important to examine the ways in which understanding is achieved by members of society through everyday, routine, ordinary and commonsense ways of organising social interaction. It involves explicating some of the taken-for-granted features of understanding that exist within the forensic interview context. I will show this by drawing on previous research in both institutional and conversational contexts. I will then show similarities and dissimilarities between listening in such contexts and the forensic interview context.

Research on listening as a discursive practice has concentrated on how listeners display their listenership without taking over their role as the main speaker. The research has been based on a cline of behaviours ranging from body language (nods, head shakes, etc), through vocalisations ('mhm', 'wow', 'oh'), through single words ('okay', 'alright'), through phrasal utterances ('Oh dear') , through short clauses ('That's right'), through longer stretches of utterances (clarification requests, reformulated questions) to the other extreme where the listener status actually changes to speaker status (Tottie 1991).

These categories can further be subdivided into two sections: minimal responses such as body language, vocalisations, single words, phrases and short clauses and non-minimal responses such as clarification requests, reformulations and follow-up

questions. Current research on listening has mainly centred on minimal responses as this form of listenership is more clearly delineated from speakership in terms of both structure and function. There is considerably less research on the non-minimal responses and this has been mainly due to the fact it is frequently difficult to distinguish such utterances as a listening activity. The concept that conversation is jointly produced underlies communicative behaviour and this suggests there is a “relationship of intertextuality between speaking and listening” (Erickson, 1986:295). This is why it is perceivably difficult to delineate the roles of the speaker and the listener in conversations leading to a lack of research in this area.

2.9.1 Minimal Responses: Response Tokens

There is still debate on whether the use of minimal responses is a floor relinquishing function or a floor grabbing (even if it for a brief moment) function. For the purpose of this study, I will define all of these as tokens of listenership in so far as they address the contents of the prior speaker (Goffman, 1981). In this way, although it may be argued that such tokens have a ‘speaking’ element to them (unlike non-verbal gestures where the listener does not articulate any words but is still providing feedback to the speaker), they are speaking to display listening rather than answering. And it is in this vein that I shall review further research done on such display of listenership.

Listenership tokens such as ‘yes’, ‘well’, ‘right’, ‘okay’ which occur in turn initial positions have been found to support, converge, bridge or facilitate transitions over to the transactional aspect of talk (McCarthy, 2003). Schiffrin (1994:351) further points

to these as 'the emerging set of understandings participants gain through the give and take of interaction-through the process of orienting towards the other person'.

In the forensic interview context, one of the prevalent forms of response given by the police interviewer after the child has given an answer to a question is to provide a response token such as 'okay', 'right', 'alright', 'I see' 'yeah', 'Mh hm' and so on. Such response tokens have been studied in various contexts of ordinary conversation. They have been found to play an important role in maintaining the flow of the conversation and allowing better communication between the interlocutors. Specifically, such response tokens are responsive devices used to convey a sense of mutuality between the two interlocutors in a conversation. Research (Kendon, 1967; Schegloff, 1982) has suggested that these token acknowledgements function as devices to show attentiveness to, understanding and acceptance of the prior talk in the conversation.

Schegloff (1982) further distinguishes between sequence-closing thirds (SCT) such as 'oh', 'okay' and its variants and 'continuers' such as 'Mm hm', 'yeah' and 'uh-huh' . 'Okay' (and some variants such as 'alright') on the other hand function more generally by claiming acceptance of a second pair part and the position that is taken within that sequence. Such sequence-closing thirds also play a role in possible closure of the sequence both after 'preferred' or 'dispreferred' second pair parts in which 'informings' or 'tellings' and various other actions figure centrally.

Continuers such as 'mhm' and 'uh-huh', on the other hand, play quite a different interactive role in that they claim understanding of the prior turn. But this

understanding is specific to the notion that extended talk by the speaker is going on and this is indicated by declining to produce a fuller turn in that position (Schegloff, 1982). This then shows that the current speaker is free to continue with the turn and so closure is not possible at this point.

Specifically, 'oh', which Heritage (1984) terms as 'change of state token', is used to display acceptance of prior utterance (which may be in the form of "informings") as producing a change in its recipient from a state of non knowing to now-knowing. It displays the newsworthiness of the prior utterance. It has been noted that these tokens are often avoided in institutional settings such as news interview, courtroom or classroom interactions (Heritage, 1985). This has been attributed to the fact that in these settings, the questioners are already cognisant of what the answers are likely to be and as such the answers are not 'news' to them. Also in the context of the courtroom, it is the non-present overhearers (the judge, jury, etc.) who are informed and not the questioners. As such, the absence of 'oh' response tokens in this context signals that the questioners are elicitors of talk and not its recipients (Heritage, 1985).

Another notion associated with listenership is backchannelling devices, which include vocalisations as well single words. McCarthy (2003) divides listener behaviour into four categories which are backchannels such as acknowledgements, brief agreements and continuers (e.g. 'yeah', 'mh hm'), newsmarking items (e.g. 'oh', 'really') evaluative items (e.g. 'wow', 'how terrible'), and clarification requests (e.g. 'it's bad, is it?').

Additionally, individual response tokens in themselves can have differentiated roles in varied environments. Gardner (1987) showed how weak acknowledgment tokens such as 'Mm' have varying functions depending on their intonational shapes in a study based mainly on an Australian data set. He found that the acknowledgment 'Mm.' with a falling intonation is predominantly used in response to a turn that has been adequately and unproblematically received by listener. In contrast, the 'Mm?' with fall-rising intonation is used when the listener finds the prior talk to be problematic and thereby provides the conversational space for the prior speaker to repeat, rephrase, reorder, expand upon, clarify or explain what has just been said. Thirdly, Gardner found that 'Mm?' tokens with fall-rising intonation also function as assessment rather than acknowledgement tokens where they express alignment with prior talk in terms of surprise, albeit in a substantially weak manner compared to other assessment tokens such as 'wow' or 'really'.

Similarly, Stubbe (1998) also found differences in cross-cultural communication between neutral response tokens (e.g. 'mm', 'uhuh') and supportive tokens (e.g. 'oh gosh'). Atkinson (1992) demonstrates that in the context of Small Claim Courts token acknowledgements such as 'certainly', 'yes' function to avoid both disaffiliation as well as affiliation and thereby maintain neutrality. Potter and Hepburn (2005) show that the use of token acknowledgements such as 'right' serve to disengage from activities of sympathy and disapproval and thereby also take a neutral stance in calls to a child protection helpline.

In sum, the variability of use of each of these types of response tokens makes the point that there is a need to study the use of these items in particular contexts and not

to make generalisations about their use as derived from research in other contexts. There is a need therefore, as Zimmerman (1993) suggests, to examine the environment in which a response token is chosen by the listeners, what follows the tokens and what kinds of turns make such tokens the relevant next response in the forensic interview context.

2.9.2 Non-Minimal Responses

The second class of listenership tokens can be categorised as non-minimal responses. These include reformulation of speaker's utterances, clarification requests and follow-up questions. There are relatively far fewer studies in this category but I will review some that have been done in terms of display of understanding. The first involves repetitions.

2.9.2.1 Repetitions

Svennevig (2004) investigated the function of repeats in a corpus of institutional encounters between native Norwegian clerks and non-native clients and found that they constitute practices for registering receipt of information. They all occur in third positions response turns (after answers to questions or informing statements in other positions). Repeats with falling intonations register information. Those with a response particle with rising intonation also display emotional stance such as surprise, approval and the like. Falling receipts were found to be potentially sequence-closing turns, whereas rising receipts invited further response. Simple repetitions functioned as registering hearing (identification of the phonological form) whereas the addition of a response particle had an additional function of understanding and acceptance.

Many of the native speakers' repetitions displayed an orientation to the linguistic asymmetry of the situation. A recurrent pattern in all the forms of repetition is that they were produced in full-or even expanded-form, thus leading to less ellipsis and less pronominalisation than in native speaker interactions. This may be due to the increased need to display one's candidate understanding of the interlocutor's utterance due to the frequency of non-standard phonological features. The repeats also frequently involved modifications in the structure that align the utterances with pragmatic and grammatical conventions of the language. These modifications are not done as outright corrections, but are embedded in the sequentially relevant actions performed by the main functions of repeats, namely displaying receipt of information, checking hearing and marking emotional stance.

2.9.2.2 Reformulated Questions

Another study done by Antaki (2002) looked at reformulated questions as a display of understanding. He examined the way in which an interviewer might reformulate a question that has produced an answer that the interviewer takes to be inadequate in the context of official interviews with people with a learning difficulty. He observed that in the revised questions the respondent's perceived limitations are accommodated on the very basis the questions are asked. The interviewer inserts a sequence that particularises the basis for the original, more general question. Once this is established, the interviewer would then proceed to ask a version of the question which corresponds to the new, limited state of affairs. Moreover, the interviewer also presents the scenario as coming from the respondent's own life ('the time when you didn't have the duvet on'), or attributes it to something that the respondent themselves reported ('you said to me that...') (p.425). According to Antaki, the interviewer here

is leading the respondent into the display of voluntary acceptance through strongly directive conversational means. He observes two types of answers that precipitated reformulation of questions. The first are answers that are “common-sensically wrong” (p.424) and the second are answers in relation to the interviewers’ detailed knowledge of their respondents allows them to identify as factually wrong or incomplete.

In the forensic interview context, there are frequent reformulations of questions geared towards getting an adequate answer or detail from the child. Such reformulations provide insight into the localised and contextualised occurrence of discursive listening where the interviewer’s prior knowledge of the facts of the case might become salient.

2.9.2.3 Responding in Storytelling

Another area in which non-minimal responses have been researched is in the area of storytelling.

According to Goodwin (1986), in listening to a story, the listeners bring to the environment their own knowledge of the kinds of events it is describing and the scenes within which such events are embedded. So, within a telling, members of the audience already have resources available to them for performing three tasks, each of which I will explicate in turn below.

(a) Analysing the talk that is heard

Stories are usually told preceded by prefaces which offer an initial characterisation of what the story will be about. This provides the listeners with the resources to analyse

the story as it is told. So if, for example, the preface states that something embarrassing happened, then the listeners will look for such an event in the story to help them find where the story climaxes. This would also be the point at which they would provide their relevant responses to the story.

(b) Aligning themselves to it in a particular way

The preface of the story will also provide them with information about the type of alignment and response that is appropriate for the story. So if the speaker orients to the story being about something 'upsetting' then laughter might not be the appropriate response. However, listeners can choose to provide their own response and do not need to go along with the speaker's proposal of how the talk should be treated.

(c) Participating in the field of action it creates.

When the story gets told, the interaction of the participants is organised in distinctive ways. The speaker as the 'teller' of the story produces the extended turns and the listener orients to the role of listening by restricting his responses to continuers such as 'uh huh'. In this way, the listener demonstrates his understanding that the telling is in progress and his co-participation in the telling.

(d) Completing the story

On the completion of the story telling, the listeners will react in such a way that is contingent of what the story was about (Jefferson, 1978).

Further, the design of stories is shaped by an orientation as to whom the listener/s are, how many of them there are, how they relate to each other as well the prior knowledge of the facts related to the story that they have (Goodwin, 1981; and 1986).

Also, Schegloff (1984) found that ‘opposition-type stories in which the teller was one of the protagonists’ could present issues of alignments for the listeners. This in turn has consequences for how the telling was brought to completion. Additionally the shape of story telling, its initiation and trajectory as well its completion, can be influenced by how the listeners may contest the initial premise of the telling (Goodwin, 1986, Sacks, 1974), how the listeners may ‘interpolate’ the telling (Lerner, 1992; Mandelbaum, 1993) and how the listeners provide uptake to the story (Jefferson, 1978, Schegloff, 1992a).

In sum, the shape of the story telling and listener uptake are closely linked and the listener plays a central role in the final shape that the story takes.

In the police interview context, the child is involved in providing an account or a ‘telling’ of the alleged incident. The police interviewer is the recipient or listener of this ‘telling’ and as such her uptakes may well play a crucial role in shaping the tellings that the child provides.

2.10 Summary

In this chapter, I have highlighted the aspects related to the emergent knowledge in the forensic interview. Firstly, I discussed the three main speaker and listener roles in interactions. Then I explicated two main notions associated with discursive listening: responding and empathising. Then I presented the forensic interview context as a cross-cultural one in which the adult and the child’s culture are constructed differently. Next, I positioned the research on discursive listening within an

'interactionist' model and provided the theoretical underpinnings for such a position.

And finally, I reviewed related research on aspects of discursive listening.

In the next chapter, I will go on to discuss aspects of institutional knowledge in the forensic interview. This has to do with the guidelines in the interview protocol, which are the main guiding factors in the interview interaction. Additionally, I use Goffman's (1959) participant framework to present the larger social impact of the courtroom context on the forensic interview.

Chapter 3: The Forensic Interview Context: Institutional Knowledge and Skill

3.1 Chapter Summary

In the previous chapter, I positioned discursive listening within the context of the emergent knowledge and skill. I explicated the various theoretical and practical issues pertaining to discursive listening and suggested this as a means of capturing the way in which interviewers demonstrate being 'child centred' .

In this chapter, I will set the scene for the wider institutional context of the forensic interview. I will explore the institutional setting within which the forensic interview interaction is situated. First, I will explicate the interactional setting that is constituted by the interview protocols as outlined in Home Office (2001). These guidelines outline the manner in which the vulnerable witnesses including children are to be prepared and supported during the criminal justice process, i.e. from the time the crime is committed until after the trial is completed. Second, using Goffman's (1959) participant framework, I will review the constraints of the courtroom setting which impinge on the forensic interview context.

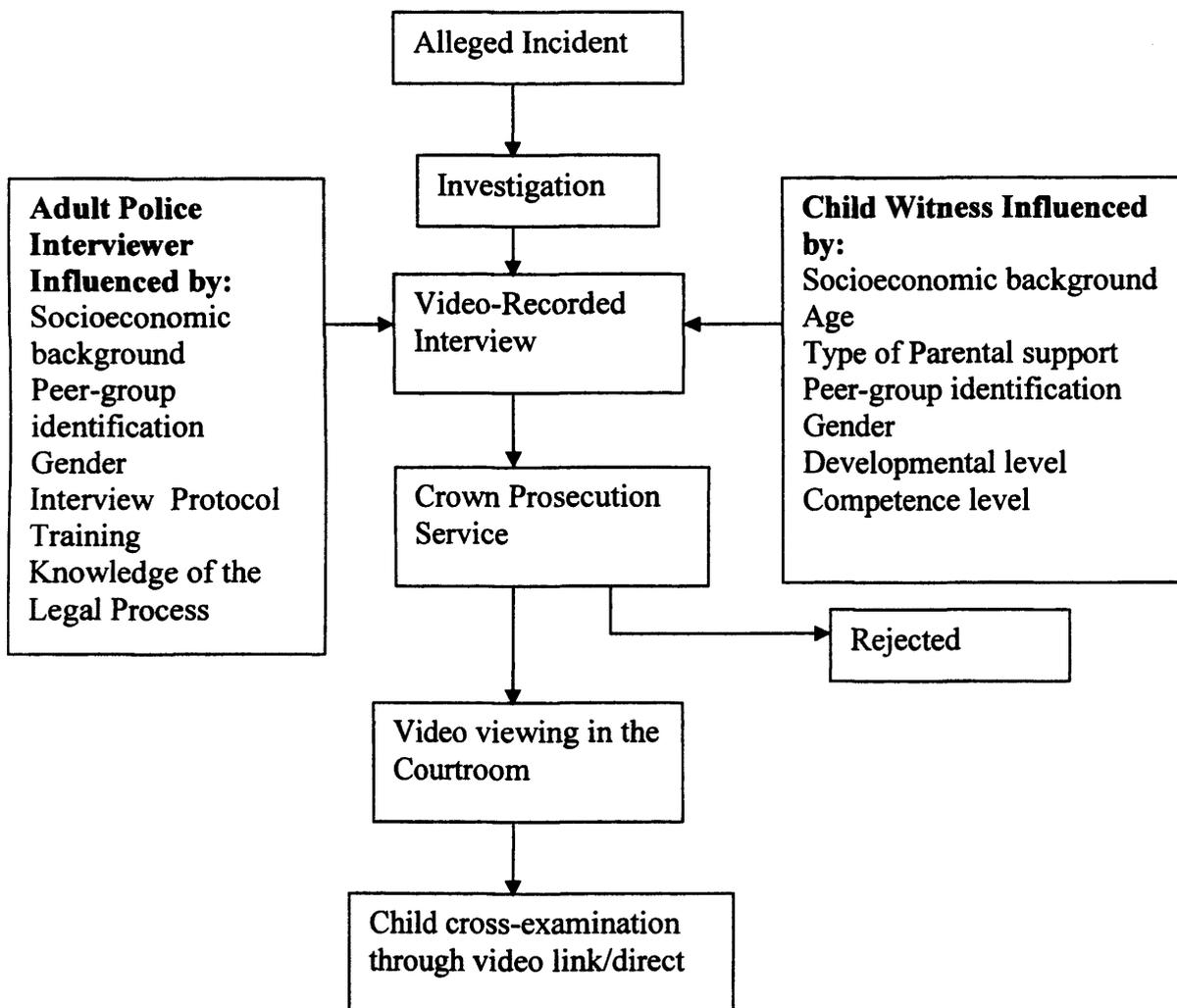
3.2 Institutional Knowledge

In terms of institutional knowledge, the forensic interview context is unique in that it encompasses a complex intersection of two types of procedures: the interview protocol and the courtroom. As Davies et. al. (1999) point out, the interviewer assumes different roles that include pursuing a criminal investigation, addressing the child's welfare needs and acting as prosecuting counsel at trial. Such a disposition can be a cause for potential conflict during the interview interactions.

Figure 3.1 outlines the process that takes places when an allegation of abuse involving a child is made and a brief description of it follows.

Figure 3.1

Process of Investigation, Interview and Trial in Abuse Involving Children



As soon as there is a report of an alleged abused, an investigation team prepares to gather evidence for criminal investigation. The video-recorded interview with the child, therefore, serves two purposes: (1) to gather evidence for use in criminal proceedings and (2) the examination in chief of the child witness (Home Office, 2001). During the video-recorded interview, both the police interviewer and the child

witness bring a range of sociolinguistic variations to the interaction. The police interviewer, for example, may come from a different social class to the child. The child also brings to the interview context a particular type of peer-group identification and parental support that make up her cultural world.

Once the interview is completed, the CPS will review the video-recorded interview to ascertain its suitability as evidence in court. If the interview is judged to be appropriate for use as evidence, then it proceeds to the court. This video-recorded interview takes the place of a written statement and this has a number of advantages. Firstly, the interviewer is not required to write down the verbal statement by the child and secondly, the members of the courtroom (prosecutor, defence lawyer, judge and jury) are able to assess the demeanour of the child during the interview for themselves. The disadvantage, however, is that quality of the interview, in terms of the strength of evidence given by the child, is variable and is dependent on interviewer expertise in eliciting forensically relevant details from the child.

In sum, the forensic interview with the child witness can be considered an intermediate stage, purely because the interaction that is played out during the interview is only acknowledged and recognised when it is finally viewed in the courtroom. In fact, not all of the recorded interviews make it to the courtroom after the review by CPS. In a study conducted by Wilson and Davies (1999) only 73% of the 150 video-recorded interviews were actually used as evidence-in-chief. There is a huge burden, therefore, placed on the police interviewers to adopt practices that can ensure that the interview interaction yields best evidence for a realistic prospect of conviction.

3.3 The Interview Protocols of Home Office/Department of Health(1992)/Home Office (2001)

Current research in this area has concentrated on issues which pertain to improving the quality of evidence elicited from children through better interviewing techniques, otherwise known as the 'protocol movement' (Poole & Dickinson, 2005). Broadly speaking, these studies have focused on developing guidelines for investigative interviews and can be divided into three main subcategories: objectivity, developmental sensitivity and reducing suggestibility.

3.3.1 Objectivity

The guidelines in Home Office (2001) highlight the importance of maintaining an objective and neutral stance, with the interviewers not assuming or appearing to assume the guilt of any party involved in the alleged incident. (p.69). The adoption of such a stance is believed to minimise both false allegations by the child as well as failure to detect genuine abuse by the interviewer. Therefore is it recommended that when a child makes an allegation, the interviewer thoroughly explores the context surrounding the allegations in order to ensure that the child is talking about abuse and not perhaps some other action that could be mistaken for abuse (Ceci & Bruck, 1993).

It is also recommended that the interview atmosphere should not be "accusatory, intimidating or condescending" (Home Office, 2001: 51). Research evidence suggests that interviewer characteristics such as intimidation and authority status can encourage children to be more susceptible to suggestive questions (Ceci, Ross & Toglia, 1989). There is also evidence to suggest that condescending comments such as 'You probably don't remember his hair colour' or intimidating or coercive

comments such as ‘You can go to the bathroom after you answer this question’, even if unintended, can lead to erroneous answers being given by the child. It has been suggested that inconsistent statements made by the child are probed by explaining that the interviewer is confused rather than by challenging the child (Saywitz & Comparo, 1998).

It is not only negative comments that need to be avoided. Positive comments of praise (‘You did the right thing’), surprise (‘Really!’) are also believed to contaminate the evidence provided by the child and are to be avoided during the interviews (Home Office 2001: 42). Saywitz & Camparo (1998) advise that the child’s efforts can be praised but not the content of what was reported.

Research has also shown that, in spite of extensive experience on the part of the interviewers, information provided to interviewers prior to questioning children affected the questions asked and the children’s responses (White, et.al., 1997). The interviewer’s prior knowledge resulted in less opportunity being given to the child to openly recall the incident and follow up with connected questions.

Another aspect related to objectivity is that a court needs to be certain that the recall is the child’s own and not from a third party from another occasion, even if she is able to recall the event accurately. It has been found that children find difficulty expressing whether their report is based on what they have experienced directly or on what they have been told (Robinson & Whitcombe 2003; Whitcombe & Robinson 2000).

Maintaining and establishing a neutral stance will have implications for discursive listening in these interviews. The present research will look at how such actions can affect the trajectory of the interview interaction.

3.3.2 Developmental Sensitivity

Home Office (2001) also suggests the interviewer learn more about the child witness in order to gauge her language ability level and adapt the complexity of the questions asked accordingly. Studies on child language development have shown that differences in the children's abilities make it necessary to use age-appropriate questions when interviewing children (Lamb, Sternberg & Esplin, 1995; Nuttal, Romero & Kalesnik, 1992; Saywitz & Goodman, 1996; Aldridge & Woods, 1998; Walker, 1999). It is suggested that questions must be matched to the child's language ability in terms of form and content. Questions that do not conform to such matching have been found to elicit more distorted answers from children. The recommendations based on such studies are summarised and shown in Table 3.2:

Table 3.2 Recommendations for Appropriate Question Types

Use short questions and sentences

Avoid long, compound utterances

Use one-to-two syllable words. (e.g. point to)

Avoid three-to-four syllable words. (identify)

Use simple grammatical constructions

Avoid embedded clauses, double negatives, subjunctives, conditionals, hypotheticals.

Use simple tenses.(-ed, was, did, has) ("What happened?")

Avoid multi-word verbs (might have been) ("Might it have been the case that...?")

Use concrete, visual terms. (gun)

Avoid hierarchal, categorical terms. (weapon, anything)

Use the nonlegal meaning of the term. (use hearing to mean auditory, not a meeting).

Use simple nonlegal terms. (use people and child, not parties and minor)

Avoid the uncommon usage found in legalese, when words have two meanings.

Use proper names, repeat antecedents. ("Did you talk to Mary?")

Avoid pronouns, such as him, her, they, he, she. ("Did you talk to her?")

Avoid unclear references. (those things, this, it, that)

Use active voice. ("Did Joe talk to Sue?")

Avoid passive voice. ("Was Sue spoken to by Joe?")

Use stable terms. (in the front of the room, in the back of the room)

Avoid words whose meaning varies with time or place. (here, there, yesterday, tomorrow)

Avoid relational terms, such as more or less. ("Did it happen more or less than two times?")

Use several short questions to replace one overloaded question.

Avoid questions that list several previously established facts before asking the question at hand.

("When you were in the house, on Sunday the third, and Sam entered the bedroom, did Mary say...?")

Taken from Saywitz & Camparo (1998:828)

Such suggestions will have implications for the kinds of discourse being analysed in the present study. As the interviewer has to bear in mind the impact of language use on how the child understands the question, the design questioning turn will be subject to a certain degree of restriction. Questions directed at child witnesses will have to consist of short and simple sentences. This means that language the police interviewers may routinely use with adult witnesses may not be appropriate for the interview with the child.

3.3.3 Reducing Suggestibility

In the police interview, the interviewer has to be extremely careful of asking misleading questions as this would compromise the testimony provided by the child. Home Office (2001) recommends that the interviewers ask open-ended non-leading questions as much as possible. It suggests that “open-ended questions allow the witness to control the flow of information and minimise the risk that interviewers will impose their view of what happened” (p.44). The child witnesses are less at risk of being influenced by the questions asked. Additionally, researchers have found that children are less likely to say they ‘don’t know’ the answer in response to open questions which related to actions (‘What did he do?’) rather than environments (‘What happened?’) and what was done rather than where it was done (Peterson, et. al. 1999).

However, there is still a need to follow through with follow-up questions to elicit further details. These questions fall along a continuum of general prompts that encourage the child to provide further details (‘what happened next?’) to focused questions that may draw the attention of the child to a particular topic (‘Tell me about

your mummy now’) to specific questions that seek clarification about information already provided (‘You said daddy was drinking. What was he drinking?’) to leading questions that introduce information about other sources (‘Where was mummy then?’).

Additionally, studies of memory development have suggested that spontaneous reports by young children are more accurate when compared to their answers to specific questions. Therefore, it is suggested that interviewers try to provide opportunities for the child to provide the most independent and complete description of an event possible in her own words. (Bull, 1995; Jones & McQuiston, 1986; Lamb, 1994; Aldridge & Woods, 1999; Walker, 1999). Prompts, cues and follow-up questions are used to elicit additional information stored in the memory that is not initially reported by the child. However, it is also cautioned that when prompts or questions are misleading, young children’s reports can be distorted (Warren & McGough, 1996).

The recommendations outlined in Home Office 2001 regarding the stepwise progression of questions is summarised below in Table 3.3:

Table 3.3 Recommendations for Stepwise Progression of Questions

<p>Step1: Open-ended Questions E.g. "Tell me what happened"</p>
<p>Step2: Expansion of Salient Parts of the Initial narrative Expand on relevant issues raised in the narrative account E.g. "So he hit you with a cricket bat, eh? Tell me more about him hitting you with the bat"</p>
<p>Step3: Categorical "Wh" questions to follow-up the Narrative E.g. "What clothes was he wearing at the time" "You said he was wearing trousers. What did his trousers look like?"</p>
<p>Step 4 Closed questions E.g. "Were you in the bedroom or in the living room when this happened?" "Were you in the bedroom, the living room or can't you remember?"</p>
<p>Step 5: Leading Questions – to be used as only as last resort and in the rapport phase when a witness is providing factual information such as names of family members.</p>

Again, the restrictions imposed on the type of questions that should and should not be asked has a bearing on the interview interaction trajectory, and specifically to discursive listening practised in these interviews. According to Davies et.al. (1999: 31),

[i]nvestigative practice in this area has been driven by scandal. This is an environment in which one might expect police.... to 'play by the rules' in so far as they understand those rules, and generally be constrained by fear of criticism.

The degree of adherence to such restrictions sets the benchmark within which the effectiveness of the forensic interviews is evaluated. If the practice deviates from

these restrictions, the videotaped interview or parts of it may be excluded from evidence (Welbourne, 2002).

Two implications pertaining to the interview interaction arise based on these guidelines in Home Office (2001). Firstly, although there is substantial information about the general patterns and tendencies in questioning children, the issue of addressing individual differences among children has not been dealt with. It is interesting to note that Home Office (2001) provides a caveat to its guidelines:

The guidance provided in this document is advisory and does not constitute a legally enforceable code of conduct. Each witness is unique and the manner in which they are interviewed must be tailored to their particular needs and circumstances (p.1).

However, very little is known about what 'tailor[ing] to their particular needs and circumstances' entails. As Hershkowitz et. al. (2005) point out, children who are involved in police interviews are a mixed group that includes abuse victims who are willing to describe their experiences, victims who do not want to disclose, victims who fail to disclose because their experiences do not correspond to the way the interviewer is defining them, non abused children who falsely report abuse and non abused children who do not disclose abuse. Additionally, the children also come from a wide range of social and cultural backgrounds, some of which might be quite different from the childhood experiences of the interviewers themselves. The choices that are being made during the interview interactions with regard to tailoring the questions to suit the individual displays of competencies by the child has to be studied in its own right.

Second, these guidelines have a significant effect on the interview interaction. There is a high degree of control in the manner in which the questions can and should be asked and this in turn will influence the trajectory of the interaction. Such control can also have an effect on child witnesses. The National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC) has found that interviewers did not always allow young witnesses the opportunity to give their information. 'They didn't give me much chance to say anything that I thought was important,' said Fiona, aged 10 (Plotnikoff & Woolfson, 2004: 54). This occurred despite the practice of over ten years of Home Office/Department of Health (1992) guidelines that emphasise the use of open-ended questions. Therefore, although the interviewers might be asking questions appropriately, there could exist structural and sequential particularities within a piece of interaction that do not provide for adequate focus on the child's point of view. It is this aspect that the present study hopes to shed light on.

In sum, one thing is certain – the guidelines provided for the interviews play an important role in determining the interactional order in the forensic interview context. The highly rigid and restrictive environment of the interview interaction is largely influenced by the requirements of these interview protocols.

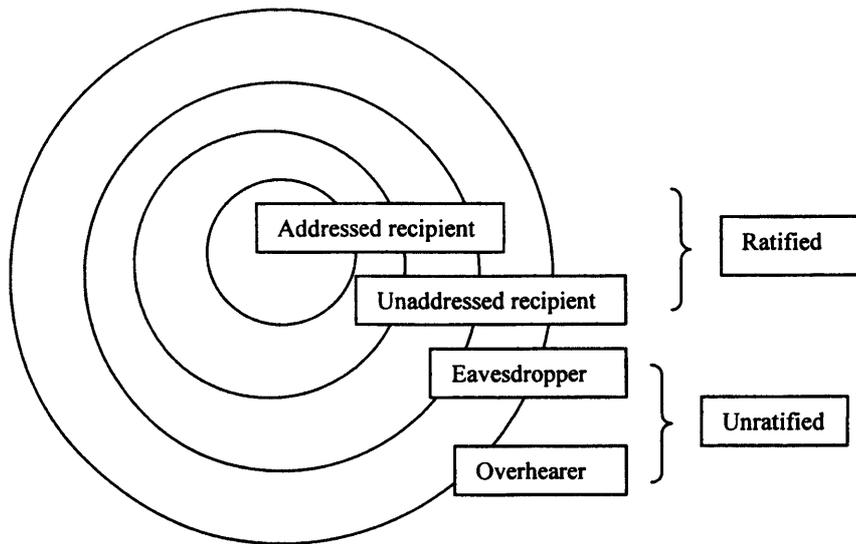
I will now proceed to discuss the second intersecting contextual feature that impinges on the forensic interview setting, which is the courtroom context.

3.4 The Courtroom Context

The police interview of child witnesses is different from many other interviews (e.g. job interviews) because this particular interview involves many different types of

audiences. According to Goffman (1981), there are 4 types of listeners in an interaction as shown in Figure 3.4.

Figure 3.4 Illustration of Goffman's Participation Framework



Applying Goffman's categories to the police interviews, we can see that at the first level, the child is interviewed by the police officer and in this context, both the child and the police officer take turns being the addressed and addressee in the interaction. They are the ratified participants who are entitled and expected to hear what is being said.

In addition, the social worker or the parent of the child may be present during the interview. These two people are not usually addressed during the interview and even if they are, it is minimal. They therefore, can be considered the unaddressed recipient. Also, there is a list of people who are not present during the interview but will be viewing the video at one point or another. These comprise members of the Crown Prosecution Service, members of the Defence Counsel and finally if the video is

approved for court hearing, the courtroom participants consisting of the judge, the barristers, the members of the jury, the accused, the court reporters and the members in the public gallery. These are the unratified participants who not the official addressees of the speaker.

However, the larger context of how the videotaped interview will be used as evidence in court makes the presence of all these overhearers rather significant. This interview interaction is being enacted for these non-present overhearers. It is the non-present overhearers (more specifically CPS) who will view the video, deem it suitable or otherwise for evidence in court. If it is approved for use as evidence, then another set of overhearers (namely the judge, the defence and prosecution barristers and members of the jury) will view it in the courtroom. Here, the interview is further subjected to scrutiny as the defence counsel for the alleged perpetrator tries to discredit the evidence and the credibility of the child witness. The defence will be on the look for suggestible questions as well as inconsistencies in the child witness's answers in order to cast doubt on the veracity of her testimony. The members of the courtroom will also be making interpretations based on the child witness's demeanour during the interview to make up their minds about whether she is telling the truth or not about the alleged incident. It is ultimately, these non-present overhearers who will making decisions that will determine the outcome of the case. Interestingly enough, these unratified participants can become ratified, as in the context of the present study.

This indeed presents a unique context for the interaction. The context of the interaction is not only determined by the situated factors of the 'here and now' of the interview but the much larger context of the judicial process. This usually means that

issues such as witness credibility, evidence admissibility, and other legal elements will need to be taken into consideration during the interview. A 'good' police interview will result in the videotape being used successfully in the court to obtain a guilty verdict while an unsatisfactory one will result in it being rejected for use as evidence by Crime Prosecution Service or discredited by the defence barrister in court (as shown in Figure 3.1).

The courtroom context, thus, presents additional situational factors that permeate the forensic interview. The trajectory of the interaction in the forensic interview can be influenced by the perceived needs of these non-present participants.

3.5 Implications for Forensic Interviews with Children

The preceding discussion presents the forensic interview context as a site for the intersection of two settings: the constraints created by the interview protocols and the courtroom context.

The task the police interviewer has at hand in balancing these two variables is certainly an unenviable one. Not only does he have to deal with the capricious nature of the interaction with the child and keep in mind the organisational relevance of the interview itself, his every move during the interview is subjected to scrutiny by the non-present overhearers and subsequently will be evaluated for its effectiveness.

In the forensic interview context, the police officers are expected to have expert knowledge in not only the procedural aspects of the interview and the courtroom but also in specialised knowledge about interactions with the child. However, this

specialised knowledge is not reflective of an ordinary day-to-day interaction between an adult and child but one that is subjected to various constraints as outlined in the interview protocol.

This specialised knowledge essentially serves one common purpose - to enhance relevant talk by the child. This is done in three ways. The first involves promoting the progressivity of talk (to get the child to provide an account in her own words), the second deals with managing the progressivity of talk (to reduce suggestibility and increase the production of forensically relevant details for the benefit of the non-present overhearers) and the third pertains to restarting the progressivity of talk (to obtain further details when the child is not forthcoming with any).

In the four analytic chapters, I will provide an analysis of the interview interaction that will move along these three strands. Chapter 5 will focus on the ways in which the police interviewers yield turns to the child in order to promote progressivity of talk. In Chapters 6 and 7, I will focus on selected examples of how police interviewers pursue a response in which the child will display evidence of abuse. In Chapter 8, I will examine selected examples of how the interviewers treat instances of the child's 'non- responsiveness'.

In the next chapter, I will proceed to outline the methodological implications of using conversational analytic tools to elucidate discursive listening in the forensic interviews.

3.6 Summary

In this chapter, I have set the scene for the wider institutional context of the forensic interview interaction. I have presented two main contextual features that imbue the interview context. The first is the space that is constituted by the interview protocols and guidelines in Home Office/Department of Health (1992) and Home Office (2001). These guidelines outline a checklist of features that should and should not be practised by the police interviewers in the interviews. The second is the constraints presented by the courtroom context that impinge on the forensic interview context. Using Goffman's participation framework, I reviewed the way the interview interaction is largely organised for the non-present overhearers.

Chapter 4: Methodology

4.1 Chapter Overview

In this chapter, I present my methodological framework and procedures. I start by describing the data collection procedure and provide some background information about the data corpus. I also describe two important procedures involved with the presentation of data: the anonymisation of the data transcript and the transcription procedure involved. Then I present the methodological framework and explain my choice for adopting the conversation analytic approach for studying 'discursive listening'. I outline the various structures of analysis within conversation analysis such as turn-taking, sequence organisation, repair and membership categorisation and how these serve to extend my analysis beyond the linguistic level to provide an account of the discursive listening practices in terms of the various actions and activities that are being played out in the interaction. I conclude by providing a summary of the shortcomings that could be attributed to this research based on the choice of this approach and discuss how this research stands up to them.

4.2 Overview of Data

4.2.1 Data Summary

The data for research consist of 11 video-taped police interviews with children. The video interviews were viewed and transcribed over the course of one year. There are 7 hours and 27 minutes of interview with children ranging from the ages of 4 to 8 years. Table 4.1 provides a profile of the children and interviewers involved. As can be seen, there were two male and nine female children in the corpus. Also, there were a total of 8 different interviewers (two of the interviewers conducted more than one interview) and only one interviewer was male.

Table 4.1 Profile of Data Corpus

Interview	Child Pseudonym	Gender	Age	Interviewer	Gender	Interview length Hrs:mins:secs
1	Lizzie/Elizabeth (Ch1)	female	5	In1	female	0:35:15
2	Bonnie (Ch2)	female	4	In2	female	0:20:29
3	Charlie (Ch3)	male	5	In3	male	0:31:56
4	Donna (Ch4)	female	5	In4	female	0:47:44
5	Gilly (Ch5)	female	6	In5	female	1:25:34
6	Elsie (Ch6)	female	4	In6	female	0:21:44
7	Diana (Ch7)	female	6	In7	female	0:20:41
8	Carol (Ch8)	female	7	In6	female	0:25:25
9	Laura (Ch9)	female	7	In6	female	0:39:33
10	Serena (Ch10)	female	8	In8	female	0:49:28
11	Steven (Ch11)	male	8	In8	female	0:48:55
Total						7:27:05

The cases involved sexual or physical abuse. Permission was obtained from the Child Protection Unit of one of the Police Headquarters in UK to view and transcribe the videotapes. The exact locale in UK is not mentioned in this dissertation to protect the identity of the children involved.

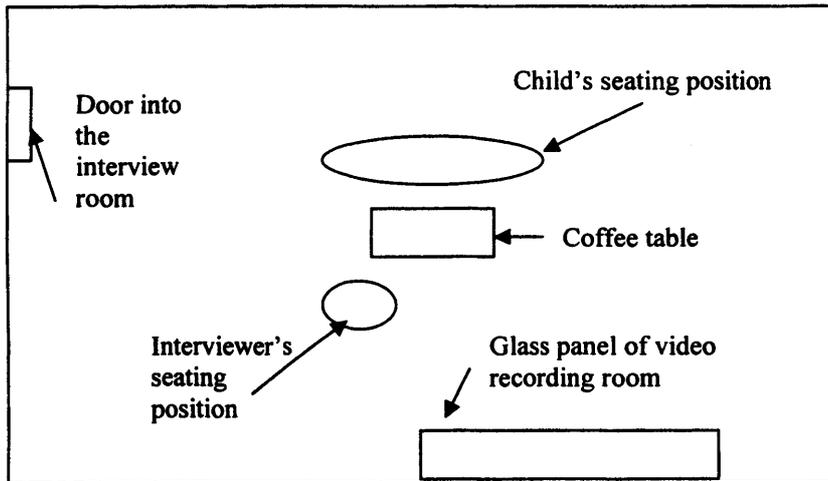
4.2.2 Setting

4.2.2.1 Video Interview Suite

The video recording took place in a specially set up video interviewing suite. There were two rooms adjacent to one another. One was the interview suite where the interviewer and the child were present. The other was the control room where there was a police officer operating the video equipment. The police officer in the control room was able to view the interview room through the glass panel. In the video interview suite, there was usually a settee (where the child usually sat), coffee table and a chair opposite the settee where the interviewer usually sat. In each of the video recordings included in the present data corpus, the interviewer was sitting opposite the

child. The video recording typically started with the child and the interviewer entering the room together and getting into a comfortable seating position. The children were involved in drawing or sketching in Interviews 1, 3 and 8.

Diagram 4. 1: A Visual Representation of a Typical Video Interview Suite



4.2.2.2. The Spatial Arrangement of the Interview Suite

The camera focussed on the child facing the camera. There is also an inset picture of the child on the top left hand corner of the video. The interviewer's back is often facing the camera.

As a result of this variable positioning of the camera as well as the fact that the interviewer's facial expression is not always visible to the viewer, it was impossible to analyse the interviewer's head movement and eye contact in relation to the listening behaviour. Therefore, it was decided that only the verbal responses of the interviewer and the child as well as visible movements and expressions such as nods, smiles, etc. would be captured for the transcription.

4.2.2.3 Details of the Interviewer- Interviewee Behaviour

A brief description of each interview is provided below. The names of the children have all been changed.

Interview 1

Lizzie (Ch1) was a 5-year-old female. During the interview, she was seated on the settee in front of a coffee table. The interviewer (In1), a female, was seated on a chair in front of her with her back to the camera. Throughout the interview, Lizzie was occupied doing some colouring and looked up periodically at the interviewer. Most of the time, however, she was seated on the settee and looked down at her colouring. At certain points during the interview (these are indicated in the transcript), she would get up to animate and gesture when describing the alleged incident. Lizzie provided accounts of three different episodes of the alleged abusive incident by her grandmother.

Interview 2

Bonnie (Ch2) was a 4-year-old female. During the interview, she was seated on the settee in front of a coffee table. She was not involved in any play activity and remained seated on the settee throughout the interview. She looked up at the interviewer (In2), a female, intermittently but most of the time fidgeted with her hands and fingers, looking down. She used gestures to explain some of the details of the incident. Bonnie provided an account of how her grandfather allegedly abused her and her brother, Larry.

Interview 3

Charlie (Ch3) was a 5-year-old male. During the interview, he was seated on the settee in front of the coffee table. Throughout the interview, he was doing some drawing and colouring. The interviewer (In3), a male, was seated opposite him and his back was facing the camera. In3 helped Charlie to draw some pictures during the interview. The interview itself is interspersed with episodes of both Charlie and In3 talking about what they were drawing and colouring. Charlie did not provide any disclosure of an alleged incident during the interview.

Interview 4

Donna (Ch4) was a 5-year-old female. She was seated on the settee in front of the coffee table. During the interview, she played with her 'squeaky shoes', her braided hair and moved around quite a bit on the settee. She also got up from the settee to demonstrate how the alleged incident happened. The interviewer (In4), a female, was seated in front of Donna and her back was facing the camera. Donna provided an account of an alleged abusive incident by her father and his partner Jan.

Interview 5

Gilly (Ch5) was a 6-year-old female. She was seated on a little couch in front of the interviewer (In5), a female. She was not involved in any play activity and remained seated on a small couch throughout the interview. She looked up at the interviewer intermittently but most of the time looked down. She also got off the couch to demonstrate how the alleged incident took place at certain points when requested by In5. She provided several accounts of how she and her brother were abused by the alleged perpetrator, Tom.

Interview 6

Elsie (Ch6) was a 4-year-old female. She was in the video interview suite with her mother and was seated on her mother's lap on the settee. The interviewer (In6), a female, is also seated on the settee on the left hand side of the child. Elsie was not very communicative during the interview. She did not answer many of the In6's questions and very often her mother repeated In6's questions and prompted her with the answers to the questions. Elsie did not provide any information about the alleged incident.

Interview 7

Diana (Ch7) is a 5-year-old female. She was in the video interview suite with her father and was seated on his lap on the settee. The interviewer (In7) was a female and was seated on the couch opposite with her back to the camera. Diana communicated well during the opening and rapport stages of the interview. However, she became very reticent during the narrative stage and did not provide any details of the alleged incident. Her father did not contribute to the interaction and was silent throughout the interview.

Interview 8

Carol (Ch8) was a 6-year-old female. She was seated on a small couch in front of the interviewer (In6). She was eager to provide details of the alleged incident and interrupted the rapport stage of the interview to begin telling the details of the alleged incident. At the end of the interview, she also produced a sketch alongside which she wrote down that the alleged perpetrator abused her sister.

Interview 9

Laura was a 7-year-old female. She was seated on the settee in front of the interviewer (In6). She was able to provide details of the alleged incident, but she did not produce any animation or gestures during the interview. She provided an account of how her father abused her.

Interview 10

Serena was a 7-year-old female. She is seated on the settee with the interviewer (In8) on her left. She provided an account of how she was abused by the person she referred to as her 'old dad'. The interview itself was interrupted twice. The first time was when Serena wished to go out and see her mother just when In8 had initiated the narrative stage and started asking her questions about the alleged incident. The second interruption to the recorded interview occurred when the camera went off focus and the police officer operating the camera came into the interview suite and asked In8 to help adjust the camera position in the video recording room. In8 returned to the interview suite after 5 minutes.

Interview 11

Steven (Ch11) was an 8-year-old male. He was seated on the settee in front of the interviewer (In8) who was seated on the couch. He provided an account of two alleged incidents that involved him, a group of boys and a girl, Sally. Steven and the group of boys (all under age) had allegedly sexually assaulted Sally. He was not involved in any play activity during the interview and managed to hold eye contact with In8.

4.2.3 Four stages of the Interview

A brief description of the four main stages of the interview that were in line with the recommendations of Home Office (2001) is presented below.

4.2.3.1 Opening Stage of Interview

This phase began with the interviewer establishing the seating arrangement with the child and ensuring that the child was comfortably seated in a position facing the camera. The interviewer also established information about the child's names and age. All the children in this data corpus responded to this phase well by giving details of their names and ages accurately.

4.2.3.2 Rapport Stage

The interview then proceeded to the rapport phase of the interview. This was where the interviewer built rapport with the child by engaging in topics familiar to the child such as school, pets, family, friends and so on. This phase also involved establishing whether the child was able to distinguish between telling the truth and telling a lie.

In the present data, all the children, except Ch6, were able to engage in the rapport stage and there were no major difficulties noted in this section of the interview. Although there were variations in the styles individual interviewers adopted in terms of the way in which these topics were dealt with, overall the children responded to the rapport stage well. The only exception was Ch6, who was rather reticent and so her mother, who was present during the interview, provided some of the answers on her behalf.

4.2.3.3 Narrative Stage

The next phase of the interview was the narrative phase where the interviewer elicited information about the alleged incident that the child had witnessed or experienced. This is the main section of the interview where the information that the child provides could prove to be crucial as evidence for the prosecution to convict the alleged perpetrator.

In the present data, all the interviews went through the narrative phase except Interview 3, Interview 6 and Interview 7, where the children did not make any disclosure about the alleged incident. In all of the other interviews, the children provided disclosure of an alleged abusive incident.

4.2.3.4 Questioning Phase

In this phase, the interviewer seeks to elicit additional details of the alleged incident. This is because the child may not have provided all the information necessary for the conviction of the alleged perpetrator during the initial disclosure.

In the present data corpus, the questioning phases in Interviews 3, 6 and 7 was not successful in eliciting a disclosure of the alleged incident and so the interviewers in these three interviews proceeded to the closure stage of the interview. In all the other interviews, the children provided important additional information related to the alleged incident.

4.2.3.5 Closure Stage

After the questioning stage, the interview proceeded to the final stage of the interview that was signalled by the topic shift to less serious topics such as what the child was going to do after the interview.

All of the interviews in the present data ended with this stage after which both the interviewer and the child walked out of the interview suite to meet the child's parents or caretaker who was waiting outside the interviewing room (except in Interviews 6 and 7 where both children's mother and father respectively were already with them).

4.3 Procedure for Anonymising the Transcription

The data for this research were regarded as highly sensitive (both in terms of the private nature of the contents as well as the effect that it might have on ongoing cases). Therefore, precautionary measures were taken to ensure anonymity of the transcripts. Anonymisation issues in this research involved not just anonymisation of revealing items for identity protection but also anonymisation of sensitive items for personal privacy and confidentiality.

For identity protection, the names of all the children involved in the interview were changed. Pseudonyms that contained the same number of syllables as the original names were used in order to preserve the same pattern as in the original names. Several other types of identification details, such as description of time, places, and names of all other persons identified in the course of the interview, have also been altered.

Another measure taken was to check fragments in the data presentation in order to identify sections that could be considered sensitive such as where revealing, distressing or offensive information was presented and these sections were then anonymised in greater detail.

This involved altering particular lexical items. For example, if the child had described the colour of the sofa as 'black', then this might be changed to 'brown' in the transcript. Sections of content were also removed (e.g. see Fragment 3 in Chapter 6) and replaced with a descriptive account of what the telling entailed. Both such amendments were done after making sure that these details were not material to the analytical aspect of the study.

It is acknowledged that in adopting such a high level of anonymity, there is the risk of compromising the data and its interpretation. Therefore, pragmatic decision-making in anonymising sensitive sections was employed. According to Rock (2001), we must not only ask which sections should be anonymised, but also which items must be preserved to aid effective analysis. In line with this, Philip's (emc, cited in Rock, 2001) proposal to base this decision-making on the questions that the analyst is investigating was adopted. So details that were crucial to the analytical task were not anonymised while details that did not contribute to the analytic task but which could compromise the identity of the persons involved were changed.

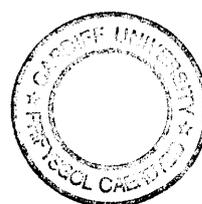
4.4 Data Selection

This data collection was assembled using the analytic method described in Hutchby and Wooffitt (1998). I focus on the variations in the turn design and context of the

child's answers and the variations in the interviewer responses. In Chapter 5, I focus specifically on the interviewer's responses in turn initial positions and provide an account of the variation of the role of response tokens in this position. In Chapter 6, I focus on the child's design of extended turn answers or 'tellings' and examine the variation and design of the interviewer's responses to these. In Chapter 7, I examine the child's design of answers when the interviewer pursues a response that displays abuse. In Chapter 8, I look at the child's design of 'non-responsive' answers and examine the variation and design of the interviewer's responses to these. The overall goal is also to focus on the outcomes produced over the course of all these sequences in terms of the discursive listening practices.

Essentially this study combines both the analysis of a collection as well as the analysis of single case analysis. Hutchby and Wooffitt (1998) outline the distinction between the analysis of a collection of stretches of talk and a single case analysis of a sequence of talk. In analysing a collection of cases, the emphasis is essentially on one particular type of action or feature. Such an analysis is undertaken in Chapter 5 of this research where a collection of 'response tokens' have been analysed in terms of their sequential position and the environment in which they occur. Also, due to the high frequency of occurrence of such response tokens, the corpus was considered large enough to make such a collection.

Chapters 6, 7 and 8 focus on selected examples of single cases and extended sequences of talk. Such analysis is done to observe the ways in which particular conversational devices (i.e. in this study the design of questions and answers) are used in the production of talk.



Although, I analyse only a portion of the entire data corpus in this research, I selected these cases because they exemplify the patterns observable in the entire collection. For the study of practices of interactions, this type of account is considered to be both practical and robust. In addition, my aim is to describe a normative organisation, rather than a statistical regularity or an empirical generalisation. What is observed in these cases should be oriented to circumstances when there are such occurrences (i.e. extended turn answers, ‘non-responsive’ answers, etc) in police interviews. Detailed analysis of sequences of talk and the use of an analytically organised sample rather than a randomly generated one is considered to be an optimal option to obtain some understanding of the practices of ‘discursive listening’ within the forensic interviews. Also due to the small size of the data corpus, it was not possible to obtain a large enough collection of similar occurrences.

The exemplars selected also come mainly from the ‘narrative’ stages of the interviews. Only one example in the analysis is taken from the ‘rapport’ stage (Fragment 5.11 Chapter 5). None of the examples taken comes from the ‘Opening’ or ‘Closing’ stage of the interview.

4.5 Data Representation

4.5.1 Transcription

Lapadat and Lindsay (1999) argue that researchers make choices about transcriptions that inevitably represent the theories they hold. It may be virtually impossible to consider the transcript as raw ‘data’ that comprehensively captures the interview *per se*. It has to be acknowledged that the transcript is a product of ‘co-authoring’ of the

conversation in context and therefore does not in fact represent a verbatim account of the interview.

The main issue in transcription lies not in 'how to represent everything exhaustively in the text but rather in how to selectively reduce the data in a way that preserves the possibility of different analyses and interpretations' (Lapadat and Lindsay, 1999 :69). Psathas and Anderson (1990) in explicating conversation analysts' actual transcription method also point out that transcripts cannot be neutral and that researchers will need to employ selectivity in deciding what to include in the transcript.

Have (1999) observes that CA researchers select practices which help them to stand aside from their data. These include being non selective in choosing talk as data, and employing transcription, with a methodical and repetitive review designed to capture and represent not just the words but other elements of talk such as pauses, cut-offs, overlaps, etc. He also suggests that the researcher make the transcriptions on his own and that he should delay applying any insider knowledge to the analysis until after the transcription is done. This method excludes all information about the participants' history and roles, details about the setting, and wider institutional and cultural factors.

4.5.2 Making one's own transcriptions

This researcher made her own transcriptions as advocated by Heritage and Atkinson (1984) and Psathas and Anderson (1990) in order to get access to the 'lived reality' of the interview process which would otherwise not be possible. This allowed the researcher to attend to the details of the interaction that would not otherwise be available to the ordinary listener. In other words, the transcription process worked as a

major 'noticing' device to capture not just the words but also other elements of talk such as pauses, cut-offs and overlaps.

At the point of making the transcriptions, the researcher had no knowledge of the background of the police interviewers or the child. The only information that the researcher had access to was information contained in the interview itself such as the child's name, age and locality as well as the interviewer's name. Although the researcher did have information about the overall setting of police interviews and other relevant information about the institutional context of the interview, the application of this knowledge was delayed until the process of analysis was done, as suggested by Have (1999), who states the process of transcription should be limited to "hearing what is being said and noting how it has been said" (p.6).

It is acknowledged that taking all these measures does not guarantee that the transcription is an accurate representation of the interview. Transcriptions are always necessarily selective. As Heritage and Atkinson (1984:12) note:

[...] conversation analysts do not claim that the transcription system captures the details of a tape recording in all its particulars, or that a transcript should (or even could) be viewed as a literal representation of, or observationally adequate substitute for, the data under analysis [...] and indeed this system is particularly concerned with capturing sequential features of talk.

According to Poland (1995), one way for analysts to address transcription issues is to become more reflective about their transcription procedures. The decision-making

criteria, positionality of the participants (including the researcher), voice, and trustworthiness ought to be addressed during the research and when it is reported.

In line with this suggestion, I will explicate some of the criteria for decision making that were used for the transcription process in this research.

4.5.3 Time, date and place of recording

The details of the interview as presented in the initial section of the video recording and recorded on the video screen were noted down. However, these details were not presented in the transcription or dissertation in order to preserve the anonymity of the participants involved.

4.5.4 Identification of the participants

The participants were identified in the transcript according to their roles, i.e. In1 for the interviewer in Video Interview 1 and Ch1 for the child witness in Video Interview 1. The accompanying numbers refer to the numbering of the Video Interview. Thus all interviewers and children are identified by numbers that correspond to the video interviews accordingly except In6 and In8 who are both involved in more than one interview session. In6 is involved in Video Interview 6, Video Interview 8 and Video Interview 9 while In8 is involved in Video Interview 10 and Video Interview 11.

There are arguments against representation of participants in terms of their assigned roles. Watson (1997) states that such a presentation seems to be 'instructing' the reader to 'hear' the utterances transcribed as being produced by the 'interviewer' and the 'child witness' respectively. However, I take the stand that such categorisations

are relevant for the purpose of this research, which is to illustrate how police officers listen to children. Therefore these identification codes become necessarily useful in identifying the differences and variations in the designs within such roles. The analysis hopes to shed light on how such differences are played out within the institutional context of the forensic interviews. In other words, it seeks to establish the characteristics that make it typically a police interview with a child witness and not an interview of some other nature.

4.5.5 Words as spoken

In this transcript I have captured the words as spoken rather than as written. The assumption here is that the participants are engaged in the use of conventional linguistic forms grounded in a common language with semantic and syntactic conventions (Psathas and Anderson, 1990:80-1). The method adopted was to use standard orthography for routine but significantly recurrent deviations in pronunciations were marked with modifications. Some examples of words that have been spelled in the spoken form are as below:

Standard form	Transcribed form
'do you' (Standard form)	'd'you'
'did you'	'd'ju'
'clubbin'	'chubbin' (as spoken by Ch9)

Such variations differed from interviewer to interviewer and child to child and this was transcribed accordingly. The decision was also made against capturing the regional accent that was present in the interview as this did not contribute to the miscommunication or the sense making process in the interview. However, the

different ways in which the child pronounced the words, e.g. 'chubbin' for 'clubbin', was captured in the transcriptions as this was consequential to the manner in which the trajectory of the interview unfolded.

4.5.6 Sounds as uttered

Apart from words that are spoken by the interviewer and the child, all other sounds that can be heard in the video recording were noted down as well. These included sounds such as .hhhh (inhalation), 'tch', 'pt', 'er' or 'uh' and 'mhm' and so on. The reason for capturing these sounds was that they had interactional meaning, for example, .hhh (inhalation) can be interpreted as the speaker holding the speaking turn.

4.5.7 Inaudible or incomprehensible sounds or words

A few young children in the video recording speak rather softly and therefore their words were inaudible to the researcher. In such cases, I have put these words and sounds in open brackets. Fragment 4.1 below provides one example of this.

Fragment 4.1

((In4 -Female, Ch4 - Female Aged 5))

01 In4: Is it? wh- when was that.

02 (.)

03 Ch4: When I was a li:ttle ba:by a:n when I went(unclear)

04 he pu:lled my 'ead then.

05 (.)

06 In4: Where did he pull your head to.

07 (1.8)

4.5.8 Spaces/silences

Silences (gaps and pauses) were timed according to Jefferson's (1989) method of counting 'no one thousand, one one thousand, two one thousand,...'. For example, a pause of 1.8 second would end at the count of 'no one thousand, one one thou-'. This method was chosen over the method of using a stopwatch as it was a consistent

method that allowed for short durations (shorter than 0.5 second) and longer durations as well. The capturing of such silences is deemed important for this research as it is relevant to the way in which listening is being practised in the interview i.e. the interpretations that are being made about the silences by both the interviewer and the child.

As Psathas and Anderson (1990: 87) remark, 'the transcriptionists' close and repeated listening to the interaction enables her/him to perceive differences in the spaces (pauses, gaps, silence) that occur.'

An analytic decision is also made at the point where silences are recorded as inter-turn gaps or within turn pauses as shown in Fragment 4.2.

Fragment 4.2

((In5 -Female, Ch5 - Female Aged 6))

01 In5: 'n who Miss Joe?
02 (1.0)
03 Ch5: Er (1.0)it's the class teacher.
04 In5: Alright. so I think you said the lady came to school,
05 yeah?
06 Ch5: ((nods))/(1.0)
07 In5: Were you in school last week then?
08 (3.9)

In line 02, the silence has been recorded as an inter turn gap as it was interpreted that after the question the floor is turned over to Ch5, i.e. In5 has selected Ch5 to speak next. However, the silence in this space indicated that Ch5 has not selected herself to speak immediately after the question. In line 03, the silence has been recorded as a within turn pause as Ch5 has taken up and is holding to her turn with the hesitation 'er'. In line 06, Ch5's non-verbal answer is recorded together with the length of silence to indicate the time lapse during this turn shift.

4.5.9 Overlapped speech and sounds

The overlapped speech where the second speaker overlaps the first is marked with square brackets. In all cases, the onset of the overlap and the end of the overlap is marked with a square bracket. The overlaps would provide an indication of how the listening in the interaction is taking place, whether enough time is being given before the child finishes talking before the interviewer takes up his turn and vice versa.

4.5.10 Pace, stretches, stresses, volume, etc.

The following elements of speech are also noted in the transcription as they all have interactional significance:

- Latching where one turn of talk is immediately followed by another with no gap between the two.
- Cut-offs where a word is cut-off abruptly.
- Stretching where words and other sounds are stretched.
- Stresses where syllables of words are stressed.
- Volume where volume of utterances is increased and decreased.
- Speed where speed of utterances is increased and decreased.
- Intonation patterns where there may be rising intonation, falling intonation, continuing intonation are marked as well.

4.5.11 Visual Information

A few of the children in the video recording have an animated disposition and as a result, there is a lot of movement and gesturing in their responses. Movements and gestures play an important role in reinforcing the meaning of their verbal response

and therefore these have been recorded in the transcripts. These have been recorded in brackets as in the example below.

Fragment 4.3

((In2 - Female, Ch2 - Female Aged 4))

01 In2: So what're you goin to be doing later when get leave ere:
02 Ch2: Forgotten ((closes mouth))
03 In2: You've forgotten? Ah:: well, we'll have a chat with
04 daddy and we'll see what you get to do later, shall we?
05 Okay, do you want me to take the drink for you or you'll
06 carry it?

Also recorded are the head shakes, and nods which the children give as responses to questions asked. However, the onset and the completion of such movements have not been recorded as the purpose of the study was not to provide an in depth analysis of the movements themselves but was rather on how the sense-making process in the interaction was taking place interactionally.

Other elements of non-verbal communication by the child such as eye gaze were not recorded because it was difficult to capture these as there were no close-up shots of the child's face in the video recording. Also, it was not possible to actually see the eye gaze very clearly as the video recording was not of excellent quality.

4.5.12 Reflections on Transcription

As can be seen from the description of the transcription decisions above, the choice of notations has been guided by the interactional role played by each of these elements and therefore cannot possibly be considered as an objective representation of the actual interaction as recorded in the video recording. In this sense I will agree with Psathas and Anderson (1990:89-90) who state:

the transcript may and does incorporate some analysis, as it is being produced by the transcriptionist.

The transcript contains the constructed version of the actualities and particularities of the interview interaction. However, I would argue that this ‘spliced’ representation of reality is an important part of the analysing and interpreting meaning and that the representation of the actuality is virtually an impossible task and incorporating elements that are not essential for the analytic task may be quite irrelevant.

4.6 Conversational Analysis as a Tool for Analysing Discursive Listening

I will now put forward my arguments for using the tool of conversational analysis to examine how police officers listen to children in forensic interviews. I will do this by sifting aspects related to discursive listening and context as applied in the forensic interview context and offering a basis for using conversational analysis as a tool to make sense of what the police officer as a listener does when the child provides an answer to the question.

4.6.1 Discursive Listening and Context

In chapters 1 and 2, I have argued for the need to examine listening in police interviews as a discursive practice. I introduced the notion of ‘discursive listening’ that encapsulates the different forms of responsive actions that follows an utterance by the speaker. For the analyst, this entails conceiving of the communicative effect and results of what is going on as emergent phenomena. This means that it is important to determine exactly what it is that a listener understands in the moment-by-moment sequencing of taking turns at talk. Whereas a grammarian can analyse a sentence for an extended length of time and read all the possible meanings into it, the listener is ‘exposed to an utterance just once and is forced to register its ingredients in just the temporal sequence in which it reaches him’. (Hockett, 1986: 50).

Given that the interpretive strategies of listeners are context-specific, the analyst then needs to know for certain which utterance or utterances may have been salient to the way in which the communicative sequences created by the participants unfold. The point then is not about what the speaker or listener 'meant' or 'intended' as most linguistic/pragmatic analysis seek to uncover but rather on what Dore and McDermott (1982) refer to as 'working consensus' or how understanding and meaning is interactionally achieved. The focus is on how analysts can ascertain what is going on in the talk so that evidence can be provided for making claims about the particularities of a piece of interaction.

Further in Chapter 2, I have argued for the claim that children are and must be seen as actively constructing and determining their own lives, the lives of the people around them and the societies which they live in. In this sense children are seen as enacting their social competencies in what Hutchby and Ellis (1998: 10) call "arenas of action". And in order to gain insight into the way such competencies are being displayed, analysts need to situate the study in such 'arenas of actions' and use qualitative methods which view the relevant social action 'in situ' rather than 'a priori'. It is only by doing so that the procedures by which the adult police interviewer and the child witness organise and make sense of their utterance in the interview process can be obtained. As Boyle (2000:31) suggests, there is a reflexive relationship between talk and context and the study of the interaction "in situ" provides understanding into this complex relationship.

To give an example, McTear's (1978) study shows that a child can assign the same function to different realisations at different stages. The utterance 'I don't know' had

the same function as repeated questions that she used at an earlier stage. Therefore, he points out that there is a danger in assigning linguistic forms and structures such as repetition, questions, utterances such as 'I don't know' to their conventional adult meaning when such meanings may not be clearly intended by the child. Therefore, I argue that there is a need to move away from categorising and coding disparate linguistic items in order to make generalised statements of the interaction and instead move towards identifying the way these items function in their particular contexts. It is a far more worthwhile enterprise to investigate the negotiated meaning of such linguistic items in the interaction that unveils the instantiated peculiarities that are relevant to institutional goals. In other words, I take the view that meaning is obtained from the negotiated context within the interview rather than 'contained' within an external context such as the linguistic form of the word or utterance.

Furthermore, the interviewer's responsive actions cannot be determined based purely on the occurrences of certain linguistic features such as repetition or confirmation checks. Although these linguistic features do play a role in the meaning making process in the interview, they in themselves do not encapsulate the various realities that make up the notions of 'discursive listening' or even 'responding'. Rather such responsive actions are shaped into being by the participants themselves using a variety of linguistic devices within their turns. In other words, providing an account of the sequential design of such responses rather than categorising responsive actions by means of linguistic features is fundamental to transform the research from what would otherwise be a static form of inquiry into a dynamic one.

4.6.2 Conversational Analysis and Context

In line with this, the basic structures within conversational analysis provide a departure from other forms of linguistically oriented analysis in that the production of utterances as well as the sense they evoke is brought about as a practical social accomplishment and not as individual structural units. In other words, words used in talk are not studied as semantic units but as products or objects that are designed and used in terms of the activities being negotiated in the talk (Hutchby & Wooffitt, 1998:14). These activities then provide insight into what the interviewer as the listener is doing. It allows for an in depth understanding of the construction as well as the constraints underpinning discursive listening and responding to the child. Such a perspective on discursive listening is not only necessary but also crucial if at all practices within forensic interviewing are to be enhanced.

This however, does not mean that such a perspective dismisses what can be learned from the linguistic structure of sentences, utterances, or other bits of discourse. What it does suggest is that because language is primarily used in temporally unfolding, sequentially organised interactions, analyses of language that fail to take this into account risk producing static accounts of human conduct. Therefore, although language does play an essential role in the sequential organisation of the interaction, this in itself will not be the only focus of the analysis.

The mainstay of the conversational analytic approach for the study of 'discursive listening' is that it provides an analytical resource wherein the contextual features in analysis are invoked only when it is evident in the details of the interaction that the

participants themselves are orienting to such features. This follows from Pike's (1967:

37) account of etic and emic viewpoints:

The etic viewpoint studies behaviour as from outside of a particular system, and as an essential initial approach to an alien system. The emic viewpoint results from studying behaviour as from inside the system...Descriptions or analyses from the etic standpoint are "alien" in view, with criteria external to the system. Emic descriptions provide an internal view, with criteria chosen from within the system.

The emic viewpoint allows the analyst to attain the dual objectives of studying listening as a discursive construct as well examining the competencies displayed by the child. The basic structures of conversational analysis offer the analyst the most appropriate method to make grounded claims for the ongoing action in a sequence of talk.

One could argue that the limitations of such research are that the generalisability of the findings are limited to the context of their occurrence and the obsession with micro detail leaves nothing to say about interactional organisation on a larger scale. Rather than consider these disadvantages, I would argue that they can be the strength of this research. The significance of this research lies not in the presentation of the macro structure of the police interviews but rather in how the micro details contribute to the overall macro goals of the interview process. The analyst's task is to uncover and describe the organisation and order of social action in the police interview. As Sacks (1992, vol2: 169) states,

Our aim is... to get into a position to transform...our view of what happened here as some interaction that could be treated as the thing we're studying, to interactants being spewed out by a machinery, the machinery being what we're trying to find; where, in order to find it we've got to get a whole bunch of its products.

Therefore, characterising the organisation of the interaction through examples of interactions allows the analyst to uncover the emic logic that underlies this organisation. Such characterisations are invaluable in providing information about the practices within forensic interviewing before even contemplating making critical evaluations on the outcomes of the interviews. Such practice-based characterisations allow the analyst to make observations that are firmly implanted within empirically based evidence and not make collective generalisations that can serve as useful guidelines but fail to reveal the intricacies involved within various individualised contexts.

Another focus of conversational analysis is to examine persistently what is being said or done in the conversation. It seeks to explain what is going on in a piece of interaction by explaining the action that the participants themselves are engaged in but may not be aware of in 'real-time'. According to Schegloff (1997), an essential question that has to be asked at the data analysis stage, is 'Why that, in that way, right now?'. This captures the perspective of the interaction as action (why that) which is expressed by means of linguistic forms (in that way) in a developing sequence (right now). This ideally provides an avenue for also asking the research question of this study, "Why (what action) did the police interviewer ask that question (the linguistic form) after that answer (in the point of the sequence) in order to discover the responsive actions or 'discursive listening' that underlie the forensic interview. This inevitably provides a means of analysing how police interviewers are responding to the child and what sense-making mechanisms are in operation at that point.

This kind of insight then serves as resource for analysts and researchers to obtain an understanding of the intricate mechanisms involved in a piece of interaction in the forensic interview. According to Schegloff (1982), there is a further analytic advantage to be gained if the discourse is examined by treating it as an interactional achievement. This simply means treating discourse as something that is 'produced' over time and which is incrementally developed. It also involves perceiving discourse as a collaborative achievement rather than one that is determined from the outset by the speaker or the listener.

Having considered the general analytic underpinnings of this study, I will now proceed to describe the analytical procedures involved in conversational analysis.

4.7 Analytical Perspective of Conversational Analysis

Schenkein (1978: 6) observes that the analytic perspective of conversational analysis consists of the following:

- 1) utilising a corpus of data consisting of naturally occurring interactions. This essentially means that the data are readily available from a particular source or setting and are not derived from a contrived context such as a simulated role-play, for example. The videotapes of police interviews with child witnesses represent one source of naturally occurring data as they have been produced for purposes other than this research.
- 2) developing analyses grounded in the details of actual occurrences. The availability of the videotaped interviews provides a means for noting and making observations of the details of the actual occurrences and. The details

are not based on 'made up' or 'postulated' examples of interactions. Details such as hesitancy, pauses, rising and falling intonations also allow the analyst to make claims based on actually occurring phenomenon and in a way, 'triangulate' the interpretations based on more than one feature of the talk. In order for such details to be captured, it is essential to have a versatile and standardised notation system that captures the details of the conversational features. In this study, the transcription notational system devised by Jefferson will be used. A list of these is given in Appendix I.

- 3) viewing the study of the conversation as an "essentially interactional activity" where both the police officer and the child are reciprocally making sense of each other's meaning. In this way, the dual objectives of this study, analysing the way in which police interviewers listen and the way in which the child is displaying her social competence can be achieved. Both the interviewer's and the child's role are crucial for the successful outcome of the interaction. Closely related to this is also the notion of focusing on "sequential emergence of turn-by-turn talk". So the sequences of talk are not looked at as discrete and disparate, isolated sentences or utterances but interconnected structures where meaning unfolds sequence by sequence. This analytic perspective provides a means for examining the way both the police interviewer and the child are involved in the 'sense making' process in the interview. So rather than 'importing' meaning from external contexts as other research (e.g. corpus analysis) tends to do, the meaning as constructed by both the participants in the interview can be analysed.

4) and finally such rigorous analytical mechanisms allow the analyst to develop conceptual schemas for the macro structure of the interview interaction. In other words, although the analytic framework used utilises the micro structural features such as the turn-taking organisation, pauses, hesitations, etc, these features provide a global view of the inherent preoccupations institutionalised within the interview.

Such a perspective inevitably excludes all references to the participants' motivations or psychological states. Rather conclusions are only based on what can actually be observed in the interaction. In order to facilitate this analysis, I will outline the four basic structures within conversation analysis that will provide the basis for the analysis in this study. I will explicate the way in which each of these four structures is inherently designed to examine the listening behaviour and actions in an interaction.

4.8 Basic Structures in Conversational Analysis

4.8.1 Taking Turns at Talk

Schegloff et. al. (1978) observe that allocation of turns in conversations is not an ad hoc or random matter but rather one that is carefully coordinated and organised. The distribution of rights and responsibilities for speaking and listening are rule-governed. So overlaps, for example, in conversations, are considered to be the exception rather than the norm and an analytically salient feature when they do occur in a conversation.

In particular, Sacks et. al. (1974) assert that speakers display an orientation and sensitivity to the listener in turn-taking and this orientation is called recipient design. Accordingly, this system of turn-taking provides 'an intrinsic motivation for listening' (p.43). The listener must carefully monitor the ongoing turn in order to ascertain when he should speak next. According to Sacks et al., "...the system translates a willingness or potential desire to speak into a corollary obligation to listen" (p.44). Also, when the listener has secured a turn, he then needs to display an understanding of the prior turns, which may or may not need addressing.

Sacks et.al. (1974) assert that the basic unit of talk is the turn construction unit (TCU) which is a unit of talk that is intonationally, grammatically and pragmatically complete. They have also described a set of rules for the allocation of next turns. The first rule is that a current speaker may, if he so desires, select the next speaker by designing his current turn to reflect this. He may do this in several ways such as eye contact, head nod, naming the next speaker, etc. Once the next speaker has been selected, only this person has the right and obligation to take the next turn to speak. If the current speaker does not select the next speaker, then the second rule comes into play. At the first point in the current speaker's turn where the completion of the turn might be detected (called the turn transition relevance place or TRP), another speaker may select himself as the next speaker by starting to speak first. If both the first and the second rule do not operate, i.e. current speaker does not select the next speaker and another speaker does not self-select, the third rule operates. The current speaker then may (but does not have to) continue until one of the first two rules operates and transfer to another speaker takes places. These three options for turn transition operate at every transitional relevant place.

However, it is important to emphasise that it is not the categorisation of turns that will be the focus of the analysis, but rather it will be the emic analytical focus on the sequence. As Hutchby and Wooffitt (1998:48) point out:

It is important to realise that it is not part of the conversation analyst's aim to define...what a turn construction unit is, as a linguist for instance may want to define what a sentence is. Conversation analysts cannot take a prescriptive stance on this question, because what a turn construction unit consists of in any situated stretch of talk is a member's problem. That is, such a unit is essentially anything out of which a legitimate turn has recognisably-for the participants-been built.

Two implications arise from these turn-taking rules in the forensic interview context.

The first is the issue of turn transfer from the police interviewer to the child. This takes place usually after the police interviewer has asked a particular question and the child is required to provide the answer. By asking a question the interviewer automatically selects the child as the next speaker. However, the transfer of speakership in these instances is not always straightforward, as some children might not take over the speakership by refusing to talk. It is this aspect of turn transfer that will be examined in further depth in Chapter 8.

In Chapter 5, I will examine more closely the turn transfer from the child to the police interviewer i.e. transfer from the child's answering turn to the next questioning turn by the interviewer. This occurs after the child has provided the answer to the question in the prior turn and before the police interviewer takes over to design the next questioning turn. This turn is also referred to as the third turn. In this case, the police interviewers need to closely monitor the child's answering turn to anticipate the point of turn completion before they self-select themselves as the next speaker. And this point of turn completion is not always as clearly laid out as it might be in an adult

interview session for several reasons.

Firstly, the children in the police interview do not always maintain eye contact with the police interviewer during the interview. Ch11, for example, is sitting on the settee and doing some colouring while talking to the interviewer. The other children, while not really doing any other activity in particular, are engaged in different forms of 'play' during the whole interview. Ch7 plays with the pillow for a while, Ch4 plays with her squeaking shoes and Ch7 just looks down and fidgets with her hands. So rule one of current speaker selecting next using gestures or eye movement or verbally, i.e. the child selecting the interviewer as the next speaker does not come into effect in every case in these interviews. It is then left to the interviewer to self-select herself at the point of turn completion. This again proves to be problematic because it is not always possible to tell whether or not the child has completed his 'telling' at the point of turn transitional relevance place. If the interviewer miscalculates that the turn is complete when in fact the child has not completed the turn, then there is the problem of interrupting the child before he has completed his telling. If the interviewer waits for a while after the child has completed his turn thereby providing a gap before self-selecting the next turn, then there is the problem of 'uncomfortable silences' occurring during the interview interaction.

So what this means is that the interviewer has to be able to closely monitor the child's turn transitional relevance places to anticipate the completion of the turn. And, this is where the usefulness of response tokens comes in. In Chapter 5, I examine the role of response tokens in the listening practices in the forensic interview. Specifically, I focus on the environment in which a response token is chosen by the listener/police

interviewer, what follows the tokens and what kinds of turns make such tokens the relevant next response.

4.8.2 Sequential Organisation

4.8.2.1 Adjacency Pairs

Adjacency pairs provide the framework for analysing sequences of talk. This is a central element that is often neglected in linguistic analysis of interactions. The term adjacency pairs refers to the way in which participants orient to what has been said by the prior speaker. It describes how listeners display understanding of what has been said by the speaker. These adjacency pairs consist of sequences which have the following features (1) two utterance length, (2) adjacent positioning of component utterances, (3) different speakers producing each utterance (4) these turns are differentiated into First Pair Parts (FPP) and Second Pair Parts (SPP) and (4) FPPs and SPPs are type related (e.g. question is followed by answer, greeting followed by greeting) (Schegloff and Sacks, 1973).

A key point to note about adjacency pairs is that the action that the talk is doing can be located in both its composition (form) and its position (sequential organisation). This means that the action that a particular utterance is doing is determined not just by the linguistic composition of syntax and lexis but also by its placement in the sequence of the interaction. By focusing on units larger than individual sentences or utterances, the sense of the utterance as an action can be obtained and this action is the interactive product of what the speaker/listener does. These units are then considered to be units of activity and their component units are turns within sequences. According to Schegloff and Sacks (1973:297),

What two utterances, produced by different speakers, can do that one utterance cannot do is: by an adjacently positioned second, a speaker can show that he understood what a prior aimed at, and that he is willing to go along with that. Also, by virtue of the occurrence of an adjacently produced second, the doer of a first can see that what he intended was indeed understood, and that it was or was not accepted. Also, of course, a second can assert his failure to understand, or disagreement, and inspection of a second by a first can allow the first speaker to see that while the second thought he understood, indeed he misunderstood.

The following exchange with a child and his mother provides an illustration of this concept.

Fragment 4.4

01 Child: have to cut the:se Mummy.
02 (1.3)
03 Child: won't we Mummy
04 (1.5)
05 Child: won't we
06 Mother: yes.

(Atkinson and Drew, 1979: 52)

This fragment illustrates several points. Firstly, after the child makes a statement (the first pair part) in line 01, a second pair part becomes conditionally relevant. However, no response is produced by Mummy in line 02. Therefore, the second pair part is noticeably absent, meaning that it is deviant from the norm where the second pair part or at least an account for its absence is always produced after the first pair part. Secondly, this absence is not only noticeable to the analyst but also to the participants. This is demonstrated by the child's repetition and re-repetition of his question. The longer the second pair part remains absent, the more accountable and sanctionable it becomes. This is displayed by the increasingly curt linguistic forms that the child uses to express the first and the second repetitions of his question. In line 06, the mother finally does produce the second pair part in form of an affirmative answer. Thirdly, it can be noted that the tag questions forms are used specifically at the points in lines 04

and 05 in the interaction because the previous two questions did not receive a relevant second pair part answer. So these linguistic forms are performing a particular action in this position – of prompting the sequentially relevant next action which is the second pair part (i.e. a ‘yes’ or a ‘no’ answer) or accounting for its absence (i.e. the mother could have said ‘Let’s wait for daddy first’).

In the police interviews, the first action (or question by the police interviewer, in the case of the present data corpus) is viewed as projecting the production of a relevant next action by the next speaker (an answer by the child witness). Following this, there are three ways in which the trajectory of an interaction can unfold: 1) If the next action (the answer given by the child) occurs in the next turn, it is treated in a taken for granted fashion by the police interviewer (i.e. the listener) as the norms have been adhered to. 2) The relevant action may not occur in the next turn, but its noticeable absence may be accounted for by the child (e.g. when the child answers ‘I dunno’ when the police interviewer asks a question). 3) However, if the relevant next action is not produced by the child and no account is provided of why it is not produced, this absence can be treated as noticeable, accountable and sanctionable by the police interviewer (e.g. when there is silence after the question). Therefore, although it is perfectly possible for the child to deviate from norms, the police interviewer as a listener may evaluate these deviances and assign particular meanings to them and then respond accordingly, constituting the next sequence of action.

In this regard, the question and answer sequence in the forensic interview context can be viewed not just as a series of information elicitation sequences but the performance of particular activities that are relevant to the interviewing agenda. The interaction in

the police interview is organised in a question and answer sequence in that the questions asked by the interviewer would form the first pair part and the answer given by the child would be the second pair part. The first pair part (the question) really embodies the constraints of the action (what the child should do) and of interpretation (how the child should be understood).

4.8.2.2 Turn Design

The analysis of turn design shows how participants display their orientations to the particular institutional context in which they are interacting. Both the police interviewer and the child display to one another they understand (or do not understand, as the case may be) what the other is saying. Sacks et.al. (1974) point out that any turn can perform three kinds of sequential work. First, it shows how it fits in with the prior turn. Second, it performs its own social action or contributes to the sequence. Third, it provides the context for the next turn. This correlates with the fundamental aspect of 'discursive listening' where the utterance of the listener first and foremost serves to fit into the talk of the prior speaker. The way in which the talk fits in with the prior talk as well as the action that it seeks to perform provides the analytical tool to examine the responsive action taken by the interviewer in the interview. How the interviewers make sense of the child's utterance as well as whether or not they are accommodating to the child can be examined through the mechanics of the adjacency pairs. The mechanics of turn design capture the details of the verbal construction through which the turn's activity is accomplished.

In order to illustrate this point, I will compare two pairs of fragments that have identical structural formats but with different sequential implications.

Fragment 4.5

((BDLP: Extract B))

01 T: Is it a hill or a mountain
02 R: A hill
03 T: A hill/yes
04 T: And what's on the hill
05 R: Ice
06 T: Yes/ice

(Drew,1981:261)

Fragment 4.6

((In2 - Female, Ch2 - Female Aged:5))

121 In2 : Okay, so who's house is this happening.
122 Ch2 : Grandad's.
123 In2 : In Grandad's. oka:y, ri:ght. an who lives at home with
124 Grandad.
125 Ch2 : Nanny.
126 In2 : Nanny is it?
127 Ch2 : ((nods))
128 In2 : Okay.

In Fragment 4.5, T confirms R's answer by repeating the answer and by providing an affirmative. Similarly, in Fragment 4.6, In2 confirms receipt of Ch2's answer by also repeating the answer and by providing a response token. Thus, the actions in both these sequences can be organised into this structure:

- A: Question/Elicitation
- B: Answer/Response
- C: Confirmation (Repeat followed by confirmation or response token)

However, to reduce the actions in these two sequences by coding these utterances as 'repeats' or 'confirmation' and so on does not capture much of the interaction and sequential work which the turns in these fragments are designed to achieve.

Fragment 4.5 is clearly designed to perform an instructional task and this is mainly evident from the way the T's turn is designed to provide confirmation to R that the answer given is the correct one. The emphasis is placed on the correctness of the answer through the turn design in which the correct answer is repeated and an affirmative is provided. The emphasis on correctness also presupposes that T is already in possession of this knowledge and is asking the question to 'test' R's knowledge. The design of the turn also provides an indication that this is an 'instructional' activity in that knowledge about hills and mountains are not personal information but rather information obtained as part of what may be termed general knowledge.

Fragment 4.6, on the other hand, is designed to perform the task of soliciting corroborating evidence to be used to incriminate the alleged perpetrator in the court of law. The repetition of the answers given by Ch2 here does not confirm the correctness of the answer but rather it confirms acceptance of the answer. The emphasis on the acceptance is done through the repetition and the response tokens and also the move to the next detail of identification in In2's turn in line 123. In2 does not provide an affirmative response as T does in Fragment 4.5. The turn design also consists of information that falls under the personal domain rather than general knowledge domain. The elicitation of personal information is more characteristic of an 'information seeking' sequence rather than an 'instructional' sequence.

In this way, these two fragments can be identified as belonging to two different institutional settings, something that a set model of coding and categorising fails to do. The distinction comes not through their structural formats but through the

understanding of turns, and components within turns, as sequential objects. It is these features that are managed with a view to their sequential placement which provides for the richness for this analytical perspective compared to some others (cf. Sinclair & Coulthard, 1975; Strenstrom, 1994; Wells & Montgomery, 1981)

4.8.2.3 Preferred and Dispreferred

Certain first pair parts can be followed by more than one type of second pair part. For example, an invitation can be followed by a decline, an acceptance, a statement can be received with an agreement or disagreement, etc. And there is a structural bias where certain pair parts are preferred over others, for example, an acceptance is preferred over the decline and the agreement is preferred over the disagreement. It is important to note here that the term 'preference' is not used in a psychological sense of wanting or liking something but in a normative sense that it is the regularly preferred answer (Seedhouse, 2005) Speakers typically design their dispreferred responses to include some or all of the following features: (1) delay by silence, hesitancy or other paralinguistic features, (2) prefaced by appreciations (e.g. 'You are such a dear' but I'm afraid...) or similar actions, (3) accounts or explanations and (4) mitigating preface markers such as 'well' or 'I think'. This is because, as Heritage (1984: 265) puts it, "there is a 'bias' intrinsic to many aspects of the organisation of talk which is generally favourable to the maintenance of bonds of solidarity between actors and which promotes the avoidance of conflict". Therefore, preferred responses are said to be 'affiliative' and promote social solidarity while dispreferred ones are 'disaffiliative.' And in order to minimise the degree of disaffiliation caused by the dispreferred second pair part, the speaker then has to do more work by delaying its production. This way an immediate decline, which is face-threatening, can be

avoided. The mitigating accounts also serve to minimise the degree of disaffiliation that may be brought about by action of decline.

In the forensic interview context, the child inevitably does produce quite a few silent responses to questions asked. By examining the way in which the police interviewer responds to such silences, the extent to which such silences are oriented to as the preferred or dispreferred answer in the interview context can be ascertained.

4.8.3 Repair

Repair is defined as “practices dealing with problems or troubles in speaking, hearing or understanding the talk” (Schegloff, 2000: 207). It involves a suspension in the ongoing progressivity of the turn constructional unit, the turn, or the sequence and the action that is being produced. Instead of continuing with the topic, utterances become occupied instead with dealing with the trouble of speaking, hearing or understanding. These repairs often include to various kinds of false starts, mid-sentence lexical substitution, and additions and fillers such as “eh”. Repairs play an important role in the joint and emergent construction of social context and meaning as they seek to clarify understanding. Repair activity is composed of *trouble source* – which is the problematic talk, *repair initiation* – where the immediately preceding talk is halted to deal with the problem and *repair outcome* – where there is either a solution or abandonment of the problem.

In forensic interviews, repairs form an integral part in the activity of ‘discursive listening’ as both the child and the police interviewer display an orientation to ‘getting the forensically relevant answer’. While the analyst may not be able to observe

whether the police interviewer has understood all the possible meanings of the child's prior turn, it is possible through considering repair activities for the analyst to observe what the trouble source is, how repair is initiated and what repair solution is offered. Similarly, when the child initiates self-repair, she is orienting to particular aspects of meaning she wants to make clear to the police interviewer.

So the way in which the police interviewer and the child perform repair in the conversation also provides the analyst with the resources to discern the preoccupation of their sense-making activity.

There are four types of repairs that can occur in a conversation according to whether repair is initiated by the current or other speaker and according to who carries out the repair (Schegloff, 2000).

Self-initiated self-repair is where repair is both initiated and carried out by the speaker of the trouble source. In the present data, there is evidence of both the adult interviewer and the child doing this type of repair.

Fragment 4.7

((In1 - Female, Ch1 - Female Aged 5))

- 12 → In1: and he- you- he put you in the ba:th?
13 Ch1: Not (.) granddad in there, but my different granddad.
14 In1: Your different granddad the granddad with nanny,
15 is it?
16 Ch1: Yeah.

In line 12, In1 utters the person reference 'he' identifying the alleged perpetrator and then initiates a repair by substituting it with another person reference 'you',

identifying the child and then she shifts back to the original person reference 'you'. This form of self initiated self-repair by the interviewers is common in the forensic interview. This is probably due to the acute awareness on the part of the police interviewers to design the questioning turn that both yields forensically relevant information and at the same time is consistent with guidelines provided in Home Office (2001).

Other-initiated self-repair is where repair is carried out by the speaker of the trouble source but initiated by the recipient. In the present data, it is usually the adult interviewer who performs this kind of repair in the follow-up turns.

Fragment 4.8

((In8 - Female, Ch11 - Male Aged 8))

```
20      In8:    =Right. so there's you and Ricky Hanson layin on the
21            settee(.) she asked for two volunteers (.)an Ricky said
22            he'd volunteer (.) an then he said who:: (0.5)
23 →      who:: (0.5)
24      Ch11:   who else
25      In8:    who else. Right. a:n Jeffrey said yo:u,
```

In lines 20-23, In8 summarises the telling that Ch11 had provided earlier by repeating items in his telling. In line 22 -23 In8 initiates repair on Ch11's unclear utterance in the prior telling by repeating the proterm 'who:'. Ch11 then provides the repair solution in line 24 which In8 accepts in line 25.

Self-initiated other-repair where the speaker of the trouble tries to get the recipient to repair the trouble. An example of this repair taken from a study conducted on the conversation of two children is given below.

Fragment 4.9

((Siobhan: 4 years 6 months, Heather 4 years 10 months))

01 Siobhan: you have to have. Um hard numbers and I
02 → have to have (0.4)
03 Heather: easy numbers
04 Siobhan: yea

(Fragment taken from McTear,1985: 51)

In the example above, Siobhan initiates repair by pausing before a point of possible completion. Heather offers a candidate repair that Siobhan accepts. There is no occurrence of such repairs initiated by the children in the present data corpus. For obvious reasons, there is also no occurrence of this type of repair initiated by the interviewer. If the interviewer were to provide a candidate repair in the interview interaction, it would mean that she is leading the child witness.

Other-initiated other repair where the recipient of the trouble source turn both initiates and carries out the repair.

Fragment 4.10

((In1 - Female, Ch1 - Female Aged 5))

12 In1: and he- you- he put you in the ba:th?
13 → Ch1: Not (.) granddad in there (pointing to the adjoining
14 room), but my different granddad.
15 In1: Your different granddad, the granddad with nanny,
16 is it?
17 Ch1: Yeah.

In line 13, Ch1 provides repair for the person reference in In1's question in the prior turn. She locates the trouble source both verbally ('not (.) granddad in there') and non-verbally by gesturing to the adjoining room where her grandfather was waiting. The she provides the repair solution as 'my different granddad'.

In the forensic interviews there is also a preference for stronger over weaker forms of

other initiated repairs. (Schegloff et. al., 1977:369). The stronger forms are based on their capacity to locate the repairable. Fragments 4.8 to 4.10 illustrate such examples where repair is designed to locate or specify the source of trouble by repeating its proximate environment in the prior utterance.

The weaker forms occur when specific locations in the prior turns are not indicated in the repair. These may typically take the form of 'Pardon?', 'Sorry?' or 'What?' (Drew, 1997). Such forms occur in the present corpus data only when the child's utterances are completely inaudible and where partial repeats of the prior utterance are not possible because of this.

Schegloff (1987) points out how the participants can not only display trouble with the possible intended referents but with the sequential import (implicativeness) of the prior turn i.e. what action is being done by the turn and what is an appropriate next turn. By looking specifically at repair strategies, it can be shown that the child's answers can be deemed inadequate in terms of fulfilling the requirements of the prior question and how the subsequent production of an adequate answer or further apparent inadequate answers can be brought about interactionally through the construction of the police interviewer's repair request and how the child treats that request. The child can also use certain behaviours in the next turn that delay the provision of any sort of repair, putting the onus on the adult interviewer to reformulate the question, rather than provide an inappropriate repair themselves.

As with sequence organisation, analysis of repairs will form the basis of all the analytic chapters - Chapters 5, 6, 7 and 8.

4.8.4 Questions and answers as conversational objects

4.8.4.1 Questions as interactional objects

A significant part of the forensic interview is concerned with asking questions. However, in order to understand what actions the questions are actually seeking to pursue, it is important to analyse the questions in terms of their sequential implicativeness rather than just their linguistic form. Such an analysis would not only reveal details of the interaction which may be otherwise hidden, but more importantly, they are important for making practice-based improvements. Suggestions that are based on contextualised examples would have more real world benefits rather than idealised or checklist forms of recommendations. Schegloff (1984:35) states:

what defines the class “question” as a linguistic form will not do for questions as conversational objects, or interactional objects, or social actions. If by “question” we want to mean anything like a sequentially relevant or implicative object, so that in some way it would adumbrate the notion “answer” if therefore, something like adjacency pair organisation is involved, with special constraints on the second pair part of a sort not yet analytically explicated; if, finally, we intend “questions” to be able to serve as a form of account of conversationalist’s behaviour, rather than idealised speakers and hearers, or “subjects”, then it will not do for a variety of reasons, to use features of linguistic form as sole or even invariant though not exhaustive, indicators or embodiments of such objects. Sequential organisation is critical.

In the present study, questions will be analysed not as individualised information seeking linguistic tools but collectively in terms of the actions or interactional goals that they serve to achieve. In Chapter 6, the interviewer’s follow-up questions to the child’s extended turn answer will be examined. In Chapter 7, the follow-up questions to elicit an answer that displays abuse from the child will be looked at. In Chapter 8, the interviewer’s questions in the face of ‘non-responsive’ answers will be analysed. In all of these chapters, the analytic focus will be on the responsive actions that the design of the follow-up questions seeks to achieve.

4.8.4.2 Answers as interactional achievement

According to Button (1992: 215), “hearers have systematic grounds for finding that someone, though indeed talking after a question, has not ‘answered’ it, for example in terms of the questioner’s or other hearer’s understanding of the question...”. This has two implications for considering the answers provided by children in the forensic interview context. The first is considering what action the answers provided by the child is doing and the second, how this answer is being oriented to by the interviewer. And this will be the focus of the analyses in Chapters 6, 7 and 8.

Firstly, the child’s answers in themselves will be examined. In Chapter 6 the analytic focus will be the extended turn answers or tellings, in Chapter 7, the child’s answers when the interviewer pursues a response to display abuse and in Chapter 8, the child’s non-responsive answering.

Secondly, the analysis in these chapters will look at the interviewers’ response subsequent to the child’s extended turn answer in order to characterise their orientations towards it and how the answer provided by the child may (or may not) be completed in an interactional manner for the organisational purposes of the forensic interview. There are methodic grounds by which the police interviewers who hear the child’s answer could characterise it as not ‘answering’ the question. Therefore, just as the child’s turn is monitorable as to how she has understood the prior turn (namely the question in the prior turn), so too may the police interviewers have their response monitored for their understanding of the child’s answer. Police interviewers do not know what shape their subsequent response will take, as this is dependent on the answer the child provides in the intervening turn. Therefore, by examining the

responses the police interviewers provide in the turns subsequent to the child's answer, we can characterise the interviewer's orientation towards these answers. If the interviewer finds the child's answers to be incomplete or inadequate in any way, then she can initiate some form of repair. This can be done by asking further follow-up questions. In this way, answers provided by the child may present the sequential opportunity to return to the answer and consequently the answer's completion may be achieved over a course of a number of turns making the answers actual completeness an interactionally achieved matter. This will be the second focus of Chapters 6, 7 and 8.

4.8.5 Membership Categorisation

Closely related to understanding the way in which the different cultural worlds (the adult's and the child's) are played out in the forensic interview is the notion of membership categorisation. Sacks (1992: 41) notes:

If we're going to describe members' activities, and the way they produce activities and see activities and organise their knowledge about them, then we're going to have to find out how they go about choosing among the available sets of categories for grasping some event.

The choice made among the available options is vital to reveal the orientations that the adult interviewer and the child adopt in constructing and producing the world they live in. And, this can be done through Sacks' three part method of analysis 1) obtaining a commonsense understanding of the activity, 2) by using the pre-existing tool (such as sequence organisation, repair, etc) and 3) making the observations strange for purpose of the analysis. In this way, the commonsense understandings are used to 'decompose' the ordinary sense and then they are put together again to be 'reunderstood' in culturally specific ways. This mode of understanding is especially

vital in the context of understanding the different cultural worlds in the forensic interview. From an adult point of view, many assumptions and predetermined, preconceived notions are played out during the interview without the interviewer even being aware of such notions. From the child's point of view, such assumptions and preconceptions may be an alienating phenomenon. Such tacit understandings are also very important for training and guideline implementation purposes as they most certainly would allow the interviewers to be more self-aware about their own adult cultural perceptions.

Specifically, Sacks talks about 'class' or 'classes' for a topic. He suggests that one basic way that 'topical talk' is designed is using co-class membership. He comments (1992: 757)

A given part of an utterance can be analysed to find that it has some (actually many) class status. Having found some class status for that given item, one may in the next utterance present such a term as it stands in co-class membership with a term used in the last. So A talks about cigars, B can talk about pipes.

However, Sacks does acknowledge that cigars and horses may also be co-class members as can virtually any members be co-members of a class. However, what is essential is that it is the topic at hand that will determine their co-class membership status.

Membership categorisation analysis is an activity that has to be carried out in the local context of the interaction. Hester and Eglin (1997) argue that membership categorisation devices are "in situ achievements of members' practical actions and practical reasoning" (p.21). Here members of categories are grouped together with others in the course of their being used. In this way, each group is constituted through

its particular context and not from an external grouping mechanism that states how a particular grouping should be formed. This grouping can also be recognised because it is used as such in the local context of the interaction.

Sacks (1972) provides an example of this tool with the example 'The baby cried. The mommy picked it up'. We are able to make the judgement that the mommy is the baby's mommy and that the baby was picked up because it cried. This is the sort of inference that is made between the words and the social arrangements they represent. Therefore, Sacks suggests that words can work as 'devices' that force a set of otherwise random objects into a 'category' with 'members'. So in the example above, 'baby' and 'mommy' are membership categories (MC) which make up the membership categorisation device (MCD) of 'family'. Such is the inference mechanism that is used by the listeners to make sense of utterances. In addition, this category machinery is complemented by the notion of category-bound activities (CBA) which attempts to describe how certain activities were common-sensically tied to specific categories and devices (e.g. the activity of crying is tied to the category 'baby' as being a normative behaviour of a baby as opposed to maybe another activity such as 'smoking'). Sacks' initial ideas of categories or description involved a conceptualisation of an array of 'collections' or a shared 'stock of common-sense knowledge' which membership categorisation devices were seen to encapsulate. For Sacks, therefore, such categorisations and their devices formed part of the common-sensical framework of members' methods and recognisable capacities of practical sense making. Further, as Drew (1978: 3) states:

An importance of Membership Categories is that they are a conventional basis for ascribing activities (and other characteristics) to persons. Given that a

person, group etc., may be characterised in an indefinite number of ways, in someone's activity a speaker may depict that person with that category which is, conventionally, especially relevant to doing that activity.

As an analytical tool then, this is useful for analysing the way in which both the police interviewer and the child are orientating to the various concepts within the interview context. For example an ordinary notion such as 'dad' and how this notion of 'dad' is conceptualised by both the child and the adult can be ascertained from the way in which lexical items surrounding the talk about 'dad' takes place. Such analysis can reveal that even this basic and prevalent taken-for-granted notion of 'dad' and what it represents can be conceptualised differently in the adult and the child's world. However, what is important is that the variations of such notion arise from their context of use rather than predetermined categorisations.

Watson (1997) points out that, in a sense, sequential organisation and membership categorisation in interactions are "two sides of the same coin" (p.73). So, while membership categorisations in talk comprise examples of our commonsense knowledge of social categories which are done through sequence organisations, sequence organisation provides a realisation of how those categories are made relevant in the unfolding talk.

Edwards (1997:250) argues that "approaches to categories and categorization are closely linked to notions of cultural knowledge". Cultural knowledge, in effect, is ways in which ordinary people categorise and understand things and events including human actions and mental experiences. Undoubtedly, such categorising will be very different for the two participants in the forensic interview, not only because they come

from different cultural worlds (adult and child) but also because they might come from different socioeconomic backgrounds. Such differences would come across in the way they might orient to the various notions of family, relationships, friendships, play activities, etc.

In the context of the current data, the review in Chapter 2 has shown that the cultural knowledge of the child and the adult are bound in very different ways. However, it is not the purpose of the present study to discuss these forms of cultural knowledge based on analytical categories that are predetermined by the analyst. As Edwards (1997:251) suggests, this would result in “important features of common-sense understanding [being] systematically obscured, such that we are left with nothing but abstracted cognitive sense-making to explain the data”.

The purpose of analysing the data in Chapters 6, 7 and 8 is to study ways in which cultural knowledge is constructed, established and shared as an interactional achievement. By explicating how cultural norms are represented – the ways in which the participants come with and make up categories and categorisations- it is possible to gain further insights into the complexities of the interview interaction. This approach provides an analytical tool to investigate what it is to be (or not to be, as the case may be) a cultural member of the adult world and the child’s world. In this way, the constitutive nature of the cultural norms can be studied using empirical data.

Membership categorisation analysis will be used in Chapter 8 to examine the various ways in which the differing cultural worlds of the adult and the child are constituted

in the interview interaction and how such a constitution might give rise to an asynchronous relationship in the forensic interview.

4.7 Chapter Summary

In this chapter, I have presented my methodological framework and procedures. I started by providing a description of the data collection procedure as well as information about the data corpus. I explicated two main procedures involved in data presentation: the anonymisation of the data transcript and the transcription procedure involved. I explained my rationale for using a high level of anonymisation procedure and how I have used pragmatic decision making to avoid compromising the analytic task involved. I have also reflected upon my transcription procedure and acknowledged that this involved a certain degree of subjectivity.

Then I presented the methodological framework and explained my choice for adopting the conversation analytic approach for studying 'discursive listening'. I discussed how the basic structures of conversational analysis correlate with the notion of discursive listening' and can provide insight into the meaning that unfolds sequence by sequence in the interview interaction. I outlined the various structures of analysis within conversation analysis such as turn-taking, sequence organisation, repair and membership categorisation and how these enable my analysis to go beyond the linguistic level and provide an account of the discursive listening practices in terms of the various actions and activities that are being played out in the interaction. I concluded by providing a brief overview of the shortcomings that could be attributed to this research based on the choice of the conversational approach and discussing the limited focus of this research.

Chapter 5 The Role of Response Tokens in Facilitating Listening in Police Interviews with Children

5.1 Introduction

In this chapter I will examine the way in which listening is practised in terms of offering opportunities for the child to continue speaking and making the child's answer clear to non-present overhearers. In this respect, I will analyse the way in which response tokens are used in the police interviews with children. These response tokens are frequently provided by police interviewers immediately after the child has given an answer to a question asked by the police interviewer in the prior turn. These response tokens occur at the turn initial position of the interviewer's response after the child's answer. Such tokens can occur in a single form, as in 'okay', 'right', 'I see', 'Mhm' 'yeah' or in a composite form as in 'right. Okay'. These response tokens may also occur in varying intonational shapes such as falling intonation ('okay.'), falling rising intonation ('ok↓↑ay') or rising intonation ('Yeah?').

The varying functions of each of these response types have been discussed in Chapter 2. Hence, it is not the purpose of this analysis to reproduce the individual functions of each of these responses in the police interview context. It also does not seek to address the distribution or trend of such occurrences. Instead, I intend to investigate the environment in which a response token is chosen by the listener i.e. police interviewer, what follows these tokens and what kinds of turns make such tokens the relevant next response. I argue that the examination of this environment is important as it will provide insights into the ways in which listening is being done, relevant to the institutional context of these interviews. Such insights are instrumental in providing an account of the listening practices in the police interviews of the present

corpus of data.

In line with this, the focus of my analysis is to explicate three types of interactional achievement of these response tokens relevant to the overall organisation goal of the interview with child witnesses. In section 5.2, I will look at examples which illustrate how the token responses act as turn yielding devices. Turn yielding or providing opportunity for the child to take the floor is a central part of a listening practice. I will focus on three different ways in which turns are yielded to the child in these police interviews namely by using response tokens (1) as continuers, (2) as sequence-closing thirds and (3) in summary sequences. In section 5.3, I will examine instances where response tokens influence the affective dimension of listening. This is done by avoiding complete affiliation as well as disaffiliation and thereby allowing the interviewer to maintain a neutral stance as laid down by the interview guidelines. In section 5.4, I will analyse examples of interaction where response tokens act to provide clarity to the non-present overhearers. Here, token responses act as devices to delay the next questioning turn through various paralinguistic features. They also act as phasing devices to distinguish individual answers given by the child, as suggested by Atkinson and Drew (1979). And finally in section 5.5, I will discuss the implications that these have on listening, generally, and forensic interviewing specifically.

5.2 Yielding Turns as a Practice of Listening

A fundamental aspect of listening to the child involves the way in which police interviewers yield turns to the child during the interview in order to provide as much opportunity as possible for the child to take the floor and provide details of the alleged

incident. One obvious way to do this is by asking the child questions. The asking of questions selects the child as the next speaker and when the child answers, the turn is yielded to the child. This provides the child with the opportunity to provide further details of the alleged incident and promotes the progress of the telling. This aspect of turn transfer will be dealt with in Chapters 6 & 7. The transfer of speakership, on the other hand, may not always be straightforward as some children may refuse to take the floor and may not disclose details of the alleged incident. This aspect of turn transfer will be examined in further depth in Chapter 8.

This chapter will be concerned with another means of yielding turns to the child. i.e. in the third turn. This occurs after the child has completed her answering turn and before the next line of questioning is pursued by the interviewer. Specifically, I will examine the way in which response tokens, used in turn initial positions, can act as devices to yield turn to the child in the police interview.

5.2.1 Continuing the Progressivity of Current Talk

One way in which the police officer yields turns over to the child is by providing response tokens at turn initial position. The following fragment provides an example of this.

Fragment 5.1

((In6-Female, Ch9- Female Aged 7))

55 In6: Right. so where was daddy.
56 (2.0)
57 Ch9: out chubbin with mummy.
58 In6: Out clubbin?
59 Ch9: ((nods))/(0.5)
60 → In6: °right°°okay°
61 (0.5)
62 Ch9: goin out- (0.5) f'r a drink.
63 In6: f'r a drink right,okay,so, who else was in-in the
64 house, when you got back.

In Fragment 5.1, In6 first designs a questioning turn in line 55. Using the current speaker selects next option, this questioning turn makes it relevant for Ch9 to take up the answering turn. Ch9 produces a relevant answer in line 57 after a 2 second gap. However her pronunciation of the lexical item 'chubbin' is somewhat unclear and in the next turn In6 initiates a repair by offering a candidate repair solution 'clubbin'. In the next turn Ch9 accepts this solution by answering with a nod. Then In6 self selects the next turn by producing the response tokens 'right' and 'okay' (line 60). This is followed by a 0.5 second delay. It can be noted that after this point, it becomes relevant for either In6 as current speaker to self-select the next turn or Ch9 as next speaker to self-select the next turn. It then turns out that Ch9 self-selects to continue and produces another unit of telling, 'goin out (0.5) f'r a drink' ('line 62) which attends to the earlier trouble source. Ch9 has initiated a repair of the trouble source by clarifying what she means by 'chubbin'. In this way, she treats In6's pronunciation check as a problem with understanding and provides an explanation of this term.

An important outcome of the production of the response tokens in line 60 is that topical talk by Ch9 is promoted without using the 'current speaker selects next' option. The promotion of such talk provides more opportunities for the non-present overhearers to 'make their own conclusions' about Ch9's credibility as witness and the veracity of her evidence. The progressivity of talk has been possible because the response tokens act as single lexical turn constructional units after which it becomes transitionally relevant for the current speaker to self-select or the next speaker to self-select. This throws open the floor for the child to take up speaker rights, if she should choose to do so. In this way, the interviewer is able to yield her turn to the child to produce more turn constructional units and in effect promote the progressivity of the

telling.

In the next fragment, I show how the use of response tokens in turn initial positions can act to facilitate further tellings of the alleged incident.

Fragment 5.2

((In6-Female, Ch9- Female Aged 7))

06 Ch9: I came home from [place]right?
07 In6: Yeah=
08 Ch9: =Kimberley was in bed
09 In6: °right.°
10 Ch9: she woke up (.) chryin (.) and she poo:ed (0.2) Donovan
11 sma:cked her (0.5) really ha:rd.
12 → In6: °right.°=
13 Ch9: =all over, 'n (.) then an (.) then, he sended her in
14 the (.) ba:th (.)roo:m (.) I was sneakin in there, t'see
15 what was ha:ppenin, an- he said, that he in time he- I-
16 will sma:ck (0.5)me as we:ll
17 → In6: right.
18 Ch9: an (.) I did wen in an, he put her in the loo,an made a
19 bo'tle, taked her upstai:rs >I wen upstairs< f- what's
20 happenin, an he said 'Get down now Carol (0.5)'n she was
21 asleep when I wen up in there next.

In this Fragment, Ch9 is providing an account of the alleged incident involving the alleged perpetrator and her sister, Kimberley. In lines 12 and 17, In6 responds with response tokens 'right'. This occurs just after the transition relevance place in Ch9's multi-unit turn and since the turn constructional unit at that point is possibly complete it becomes relevant for In6 as next speaker to self-select to speak next.

I will now examine Ch9's telling before the production of these response tokens. In lines 10 to 11, Ch9 discloses a series of actions that occurred - 'she woke up', she pooed', 'Donovan smacked her really hard'. The last of these units contains a key point of allegation. Therefore, at this point, the turn constructional unit is grammatically, intonationally and pragmatically complete and therefore the telling could have reached a point of possible completion. But this does not mean that Ch9

does not have further tellings to provide about subsequent events after that. At this point in Ch9's turn, it is not entirely possible to anticipate whether her telling of the alleged incident is complete or not. Further, if there is more relevant information that Ch9 could go on to disclose, In9 may not want to prevent her from doing so.

Similarly in lines 13 to 16, Ch9 produces a rather extended multiunit turn, providing further details by disclosing another series of actions following the earlier ones. In the last unit of her turn, she provides another key point of allegation about how he threatened to smack her as well and this makes her turn, again, possibly complete at this point.

Therefore, at both these points of transition relevance places, two possibilities arise. One, Ch9 could very well be in the middle of an extensive multi-unit turn and may go on to produce further turns to continue her telling or, two, she has made the point she wants to make in her telling and has therefore completed her turn. And it is at these points that In6 as next speaker self-selects to take up the turn and produces a single lexical turn constructional unit using the response token 'right'. By so doing, it provides another opportunity for Ch9 as next speaker to self-select to produce further units and therefore provide further tellings. This leads to the promotion of the progressivity of talk by the child. Such a design allows Ch9 to go on talking until she does not self-select any more after the response tokens are provided by In6.

Furthermore, it can be observed that in lines 12 and 17, the response tokens 'right' with a downward intonation acknowledge receipt of the information in the Ch9's prior turn, i.e. her telling related to the alleged incident. As both the response tokens occur

after the key point of allegation that Ch9 has made in her telling, they are responsive to the emotional tone of that prior turn. Therefore, in all of these senses they act as a sequence-completing third turn. However, because Ch9 self-selects to take the next turn in both cases, these response tokens then become ‘continuers’ in that they decline a fuller turn of talk and acknowledge that the child might be in an extended turn. So the sequence-closing third in this case gets (re)designated as a continuer by virtue of the child self-selecting the next turn.

In the next section, I show how the closure of talk can also be facilitated through the use of the same response tokens by focussing on a different sequential role played by these. Such closures are achieved when further tellings are no longer forthcoming from the child.

5.2.2 Facilitating a Non-Partisan Closure of Talk

Fragment 5.3

((In6-Female, Ch9- Female Aged 7))

18 Ch9: an (.) I did wen in an, he put her in the loo, an made a
 19 bo'tle, taked her upstai:rs >I wen upstairs< f- what's
 20 happenin, an he said 'Get down now Carol (0.5)'n she was
 21 asleep when I wen up in there next.
 22 → In6: °oka:y°
 23 (2.1)
 24 → alright.
 25 (0.8)
 26 you've told me a:wful lot of things there, haven
 27 you?
 28 Ch9: ((nods))/(0.8)
 29 In6: 'n er- you can remember things very we:ll,
 30 .hhh so- what I'm gonna try 'n do, (0.5) is to go
 31 back, (.)to the beginnin (0.5) an just ask a >few little
 32 questions< so th't (0.5) I know who is who. y-you
 33 mentioned Kimberley, (.) who is Kimberley,

In lines 20-21 in Ch9's telling there is a narrative resolution in the series of events that Ch9 is recounting. Her statement that her sister, Kimberley, was asleep when she went

upstairs later provides a resolution (or at least a temporary reprieve) to the altercation between the alleged perpetrator and her sister. This signals that the telling of the alleged abusive incident is over and therefore that the telling itself is also hearable as complete.

It can be noted that In6 does not immediately formulate the next questioning turn after the telling in line 21. In lines 22 and 24, In6 provides response tokens, both accompanied with a delay at the point of transition relevance, before going on to form the next questioning turn in line 26. In this way, she delays the move into the next questioning turn. This provides Ch9 the opportunity to take the floor if she so wishes. In this case, Ch9 does not do so and so In6 as current speaker ends up self-selecting the next turn to design another questioning turn.

So the completion of the telling here is achieved in a non-partisan manner whereby In6 provides at least two opportunities for Ch9 to take the floor before self selecting herself to design the next questioning turn. The completion of the talk is brought about by Ch9's lack of uptake in producing further disclosures. In this way, In6 ensures that Ch9 is provided with ample opportunities to take up speakership and hence promote the progressivity of the talk further before drawing it to a close.

Another point to note is that because Ch9 as next speaker does not self-select, the response tokens 'right' and 'okay' get designated as sequence-completing third turns where the interviewer claims a hearing of the prior turn and acknowledges understanding of this turn and then proceeds to design a new unit of questioning. Unlike the previous section where the response tokens function as 'continuers', in this

fragment they are sequence-closing thirds. The response tokens play a different role in terms of sequential organisation by virtue of lack of uptake by Ch9.

In the next fragment, I show how another form of non-partisan closure to a telling can be achieved, chiefly brought about by the child's uptake rather than the lack of it.

Fragment 5.4

((In2-Female, Ch2- Female Aged 4))

1 In2: She's good,
2 °Alright then°.
3 Ch2: Cos she's got a patch in her eye and stuff
4 In2: She's got a patch in her eye=
5 → Ch2: =ye[ah
6 In2: [what's the matter with her eye then.
7 Ch2: We:ll (0.8) she needs new glasses and she's got one=
8 → In2: =yeah=
9 Ch2: =and she's got another patch she had a big one=
10 → In2: =Yeah=
11 Ch2: an now she's got er- (0.5) wha- what she had to go to bed
12 with=
13 → In2: =Mhmm
14 Ch2: and that's all about it
15 In2: Ri:ght. I see. There's somethin else I forgotten to ask
16 you(0.2)right.>do you know< when you said you were in the
17 ba:th and granddad fumbles you okay.
18 What're you wearin at that time
19 Ch2: Nothin
20 In2: You're not wearin anything `re you.

In Fragment 5.4, Ch2 is describing the eyepieces that her grandmother wears. In lines 7, 9 and 11-12 she provides details of the different types of eyepieces. It is not evident from Ch2's telling whether or not she has completed her multiunit turn. There is no final intonation in Ch2's utterance in line 12 and the telling itself does not have a climax that would indicate to the listener that the telling is complete. Also, the question deals with the problem with her grandmother's eye. Ch2's answer does not specifically address the issue of the problem with the eye but rather it deals with the eyepieces that her grandmother wears. Therefore, it is not possible from this form of telling to gauge whether the narrative resolution or the climax has been reached in the interaction.

In2 displays her understanding that Ch2 is in an extended telling by providing continuers at lines 5, 8, 10 and 13. Each of these continuers are signalled with latching that show that In2 is closely monitoring Ch2's turn construction and comes in quickly at the point of possible turn completion. Therefore, in this case, use of the continuer at these transition relevance places yields the turn over to Ch2 in order to promote further talk by her.

An interesting observation in the above fragment is that Ch2 also exhibits her understanding of the function of the response token 'Mhmm'. In line 14, Ch2 says 'and that's all about it', indicating that she has finished her extended telling. In this way Ch2 shows that she understands In2's 'mhmm' in line 13 is meant to signal that she can continue to say more. Ch2 does go on to take the turn as implied by the production of the response token 'mhmm' but in doing so explicitly states that she has no more to say. In response to this, In2 proceeds to provide the response token, 'right I see' (line 15) and proceeds to design the next questioning turn on a new topic. In this way In2 displays not only that she has understood that Ch2 has completed her extended turn but also that the sequence itself is complete and that a new line of questioning can now be initiated. As such, this line of talk reaches closure due to Ch2's initiative to articulate that she has no more to say.

5.2.3 The Role of Response Tokens in Promoting Progressivity of Talk

Two important issues will be considered at this point. The first concerns the turn-taking organisation and the second concerns sequential organisation and how in this case, one impinges on the other.

5.2.3.1 Turn Allocations

First, I will discuss the turn-taking organisation in these forensic interviews. The use of the single lexical turn constructional unit, i.e. response tokens such as 'right' 'okay', 'yeah', 'mhhh' at transition relevance places makes it relevant for the child (as next speaker) to self-select to speak next if she chooses to do so. And in Fragments 5.1 and 5.2 I have shown that the child does indeed self-select and produces further multi-unit turns and therefore produces further tellings related to the alleged incident. Additionally, it can be noted that if the child as next speaker does not choose to self-select, then the interviewer could choose to self-select to continue with the next questioning turn, as shown in Fragment 5.3. In Fragment 5.4, I illustrated how the child can choose to self-select the turn in order to articulate that she has no more to say, hence bringing the sequence of talk to a close.

In this way, response tokens, acting as single lexical turn constructional units, make it possible for the child as next speaker to self-select the next turn without having to answer any question in particular. The option to continue the telling is available for the child if she should choose to do so. Also to be noted is that there is no real 'pressure' on the child to self-select the next turn as there might be when the child is required to produce a second pair part answer to the first pair part question in the prior questioning turn. This is because at the transition relevance place after the single lexical turn constructional unit, the option is available for both the interviewer and the child to self-select on an equivalent level. This is unlike the current speaker select next option where if the interviewer does select the child to speak next (through questions, for example), and it is really the child who has to take up the turn and if she does not do so then this leads to interactional difficulties (as will be discussed in more

detail in Chapter 8)

A diagrammatic view of this turn-taking system is shown below:

(1) Response token (RT) → Child Takes up turn → Response token → Child takes up turn

(2) Response Token → Child does not take up turn → Interviewer Designs next Questioning turn

The upshot of this type of structural organisation is that there flexibility in the turn allocation system in forensic interviews. Turns are yielded to the child not solely based on current speaker select next option i.e. where the interviewer asks the child a question. The child can take the floor after the third turn to provide further details without feeling pressured by undue silences. The interviewer also suffers less risk of being interrupted by the child while designing the next questioning turn as could be the case if no response token is produced in the third turn. Furthermore, the use of the response tokens in turn initial positions allows for a non-partisan closure of the current line of talk. Both the interviewer and the child have an equal chance of terminating talk on the current topic.

Hence, the turn-taking organisation in the forensic interview provides ample opportunities for the child to provide further telling. This promotes the progressivity of talk and achieves the purpose of the forensic interview, which is to provide as much opportunity as possible for a disclosure in the child's own words. The more talk the child produces in the interview, the more opportunities the non-present overhearers have of 'drawing their own conclusions' about the child's competence as a witness and the veracity of her evidence.

5.2.3.2 Sequential Role

Now I will discuss the second aspect of the role of response tokens through their sequential organisation. The sequential role played by the response tokens 'right' and 'okay' with downward intonations as 'continuers' or 'sequence-closing thirds' cannot be predetermined. Their role is renegotiated on a moment-to-moment basis based on the turn-taking organisation. It is fundamentally more important to examine how these response tokens achieve these roles interactively within the context of forensic interviews. The role that they play is context dependent because the designation of this role depends on whether or not the child does self-select the turn after the single lexical turn construction unit is produced by the interviewer. In cases where the child does take up the turn, the response tokens become 'continuers' which serve as bridges between two turn constructional units or in the case of tellings, two multi-unit turn constructional units.

However, in cases where the child does not self-select, and the interviewer self-selects to continue with the next questioning turn, these response tokens become 'sequence-closing thirds'.

So the response tokens - 'right' and 'okay' - here oscillate between acting as 'continuers' (when the child self-selects to design further turns after the response tokens) and acting as 'receipt tokens' or sequence-closing third (when the interviewer self-selects to design further turns be it to produce more response tokens or the new questioning turns).

I suggest, then, that there is a third variety of role played by the response tokens and

this is the role of 'turn yielders' i.e. they function to provide the child with the opportunity to take the floor. This turns out to be a very useful mechanism because, as has been mentioned earlier, it is not always possible to anticipate whether the child has completed the turn or not at the point of possible turn transition relevance place. By using response tokens, the interviewer is able to cater for both possibilities by modulating between producing a response token which can be both a 'continuer' and a 'receipt token', depending on whether the child self-selects to design the next turn or not.

Progressivity of talk by the child, in short, is a collaborative and interactional achievement. Both the police interviewer's use of turn yielding devices and the child's initiative to take the floor are important for its success. If the child does not take up the floor after the response tokens that opportunity for the child to speak is lost.

In the next fragment, I show how token responses are used to further the telling albeit in a different direction from the previous line of talk.

5.2.4 Continuing the Progressivity of Talk in a Different Direction

Fragment 5.5

((In4-Female, Ch4- Female Aged 5))

01 In4: Oh right, So who lives- who lives with Nanny Dot then.
02 Ch4: my gransha,
03 In4: Yeah,
04 Ch4: my Nanny,
05 In4: Yeah,
06 Ch4: my daddy,
07 In4: → †Oh ri:ght, your daddy lives there, does he?
08 Ch4: Did the police told you what my daddy done.

In Fragment 5.5, Ch4 is listing the people who live with her grandmother. In4 shows that she is attentive to the turn in progress by providing the continuers 'yeah' with a continuing intonation in lines 03 and 05. These continuers display receipt of the details being provided by Ch4, while at the same time, they are designed to propose that Ch4's list of details is not complete and therefore aims to elicit further talk from Ch4.

In line 07, In4 provides the composite response token 'oh right' with a fall-rise intonation at the turn initial position and this is followed by a tag question to confirm that Ch4's father lives at the place. In this way, In4 breaks the continuity of the extended turn by focusing on a specific topic and newsmarking it. The 'oh right' receipt also does not prompt further listing of details from Ch4. Additionally, in her turn in line 08, Ch4 does not provide a confirmation to In4's confirmation check in line 07. Instead, Ch4 solicits information about whether In4 is aware of what her father had done. This shifts the topic of the interaction in a specific way because Ch4 has initiated the topic about the alleged incident. So in this way, the 'oh right' in line 07 acts as a 'change of state token' (Heritage, 1984) where it is usually used to accept prior talk as informative. The composite of response token 'oh right', in this case then does not act as a sequence-closing third or as a continuer. Its role is more significant in closing the sequence of the prior turns and initiating a new sequence of talk that then leads into the topic relevant to the global agenda of the interview – an account of the alleged incident.

Therefore, in this fragment, the listing by Ch4 is halted by In4's production of the composite response token and her subsequent check to confirm that her father lives at

her grandmother's house. There is a shift to the topic of Ch4's father and the alleged abusive incident. In this sense, the opportunity for the child to take the floor is maintained by the current speaker select next option i.e. though the confirmation check produced by In4. However, the direction of the talk itself gets shifted to another line of talk relevant to the organisational goal of the interview. The shift in direction of talk is also a collaborative achievement as although it is the interviewer who initiates this shift with the production of the 'change of state token', it is Ch4 who also promotes this talk by designing her next turn to ask if In4 was aware of the alleged incident.

In all the examples thus far, it can be noted that response tokens such as 'yeah', 'mhm' 'alright', 'okay' and 'oh right' have differentiated functions in the interaction based on the positions in which they occur. 'Yeah' and 'mhm' with continuing intonation both act to allow the child to continue with the current line of talk whereas 'oh right' here also acts to provide the opportunity to the child to speak but in a different direction than the original line of talk. 'Right' and 'okay' with a downward intonation can act as 'turn yielders' by providing a choice for the child to continue talk if she so wishes. In all of these ways, these response tokens allow for the child to accept speaking rights to promote the progressivity of talk.

In the next section, I show how turns can be yielded to the child using the response token 'yeah?' with a rising intonation in summary sequences.

5.2.5 Setting the Scene for Further Talk – Response Tokens in Summary Sequences

Another way in which turns can be yielded to the child is through summarising as the following two fragments illustrate.

Fragment 5.6

((In5-Female, Ch5- Female Aged 6))

01 In5: Okay, so: Lisa an big Sam went out to the pub (.)
02 Ch5: ((nod))/(1.0)
03 In5: 'n Tom stayed in with you:,
04 Ch5: ((nod))/(1.0)
05 → In5: 'n your two brothers, 'n little Sam.(.) yeah?
06 Ch5: ((nods))/(1.5)
07 In5: 'n you watched the telly,
08 Ch5: ((nod))/(1.0)
09 In5: 'n you played some games,
10 Ch5: ((nod))/(2.2)
11 In5: wha:t abou:t er- eating.
12 (0.7)

In Fragment 5.6, In5 summarises the details of the sequence of events that has been recounted by Ch5. This involves repeating the details that Ch5 had provided in the previous questioning sequence. Each piece of detail is followed by a transition relevance place indicated by continuing intonation, stretched last syllable or silences. The first detail 'Lisa an big Sam went out to the pub' is followed by a continuing intonation and a silence. The second detail 'an Tom stayed in with you:' is followed by a stretch on the last item of the turn constructional unit. The third detail, 'an your two brothers' is followed by a continuing intonation. The fourth detail ' little Sam' is followed by a silence and finally a confirmation check 'yeah?' with a rising intonation. Ch5 provides a non verbal agreement through her nod at the mention of each of these details.

In5 then continues to list further details given by Ch5 in the same manner in lines 07 and 09. It is interesting to observe that each of these details is followed by a transition

relevance place which allows Ch5 to take up the turn if she wanted. Each of these transition relevance places is signalled by the various paralinguistic features such as a gap, stretching as well as continuing intonation. In this way, between lines 01 -11, Ch5 has been given five opportunities to take the floor. In each of these cases, Ch5 takes up the turn with the non-verbal gesture of nodding. However, she chooses not to give any additional details and thus passes the turn back to In5.

In terms of the turn design of the summary sequence, it can be observed that In5 is pulling together items to show that Lisa and Big Sam, who are two adults, were out in the pub. Therefore, there is evidence that Tom (the alleged perpetrator) was the only other adult in the house. The pulling together of these items in itself does not perform any blame implicative work (cf. Drew, 1992).

In the courtroom context, Drew (1992) demonstrates how the defence lawyer selectively brings together parts from the witnesses' testimony (i.e. contrasting pieces of information) and juxtaposes them in such a way as to generate a puzzle. The implication of this puzzle discredits the veracity of the witness' evidence. These damaging inferences are not explicitly stated and are implicitly left for the non-present overhearers to draw conclusions.

In this fragment, there is no such generation of a puzzle in the selection of items for the summary sequence. These items, however, do function to situate the alleged incident in a context where no adult other than the alleged perpetrator was present in the house. Unlike the summary sequence in Drew's (1992) example which was a completion of a line of questioning, in this case it acts as a 'take off point' for the

actual telling of the alleged incident. In other words, the pulling together of these items sets the scene for the telling of the alleged incident. As such, this summary sequence does have an organisational relevance, as it were, and is not simply a random pulling together of facts. It can also have a potentially damaging effect for the alleged perpetrator's case as the jury is left to draw its conclusion about the vulnerable situation of which he is accused of taking advantage.

Fragment 5.7

((In1-Female, Ch1- Female Aged 5))

101 In1: When you were four, Right.
102 → so you said (.) grandda:d ra:n the ba:th,yeah?
103 Ch1: (nods)
104 In1: an put the toys- toys in the ba:th,
105 → ye:ah?
106 (0.9)
107 °Did you say that° (I don't think see-)
108 because, I'm not sure whether my memory
109 is quite as good as you:rs.
110 So granddad put the toys in the ba:th,
111 Ch1: (nods/(0.5))
112 In1: and he- you- he put you in the ba:th?
113 Ch1: Not (.) granddad in there (pointing to the adjoining
114 room), but my different granddad.
115 In1: Your different granddad the granddad with nanny,
116 is it?
117 Ch1: Yeah.
118 In1: Right. Okay, So think back now for me
119 I haven't been in nanny's house see,
120 have I?.

In Fragment 5.7, from lines 01 to 10, In1 is summarising the sequence of events by repeating the details that Ch1 had provided in the prior segment of the interview. In lines 02 and 04, there are transition relevance places after the details in her summary list indicated through her continuing intonation and stretched pronunciation of 'ba:th'. There is no response (either verbally or non-verbally) from Ch1 at both these transition relevance places. In1 then provides the response token 'yeah?' with a rising intonation to indicate a confirmation check in lines 102 and 105. Unlike Fragment 5.6, where the confirmation check was used after producing a series of details in the

summary list, here the confirmation check is provided after the listing of each detail in the summary sequence. It appears then that a confirmation check, being a more explicit form of checking if that item in the summary list is accurate, is produced when a response is not given by the child during the designated transition relevance place in such a summary sequence. Ch1 nods in agreement in line 103 after the first confirmation check. In1 then continues with the second detail in her summary list and again makes a second confirmation check when Ch1 does not provide a response at the point of transition relevance place. In1 produces the token response 'yeah' with a rising intonation in line 105. When there is still no uptake from Ch1 after this confirmation check, In1 then designs the turn to explicitly ask for confirmation 'did you say that?' (line 107) and provides a reason for asking for these details again - because her memory was not as good as Ch1's.

She then goes on to repeat the last detail in the prior summary sequence, again with a stretched articulation of 'ba:th'. This time Ch1 nods at the transition relevance place and then In1 goes on to produce another detail in the summary sequence, 'he put you in the ba:th?' emphasising 'you' and ending the utterance with a rising intonation to indicate that she is asking for confirmation.

At this point Ch1 takes the floor by offering a clarification of a detail in In1's summary sequence. This turn by Ch1 does not provide the confirmation of the action as requested by In1 in the prior turn. Instead, Ch1 clarifies that the grandfather she is referring to is a different one from the one who is present in the room adjoining the interviewing suite. However, the point to be noted is that this form of summary sequence provides ample transition relevance place opportunities. This, in turn,

provides Ch1 as next speaker with a chance to take the floor and correct or dispute any of details in summary sequence produced by In1. In this case, Ch1 gets the opportunity to provide clarification on the identity of the alleged perpetrator – a forensically relevant piece of information.

In terms of the selection of details for the summary sequence, In1 pulls together details that consist of the sequence of events leading up to the alleged abusive incident. So, as with Fragment 5.6, the pulling together of details seeks to provide the context for the way in which the alleged incident occurred and does not in itself imply blame but leaves the implication for the jury to draw conclusions about the vulnerability of the situation that Ch1 was placed in.

It can be noted then, that these summary sequences are markedly different from the ones described by Drew (1992) where the questioner is said to have ‘first rights’ to pull together the evidence and ‘draw conclusions’ (p: 507). In those circumstances, the questioner is said to have the power over the witness who does not have the choice in the way the evidence is put together or have control over the meaning brought by these conclusions. In the courtroom cross-examination, the lawyer selects the items which are potentially damaging to the witness’ testimony and the witness has no control over the way in which the connections are made between these items or over the inferences that may be drawn from such combination of items. The witness’ recourse to rebuttal lies in the turn after the lawyer has finished asking the question.

In these data, however, we can see that there is much less control over the pulling together of the items. Firstly, the items that the interviewer selects are not contrasting

items that can be damaging to the veracity of the witness' testimony. Rather they are items disclosed by the child earlier and act to set the scene for the disclosure of the alleged incident. Secondly, the listing of each of the items is followed by possible transition relevance places providing the child with the opportunity to correct or dispute if necessary. Thirdly, the summary sequences do not function to imply blame or guilt but rather to provide a point of reference for a further telling of the sequence of events in the alleged incident. Therefore data from the forensic interviews display a more proportionate distribution of speaking rights where the meaning in the summary of evidence is negotiated between the interviewer and the child and does not rely only on the 'first speaker' rights and inferences drawn based on the selection of the summary items. Although, the jury is still seen to draw conclusions based on the vulnerability of the situation presented in the selection of items in the summary sequence, it does not seek to discredit the veracity of the testimony provided by the child.

5.2.6 Summary of Response Tokens as a Turn Yielding Device

In this section, I have explicated two main ways in which response tokens function to facilitate a more proportionate distribution of speaking rights between the interviewer and the child. First, this is made possible through their production in turn initial positions, where response tokens act as single lexical turn constructional units to offer transition relevance place for the child to take up speaker rights. In addition, I suggested the response tokens might have specialised functions. 'Mhmm' and 'yeah' with continuing intonation can function as 'continuers' while 'okay' and 'right' have a 'turn yielding' function in these positions. Additionally I have pointed out that the composite response tokens 'oh right' can function to promote the progressivity of talk

in different direction. Second, I have shown in summary sequences, how the response token 'yeah?' with rising intonation works together with transition relevance place at the end of the listing of a detail to offer the floor to the child. This structural organisation allows the child to interject with a correction or additional detail during the summary sequence. Summary sequences offer plenty of opportunities to child to take up speakership and hence promote the progressivity of talk by the child during the forensic interview. The upshot of promoting the progressivity of talk by the child is that there is more opportunity for the present overhearers such as the jury to draw their own conclusions about the veracity of the child's testimony.

In the next section, I will examine the role of response tokens as a resource for police interviewers to maintain neutrality in the interviews.

5.3 Maintaining Neutrality

In this section I will examine the way the response tokens in the forensic interviews play an important role in managing the affective dimension of the interview. I suggest that response tokens play an important role in enabling the interviewers to maintain a neutral stance during the interview. This involves avoiding both complete affiliation as well as disaffiliation in the interview. It is only if a right balance is achieved that the child can feel secure enough to talk. Achieving this balance is crucial to promote the progressivity of talk. In this section I will, first, explicate the way response tokens serve to avoid full-scale affiliation with the child's telling. Then I will show several examples where the absence of response tokens indicates a disaffiliative feature. In this way, the presence of response tokens serves to avoid such disaffiliative features. Finally, I demonstrate how response tokens serve to delay the introduction of the

difficult next topics and in this way interviewers can avoid being disaffiliative during the interview.

5.3.1 Avoiding Outright Affiliation

Fragment 5.8

((In6-Female, Ch9- Female Aged 7))

06 Ch9: I came home from [place]right?
07 In6: Yeah=
08 Ch9: =Kimberley was in bed
09 In6: °right°
10 Ch9: she woke up (.) chryin (.) and she poo:ed (0.2) Donovan
11 sma:cked her (0.5) really ha:rd.
12 In6: °right°=
13 Ch9: =all over, 'n (.) then an (.) then, he sended her in
14 the (.) ba:th (.)roo:m (.) I was sneakin in there, t'see
15 what was ha:ppenin, an- he said, that he in time he- I-
16 will sma:ck (0.5)me as we:ll
17 In6: right.
18 Ch9: an (.) I did wen in an, he put her in the loo,an made a
19 bo'tle, taked her upstai:rs >I wen upstairs< f- what's
20 happenin, an he said 'Get down now Carol (0.5)'n she was
21 asleep when I wen up in there next.
22 In6: °oka:y°
23 (2.1)
24 alright.
25 (0.8)
26 you've told me a:wful lot of things there, haven
27 you?
28 Ch9: ((nods))/(1.0)
29 In6: 'n er- you can remember things very we:ll,
30 .hhh so- what I'm gonna try 'n do,(0.5) is to go
31 back,(.)to the beginnin (0.5) an just ask a >few little
32 questions< so th't (0.5) I know who is who. y-you
33 mentioned Kimberley, (.) who is Kimberley,

In Fragment 5.8, Ch9 provides details of the abusive incident that took place in lines 10-11. Her account evokes the seriousness of the action involved in the incident with the stretch and stress of the words 'sm:ack' and 'really ha:rd'. In lines 13-16, Ch9 continues her telling, and adds 'all over' which extends the area of body involved in the abuse. She adds that the alleged perpetrator threatened abuse on her too, again with stretch and stress of the words 'sm:ack' and 'me'. In this way, Ch9 displays the seriousness of the action that she is recounting. This telling projects a response of mortification from the listener. Such a response would display an empathetic stance

towards Ch9's plight during the alleged incident in ordinary conversational telling.

It is important to note that in this interaction In6 does not provide such a response. Instead, in line 12, In6 provides a response token 'right' uttered softly. In line 17, In6 again provides another response token 'right', this time with no apparent paralinguistic features.

Therefore, the use of response tokens in lines 12 and 17 does not display an overtly empathetic stance. The use of the response tokens 'right' at both these points displays no recognition or endorsement of the seriousness of the action that Ch9 has described. In line 12 the response token 'right' is uttered softly which does display sympathy or serves as a 'soothing mannerism' (Potter & Hepburn, 2005: 56). Although such features are built into the response tokens, they do not express full-scale action of sympathy or incredulity of the incident that Ch9 has recounted. Such paralinguistic features are important for giving a sense of acceptance and support to Ch9's telling without being completely sympathetic to the telling.

This is, of course, in line with the criteria of the interview protocol that require the interviewer to remain objective and neutral during the entire interview process. In some other context such as counselling or even ordinary parent-child interaction, the same turn would have been responded to with a marker of surprise ('Really?') or an assessment ('Oh dear') and so on. This then would have displayed recognition of the impact of the action on the child's emotions and therefore represented an empathetic stance on the part of the listener. However, due to the restrictions imposed in the interview protocol, taking such an empathetic stance is not an option as this can be

prejudicial to the case when the video recording is presented in court.

Similar findings have been found by Potter and Hepburn (2005) in calls to child protection helpline where the Child Protection Officer neither offers condemnation of the perpetrator nor sympathy for the victim immediately after the first report of abuse. Potter and Hepburn argue that in such institutional environments there can be resistance to 'mundane morality' (Potter & Hepburn, 2005: 63) which might be otherwise present in other institutional contexts.

I now move on to show how response tokens can function to avoid disaffiliation. Firstly, I will focus on the use of response tokens to avoid disaffiliation. Then, I will illustrate, by giving several examples, how the absence of response tokens can be an indication of disaffiliation.

5.3.2 Avoiding Disaffiliation

Fragment 5.9

((In8-Female, Ch10- Female Aged 8))

1 In8: so tell me a bit about (.) your old dad then.>I know his
2 name< is John Hendry,
3 (2.5)
4 Ch10: Ah er::m He- he beated my mama an (3.4)he sent me to bed
5 becos .hhh he threw a cushion at me,(0.9)an I- an I
6 (1.1) em: .hhhh(2.5) an I said (0.8) stu:pid, an >he sent
7 me to< be:d, (1.4) a::n he was lookin' cos my bampy took
8 the look- lock off the door.hhh cos er: (0.5) otherwise
9 he'd lock me in my bedroom.
10 In8:→ Right, °okay°, >so how long have you< known (.) John.
11 Ch10: All my life.

In Fragment 5.9, In8 initiates the topic Ch10's 'old dad'. She initially uses an open-ended invitation which leaves the option for answers wide open. She then uses the phrase '>I know his name< is John Hendry,' to provide a hint that she is eliciting personal details about John Hendry. In this way, the turns are designed to 'prefer' an

answer that describes personal details.

However, Ch10's answer in the following turn does not provide any such characteristic details. Instead, she orients to the relevant tellable details of the alleged incident. In8's next turn, firstly, displays understanding of the telling in the prior turn by providing the response token 'right, okay' in turn initial position (line 10). The next unit of this turn proceeds to elicit information about the length of time Ch10 has known John. The question design seeks to redirect talk back to personal details about John rather than delve into the alleged incident that occurred. By reformulating the question in this way, In8 is initiating a repair sequence to elicit talk based on the initial questioning turn in line 02. However by displaying understanding of the prior turn with the response token 'right, okay' and prefacing this question with the marker 'so', what In8 is in fact doing is making it seem as if it were a new question and therefore a new first pair part rather than a repair sequence of the initial first pair part.

In this way, In8 ratifies and accepts Ch10's answer without really having to react to, in this case, its relevance as a second pair part answer. The use of the response tokens at the turn initial position provides legitimisation for the answer that the Ch10 has given. Attention is not explicitly drawn to the fact that she has not answered the question posed in the prior turn, in the way that an utterance such as 'No, that's not what I meant. I meant how long you have known him' would have done. Such utterances can be considered as being disaffiliative in that they would indicate to the child that she has not understood the question correctly and therefore has given the wrong answer. This, of course, can be quite intimidating for the child.

Next, I go on to show several examples where the absence of response tokens can be a signal that there is a problem in accepting the position in the prior answering turn by the interactant. When response tokens are not provided, they can be followed by silences, the next questioning turn or confirmation checks. I will first explain the occurrence of silences in third turn positions using two examples, one from the courtroom and the other from the present corpus of data.

5.3.3 Doing Disaffiliation

One of the first indications of a problem or conflict in an interaction is the occurrence of gaps between turns. In order to understand why gaps or delays in responding at this point might be considered disaffiliative, I will first examine the sequential implication of such delays in a fragment from the courtroom. The following courtroom fragment from a rape trial illustrates the tactical use of gaps in cross-examination.

5.3.3.1 Silences in the Courtroom

Fragment 5.10

((Trial 1 (Matoesian 1993:146-147)))

0628 DA: Did she only have two drinks?
0629 (4.1)
0630 V: Yes- I think- if she did drink it was uh few.
0631 (1.5)
0632 DA: Not many?
0633 (0.8)
0634 V: No=
0635 DA: =But she drove right across some strange peoples
0636 lawn didn't she?
0637 (2.6)
0638 V: °Yes.
0639 (2.0)
0640 DA: She was in a pardying mood wasn't she.
0641 (2.1)
0642 V: Yes.
0643 DA: So were you weren't you.
0644 → (2.0)
0646 V: Yes
0647 → (25.2)

In lines 0635, 0640 and 0643 DA cumulatively builds the case for the fact that V and her companion were both drinking and in a ‘partying’ mood. The implication of this is that the rape was not a ‘forced’ action but was mutually initiated. The DA’s use of silence in lines 0639 and 0647 stresses V’s affirmative answer to his questions and in this way is accomplishing blame implicative work. This unspoken third turn works in a sequential environment of question-answer-gap to provide the jury with the time to “absorb” the implications of this answer without DA having to overtly explicate it (Matoesian, 1993 : 146 - 147). In this way, DA can withhold the start of the next turn to display disbelief, make blame attributions or emphasise the significance of V’s answers and hence convey the same impression to the jury.

However, it also has to be noted that such gaps, used pervasively in the courtroom context for particularly strategic purposes, also give rise to a disaffiliative relationship between DA and V, i.e. the lawyer and the witness in this case. It forms part of the hostile turn designs that are omnipresent in courtroom cross-examinations where attorneys test the credibility of the evidence given by the witnesses (Drew, 1992).

5.3.3.2 Silences in Forensic Interviews

In the police interview, the absence of response tokens in the turn initial position can also indicate problems in accepting the child’s answer in the prior turn.

Fragment 5.11

((In1-Female, Ch1- Female Aged 5))
((Ch1 is colouring a picture while talking))

01 In1: .hhh ri::ght so:: (3.0) tell me what you like to do
02 then, Lizzie.
03 Ch1: I- (0.5) like t’ have my mu:mmy.
04 → (6.0)

05 In1: You like having your mu:mmy.
 06 Ch1: ((Nods))/(4.0)
 07 In1: Ri:ght, (2.5) go:od.
 08 And what else d'you like to do
 09 Ch1: I:: (2.0) I li:ke (1.0)dra:wing an I like pla:yin
 10 In1: You like drawin an you like playin.
 11 Ch1: ((Nods))/(2.0)
 12 In1: Oh:: I see. I thought you were going t'say that cos
 13 you're (1.0) you're colourin a lovely picture an you're
 14 doing such a good job of it.

In Fragment 5.11, In1 solicits information about the things that Ch1 likes to do. Ch1's answer -'I- (0.5) like t' have my mu:mmy'- could indicate two things. She could be displaying her preference to have her mother in the interviewing room with her. Alternatively, she could be addressing In1's question and indicating her preference for doing things with her mother. It is noteworthy that Ch1's answer is followed by a 6.0-second pause, after which In1 goes on to rephrase this answer with the response 'You like having your mu:mmy'. In1 displays understanding Ch1's answer as addressing the question asked. Ch1 nods in agreement to this rephrased answer and then in the next turn, In1 provides a composite response token and proceeds to steer the topic to other things Ch1 likes to do. It seems that In1 is not keen on pursuing this topic that Ch1 has brought up about her mother.

In1 could have chosen to do further topical development on Ch1's answer by asking 'and what do you like to do with mummy'. Instead, In1 steers the topic away from the one that Ch1 has initiated. It can be observed, then, that In1 is clearly treating Ch1's answer as not appropriate for further development as she moves to the previous topic rather than pursue further the topic of Ch1's answer. In this way, Ch1's answer is being treated as not being the 'appropriate' answer to the question.

Additionally, when Ch1 provides the answer in line 09 about her preference for

'drawing' and 'playing', In1 responds with a repetition of this answer. However, this time there is no notable silence between the turns. In lines 12 -14, In1 also goes on to develop this topic further.

The avoidance of the topic involving mummy could possibly be due to the fact that this piece of interaction occurs at the rapport stage where neutral topics are to be discussed. Therefore it might be rather premature to introduce the problematic issue of the alleged incident (involving mummy) at this stage. And In1 clearly makes an attempt to move away from this problematic topic. This gap between turn transitions may indicate a problem on the part of In1 to accept the detail offered by Ch1 in the prior talk, at least in terms of the timing of this disclosure.

In the forensic interview, such delays in turn transfer after the child has completed the answering turn and before the interviewer begins the next questioning turn i.e. the third turn, in the sequential organisation can mean doubt about the believability, acceptability, appropriateness, truthfulness or accuracy of the answer provided by the child to the prior question asked by the interviewer. This can be a disaffiliative feature in the interview interaction.

The interviewer's use of response tokens such as 'okay', 'alright' and other variants just after the child's turn is completed is designed to avoid the occurrence of this delay, and thereby avoid disaffiliation. In this respect, I suggest that the response tokens are designed to accept, endorse and ratify the child's answers without questioning their accuracy, relevance, truthfulness and believability. The absence of such response tokens could lead the child to assume that the interviewer does not

believe her answers or that she has not answered correctly. She may not realise that it could just be that her answer has not been helpful to the interviewer's agenda.

In both examples above, it can be observed how a silence at the third turn can act as a sign of a problem in accepting the answer given by the child in the prior talk.

The problem of accepting the position in prior talk can also be seen when the turn after the child's answer is followed immediately by the next question with no silence or delay.

5.3.3.3 Absence of Silences in Forensic Interviews

Fragment 5.12

((In1-Female, Ch1- Female Aged 5))

240 In1: [Why were- (.) why] were you
241 shouting for help.
242 Ch1: Cos er- Nanny was chasin me down the stairs,
243 and she was ruhnnning like this.
244 (0.7)
245 In1: °Why was nanny chasing you downsta↓irs?°
246 Ch1: Cos she wanted (0.5) she wanted t'smack me.
247 In1: Why did she want to smack you?
248 Ch1: Because I wouldn' wash her bits.
249 In1: Because you wouldn't wash her bits. What do
250 you mean by bits.
251 Ch1: ((child beats her lap))
252 In1: What are bits.
253 Ch1: Body.

In Fragment 5.12, Ch1 provides an account of the alleged incident between herself and the alleged perpetrator, her Nanny. In lines 242-243, she describes how the alleged perpetrator was chasing her. Ch1's focus is on the dramatic aspect of the incident. In1's turn in line 44, first, starts with a delay of 0.7 seconds and then she focuses on the reason for the alleged perpetrator's action. Ch1's answer in line 246

gives this reason but still emphasises the dramatic aspect of the incident – ‘she wanted t’smack me’. In line 247, In1 designs the next questioning turn without any delay. She again ignores the ‘dramatic’ aspect and designs the turn to solicit information about the reason that the alleged perpetrator wanted to smack her, suggesting the answer given by the Ch1 in line 242-243 is not the one she is after.

In both turns in lines 247 and 249, the response tokens are noticeably missing. In line 245, the questioning turn is preceded by a silence. Furthermore there is a lack of alignment between the Ch1’s design of her answering turn (to show the dramatic events that took place) and In1’s design of her questioning turn (to find out what had made the alleged perpetrator want to chase and smack Ch1). These differences then emphasise the way in which In1 does not accept the relevance of Ch1’s answer to the question asked and in a sense makes a pursuit of the object in the initial questioning turn in line 240.

Further interactional features in this fragment will be analysed in greater depth in Chapter 6. For now, the point to note is that a questioning turn without a turn initial response token can be an indication that the child’s answer has not fulfilled the object of the prior questioning turn. This can mean that the interviewer does not accept the answer given by the child and this can be a disaffiliative feature in the interaction.

The absence of response token at the turn initial position can also be an indication of the tentative nature of accepting the answer given by the child, as the example below shows.

Fragment 5.12

((In5-Female, Ch5- Female Aged 6))

01 In5: Oka:y,so y- you had juice to drink, din' you.
02 Ch5: (nod)
03 In5: So what-what did er: ,what did Graham have t'drink?
04 Ch5: Juice.
05 In5: An what about Rick,
06 (2.9)
07 Ch5: Juice.
08 In5: An little Sam,
09 Ch5: Juice.
10 In5: An what about Tom,
11 Ch5: Juice.
12 In5: → He had some juice as well,did he,
13 Ch5: ((nods))/(1.0)
14 In5: oka:y,so you had something to eat,
15 an you said you went t'be:d
16 Ch5: ((nods))/(1.0)
17 In5: so:,(.) who went to bed.

In Fragment 5.12, In5 elicits information about the type of beverage that the alleged perpetrator (Tom) had to drink in line 05. Ch5 answers that he drank juice. In5 responds to this answer by checking to confirm this answer by repeating what Ch5 has said. She also links this answer with the information previously given by Ch5 about what the other children had to drink with the conjunction 'as well'. After Ch5 nods to confirm this answer, In5 provides the response token 'okay' and moves on to the next line of questioning.

By checking to confirm, instead of providing the usual response token, In5 has delayed acceptance of the answer given by Ch5. In this instance the delay in accepting this answer has been designed for a specific purpose. It is to reformulate the question in order to link the answer given by Ch5 with the other information already given by her and in this way clarifies not only that Tom had juice to drink but also that it was the same drink that the other children had to drink. Hence the production of the response token is delayed until confirmation is received.

This tentative acceptance could be for several possible reasons. One could be that In5 has some prior knowledge about the beverage consumed by the alleged perpetrator and this may not correspond to the answer that Ch5 had just provided. Or it may be that In5 may want to emphasise the type of drink that the alleged perpetrator had to the non-present overhearers. It could also be to break the repetitive nature of the questions which has produced similar repetitive answers from Ch5. Whatever the reason may be, the important observation here is that there is only tentative acceptance of the answer given by Ch5. This form of confirmation check can lead Ch5 to believe that In5 is sceptical of her answer. In this way, the lack of response tokens can act as a disaffiliative feature.

By providing a response token after every answer, the interviewer can move on to the next questioning turn without actually having to indicate whether the child's answer in the previous turn has been relevant or irrelevant, accurate or inaccurate. This type of turn design receipts the child's answer as being acceptable and then displays the specific task oriented stance to elicit further information either through a new question or through a reformulation of the prior question.

In this way, the interviewers in the forensic interview are able to establish the twin interactional task of avoiding disaffiliation with the child (by endorsing every answer provided by the child, be it relevant or irrelevant) and of avoiding complete affiliation with a sympathetic token response.

This illustrates another point in sequence organisation where the dispreferred responses are oriented to by not only the speaker but also the recipient. As Heritage

(1984) points out, there is a 'bias' intrinsic to the organisation of talk which is generally favourable to the maintenance of bonds of solidarity between actors and which promotes the avoidance of conflict. And furthermore, it is the joint project of both speakers to arrive at the sequence – an adjacency pair- whose parts are contiguous and in a preferred relationship. (p.291)

I will now demonstrate with several examples how response tokens facilitate the introduction of a new topic in the next questioning turn. By delaying the onset of a new questioning turn, the response tokens serves to avoid disaffiliation in the interview.

5.4 Delaying the next questioning turn/Next Topic Initiation

As has been discussed in Section 5.2, delaying the onset of the next question may propel the child to design further units or segments of talk and thereby provide further details of the alleged incident. It provides the child the opportunity to add details after she has ended her turn. This, of course is very much advantageous to the agenda of the interview itself as the more details the child provides the better it will be for the case made against the accused, especially if these details are consistent and non-contradictory. However, this is not the only work that response tokens appear to be doing here. Response tokens also facilitate the introduction of a new topic in the next questioning turn.

The delays in the next questioning turn serve to allay the 'machine gun' questioning style (Tannen 1984: 64) or the rapid topic shift style (Sarangi & Roberts, 2002). This type of questioning style where there is a move from one question to another without

displaying any form of acceptance or understanding of the prior turn can represent stances that are distancing and excluding and therefore considered disaffiliative. By delaying the onset of the next question, the child is also not 'rushed' to answer another question immediately after answering the previous one.

The paralinguistic features of the response tokens together with their composite forms provide further evidence for the way in which they act to delay the next questioning turn. The following four fragments illustrate this point.

Fragment 5.13

((In1-Female, Ch1- Female Aged 5))

126 Ch1: Now she'sss(.)ah:. got shower an curtains an ah:m (2.0)
127 nanny came in the ba:hht with me and she says to me
128 please wash those bits 'n those bits 'n those bits 'n
129 those bits 'n those bits 'n those bits an those bits.
130 ((child touches left hip, left thigh, left knee, left
131 ankle, right knee, right leg and face))
132 → In1: Rig:ht. okay, so- na:nny's ba:throo:m is ora:nge.
133 (3.0)

Fragment 5.14

((In6-Female, Ch8- Female Aged 8))

((Lines 01 -06 omitted - Child provides a telling of the abusive incident by her dad))

07 → In6: °Right°okay then° So when you say da:ddy (.)which da:ddy
08 are we talking about now,
09 Ch8: Erm(.)Dicky.
10 In6: Daddy Dicky. right.that's daddy with Mummy Sarah
11 Ch8: Yeah.
12 In6: .hhh You said,I didn't quite catch the word,w-what you
13 call- you said something down below,you- was it fluff
14 or:-
15 Ch8: fairy.

Fragment 5.15

((In5-Female, Ch5- Female Aged 6))

01 Ch5: Knickers.
02 → In5: Okay, .hhh so what- what were your knickers like?
03 (0.7)
04 Ch5: Erm,(.) it had a bow on the:m,

Fragment 5.16

((In4-Female, Ch4- Female Aged 5))

01 Ch4: [I-]I don know, (.) er- erm, daddy's name or mu:mmy's
02 name.
03 → In4: Ri:ght (.) okay (.) So what did you think, when that
04 happe:ned, with daddy, what did- what did that feel like?
05 Ch4: (Corrr) bit (.) stu:pid.

In Fragment 5.13, Ch1 has been asked to describe the bathroom, which she does in line 126. In lines 127 -131, she shifts the topic and goes on to describe what her grandmother allegedly did in the bathroom. At this point, In1 produces a composite receipt token. The first 'ri:ght' is stretched and this is followed by the second token 'okay'. In this way In1 accepts the telling in the prior turn with the receipt token 'ri:ght' and 'okay' which both act as sequence-closing thirds before moving on to the next questioning unit 'so na:nny's bathroom is orange'. This questioning turn does not address Ch1's telling but rather shifts the topic back to the initial question prior to the telling. The response tokens delay the next questioning unit, which in a sense is rather disjunctive from the telling in the prior turn in that it does not pursue the information in this turn at all. By delaying the next questioning turn, the shift back to the earlier topic does not appear discordant. The production of the response token makes it seem as if the next questioning turn is a new one rather than a refocused one.

In Fragment 5.14, Ch8 has described what her father did to her in the prior turn. This is acknowledged by In6 with composite token acknowledgments "Right^{oo}okay then^{oo}" uttered softly. This addresses the distressing element in the telling that Ch8 has had to provide. Therefore, after acknowledging the receipt of this telling, In6 proceeds to design the next questioning unit to solicit an identification detail. There is a shift in topic from a distressful telling to a more objective information elicitation. In this way,

the production of the response tokens seek to delay this shift and thereby show sensitivity to the emotional tone of Ch8's prior telling.

In Fragment 5.15, Ch5 has been asked to describe what she was wearing underneath her clothes on the day of the alleged incident. In line 01, she provides the answer 'knickers'. In5 then provides a receipt token 'oka:y' which is stretched and then there is an audible inhalation before she designs the next questioning unit about the specific description of the undergarment. This stretching of the receipt token and inhalation delays the onset of the next questioning turn which requires Ch5 to recall details of an intimate nature, in this case the description of her undergarment.

In Fragment 5.16, Ch4 contends that she does not know the names of her father or mother. In4 acknowledges receipt of this information with the tokens 'right' followed by short delay and then another token, 'okay', followed by another delay before proceeding to design the next questioning unit to elicit information about what the Ch4's feelings were about the alleged incident. This questioning turn deals with an entirely different line of questioning from the previous one and seeks to reinstate talk about the traumatic alleged incident. The production of the response token seeks to delay the onset of introducing a more difficult topic from the previous one.

Further, in each of these fragments the new questioning turn begins with the conjunction 'so'. By beginning each questioning turns with 'so' the interviewers construct the next question as an extension of the previous line of talk. It is particularly interesting to note the 'so' prefaced question design in Fragment 5.13 where the In1's question is disjunctive to the prior talk by Ch1. It appears then the

questions are designed to reflect a sense of continuity with the prior talk by the child, immaterial of whether or not the topic of the next question is indeed connected to it.

Therefore, it can be observed that the interviewers employ various paralinguistic features together with the response tokens to hold on to the third turn in order to delay the onset of the next questioning unit. These paralinguistic features consist of composites ('right' 'okay'), stretching (ri:ght'), pauses (right (.)), inbreaths ('okay' .hhhhh). In this way, the response tokens function as sequence-completing third turns providing a token of acceptance and understanding of the child's answer in the prior turn before moving on to the next question. This gives the sense that the information in the child's answer is acknowledged not only in passing but is receipted as an acceptable answer.

When the next question is articulated, it is prefaced with the conjunction 'so' to reflect continuity with the prior talk by the child, making it seem that the interview is progressing in a smooth manner.

These features interact to add credence to the child's answer rather than just pay passing tribute to it as would be the case if the next questioning turn were immediately introduced after the token acknowledgment. These features also project that the following talk is going to be an extension of the prior talk immaterial of whether or not it may be so. Although it is arguable that a young child may not be able to make such interpretations of these paralinguistic features, it is still important that the adult non-present overhearers can hear them to be such.

Therefore, the response tokens in the forensic interviews play an important role in managing the affective dimension of the interview. In a cline that ranges from impersonal detachment at one end to empathy at the other, the interviewer's stance is somewhat in the middle ground, reflecting the objective and neutral positioning required during the interview process. In this section, I have shown how this neutral stance is maintained by using response tokens. Firstly, I explicated the way response tokens serve to avoid full-scale affiliation with the child's telling. Then I showed several examples where the absence of response tokens indicated a disaffiliative feature. Therefore, the presence of response tokens serves to avoid these disaffiliative features. Finally, I demonstrated how the response tokens serve to delay the next topic and in this way interviewers can again avoid being disaffiliative during the interview.

In the next section, I will show how response tokens serve to perform yet another function in the forensic interviews i.e. to segment the telling in order to be presentable for the non-present overhearers.

5.5 Phasing the Interview

Response tokens are also used as a stylistic device to produce a clear and coherent account for the non-present overhearers. In the case of forensic interviews there are two layers of non-present overhearers. In the first stage, the video recording will be viewed by members of the Crown Prosecution Service who will determine the suitability of its use in the courtroom. Once the video recording is deemed admissible as evidence in the courtroom, it will be viewed by members of the courtroom, the judge, prosecution and defence barristers and members of the jury.

In the fragment below, I show how response tokens function as devices to phase the interview interaction.

Fragment 5.17

((In8-Female, Ch11- Female Aged 8))

28 In8: .hhhhh right. okay so you've told me >quite a lot there
29 haven you?< yeah? so what I'm goin to do is just over (.)
30 it >in little small pieces< now alri:ght?(.)
31 okay (.) so you sa: id you were>down the park with the
32 boys< yeah?(.) so- when was it.
33 Ch11: It: wa:::s (1.8) I think it wa:::sss (1.0) Februa:ry
34 the:(0.8)se- Februa:ry the twenty first I think.
35→ In8: Right.What makes you think it was February the twenty
36 first.
37 Ch11: Cos Sally said 'what date is it' (0.2) to the fa:ther
38 an the father said,'it's February the twentieth
39 somethin' an I can't remember.
40→ In8: Okay, so- (.) what day was it then
41 (0.5)
42 >what day of the we:ek was it<
43 Ch11: Sssss I think it was (0.5) Friday.
44→ In8: Right.(.) okay (.)s:o- (0.8) what time'a day was it.
45 (0.2)
46 Ch11: It wa:::s (1.0) one o'clock.
47 In8: [m-]
48 Ch11: [in] the afternoon=
49→ In8: =>one o'clock in the afternoon< okay. so (.)> what
50 about school then<, didju- (0.5)>didju went to scho:ol?<
51 (0.5)
52 Ch11: No cos (0.5) we had a day off then cos (0.5)it was
53 teacher's trainin day.
54→ In8: Right. okay .hhhhh so it was Friday about one o'clock in
55 the afterno: on (0.2)yeah? you werent in school cos
56 it was teacher trainin day(0.2)yeah? an you were down the
57 park with the boys. So where's the pa:rk.

We can note from the above extract that a sequential boundary point is established after every question- answer sequence by the use of response tokens. In line 35, In8's response token 'Right' establishes a boundary point after the first adjacency pair in lines 32-34. A new first pair part is then initiated after this response token. The second adjacency pair occurs between lines 35-39. Again, In8 produces a token acknowledgment 'Okay' (line 41) before proceeding to initiate another first pair part. In all between lines 28 - 54 there are 5 adjacency pairs and each of these is followed by response tokens.

So in this fragment, the response tokens delineate between the different membership categorisations of time involved in the alleged incident i.e. date, day, time, and verification factor. In this way, each adjacency pair deals with a different aspect of 'time' and each of these is clearly hearable to the non-present overhearers.

In this way, the sequence-closing thirds act as phasing devices. According to Atkinson and Drew (1979) "by phasing the delivery of an utterance, the chances of parts of it being missed and (the whole being misunderstood) by others present may be thereby greatly reduced" (p.198). In courtroom context, phasing is mainly achieved using pauses (Atkinson & Drew 1979; Matoesian, 1993). However, in the forensic interview the predominant device used to break up each question-answer sequence into smaller segments that can be heard and understood by the non-present overhearers is response tokens. Utilising response tokens in this way helps the non-present overhearers to make out what is being said on a segment by segment basis.

The aspect of phasing for the non-present overhearer is further emphasised in this next extract.

Fragment 5.18

((In1-Female, Ch1- Female Aged 5))

32 In1: When you were four (.).hhhwhere does Nanny live,
33 Lizzie.
34 Ch1: A:hm in the first college [place] No. A::rm (1.0)
35 b::y (.) by da:ddy but I dunno the place what's it
36 ca:lled.
37→ (1)In1: Alright okay, by da:ddy.
38 Ch1: Yeah.
39 In1: Okay .hhh so who lives in na:nny's house.
40 Ch1: Granda:d's house er Sha:nnon (0.7) an Na:nny (.) Lau:rie
41 that's all
42→ (3)In1: Right (.) Granda:d (.) Lau:rie (.) Sha:nnon (.)an Na:nny.
43 Ch1: (Nods)/(0.8)
44 In1: Right. Who's Sha:nnon.
45 Ch1: Ah my brother but he- (.) he doesn't want to anymore
46 In1: Ri:ght an he lives with nanny does he?
47 Ch1: (nods)/(0.5)

48 In1: Okay (0.8) Oka:y so [when-
 49 Ch1: [I don't mind Sha:nnon up there,
 50 I mind Lau:rie down `ere.
 51 (0.8)
 52 In1: Oh you don't mind Shannon
 53 Ch1: I don't mind Sha:nnon but I do mind Lau:rie
 54→(2) In1: You do mind Lau:rie. °Alright° °Okay°
 55 .hhh a::n(0.2)> what did you say< th't na:nny-(0.5)
 56 about na:nny?

As can be seen the repeats can come after the acknowledgement token (arrow1) or before it (arrow2) or in between (arrow 3). The answers given by Ch1 stressed in both of these repeats ('da:ddy' in line 37 and 'Granda:d', 'Lau:rie', 'Sha:nnon', 'Na:nny' in line 42). In addition, in line 42, each answer is repeated after a short silence. These repeats make a link with the child's prior turn and emphasise the point made by the child in the prior turn.

In arrow (1), the acknowledgement occurs with a partial repetition of the child's utterance. In line 32, In1 poses a question about location - 'where does Nanny live?'. Here, Ch1 correctly treats the question as requiring the name of the place and attempts to provide this. But after providing the name of a place, she quickly retracts this answer with a rejection of this answer ('No' in line 34) and by explicitly disclaiming knowledge ('I dunno the place what's it ca:lled' in line 35). She also goes on to provide a modified answer in line 35 referring the person she lives with ('by daddy'). In this turn design Ch1, addresses the question put forward by In1 but displays uncertainty about naming the location.

In1 designs her next turn by first providing an acceptance token and then repeating Ch1's modified answer 'by daddy'. This design achieves two tasks. Firstly, In1 treats this modified answer as an acceptable answer to the question in the prior turn. Ch1 provides a verbal agreement 'yeah'. In1 follows this up with the response token

'okay'. In this way, not only is the boundary of the adjacency pair for the question and answer established but a clear version of the answer is also provided through the partial repetition. This helps point out to the non-present overhearers the important part of Ch1's extended turn answer. In this case, the answer, 'by daddy' is foregrounded and Ch1's retraction and disclaimer about the actual answer gets backgrounded. This again helps the non-present overhearers to get a clear picture of the question and the relevant answer to that question. Having indicated this boundary point through the use of the response tokens, In1 as current speaker proceeds to self-select to design the next questioning turn marked by the inhalation that this is a new point of questioning.

So composite sequence-closing thirds such as these ('right' + repeat) serve to close the sequence by not only acknowledging receipt of the prior turn but also emphasising forensically salient information in the prior turn in order to make this clear to the non-present overhearers. Therefore, two responsive actions are going on simultaneously, one which builds affiliation with the child by acknowledging receipt of the information and another emphasising the forensically salient point in the sequence to the non-present overhearers.

5.6 Implications for Listening in the Forensic Interview Context

In line with the guidelines of the interview protocol to 'actively' listen to the child, the turn allocation system in the forensic interviews is structured in a way that creates maximum space for the child to take up speakership. The production of the response tokens in the turn-initial position in third turns provide additional space for the child to take up the speaking position without having to be asked a question first.

Atkinson and Drew (1979) have pointed out that one of the characteristics of turn preallocation in courtroom contexts is the construction of multi-unit turns. Similarly, in forensic interviewing the construction of multi-unit turns is an important feature. In forensic interviews, the child is primary constructor of the multi-unit turns. The more units of telling the child is able to design in her answer the better it is for the overall interview agenda. This allows for the child to provide further details to information, clarify misunderstanding, composing unspoken comments and even dispute the interviewer's version of events. It is also in line with the requirements of the interview protocol which clearly states that the child has to be provided with every opportunity to produce the narrative in her own words.

Admittedly, not all children who are interviewed take up the turn after the response tokens to form multiunit turns. More often than not it becomes necessary for the interviewer to elicit more details through the next questioning unit. It can even be argued that most children have not gained the pragmatic ability to detect the structured and intricately organised method of the adult turn-taking system to be aware when the opportunity for them to speak or take up the turn arises. But what this analysis does show is that the structural properties of turn-taking in the sequential environment of the interview are in place to provide the opportunity and space for the child to design further talk if and when she so desires.

Therefore, it can be noted that the turn-taking allocation system in the forensic interview is different from the adversarial cross-examination context. In the courtroom, multiunit turns are formed as a product of courtroom preallocation. Therefore, the barristers exercise the current selects next and self-select options and

the witness only answers after a fully formed question has been asked. However in the forensic interview context, although preallocated in the sense that the police interviewer still reserves the right to exercise current speaker selects next and self-select options, there is an additional space for the interviewer to yield the turn to the child in order for the child to provide as much narrative detail as possible. A turn-taking organisation where the interviewer is able to give an opportunity to the child to provide further telling without necessarily using questioning turns all the time seems to be an important element in forensic interviews. In this way, the hostile questioning style present in the adversarial courtroom context can be avoided.

In this regard, listening in the forensic context has an additional dimension not available in the adversarial courtroom context. In the courtroom context, the interaction between the lawyer and the witness is unilateral and controlled with the interviewer asking questions and the witness providing the answer. Even if the witness attempts to speak out of turn, this is subject to objection and demands to strike out the witness' answer (Atkinson & Drew, 1979; Matoesian, 1993). In the forensic context the interaction is bilateral primarily because of the turn yielding organisation which allows the child witness to make a contribution to the interaction by self-selecting turns after the single lexical turn construction units made available by response tokens. Furthermore, in the courtroom context and even certain news interview contexts, the absence of response tokens indicates the role of the questioner as an elicitor of talk (Heritage, 1985). However, in the forensic interview context, the police interviewer serves the role of both the elicitor of talk as well as the recipient of talk.

The analysis in this chapter has shown how the use of response tokens ('right' and its variants) perform the work of yielding the turn to the child in order to facilitate the production of further multi-unit turns. In order to facilitate yielding turns to the child, sequentially, these token acknowledgments modulate between acting as a sequencing closing third and a continuer. Such modulation offers the police interviewers the flexibility to allow extended turns of telling by the child without interrupting the child too soon with the next questioning unit.

The analysis has also shown that these response tokens do further interactional work in avoiding outright affiliation and disaffiliation by avoiding gaps in the turn transition between the child and the interviewer and by delaying the next questioning unit. The interviewer manages the twin task of avoiding displaying a detached position that may be detrimental to the interpersonal relationship between the child and the interviewer and at the same time avoiding outright affiliation that can be seen as taking a biased stance in questioning the child. In this manner, the interviewer manages to keep a delicate interpersonal relationship going with the child throughout the interview.

And finally the production of response tokens also facilitates the interactional work of presenting evidence that is clear enough for the non-present overhearers to draw their own conclusion. As members of the jury cannot request repetition, questions and answers in the forensic interviews are 'one shot affairs with no retakes' (Matoesian, 1993: 139), it is vitally important that the evidence is presented with clarity. The production of response tokens, as opposed to silences which are evidenced in the courtroom context, act a phasing device to enhance this clarity. It

also avoids the coercive element that is reflected in the use of silences to perform this very same task.

5.7 Conclusion

The analysis in this chapter has contributed in three ways to understanding the way in which the interviewers listen to the child. The responsive actions of the police interviewers serve to yield turns to the child, act to avoid disaffiliation and facilitate the understanding of non-present overhearers to follow the sequences in the interview.

In section 5.2, I examined examples which illustrated how the token responses act as turn yielding devices. Turn yielding or providing an opportunity for the child to take the floor is a central part of discursive listening. I looked at three different ways in which turns are yielded to the child in these police interviews, namely by using response tokens (1) as continuers, (2) as sequence-closing thirds and (3) in summary sequences. In section 5.3, I analysed instances where response tokens were used to facilitate the affective dimension of listening. This was done by avoiding both complete affiliation as well disaffiliation, thereby allowing the interviewer to maintain a neutral stance as laid down by the interview guidelines. In section 5.4, I examined examples of interaction where response tokens act to provide clarity to the non-present overhearers. In such cases, I showed how token responses act as devices to delay the next questioning turn through various paralinguistic features. I also illustrated how they act as phasing devices to distinguish individual answers given by the child, as suggested by Atkinson and Drew (1979). And finally in section 5.5, I discussed the implications that these have on listening, generally, and forensic interviewing, specifically.

6 Listening to Legal Storytellings: Extended Turn Answers in Police Interviews

6.1 Chapter Summary

In this chapter, I will examine five selected fragments of interaction where the child provides extended turn answers or tellings.

This chapter will be mainly concerned with the sequential properties of turns (such as delays in asking next turn questions) and aspects of their design (cut-offs, insertions) through which details of tellings as well as overt elicitation of details of the tellings may be managed in a variety of interactionally 'delicate' ways.

The analysis will be twofold. Firstly, the features of these initial and non-initial tellings will be analysed to obtain the types of interactional achievement in each. Secondly, the analysis will focus on the responsive actions of the police interviewers. This will involve examining the way in which interviewers orient towards these different types of tellings through their responses i.e. their follow-up questioning turns.

By focusing on these selected five fragments I hope to make the point that children, like adults, are all not the same. They are not all homogenous members of the same category 'child'. They are, in fact, social actors who are authentic representatives of their own cultures. Each child will bring to the interview context his own orientation, focus and cultural practice. To ignore these particularities does not do justice to the individuality of each child and her circumstances. In other words, it is important to establish empirically 'what the child's competence actually consists of, forms that it

takes and the relational parameters within which it is enabled or disabled' (Hutchby & Moran-Ellis, 1998: 15).

In my analysis, I show how each of these tellings is a site for the enactment of the child's own cultural practices. Through in-depth analysis of the selected five fragments I show how the child is constructing specific cultural practices in the tellings. I also show that these tellings are not meaningless descriptions but they are all purposive. In other words, the child is displaying a specific interactional competence through her tellings and is not merely reporting the details as it were.

I also show how these cultural practices are in conflict with the adult and legal cultural worlds. I examine the organisational, sequential and interpersonal dimension of the police interviewers' responses. I find that the organisational and sequential goals of the interviews take precedence over the interpersonal goal. In Fragments 6.1 and 6.2, I provide a detailed analysis to show the way the interviewers accommodate to the interpersonal elements in conjunction with the organisational and sequential goals of the interview. In Fragments 6.3, 6.4 and 6.5, I explicate how the organisational and sequential goals of the interview are prioritised over the interpersonal goal. Further, in Fragment 6.5, I show that when two organisational goals are in a competing position, the police interviewer accommodates to the goal that is sequentially relevant rather than to a new one. In sum, these five fragments illustrate that the trajectory of the interaction is very much influenced by the cultural practices of the child. However, police interviewers accommodate to these cultural practices only in so far as it serves the organisational and sequential goal of the interview.

6.2 Narratives vs Tellings

For the purposes of this research, this form of evidence will not be categorised as “stories” or as “narratives” as provided for by Home Office (2001) for two main reasons. Firstly, simply coding narratives into structures such as ‘fragmented’ or ‘narrative styles’ (O’Barr,1982) or into Labovian (1972) functional categories of narratives such as ‘abstract’, ‘orientation’, ‘complicating action’, ‘evaluation’, ‘result’ and ‘coda’ does not capture the sequential and interactional work they achieve in a given interaction. In other words, categorisation of the types of narratives there are in the police interviews provides little information about the design of the turns in the narratives and the environment in which they occur. In order to investigate how police interviewers listen to the child in the forensic interviews, detailed analysis of the sequential organisation would be of much more relevance. Then, the interplay of the various features of the interactions such as the cut-offs, delays, shifts in topic and so on can be analysed to provide an in-depth perspective of the way in which the child is designing the narrative and also the way in which the police interviewer is accommodating (or not, as the case may be) to the child. Such general categorisations, I argue, fail to provide an insight into the particularities of a piece of interaction. Researchers have argued that in such definitional approaches there is no universal agreement on what the functions of narratives are (Mishler 1986:108,155). In addition, it is pointed out that the ‘same’ narrative may have different meanings according to the context in which it is told (Sacks, 1974).

Additionally, obtaining evidence in the police interview prioritises the elicitation of extended turn answers rather than single unit turns. These extended turns are not restricted to the production of narratives. Harris (2001) shows that courtroom

questions can produce both narrative and non-narrative accounts. Similarly, in the forensic interview context, questions by the interviewer can produce both narrative accounts such as the sequential order of events relating to the alleged incident as well as non-narrative accounts such as extended descriptions of the place where the alleged incident took place. For example in Fragment 6.3, the telling consists of the child providing a list of various items of clothing. In Fragment 6.2, the telling consists of the description of colour and objects in the bathroom. Both of these cannot be termed 'narratives' in that they both lack a sequential or chronological order as the term narrative implies (Harris, 2001). However, such descriptions play an important and pervasive role in police interviews and contribute towards the evidence needed in these forensic interviews.

In order to be able to analyse both types of answers and to steer away from the technical implications of using the terminology 'narrative', all the extended turn answers which include both narrative and non narrative accounts will be referred to as 'tellings' (Blum-Kulka, 1997; Jefferson, 1984) in this chapter.

I provide a loose characterisation of 'tellings' as 'packaging' or presenting facts of one's own or another's experience (cf. Sacks, 1978:259, Maynard, 1992). Such tellings (or multi-unit turns) are distinguishable in the forensic interview because they take up more than one utterance of talk and the usual turn-taking is suspended while the story is being told (Sacks, 1992: Lecture 2; 1974).

However, the focus of such tellings will not be on structural aspects such as how they are introduced into the interaction, how they are exited or how the teller and recipient

collaboratively produce the tellings (Jefferson, 1978; Sacks, 1978, Ryave,1978). Instead the focus will be on the sequential properties of the tellings and the responsive actions that ensue.

6.3 Legal Storytelling

The primary purpose of the forensic interview is to elicit verbal evidence about the alleged incident and this usually occurs in the narrative/questioning stage of the interview. In the words of Brooks (1996:22) “How stories are told, listened to, received, interpreted - how they are made operative, enacted - these are issues by no means marginal to the law nor exclusive to theory; rather they are part of the law’s daily living reality”. The verbal tellings produced by the child play an important role in determining the prosecution or acquittal of the alleged perpetrator. In cases where the child is a victim, it is often the only evidence that the crime took place. Therefore, it is important to understand how such sequences are constructed and made sense of in the forensic interview context.

One important aspect of verbal evidence is the element of credibility in the tellings provided by the child. In order for the child to be deemed a competent witness, the tellings of the child have to be believable. Common law has traditionally viewed children as unreliable witnesses based on perceptions that they are prone to fantasy, that they are suggestible, they have inferior cognitive abilities and that their evidence is prone to inaccuracy.

In the present data corpus, there exist several instances where the child’s evidence can be considered deficient. These involve issues such as inconsistency (where evidence

provided by the child may not be consistent with evidence given in a different segment of the interview), digression (where the child may not provide evidence that has been asked for by the police interviewer and instead shifts to another topic), ambiguity (where the evidence provided by the child may lack clarity and coherence), and defective (where the child's evidence might not contain elements that are incriminating). Examining the turn sequences within which such 'deviances' occur can provide valuable insight into the different ways in which the child and police interviewer are orienting towards the interview agenda.

In the next sections, I will provide fragments of interview interactions and explicate the interactional significance of each.

6.4 Defectiveness of the Telling

Fragment 6.1

((In8-Female, Ch11- Male Aged 8))

01 In8: Ah: r:ight. Got you. okay, so if we talk about this
02 time first an then we'll talk about the other time
03 that you were in. okay?
04 Ch11: (nods)
05 In8: .hhhhhh so Ricky said go lookin at
06 (.)Sally's boo:bs yeah?=so what happened then.
07 → Ch11: We all went down int' the nu:rse:ry, an(.)on the
08 nu:rse:ry a:hm grass, i-t wa- was all trees an next to
09 the tree:s there was a so:fa: an me an Ricky was layin
10 on that, Sally said 'two volunteers' an Ricky said
11 'me' an he said (who else) (.) an Jeffery Smith said
12 'Peter' so he picked- he p-said 'I'll pick someone' an
13 he picked me.
14 In8: Right.Okay, so Sally asked for two volunteers w-what
15 did she want volunteers for:
16 (0.8)
17 Ch11: To kiss her.
18 In8: Right,[okay-
19 Ch11: [so she can jump on the- ramp=
20 In8: =Right. so there's you and Ricky Hanson layin on the
21 settee(.) she asked for two volunteers (.)an Ricky said
22 he'd volunteer (.) an then he said who:: (0.5)
23 who::(0.5)
24 Ch11: who else
25 In8: who else. Right. a:n Jeffrey said yo:u,
26 Ch11: yeah,
27 In8: so Ricky picked you as we:ll.

28 Ch11: (nods)
29 In8: right. okay. so tell me what happened then once you an
30 Ricky were picked.

6.4.1 Organisational Relevance

This sequence of interaction occurs between In8 and Ch11 who is an 8-year-old male child. Ch11 together with his friends were playing with a girl in the park. There is an allegation of sexual misconduct between the boys and the girl during this time. In this case, Ch11 is a witness and quite possibly one of the alleged perpetrators and is not a victim.

In lines 01-03, In8 focuses on the order of disclosing two separate alleged incidents with 'this time first' to begin with and then to be followed with the next incident with 'the other time you were in'. After Ch11 nods, confirming that he has understood this, she goes on to design the next questioning turn to initiate talk about the first alleged incident by repeating verbatim utterances from his initial telling 'so Ricky said go lookin at (.) Sally's boo:bs'. After receiving confirmation of this with another nod from Ch11, she invites further telling of this alleged incident with the open-ended temporal cue 'what happened then'.

The organisational goal of this questioning turn is evidently to obtain more specific telling about the sequence of events. Such a questioning turn also orients to the initial telling (not presented in this fragment) by Ch11 as being inadequate and requiring further expansion. This question design elicits further details that are lacking in the initial account. The details that are produced by Ch11 are hearable to the non-present overhearers as originating from Ch11 himself. By using contrasting time referents - 'this time first' and 'the other time you were in'- as well as the time-segmented cue -

'what happened then', In8 refrains from mentioning the action itself and therefore avoids contaminating the evidence.

6.4.2 An Account of Child's Telling

In lines 07-13 Ch11 provides a detailed telling of what occurred during the alleged incident. There are three main observations to be made. First, he provides a description of the actions that occurred in sequential order. He sets the background by providing locational formulations as well as object descriptions. These details are important to understanding the manner in which the alleged incident occurred. Such descriptions in narratives correspond to the 'orientation' (Labov, 1974) or 'background segment' (Maynard, 1990) aspect of the narrative. These provide a sense of who the main characters were and where the activities occurred so that there is understanding of the unfolding events in the rest of narrative (Sacks, 1992: Lecture 7; Goodwin, 1984). It also helps to establish credibility of the witness to provide non-central information about the alleged incident. Ch11 displays his competence in providing contextual information that is important for listeners to understand the telling and this is not entirely unusual considering he is an older child.

Second, the telling does not provide any details of misconduct. In a sense, his telling could be an account of a playful activity between children. Ch11 mentions that Sally wanted two volunteers but he does not mention for what activity the volunteers were needed. This omission could be because Ch11 knows that the recipient of the story, In8, already knows this information. This interview is, in all probability, not the first time he has told his account. It could also be that Ch11 is avoiding mentioning the sensitive nature of this action. Whatever the reason may be, Ch11's omission of this

detail means that the alleged incident is not being depicted as one that involves a form of misconduct or an unlawful act.

The defence counsel can exploit such an omission if and when this video recording is shown in court. Not mentioning the misconduct in the actions of the children involved in the alleged incident can certainly prove detrimental for the prosecution's case and help the defence to argue that the incident was a purely playful children's activity.

Third, in the course of the telling Ch11 does identify two other boys as the main instigators in the alleged incident. Ch11 mentions Ricky as someone who selects himself and initiates the selection of another volunteer. He also identifies another boy 'Jeffery Smith' as the person who offers up Ch11's name as another volunteer. And finally, after a series of cut-offs, he again marks out Ricky as possessing agency in initiating the activity of selecting Ch11 to participate in the alleged incident. In lines 12 -13, Ch11 initiates self-repair where he replaces the phrase that seems headed for 'he picked me' to 'said 'I'll pick someone' an he picked me'. By inserting this extra piece of information in reported speech, Ch11 again directs attention to the fact that Ricky was responsible for the selection. Ch11's design of this telling attributes blame to Ricky as one of the persons responsible for initiating the actions involved in the alleged incident. It also acts to absolve blame for his own role in it as he was only acting out instructions and was not the principal agent.

In sum, although this telling appears to lack sufficient evidence about the alleged misconduct, Ch11 attends to the interactional goal of blame avowal in this telling.

6.4.3 Interviewer's Response

In8 displays that she is attending to the organisational relevance of this telling in two ways. First, she acknowledges that the telling does not convey any details about the alleged misconduct. Therefore, in her next questioning turn in lines 14-15, she solicits more information about the purpose of asking for the volunteers. Ch11's answer that it was 'to kiss her' displays that the alleged incident may involve a form of indecent behaviour. It transforms the activity mentioned by Ch11 in the earlier telling from one of playful activity to one that may be unlawful.

Secondly, In8 also clarifies the inaudible section of Ch11's telling. She performs a category specific repair initiation by repeating the word 'who::' in line 23. As mentioned in Chapter 4, this form of repair locates the source of trouble by reproducing the approximate environment of the trouble source. This enables Ch11 to identify the exact part of his telling that was not clear. Ch11 then repeats his earlier utterance 'else', clearly this time, and In11 confirms it in the next turn by repeating it. This repair initiation serves to benefit the non-present overhearers who may not have followed the sequence of Ch11's telling because of the inaudible section. The idea inherent in this inaudible section is also organisationally relevant in that it acts to attribute blame to Ricky as the one of the main instigators of the action. It is, therefore, significant in signalling intent on the part of the perpetrators. Therefore, In8's follow-up questioning turn is aligned with Ch11's action of blame avowal.

Furthermore, In8 addresses Ch11's telling with a summary sequence in lines 20-23. The pieces of the information that are repeated in this summary sequence also reinforce Ch11's point in the telling which attributes blame to Ricky as the main

instigator of the action and Jeffrey as the person who suggests Ch11's name. In this way, In11 addresses the goal of Ch11's telling which is to absolve blame on his part. In this way, In8 designs her summary sequence to be aligned with the Ch11's telling and so these details are hearable by the non-present overhearers as having originated solely from Ch11.

6.4.4 Interactional Outcome

This fragment has illustrated that the child's telling can be lacking in details which provide evidence in the court of law. The defence can, therefore, assert that there is lack of evidence that the activity of play by the children involved improper behaviour.

In8 addresses this deficiency in her follow-up questioning turns. The design of her initial questioning turns elicits more details about the activity involved. In addition, the answer provided by Ch11 recasts the playful activity into one that may be unlawful. In this way, In8 has attended to the organisational relevance of the interview. This is done by addressing the 'defective' aspect of the telling in the follow-up turns before moving to a new questioning turn that involves the next sequence of events.

Furthermore, In8 addresses the projected outcome in Ch11's telling through her summary sequence. By repeating verbatim elements in Ch11's telling, she affirms Ch11's point in the telling which is to absolve blame for his role in the incident and instead attribute it to the two other boys involved. By focusing on this aspect of the answer, In8 provides acknowledgement to Ch11's projected outcome of the telling and displays that his point has been received and accepted and has not been ignored or

made irrelevant. This would have positive effects on the interpersonal dimension of the interviewer-child relationship in the interview.

In this way, In8 attends to both the organisational relevance as well the interactional goal in the telling itself. In8 accommodates to both these goals in the follow-up turns and in this way has managed to listen and respond to Ch11 in a child centred manner.

In the next section, I examine a fragment that highlights ambiguity in the child's telling.

6.5 Ambiguity of the Telling

Fragment 6.2

((In8-Female, Ch10- Female Aged 8))

01 In8: Right .hhh so- (0.5) >when you said< he's your old-
02 (0.2) your old father (0.5)yeah?
03 Ch10: nod/(0.2)
04 In8: w-have you got a new fa:ther
05 Ch10: nod/0.5
06 In8: An who's your new fa:ther.
07 Ch10: James Willim Finch
08 In8: Ri:ght(.) an (.) I think you said he lives with you now
09 doesn't he? yeah? .hhh (0.2) so what about John then
10 (1.4)
11 you said you've know him all your life.
12 (1.8)
13 is he your real daddy
14 (0.2)
15 Ch10: He was my first dad.
16 In8: He was your first d[ad.
17 → Ch10: [Actually, (1.5) hmmh:: co:mplicated.
18 In8: Mhm::.
19 Ch10: Cos my mum wen out with him an when she's in comp
20 she wen out(.) with my o:ld da:d my- my- real-
21 my dad I got now (0.5) kept on goin out with 'im too
22 In8: Mhmhm,
23 Ch10: then (.) goin out with- the other one (.) s- a:n
24 the wa- she ended up l- (0.5)l-la:sting with my o:ld
25 da:d .hhh an she ended up(0.5)lasting with my n- (0.5)
26 n- my:hhh other da:d.
27 In8: Right. so how many dads have you had altogether.
28 (1.6)
29 Ch10: Even the ones I wasn't born
30 In8: Mhmhm.
31 Ch10: Dunno.

32 In8: Okay what about since you've been born.
 33 (0.8)
 34 Ch10: Two.
 35 In8: Two (0.2) an that's John and James then, is it?
 36 Ch10: ((nods))
 37 In8: Yeah?=^{an} your mum was goin out with them in comp? (0.5)
 38 botha them or- (0.8) in comp was she?
 39 Ch10: She- she wen out with one'a them,
 40 In8: Mhmhm,
 41 Ch10: dumped- (.) one'a them (0.5) dumped `er or:- she dumped
 42 the:m an wen out with the other one an the other
 43 one dumped her or she dumped them an wen out- (.) back
 44 out with the other like tha:t.
 45 In8: °right° got ya:

6.5.1 Organisational Relevance

In this fragment, the In8 is attempting to elicit information about the nature of relationship between Ch10 and her 'old' dad and another significant adult whom she refers to as 'dad'. In this case, this distinction is particularly significant as the child has two adult persons in her life that she refers to as 'dad'. In terms of the organisational relevance of this piece of interaction, its design establishes the difference in the nature of relationship between 'old dad' and 'dad'.

It also becomes obvious in the initial part of this interaction that the purpose of this interaction is to make a distinction between the biological father (i.e. 'old' dad) and the non-biological father (i.e. the present partner of Ch10's mother's). In lines 01-13, In8 engages eliciting information to display this distinction.

In lines 01-04, In8 designs her questioning turn to, firstly, recall information about Ch10's 'old' father. Then after receiving confirmation of this, she designs her next questioning turn to elicit information about her 'new' father. By using a contrasting lexical item 'new' compared to the term 'old dad' used by Ch10, In8 is seeking to make a distinction between these two fathers in terms of the aspect of recency. This design demarcates the two fathers' involvement in Ch10's life in terms of

chronological order. The term 'new' invokes the meaning that the new father is by some measure a recent addition to Ch10's life and the old father having been around for a longer period in Ch10's life. So by asking if she has a new father, In8 is in fact orienting to this relationship as being a fairly recent one compared to her relationship with her 'old' dad'. In addition, by using the lexical term 'new father', In8 has also offered Ch10 an alternative term of description to describe the person whom she refers to as 'dad'. As such by introducing this term 'new dad', In8 is, in effect, imposing a new form of categorisation for the person who Ch10 simply knows as 'dad'. In line 07, Ch10 shows that she understands who the term 'new' dad refers to by providing his full name when asked for by In8.

Next in lines 08 -13, In8 engages in eliciting further details about her 'old father'. The design of this turn uses the proper name reference 'John' instead of 'old father' as used previously in lines 01-02. Again, the use of the first person here contrasts with the use of first person answer that Ch10 has produced in line 07 for her 'new' father.

When there is no uptake from Ch10 to this open-ended invitation to provide more details about 'John' in lines 10 and 12, In8 designs a close ended directed question about whether 'John' is her 'real' father. This design explicitly ascertains whether 'John' is her biological dad. In this way, In8 displays her attempts to make the distinction between the two dads, one as the biological father and the other as the non-biological one.

However, Ch10 displays difficulty in answering this question. Firstly, there is a 0.2 second gap and then in line 15 she makes an exposed correction by providing an

alternative description of her relationship with her 'old' dad – 'first dad'.

In this way, Ch10 resists the biological and non-biological categorisation being imposed by In8. By making this exposed correction, she is reinstating her own socio-cultural view of how she views the nature of the relationship between her two fathers – according to chronological order.

Therefore, it can be noted that there is a clash between the interviewer-imposed category of biological vs. non biological nature of relationship compared to the child's first vs. second in terms of the order of their appearance in her life.

In the next section, I will examine the way in which Ch10 provides an account of the relationship between these two fathers in her tellings in lines 17 -22 and lines 23-26.

6.5.2 An Account of Child's Telling

The main observation to be made about Ch10's telling in lines 17 – 26 is that she has difficulty formulating person references for her two fathers. The self-initiated repair that Ch10 makes in designing this extended turn evidences this. The first self-initiated repair occurs in line 20 where Ch10 launches into a word search marked by the cut offs after 'my' and then she uses the word 'real' but there is another cut-off after this word. Then she initiates repair by replacing the trouble source 'real' with the repair solution 'my dad I got now'. The term 'real' was initially offered by In8 as an option to describe her dad John and it is apparent that Ch10 is reluctant to use this term.

Another self-initiated self-repair occurs in lines 25-26, where there are two cut-offs

after 'n-' that could possibly be heading for the term 'new'. Again, this trouble source is corrected with the repair solution 'my other dad'.

Cut-offs are ways of initiating self-repairs on earlier talk. The cut-offs in Ch10's turn initiate repair on the person referents for her two fathers provided by In8. In this way, Ch10 is orienting to the way she views the relationship with her two fathers. Her terms of reference for her two dads after self-initiated repair are displayed as 'the dad I got now' and 'my other dad'. It would also appear that this idea of chronology might be closely linked with the notion of intimacy. 'The dad I got now' not only provides an ordering but also presents a current state of familiarity and intimacy. 'My other dad' invokes a sense of an outsider status in the relationship. This is in accordance with her rejection of the label 'new' (which could indicate unfamiliarity and therefore lack of intimacy) for her 'dad' in her self-repairs. In this way, Ch10 is exhibiting her competency in describing her relationships with her two fathers in her own terms rather than adopting the interviewer imposed terms of 'real' and 'new' which have to do with elements of biology and recency. In a sense then, through these self-initiated repairs, Ch10 resists the interviewer-imposed view of her relationship with her two fathers. She then asserts her own view of her relationships with her two fathers. This highlights the obviously different ways in which the adult and the child in this piece of interaction perceive father – child relationships.

The main issue with Ch10's telling, however, is that due to the increased number of self-repairs it would be difficult for the non-present overhearers to clearly understand what Ch10 is trying to say. Obviously, they do not have the advantage that the analyst has of replaying the segment of the interaction many times in order to follow the

trajectory of the interaction. Also, it is not clear from Ch10's telling what the nature of the relationship between these two men and her mum really is. Ch10's telling which is interspersed with the cut-offs, self-initiated repairs, and pauses makes her telling rather ambiguous and it is difficult to follow the sequential turn of events. Perhaps the most profound comment about the nature of this relationship comes from Ch10 herself when she says in line 17 that it is 'complicated'.

I will now examine the way in which In8 responds to these ambiguous tellings.

6.5.3 Interviewer's Response

In8's response to this extended telling attends to three things. First, In8 addresses the issue of the problematic person reference. After providing the customary token acknowledgement in line 27, she begins by first asking an open-ended question 'how many dads have you had?' The fact there are only two dads involved has already been established earlier so by bringing this topic up again at this point, it is almost as if In8 is reinitiating this topic in an attempt to 'start over' as it were. In8's hearing of Ch10's tellings in lines 17-21, and lines 23-26 as being ambiguous is reflected in the design of this question. In order to clarify the ambiguity, there is a need to go over the same ground again.

Second, In8 attempts to collude with Ch10's cultural view of relationships. In line 27, when Ch10 is asked how many fathers she has altogether, there is an inter-turn gap of 1.6 seconds before she takes the floor offered to her. However, instead of providing an answer to the question, she asks a question. This question, 'even the ones I wasn't born?' displays that Ch10's perception of 'dad' may include persons who are her

mother's partners before she was born. It is reflective of her earlier answer where she considers her dads in terms of chronology rather biology and recency.

In Ch10's cultural world the membership categorisation of 'dad' appears to extend to people who were her mum's partners even before she was born. As such, Ch10 is displaying an orientation to conceptualising the father-child relationship differently from the normative adult view. In line 30, In8 provides a go-ahead for this answer with her minimal response 'Mhmhm'. By not offering a temporal alternative to this view, and hence correcting this perception, In8 is colluding with Ch10's perception of relationships and hence acknowledging the fact that Ch10's cultural world may be different from the normative adult world.

It is only when Ch10 replies that she does not know the answer to this question in line 31, that In8 reformulates the question to offer the temporal alternative of after she was born. In this way, In8 seeks to cooperate with Ch10's cultural view without imposing her own normative adult view.

Third, In8 overrides the initial imposition of the stereotypical view of the father-child relationships. In line 35, In8 replaces the person reference for Ch10's two fathers from the category specific labels such as 'new' and 'real' with their first name references. What this design does is delete the earlier references to 'new' and 'real' fathers and replaces them with the dads' proper names. This again reflects In8's hearing of these references as the source of ambiguity in Ch10's telling and therefore initiates the move to rectify this trouble source.

Additionally, in lines 37-38, In8 reinitiates the topic of the relationship between Ch10's mum and her two dads. Her question also offers another term of reference for her dads, namely 'them' and after a short pause offers another term 'botha them'. Notably, this label now marks a shift from making a distinction between the two fathers to making them collective.

So by restarting the topic, removing the problematic relational reference 'dad' in the questioning design and replacing them with the proper name reference 'John' and 'James' as well as introducing the collective reference 'them', In8 initiates the move to remove the trouble source in Ch10's telling. Additionally, In8 also distances the talk from the stereotypical view of parent-child relationships and reinstates a more neutral view. This is interesting as it avoids imposition of the stereotypical view such relationships presented in the design of the initial questioning turn.

In lines 41-44, Ch10 provides another telling that provides a clear account of the relationship between her mother and the two fathers. Ch10's uses the collective references 'them' in this telling and is therefore able to avoid referring to her two fathers individually.

6.5.4 Interactional Outcome

The main point to make about this piece of interaction is that Ch10's telling can be ambiguous to the non-present overhearers not as a result of the child being an 'incompetent storyteller', but rather through the clash between the adult's and child's conceptualisations of relationships in the real world.

The interaction highlights how seemingly ordinary conceptualisations of father-child relationships in the normative adult world can be different in the child's world. Conceptualisations of relationships in terms of biological and non-biological that are very much part of the way adults categorise relationships between a father and a child can be a cause of confusion for the child. Such conceptualisations are pervasive in the language used in everyday life, for example in labels of person references. This being the case, there are warrants for examining the labels and terminologies used in the police interview, not just in terms of 'age-appropriateness' but also in terms of their tendency to reflect a stereotypical socio-cultural world.

However, this fragment also shows that In8, although initially conforming to the stereotypical view of parent-child relationships, goes on to accommodate to Ch10's differing view by reformulating her questions to avoid imposing such a stereotypical view. In this way, In8 has listened to the Ch10's point of view and responded accordingly. The upshot of this has been that not only has Ch10's point of view been recognised but also the organisational goal of providing a clear account of her relationship with her two fathers has been established.

In8's responsive action has attended to both the local interaction goal of disambiguating elements in a telling as well as the global goal of eliciting details of the father-child relationship. Although In8 started the interaction with her preconceived notions of this relationship, her subsequent accommodation to the individual differences has managed to resolve the ambiguity in Ch10's telling. It can be said then that In8 has listened to and responded to the interactional goals of the forensic interview in a child centred manner.

In the next section, I look at a fragment that contains some possible lapses in the consistency of the telling.

6.6 Lapses in Consistency of the Telling

Fragment 6.3

((In4-Female Ch4- Female Aged 5))

(Ch4 provides an account where she witnessed her daddy and his partner, Jan, in the bathroom and Jan was engaged in a sexual act with her father)

1 In4: Did she::?
2 (0.5)
3 A:nd what was daddy 'n Jan we::arin (0.2)when this was
4 happening.
5 Ch4:► .hhh Jan was we:arin- (0.5)erm a ski::rt,
6 In4: yeah,
7 Ch6: an she was we:arin: bo:ots >long bo:ots<
8 In4: Ye::ah,
9 (0.8)
10 Ch4: And she wear (0.2) in 'er whi:te top with no (0.2) a:rms
11 on like me:
12 In4: Ri:ght,
13 (0.5)
14 Ch4: and (0.5) a:nd my daddy was we:arin (1.3) ahm:: (0.2)
15 sho::es like mi:ne,
16 In4: Mhmmm,
17 Ch4: trou:se:rs je::ans,
18 In4: Ye:ah,
19 (2.4)
20 Ch4: and er:: (0.5) an (.) a wo:rking to:p
21 In4: Ri::ght .hhhh so ho- how did [how di-
22 Ch4: [A:nd he put the: wo:rkin
23 jump on a wo:rkin (0.2)an a wo:rking ja:cket
24 on an a wo::rki:n coat on,
25 (.)
26 In4: Oh::[:
27 Ch4: [an a wo:rkin bo:ots on
28 (.)
29 In4: So how did you see his willy then if he had all those
30 clo:thes on
31 (1.6)
32 Ch4: Ja:n pulled his trousers down then
33 In4: Oh: ri:ght. oka:y hhhh so when you went in the bathro:om
34 (0.2)
35 an you sa:w what Jan 'n daddy were doin,
36 Ch4: my daddy dragged me i::n the bathroom an he locked the
37 door on me.
38 In4: Did he:?

6.6.1 Organisational Relevance

Prior to this fragment, Ch4 has produced a telling that described a sexual act by her father and his partner, Jan, in the bathroom. In line 01, In4 responds to this piece of telling by Ch4 with a confirmation check. However, there is an evaluative element in this question where there is a stretch and a final rising intonation. This confirmation check expresses a surprised reaction to the telling by Ch4. In this way, it is different from the interviewer responses in Fragment 6.1 and 6.2 which convey a neutral receipt of the child's telling.

In the next questioning turn, In4 goes on to elicit information about what Jan was wearing during the alleged incident. The organisational relevance of this questioning turn would be to provide additional information about the alleged incident that took place. Providing further evidence about the state of dress/undress of the participants involved in the alleged incident will provide support to Ch4's claim that such an incident had taken place. Building up the narrative consistently in this way adds credibility to Ch4's claim of abuse.

Typically, there are two aspects to the organisational relevance of this turn. One is to present Ch4 as a competent witness if she is able to describe associated facts surrounding the alleged incident in a consistent manner. As mentioned earlier, in police interviews with a child, there is the underlying preconception that the child could be making up stories. Therefore, if the child is able to substantiate the associated facts then this portrays the child as a competent witness and further helps build the case for the prosecution.

Secondly, the description of such associated facts helps in the investigative aspect of the case. For example, if the child is able to identify an item of clothing which later through forensic or DNA testing is found to contain traces of substances involved in sexual activity, then this can be used as corroborating evidence.

This questioning turn seeks to establish credibility as well as the possibility of corroborating evidence. I will next provide an analysis of Ch4's telling for this questioning turn.

6.6.2 An Account of Child's Telling

There are two interesting observations about Ch4's telling from lines 05 - 20 in this fragment. Firstly, although she provides a description of the items of clothing that the alleged perpetrator and his partner were wearing, she does not provide an account of their state of undress. In the alleged activity of fellatio, this account will provide crucial information to verify Ch4's allegation. This is forensically more relevant information as it would provide corroborating evidence to what Ch4 had witnessed. Instead, Ch4's list of various items of clothing and footwear suggests that both the participants in the alleged incident may have been fully clothed at the time of the incident. There is, therefore, a need to pursue further information to clarify what the state of dressing of alleged perpetrator and his partner was.

Secondly, there is a noticeable pattern in the way Ch4 lists the various items of clothing. In lines 5 -20, Ch4 describes pieces of clothing and footwear worn by her father and Jan. She uses the past continuous tense for this description, 'she was we:arin..' (line 7) and 'my daddy was we:arin..' (line 14). There is also a repetitive

element in the listing of the items in her telling. In line 22, she interrupts In4 who was midway producing a turn, indicating that she still has not finished with her telling. From lines 22 – 25, she provides further items of clothing worn by her father. However, she uses a different sentence structure to the previous piece of telling. This time she shifts to the simple past tense ‘he put the:..’, suggesting a different line of action from the previous telling. Then she goes on to provide a list of items of clothing that her father ‘put on’. There is a repetitive element in this part of the telling – ‘working jump’, ‘wo:rking ja:cket’, and ‘wo::rking coat’ and ‘wo:rking bo:ots’.

One possible explanation for this pattern may be found in children’s storytelling. Everyday storytelling, which children are exposed to in school and in their family life, involves a repetitive element. According to Raines and Isbell (1999), teaching children storytelling should involve repetitive words and phrases.

In this sense, then, this part of the telling suggests that Ch4 may have shifted from the frame of alleged incident to the frame of enacting her cultural practice of storytelling. Enactment of cultural practices as discussed in Chapter 2 is an attempt by Ch4 to display her competence in providing items of clothing as solicited by In4 in the questioning turn in lines 3 - 4. It is obvious that Ch4 has not addressed the organisational relevance of this questioning turn. In her cultural world, and probably boosted by In4’s surprised reaction token, her next move in a storytelling mode would be to display her competence in listing items of clothing so that she can elicit further reactions of surprise or praise.

However, in the courtroom context, the competence that Ch4 has displayed does not

fit with In4's agenda of eliciting details that can provide substantial proof of the allegation. The non-present overhearers can note the potential inconsistency of the evidence given by Ch4 and question the credibility of her evidence and subsequently the truthfulness of her allegation. The defence counsel can use such lapses in Ch4's telling to discredit her testimony.

6.6.3 Interviewer's Response

In4 responds to Ch4's telling in four distinct ways. Firstly, she acknowledges that an extended turn is in progress by providing continuers in lines 6, 8, 12, 16 and 18. The continuers function to receipt a complete chunk of information while eliciting further talk from Ch4. In this way, In4 encourages further tellings by Ch4 about the various items of clothing that the participants in the alleged incident were wearing.

Secondly, in line 21, In4 acknowledges receipt of Ch4's telling about the various items of clothing with a stretched 'Righ::t'. There is a further delay with an inbreath before In4 begins the next questioning turn with 'how did..'. In this way, In4 does not immediately dispute Ch4's telling. This design is similar to the design in the questioning turn in line 29, 'So how did you see his willy then if he had all those clo:thes on'. So, although In4 does indeed seem poised to produce a challenging turn, it is not designed as an immediate response to Ch4's telling. In4 provides the space for Ch4 to go on with her details of description before issuing the next question. This acts to soften the impact of the 'challenge' and therefore acts as a less hostile form of questioning.

Thirdly, in line 27, In4 again provides a surprise reaction token ('Oh:::') to Ch4's

listing of further items of clothing that her father was purportedly wearing at the time of the alleged incident. This response token signals a change of state in In4's understanding of Ch4's telling. The "Oh::" token here is designed as information receipt that is proposing that Ch4's telling in the prior turn has been particularly newsworthy to In4 (Heritage, 1984). But it is newsworthy not in the sense that it has helped to clarify understanding but rather in the sense that it does not quite fit into the way the alleged incident could have occurred. So In4's "Oh::" shows that there is a problem now in understanding the description given by the child which is inconsistent with the previous account of what happened in the bathroom. She also chooses to provide this token response at the point at which the turn is possibly not complete as Ch4 actually has a continuing intonation at the end of her prior turn, and this way In4 is actually interrupting Ch4 in her extended turn. At this juncture, In4 is taking a more evaluative stance towards Ch4's telling. Instead of merely receipting Ch4's telling as in the previous turn in line 21, here she chooses to express surprise about her telling and in doing so treats Ch4's telling so far as a problematic one. But Ch4 does not treat the 'oh::' as a signal of a problem faced with her telling. Instead she treats it as a prompt to continue with her listing and goes on to provide one further item worn by her father.

Finally, in line 29, In4 redoes the questioning turn that she was not able complete in line 21. In this completed turn, In4 disputes the telling that Ch4 has given so far about the various items of clothing. She draws attention to the fact that this telling is inconsistent with what Ch4 had described previously about having seen her father's private part. This turn design then has more to do with the organisational relevance of ensuring evidence presented in court is hearable as consistent and logical. This

question also provides an opportunity for Ch4 to address the possible lapse in the consistency of her telling thus far. It is also an opportunity to redress the credibility of her evidence that has been made questionable by portraying her father and his partner as being fully clothed during the act of fellatio.

6.5.4 Interactional Outcome

In line 32, Ch4 goes on to provide a logical explanation about how it was that she was able to see her father's private part. Ch4's restores the possible lapse in her evidence. Her explanation that it was because 'Ja:n pulled his trousers down then' is aligned with her earlier allegation that she witnessed her father and his partner being involved in a sexual activity.

Although this answer does not provide an account of why she presented the telling of her father and Jan being fully clothed, it does make the evidence provided by Ch4 credible. It is possible that Ch4 was describing their clothes as she first saw them in the bathroom and the trousers were pulled down once she was locked in the bathroom. It redirects the focus of the interaction back to the alleged incident and the facts associated with performing a sexual act. It redirects the attention of the non-present overhearers to the re-established consistency of Ch4's telling rather than to its initial incongruity.

Therefore, in effect, both the questioning turn that In4 designs in line 29 and the subsequent answer given by Ch4 in line 32 serve the function of reinstating the credibility of the child and providing corroborating evidence of the alleged incident. In order to do this, In4 took a more forceful approach of challenging Ch4 about her

telling. This approach of questioning marks a departure from the usual questioning style that is rather non-directive.

Unlike the interviewers in Fragments 6.1 and 6.2, In4 does not accommodate to Ch4's cultural practice of story telling. In this case, taking a more challenging position was important to counteract the possible argument that the defence counsel may make. Again, the organisational relevance of verifying the evidence for the benefit of non-present overhearers plays an important role in the type of responsive action taken by the interviewer.

It appears then, that the interpersonal dimension of accommodating to aspects in the child's telling is only made relevant in the interview agenda when it is aligned with the organisational relevance. Where there is a conflict between these two goals, the organisational relevance becomes a dominant factor in influencing the trajectory of the interaction.

In the next section, I will examine an example where the child provides a telling that contains a divergence in the topic of the question asked.

6.7 Divergence in the Telling

Fragment 6.4

((In1-Female, Ch1- Female Aged 5))

- 118 In1: Right. Okay, So think back now for me
119 I haven't been in nanny's house see,
120 have I?. tell me where na:nny's
121 ba:throo:m is in the house=
122→ Ch1: =Upstairs an she's got (.) a ba:th- a::hm (1.5) ora:nge
123 an she's got every single thing ora:nge, an she's got
124 toile:t she's painted he:r er: wa:ll's blu:e now.
125 In1: °Oh r:right.°

126 Ch1: Now she'sss(.)ah:. got shower an curtains an ah:m (2.0)
 127 nanny came in the ba:hhth with me and she says to me
 128 please wash those bits 'n those bits 'n those bits 'n
 129 those bits 'n those bits 'n those bits an those bits.
 130 ((child touches left hip, left thigh, left knee, left
 131 ankle, right knee, right leg and face))
 132 In1: Rig:ht. okay, so- na:nny's ba:throo:m is ora:nge.
 133 (3.0)
 134 In1: Is it orange now?
 135 Ch1: No: it's blue
 136 In1: >It's blue now< she's painted it blue: Right. so think
 137 back to that time now when grandpy ra:n the bath f'you
 138 (0.5)an put your to:ys in the ba::th, where were you when
 139 grandpy was runnin the ba:th (.) put-puttin the water in
 140 the bath (.) an- an your toys.
 141 Ch1: Ah::m (0.5) I wa::s (.) upstai:rs.

6.7.1 Organisational Relevance

In this fragment, In1 asks Ch1 to provide a description of the bathroom where the alleged incident took place. After the turn initial response token and before proceeding to the questioning turn, In1 provides the relevance for asking for the description of the bathroom. In doing so, she attempts to relate to Ch1's social world. In1 positions herself as someone who has not been to Ch1's grandmother's house and therefore would not be likely to know what it looked like. In1 attempts to show the relevance of eliciting the description of the bathroom that might otherwise seem irrelevant to Ch1. In1 attempts to address the possible perplexity on Ch1's part, as to the relevance of this description because she may not be aware of the organisational relevance of describing the scene of crime. It is also important to note that In1 establishes this relevance in terms of Ch1's social world ('I haven't been in nanny's house see, have I?').

6.7.2 An Account of Child's Telling

There are two points to observe about Ch1's extended turn answer to this question. First, Ch1's telling contains more details than solicited in the questioning turn. In her initial part of her telling in lines 122-124, she provides the location of the bathroom as

requested by the prior questioning turn. Then she proceeds to provide a description of the bathroom, giving details about the colour and the objects in the bath. Although In1's questioning turn only projects a single turn constructional unit, soliciting locational information, Ch1 displays her competence by describing both the colour and the objects in the bathroom even without being asked to do so by In1.

Secondly, there is a topical shift in Ch4's description of the alleged abusive incident. In line 126 after In1 provides a response token, Ch1 continues with the description of the bathroom. Then after some hesitation and a short delay of 1.5 second, Ch1 shifts topic and goes on to provide details of the alleged incident in the bathroom with grandmother. She also uses gestures to demonstrate to the interviewer each part of the body as she mentions it. In this way, she again displays her competence in providing an account of the alleged incident by specifically describing the actions through a combination of words and actions.

In this extended turn, Ch1 has shifted from the topic of describing the bathroom to the topic of describing the alleged incident in the bathroom. This form of shifting in topic can be described as a digression as it does not limit the answer to the remits of the question asked. It runs contrary to Drew's point that 'anyone in the position of answering is restricted to dealing with just what's in the prior question' (1992:506). One way of accounting for this digression would be to attribute it to Ch1's inept pragmatic abilities that do not extend to that of the adult and therefore she is not likely to limit the scope of the answer to just what was asked in the prior questioning turn.

However, it is also important to note that during this episode of 'digression', Ch1 is

orienting towards telling about the part of the alleged incident that is more salient to her. In the course of the extended turn, although she complies with In1's request to provide a description of the crime scene, she also goes on to provide an account of the events that were offensive. In this way, Ch1 displays her competence in not only providing details of the alleged incident but she also shows that she is aware of the relevance and purpose of the interview i.e. providing details of the offensive incident. In both the description of the bathroom and the alleged incident, she provides detailed accounts. However, by enacting a topic shift to disclose details of the alleged incident, she displays her knowledge of the more salient goal of the interview.

6.7.3 Interviewer's Response

In1 responds to Ch1 by firstly acknowledging receipt of her telling with response tokens and then by redirecting the next question turn to the topic of the colour of the bathroom. In1 ignores Ch1's telling about the alleged incident and does not take the opportunity to elicit further information about this.

Both the topics involved in the fragment – description of the location as well the account of the alleged incident- are organisationally relevant. However, in pursuing the topic initiated in the preceding turn i.e. the description of the location, In1 is orienting to topic coherence in the interaction. If In1 pursues the second topic of the alleged incident, then the orderliness of the progression of topic may be affected. As such by refocusing on the topic of the prior turn, In1 is able to keep the orderliness of flow of topics. This shows the interviewer's preoccupation of keeping to the order of the interview script.

Ch1's response to this redirection in topic is somewhat delayed. Firstly, there is no uptake from her and when she does respond in line 135, it is to correct In1's statement about the colour of the bathroom. The lack of uptake could possibly be an indication that Ch1 is bewildered as to why In1 has not chosen to address the issue of the alleged incident and instead has chosen to focus on the topic of the bathroom.

In1 confirms this correction by repeating it and then goes on to design the next questioning turn to solicit specific information about the sequence of events already provided by Ch1 in earlier turns. Again, In1 is orienting to the sequential organisation of the interview where the sequencing of the events leading up the alleged incident is dealt with turn-by-turn.

6.7.4 Interactional Outcome

In this fragment, it can be observed that when presented with two organisationally relevant topics, In1 has chosen to proceed with the one that is more sequentially relevant to the preceding turn rather than what appears to be salient to Ch1. Therefore, unlike the previous three examples where the interviewers had to choose between addressing the organisationally relevant goals or the interactional accomplishment in the child's telling in the next turn, the interviewer in this example had to choose between two organisationally relevant goals. In other words, In1 had the opportunity to do child-centred listening by following Ch1's cue and eliciting more details about the alleged incident as this is also organisationally relevant. By not doing this, In1 displays an inherent preoccupation for topical organisation within the interview. It appears there is a requirement for the topics in the interview to be addressed one by one and 'jumping topics' as it were might not be a favourable thing to do. This could

possibly have to do with presenting the evidence to the non-present overhearers clearly so that they would be able to follow Ch1's talk and not get confused with an inordinate combination of topics.

However, such a preoccupation can lead to several consequences. Firstly, Ch1 can feel that she is not being listened to, especially if she does not understand the relevance of the description of location that is being elicited. It has to be noted that Ch1 has competently produced a disclosure of her own accord and in her own words. By ignoring this disclosure, In1 does not provide affirmation to Ch1's effort in producing this disclosure. Secondly, it is obvious from the way the interaction unfolds from this point that In1 intends this disclosure to be produced at a predetermined later stage in the interaction (see Chapter 7, Fragment 7.2). However, there is no guarantee that Ch1 will produce this disclosure again at the predetermined segment of the interview. The analysis in Chapter 7, Section 7.4 confirms precisely this.

This suggests that discursive listening can be oriented towards achieving institutional goals for the benefit of the non-present overhearers rather than providing recognition of the child's interactional competence in particular instances.

In the next section, I will examine a fragment of telling which contains a long extended turn.

6.8 Non-Engagement with the Telling

Fragment 6.5

(In8-Female, C11- Male Aged 8)

- 1 In8: Okay? Right. Okay, Now I think I've done enough
2 talkin now, haven I? yea:h?.hhhhhh so:: you said you've
3 come up to talk t'me about Sally (0.2) yeah? so you
4 tell me everything you can (0.8)about (0.2) Sally=
5 Ch11: =all the boys were in the pa:rk, an Sally was in the-

6 (0.8)er- (2.0)in the ol' nu:rser^y, (0.8) an Ricky
7 went over there (0.2) an Jeffrey an she did an me Roger
8 (0.2) Martin (0.2)an(.) Ricky William were sittin
9 in the pa:rk, then two went over so I went over
10 (0.2) an Ricky says- said he wants t'take a look at
11 Sally's boobs .hhhhh an- so- she said she sing a so:ng,
12 an: (0.8) she said she- wants (0.2) two volunteers (.)
13 an me and Ricky was layin on the sofa: cos they move the
14 sofa from erm-(0.2)er garage an: (0.8) they- (0.8)>me
15 and Ricky was layin on the sofa< an she jumped on top'f
16 us (1.2) a::-nd then (1.2)S- Sally's (.) friends (.)
17 father come over a:nd <he said< 'wha you d- wha you doin
18 a:n >he said< who's swearin an (Gees Bevan)(0.8)a::n
19 (0.8) h-he said 'stop y- your swearin or I'm goin t'see
20 your mother, a:n(.) so- he said to Sally, '>What are you
21 doin in here with the boys<', '>you're not allowed' by
22 'ere<' (0.8)she said 'I'm only- (0.2)showin 'em my to↓:p'
23 an she start tellin 'im to f off(.) an er- (1.0)
24 the:n (0.2) he wen 'ome to tell his mother an Lo- (0.2)
25 Lo- Lo- Lonnie Sally's mother (1.0) asked Sally to come
26 ho:me an then (0.2) five minutes later, she let (.) Sally
27 back out (1.0) a:n I din' go out.
28 In8: .hhhhh right. okay so you've told me >quite alot there
29 haven you?< yeah? so what I'm goin to do is just go over
30 (.) it >in little small pieces< now alri:ght?(.)
31 Ch11: (nods)
31 In8 okay (.) so you sa:id you were>down the park with the
32 boys< yeah?
33 Ch11: (nods)
34 In8: so- when was it.
35 Ch11: It: wa:::s (1.8) I think it wa:::sss (1.0)Februa:ry
36 the:(0.8)se- Februa:ry the twenty first I think.

6.8.1 Organisational Relevance

This first fragment begins with an initial narrative elicitation sequence where In8 sets the scene for Ch11 to provide an account of the alleged incident in his own words. In8 designs the turn in this narrative elicitation to display three main organisationally relevant meanings. Firstly, she demarcates the following line of talk to be different from the previous line of talk. She does this by firstly orienting to the finality of the way in which talk has been designed in the previous segment ('Now I think I've done enough talkin now, haven I?'). She also treats this move into the new segment as a collaborative effort by using a confirmation check 'yeah?' In this way, it appears that the move into the new segment is collaboratively achieved as opposed to one which is interviewer imposed. Before designing the next turn constructional unit to invite Ch11

to produce his account, In8 produces a long inhalation and this is followed by the stretching of the conjunction 'so:.'. In a sense, these paralinguistic features also demarcate the entry into a more 'serious' phase of the interview, where the move is from rapport stage to the narrative stage.

Secondly, In8 opens up talk about the alleged incident by avoiding mentioning anything about the alleged incident itself. She firstly produces a verbatim report of what Ch11 has said previously. In this verbatim report, she mentions one of the protagonists in the narrative, 'Sally'. Ch11 has already mentioned this protagonist previously so In8 is not producing any new information but merely repeating details that have already been provided. Also by mentioning the protagonists' name in this way, In8 is able to avoid mentioning anything about the incident itself or details that may be associated with it. The first mention of the alleged incident then belongs solely to Ch11. This evidently serves to promote the neutral positioning of the interviewer as required by the interview protocol and serves to preserve the child's telling in his own words.

Thirdly, In8 also designs the turn to invite Ch11 to produce an extended turn. By using the phrase 'tell me everything you can', In8 makes relevant the answer to be an extended turn (or multi-unit turn) rather than a single turn answer. In8 does not produce this turn in a hurry. It is done by firstly repeating what Ch11 has said, then there is a confirmation check to elicit Ch11's confirmation that this is indeed correct, and then the final turn constructional unit is designed with short gaps within the turn. In this way, In8 is orienting not only to the fact that she is selecting Ch11 as the next speaker but also to the type of turn that Ch11 is expected to produce. In8's preface

here makes relevant the production of an extended turn and that this turn will provide as much details as possible about the alleged incident.

6.8.2 An Account of Child's Telling

There are 5 observations to be made about the way in which Ch11 designs the account. Firstly, Ch11 ascribes blame on Sally who is one of the protagonists. Ch11 mentions in line 12-13 that 'she said she- wants (0.2) t̄wo volunteers (.)' and in lines 15-16 'she jumped on top'f us'. This design shows that Sally was willing to participate in the activity, and that she even initiated it. In lines 22-23, he mentions that Sally said 'I'm only – (0.2) showin' 'em my to↓p and she started telling 'im to f off'. In this way, Sally is characterised as rude and aggressive and not an innocent victim in the alleged incident.

Secondly, Ch11 addresses the sexual nature of the alleged incident. In lines 10-11, he mentions that 'Ricky says-said he want t'take a look at Sally's boobs', and then he also implies that in lines 15-16 that Sally instigated the activity by jumping on top of them. Finally, in lines 22-23, he highlights Sally's dishonesty in answering the adult who questioned her actions. In all of these utterances, there is only a hint that the alleged incident involved a form of sexual misconduct although the exact nature of it is not very clear from Ch11's narrative account.

Thirdly, Ch11 presents the adults in the alleged incident playing two differentiated roles. One adult is playing the 'policing' role and the other has a more 'lackadaisical attitude' role. In lines 16-25, he provides an account of an adult who came by to see where the children were and reprimanded one of the boys for swearing. He also

reprimanded Sally for being with the boys when she was not allowed to be and he went on to complain to Sally's mother about the incident. The adult in this case takes a more authoritative role in disciplining the child and plays the role of a moral policeman. The second adult that Ch11 mentions, Sally's mother, is presented as having a more moderate authoritative role in that she made Sally to go home but later allowed her to go out again. In this way, Ch11 differentiates the roles played by the two adults in this incident.

Fourthly, Ch11 presents himself and the other child in the incident as 'outsider' and 'volunteers' in the incident. Ch11 positions himself in the account mainly as an observer. In lines 13 -16, he also mentions himself to be involved in the incident with Sally but again this is mitigated by assigning the role of the aggressor to Sally because he and Ricky were just laying on the sofa and it was Sally who jumped on top of them.

He also identifies one of his friends, Ricky as being potentially involved in the activity more than the other boys. He marks out Ricky as wanting to engage in a sexually related activity in lines 10-11, ' Ricky says- said he wants t'take a look at Sally's boobs'. Additionally, he does not mention anything else that might incriminate himself or any of the boys. In fact, in line 12, he also positions himself and Ricky as 'volunteers' which distances both of them from what may be considered an aggressive position of taking advantage of a young girl.

In sum, this narrative account is not a neutral one. It positions Ch11 as a competent narrator as he is able to orient the narrative in such a way that absolves himself and

the other boys of blame, responsibility and guilt.

6.8.3 Interviewer's Response

Three main observations can be noted about In8's response to this extended telling by Ch11. Firstly, her response to the telling is minimal through the production of response tokens. She then focuses on the quantity of Ch11's telling ('okay so you've told me >quite a lot there haven you?<') but she does not address any specific aspects of his telling. After that, she explains how she is going to proceed with the interview - 'just go over (.) it> in little small pieces<'.

And thirdly, In8 designs the next questioning turn to contextualise Ch11's telling within a specified time. In this way, she shifts the topic away from the main elements of the narrative account provided by the child to the elements *not* provided by Ch11 in the narrative and in this case, the time of the incident. Also, In8 refrains from turns that focus on specific elements in the narrative and which might in some way provide an indication of an assessment being made of the narrative account on the whole.

6.7.4 Interactional Outcome

As In8 does not address any specific element in Ch11's telling, this telling is hearable as originating from Ch11 alone. In terms of discursive listening, then, it is clear that In8 is orienting towards the institutional goal of maintaining neutrality and allowing the child to tell the story in his own words. This is certainly rather contrary to other story telling episodes (Schegloff, 1992a; Goodwin,1986; Mandelbaum,1987; Lerner,1994) in ordinary conversations where the recipients always orient to the projected outcome of the story. This may be in terms of showing alignment appropriate to the type of story produced or providing disagreement. Whichever the

case may be there is a reference to the content of the narrative itself. This also enables the audience to be engaged with the story telling activity.

The absence of such engagement in this instance could leave Ch11 with the feeling that his narrative account was not believed or not perceived to be accurate. Although it is acknowledged that the interview protocols requirement make it necessary for In8 to maintain this neutral stance, it is also highly possible that Ch11 may be left with the feeling that he is not supported after his efforts to provide the narrative.

The topical shift enacted to address the institutional relevance of time of incident also shows how the institutional goal rather than the interpersonal goal is prioritised in this particular fragment.

6.9 Conclusions

The analysis in this chapter has captured five different forms of response / responsive actions performed by the interviewers. In Fragment 6.1, In8's responsive action addresses the omitted and unclear parts of Ch11's telling. The outcome of this action, in turn, recasts Ch11's telling as one that involves an unlawful act rather than innocent children's play. This recasting has legal implications for the way the activity recounted by Ch11 is perceived by the non-present overhearers. In Fragment 6.2, In8's responsive action accommodates to the social world of the child and addresses the ambiguous telling that Ch11 had provided. This is done by removing the problematic person references and using a neutral proper name reference. In Fragment 6.3, In5's responsive action disputes Ch5's inconsistent telling and in doing so reinstates the Ch5's credibility as a witness. In Fragment 6.4, In1 responds by

reinstating topical talk when Ch1 diverges from the topic of the prior turn. In Fragment 6.5, In8 responds by making a topical shift which serves to contextualise the activity in Ch11's telling.

All of the responsive actions have one thing in common: they all address the organisational relevance of the child's telling and tend to leave unattended the cultural practices or the projected outcome in the child's telling. Although, in Fragments 6.1 & 6.2, In8 does accommodate to Ch10's cultural world, this is done in conjunction with achieving the organisational relevance of disambiguating the telling Ch10 has provided. In Fragment 6.3, In4 performs what is considered an unfavourable responsive action- disputing elements in Ch4's telling. However, again this is done with the aim of achieving the organisational relevance of reinstating the credibility of Ch4's evidence and her status as a witness. Therefore, it can be concluded that organisational relevance plays a particularly important role in the type of responsive action that interviewers take after the child's telling.

Second, it can be said that each of these responsive actions is occasioned not only by the telling that the child provides but the environment in which the telling occurs. So while in Fragment 6.1, In8 addresses the details that are lacking in Ch10's telling, in Fragment 6.5, which is the initial telling, she postpones addressing the issues in the telling and shifts towards obtaining contextual information relating to the alleged incident i.e. the time of the incident. So sequential positioning of the telling, whether it is the initial telling or a subsequent one, appears to influence the responsive action taken by the interviewer. In Fragment 6.4, In1 chooses to reinstate topical talk rather than proceed with the topical shift enacted by Ch1. Again, this action serves to

preserve the continuity of topical talk and avoids making disjunctive topical shifts in the unfolding trajectory of the interaction.

It can therefore be concluded that these responsive actions act to control the topic i.e. for the telling by the child to be heard in some preconceived way. And it is the interviewer who is in control of the topic. The topic shift initiated by the child is resisted in favour of maintaining the sequential organisation of the telling.

Third, the analysis has shown the way in which the child displays various interactional competencies through her telling. The analysis of the five selected fragments has shown that each child in the interactions displays various interactional competencies through their tellings. In Fragments 6.1 and 6.5, Ch11 displays his competence in designing the turn to avoid implicating himself in the alleged incident. In Fragment 6.2, Ch10 displays her competence in designing the turn to resist the preconceived cultural world imposed by In8 and chooses to assert the cultural world that she is familiar with. In Fragment 6.3, Ch5 displays her competence in displaying her ability to list various items of clothing in line with the In5's response in the prior turn. In Fragment 6.4, Ch1 displays her competence in providing details of the scene of the incident and in displaying her legal awareness by shifting the focus to provide an account of the alleged incident. This analysis has shown that the clash between the organisation goals pursued by the interviewer and the cultural world of the child can pose problems to the way the interaction unfolds.

In sum listening to the child in the forensic interview involves a moment by moment negotiation of the organisational goals. Accommodating to the child's world is also

done in conjunction with the attainment of this organisational goal rather than as a goal in itself.

6.10 Implications for Listening in the Forensic Interview

So how can the five fragments of child's telling advance our understanding of how police interviewers listen in the forensic interview context? Firstly, the analysis shows that listening in the forensic context is a multidimensional process. One dimension that the interviewer has to contend with is the interacting cultures in the interview. The analysis shows that in the forensic interviews, the child is participating in two cultures – the child's and the adult's. In the same way, the adult police interviewer is also participating in both these cultures. Both these cultures are inextricably woven and it would be difficult to separate one from the other. As Fragment 6.2 shows, conflicts can also arise when the police interviewer does not identify with the child's world.

Another dimension is the legal framework within which the interview protocol is based. Such a framework dictates that the organisational and sequential relevance of the interview is of paramount importance. The way in which the interviewer responds to the child in each fragment is made in conjunction with achieving the organisational and sequential relevance of the interaction.

A third dimension is the interpersonal dimension. As Fragment 6.3 shows, the inclusion of an interpersonal dimension ('oh really' as an expression of surprise) in the interview interaction leads to the enactment of a cultural practice that violates requirements of the police interview. Therefore, the practice of listening in the

interview process is a rather slippery one. It involves managing all the different dimensions of that interaction.

The way in which the interviewers respond to the various problems in extended turns in these selected examples also shows that there is a diagnostic element in listening to the child. In cases where the extended turns are ambiguous, listening involves identifying and locating the source of ambiguity and then either removing this ambiguity or clarifying in the context in which it is uttered. In cases where the extended turns contain elements of inconsistency, the listening involves identifying and locating sources of the inconsistency and then addressing this in order to reinstate the child's account to a state of consistency. And in cases where the extended turns are lacking in clarity and blame ascription, then listening involves identifying and locating sources of this defectiveness and addressing them with the appropriate follow-up questions.

Finally, in cases where there is divergence in the segments within the extended turns, listening involves reinstating the trajectory of the interaction to the prior question asked. In this way, coherence in the sequences within talk is maintained.

This diagnostic feature focuses on what the child is not doing rather than what she is doing. It involves not only understanding the units within the extended turn but also in locating and identifying sources of problems, mainly for the non-present overhearers, in understanding the extended turns and then subsequently going on to design turns with the aim of remedying these problems. This is done in the context of pursuing the

ubiquitous organisational relevance of interview – to obtain forensically relevant information that can assure a reasonable possibility of conviction.

Police interviewers need to recognise that it is not only the procedural norms of the legal and investigative world that determine the trajectory of these interviews. More importantly, as the present analysis has shown, the child also comes into the interview with her own worldview. And it is equally important to consider this worldview in the interview interaction. In other words, instead of determining what the child is not doing when a question is asked (e.g. not providing a complete answer, digressing to a different topic, not providing a clear enough telling, not providing a consistent answer), it is important also to ask what the child *is* doing when answering the question.

Although it is important for police interviewers to keep to the procedural norms of the interview in terms of achieving the organisational and the sequential goals, there also needs to be some recognition that departure from the sequential organisation, at some level, may not necessarily be detrimental to the interview. Child-centred listening then involves the flexibility to allow the child to take the lead in the telling and this may involve letting go of the tight rein held on the sequential organisation of the interview.

6.11 Chapter Summary

In this chapter, I have shown how the child's tellings are a site for the enactment of the child's own cultural practices. Through in-depth analysis of five selected fragments I show how the child is constructing specific cultural practices in the tellings. I also show that these tellings are purposive and display the child's

interactional competence.

I also showed how the responsive actions of the police interviewers relate to the organisational relevance of the interview. Therefore, the cultural practices of the child are in conflict with the adult and legal cultural worlds. I examined the organisational, sequential and interpersonal dimension of the police interviewers' responses. I find that the organisational and sequential goals of the interviews are prioritised over interpersonal goals. In Fragments 6.1 and 6.2, I provided a detailed analysis to show the way the interviewers accommodate to the interpersonal elements in conjunction with the organisational and sequential goals of the interview. In Fragments 6.3, 6.4 and 6.5, I illustrated how the organisational and sequential goals of the interview are prioritised over the interpersonal goal. Further, in Fragment 6.5, I pointed out that when two organisational goals are in a competing position, the police interviewer accommodates to the goal that is sequentially relevant rather than a new one.

In sum, these five fragments illustrated that the trajectory of the interaction is very much influenced by the cultural practices of the child. However, police interviewers accommodate to these cultural practices only when it serves the organisational and sequential goal of the interview. Therefore, it was concluded that listening to the child in police interviews involves accommodating to organisational and sequential goals of the interview rather than the addressing the cultural practices the child is enacting in these tellings.

Chapter 7 Pursuing An Answer: Listening to the Child's Local Interactional Goals

7.1 Chapter Summary

In the previous chapters, I have examined cases where the child produces a telling (i.e. extended turn answers) and explicated the responsive actions that the interviewer can take in such cases. In this chapter, I will look at specific instances where evidence of abuse is elicited by the interviewer. I will examine the child's orientation to such questioning as well as the responsive actions taken by the interviewer when such displays are not forthcoming from the child.

Specifically, I will examine the manner in which interviewers reformulate questions when the child's answer does not display evidence of abuse and how such reformulations orient to the institutional goals of the forensic interview. I will look at question forms which project specific claims that display evidence of abuse. Such questions are typically in the form of open-ended action-based cues ('What did he do?') and time-segmented cues ('What happened then?'). I will also show how the child's answers to such questions orient to a local agenda and this displays the child's interactional competence. Using three examples, I will show how the interviewer attends to the institutional agenda in the design of the follow-up questions. I will also examine the child's overall answers and show that the child is attending to local coherence within the interaction. I conclude by suggesting that in order to listen and accommodate to the child it is important to take into account the local goal that the child is orienting towards.

7.2 Institutional Goal vs. Local Interactional Goals

One of the purposes of the forensic interview is to elicit information that is sufficiently useful in obtaining the conviction of the alleged perpetrator. The disclosure to display evidence of abuse as well as of the specific details pertaining to this is extremely crucial in the forensic interview. Paradoxically, this is also the most difficult aspect of the interview for the child as she is required to disclose information that is extremely sensitive and intimate in nature. The details required cover aspects that relate to identification of the perpetrator, position of the child and the perpetrator during the alleged incident, details of specific parts of the anatomy, and so on. Discussing such intimate details is certainly not part of the child's cultural routine. In fact, adults often steer away from talking about such topics in the presence of children (Hutchby & Moran-Ellis, 1998). Clearly then, this is a difficult topic for any child, abused or otherwise, to talk about. However, in order to obtain a conviction, sufficient details are required in the child's answers. And, in cases of sexual abuse, this would entail the child articulating very intimate details of the abusive act. The child would have to utter words that she knows are taboo in her and the adult cultural world. She could also be aware that the actions that she is recounting are considered morally 'wrong' in the eyes of the society. This can invariably lead the child to be hesitant in producing a detailed disclosure. Hence, the initial details produced by the child in her answers may not be sufficient for the purposes of the forensic interview. This then results in the interviewer reformulating the questions in the subsequent questioning turns to solicit further details.

7.2.1 Initiation of Topic to Display Evidence of Abuse

In the interview, the topic of the alleged incident is usually broached through free recall questions such as 'Tell me what happened'. If the child does not provide disclosures or insufficient detail have been provided, then this is usually followed up with free recall prompts to secure incident specific information, for example, 'You said he touched your private. Tell me more about that'. There are two types of such free recall prompts (Lamb et.al., 2003). One is action-based cues ('What did he do?') and the other is time-segmented cues ('What happened next?'). The purpose of using such cues is to initiate disclosure by the child without any contamination of the evidence by the interviewer. In other words, when these two question types are used, it is hearable to the non-present overhearers that the interviewer did not lead the child to provide the answer in a particular manner. As a result, the answer produced by the child is also hearable by the non-present overhearers as originating solely from the child. These two questions differ with respect to the information they request. Action-based cues seek to elicit more information about the action itself whereas time segmenting cues solicit information about what happened before or after the action referred to. It has been found that time-segmented cues are more cognitively demanding than action-based cues (Lamb et al, 2003). This is because the action is the focus of the action-based cues while the action in the time-segmented cues serves only as temporal reference points.

In addition, if the child still does not produce an adequate answer, directed questions are asked to refocus the child's attention on details or aspects of the alleged incident that she has already mentioned. These typically include the 'wh' questions which request specific category or types of additional information, for example 'What colour

was the car?’ (when the child has already mentioned a car). The aim of such directed questions is to elicit specific details that are not contained in the child’s initial narrative (as mentioned in Chapter 4 Section 4.2.3.4)

7.2.2 Local Coherence of Conversation

There is, however, another aspect to this interaction apart from eliciting specific detail to disclose abuse in answers. This has to do with the child’s social functioning. In the speech therapy context, McTear and King (1991) claim that the therapist is likely to be guided by the global theoretical goals while the child can provide responses that attend only to the local coherence of the conversation. They suggest that the child can give an appropriate ‘yes’ response to a yes/no question or imitate a given model but in the context of the whole conversation topic or global plan, these responses may prove to be inappropriate.

Gardner (1998) provides an interesting illustration of the clash between the global agenda and the localised one in a speech therapy session.

Fragment 7.1

((St - Stuart/Child, Th - Therapist/Adult)

01 Th: And who’s this? She helps you when you go to hospital.
02 St: Nurt.
03 Th: The nurt?
04 (.)
05 Th: What, what should it be?
06 (.)
07 Th: Not the nurt, the:
08 St: doctor.
09 Th: No. You were right but you said it wrong, You forgot the
Snakey sound at the end.

(Taken from Gardner, 1998: 125)

In this fragment, Stuart provides a semantically appropriate response ‘nurse’ to the initial question. However, this answer is queried by the therapist by producing an

accurate repeat. In line 05, the therapist follows this query with another one emphasising that she has heard Stuart's answer but that the content is not an appropriate one. She also clearly rejects Stuart's first try with 'not the nurt', in line 07. In line 06, Stuart provides the answer 'doctor'. It can be noted that he responds at the lexical level, replacing the answer 'nurse' with another possibility. After he produces this answer, the therapist goes on to state that it was his pronunciation that was at fault and goes on to explain what the fault was. In parental feedback, correction is usually at truth value level (Morgan & Travis, 1989), so it is possible that Stuart presumes he has given the wrong answer and not that he has pronounced the word wrongly.

This example illustrates that the child and the interview are orienting to two different goals in this interaction and it is only after the child's alternative answer in line 08, that the therapist realises this and goes on to provide a more specific repair request.

This provides an interesting viewpoint to examine the interaction within the police interview with child. As most research in such forensic interviews has focussed on the variability of the cognitive demands presented by various question types i.e. how effective these questions types are in eliciting specific types of answers, it is also important to understand what the child is doing when faced with such questions in the interview. This perspective would certainly enhance the police interviewers' understanding of the child's social and pragmatic skills.

In the following sections, I will provide an analysis of three fragments that illustrate differing goals oriented to by the police interviewer and the child. In Section 7.3, I will show that the child is focussed on managing her inhibitions. In Section 7.4, I will

illustrate that the child is preoccupied with dramatising the events involved in the alleged incident. In Section 7.5, I explicate the way in which the child is engaged in avoiding blame in the alleged incident. I will examine how the interviewer pursues the institutional goal of displaying abuse in all of these cases.

7.3 Inhibition

Fragment 7.2

((In2-Female, Ch2- Female Aged 4))

01 In2: Now you've come here today t' talk to me about
02 somethin, haven't you (0.2) yeah?
03 Ch2 ((nods))
04 In2: what is- what've you come to talk
05 to me about.
06 Ch2: What we said to our da:d.
07 In2: What you said to your dad was it (0.2) so what did you
08 tell your dad then.
09 Ch2: Er:: (0.8) said grandda:d °(fumsels us)°
10 In2: Granda::d
11 Ch2: °(fumsels us)
12 (1.0)
13 In2: See:
14 (1.0)
15 Ch2: cos grandda:d fumbles us (0.2)
16 In2: fumbles us, is that what you're sayin?
17 Ch2: ((nods))/(1.2)
18 In2: Okay so tell me what he does then.
19 Ch2: .hhhh when we're in the ba:th °gra:nddad doesn't be
20 careful with our bum°
21 (0.5)
22 In2: He what sorry?
23 Ch2: He doesn't be careful with us.
24 In2: He doesn't be careful with you,
25 Ch2: ((shakes head))/(1.0)
26 In2: Okayhhh .hhh so when he's not careful with you what does
27 he do.
28 Ch2: Mmm (0.2) he doesn't like being in the bath.
29 In2: Hmhm
30 (0.8)
31 Okay (0.5) so:: when he says he does- er::m (0.2) he's not
32 careful with your bum, right (0.5) what does he do with
33 your bum.
34 Ch2: he fumbles it.
35 In2: Okayhhh d'you want t' tell me what you mean by that.
36 Ch2: ((Nods))/(1.0)
37 In2: What does fumble mean then.
38 Ch2: It hu:rts when he go like that to 'ere-
39 (child gestures around private area)
40 In2: Ri:ght. I see: Oka:yhhh .hhhh and who's in the bath
41 when he's doin that.
42 Ch2: My grandda:d
43 In2: Hmhm (0.8) oka:y (0.2) alri:ght .hhhh and what does he
44 do that wi:th.
45 Ch2: With (0.2) his hand. ((child shows her palm to the

46 interviewer))
47 In2: Okay, and how does that feel, when he does it.
48 Ch2: A bit, er: (0.5) a bit hard ((child grimaces))

7.3.1 Positioning Talk to Display Evidence of Abuse

In this fragment, In2 initiates talk on the topic of the alleged abuse. It serves to move the topic of talk over from the rapport phase to the narrative phase where the disclosure of the details of the alleged incident is required. She solicits information about the purpose of the child's visit there and as with most other interviews, it is interviewer-initiated rather than child initiated (only one out of a corpus of 11 interviews had a child-initiated account of the abuse). The phrasing of the question itself is open-ended. The design of the questioning turn, 'you've come here today t'talk to me about something, haven't you?', presents the talk to follow as having been predetermined and pre-planned which is characteristic of the narrative phase of the forensic interview. This question is designed to elicit a specific type of talk from Ch2 and not just any talk in general. It is designed to produce talk that displays that abuse has taken place. In other words, Ch2 is invited to produce talk that not only contains disclosure about the alleged incident but this disclosure is meant to provide verbal proof to the overhearers that abuse has taken place.

Firstly, her initial answer in line 06 consists of a single turn unit utterance. This answer does provide some information relating to the prior question. Ch2's answer seeks to make a claim that this information is already accessible to an adult (in this case, her dad). In this way, Ch2 is displaying that she is cognisant of the fact that her dad would have conveyed that very same information to the police and it is the content of this information that is being referred to by interviewer. This answer serves to achieve common ground about what the 'talk' relates to.

7.3.2 Pursuing a Response to Display Evidence of Abuse

In2 accepts this answer provided by Ch2 in line 06 (by repeating the answer and therefore confirming receipt of it). However, the design of her subsequent questioning turns in this sequence of interaction indicates that she seeks to pursue further details that display evidence of abuse.

She designs her next turn to solicit more information about the nature of her comment to her dad with 'so what did you tell your dad then'. The conjunction 'so' marks the connectedness between these two questions. In other words, this second question is designed to be a follow-up question to the first and not as if it is a redone question in the light of the child's non-disclosure about the abuse.

This responsive action, as contained in In2's question in lines 07-08 seeks to pursue further details about the alleged incident itself. In this way, In2 is essentially initiating repair i.e. by seeking to obtain information that was not given through the first question. However, this repair is being done in an indirect manner - as a new question rather than as a repetition. This type of repair is similar to the ones identified by other research (Jefferson, 1978; Drew, 1997). This questioning design repositions the talk to obtain the details required in the first question by making it seem as if it is a sequentially relevant next question rather than a repair initiation on the part of the interviewer. It can also be noted that this question again assumes that both In2 and Ch2 are at the same level of understanding about the type of details of the alleged incident that are required in this reformulated question.

In line 09, Ch2 provides a disclosure of the alleged incident and this is uttered softly

and involves a mispronounced word ('fumsels' for 'fumbles'). After seeking clarification about this mispronounced word between lines 10 to 16, In2 uses an action-based cue to solicit further details about the incident with 'tell me what he does then' in line 18. This question again embeds the claim that the proceeding turn will explicate and describe the offensive action that the grandfather was alleged to have committed and that this will by implication explain what Ch2 means by the use of the term 'fumble'. So, in effect, In2 is pursuing further details to display evidence of abuse through this question design. The term 'fumble' although already indicating abuse at some level is apparently insufficient and requires further elaboration.

Ch2's next answer in lines 19 - 20 is also somewhat hesitant and softly uttered. However, she does produce an answer that describes the sexual nature of the abuse ('°gra:nddad doesn't be careful with our bum°').

In lines 22 - 24, In2 begins a short sequence to clarify the answer Ch2 had produced in the prior turn. Then, in line 26, In2 makes a further attempt to elicit more details to display evidence of abuse by, first, prefacing the next question with a specific action referent, 'when he's not careful with you' and then repeating the previous action-based cue 'what does he do'. The framing of the question in this manner serves to make specific the particular action performed by her grandfather. In this way, In2 acknowledges receipt of Ch2's prior answer and makes relevant that she is soliciting further details, in addition to the ones already provided in line 23. The prefacing of the action referent before repeating the question serves to pre-empt Ch2 from repeating the same answer or saying 'I have already told you what he does' in her next turn.

However, Ch2 does not provide further details to display evidence of abuse in her next turn in line 28. Following Ch2's digressive answer in line 28, In2 seeks to reinstate topical talk i.e. talk about the alleged incident. She does this in line 31 to 33 by prefacing the question with the action referent 'he's not careful with your bum' and repeats the same question. This time, the lexical term 'with you' is replaced with 'your bum'. This design projects an answer that includes an element of sexual abuse. So, the upshot of designing the questioning turn to include the lexical term "your bum" here is that the focus of the projected answer is explicitly recast to the sexual nature of abuse.

In her response in line 34, Ch2 repeats the answer that she had given at the very start of her disclosure ('he fumbles it') and in this respect brings the trajectory of this piece of interaction to a full circle as it were.

At this point, In2 changes tack. She receipts the answer provided by Ch2 (through her response token 'okayhhh') again displaying that is an acceptable answer although it, in fact, does not provide any new information. Then she asks the question again but this time with a different formulation, 'd'you want t'tell me what you mean by that' (line 35). It can be noted that although this formulation requests the meaning of the lexical item 'fumble', by implication this would also include details of the alleged incident. But more importantly, this reformulation eliminates the accusatory tone that is implicit in 'what does he do'? In2 has changed her course of action from one that can be potentially disparaging (i.e. action-based cue 'what does he do?') to a relatively more neutral one in ('what you mean by that?'). This formulation also serves to act as a change in perspective, especially in light of Ch2's repetitive answer.

Ch2 hears this question as a closed-ended one that requires a yes or no answer and nods in agreement. In2 repeats the question in a directed question format in the next turn, 'what does fumble mean then', and Ch2 proceeds to provide an answer that further provides evidence that an abusive incident has taken place. It involves her gesturing around her private area (displaying the sexual nature of the abuse) and she suggests the action caused her pain (displaying the intrusive aspect of the abuse). The non-verbal form of her answer (gesturing around her private area) also reinforces the display of the sexual abuse in the answer.

In lines 40 - 48, In2 proceeds to design further questioning turns to elicit more specific details of the alleged incident. They are directed questions, which are designed to elicit category specific information such as the identity of the alleged perpetrator, Ch2's feelings at the time of the incident, and the parts of anatomy involved.

The above analysis shows that In2 has followed the standard questioning guidelines outlined in interview protocol. She started with the invitation for free recall, followed this up with action-based cues for free recall and then finally ended up using category specific directed questions. She has also managed to pursue the responses that display evidence of abuse by designing her questions as if they were follow-up questions when in fact they were reformulated to pursue further details that display evidence of abuse. She also shifted tack when she discovered that Ch2's answers were repetitive. By changing the formulation of the question from the action-based cue (which she repeated twice in lines 26 and lines 31-33) to the new formulation of 'what you mean by that', she was able to present a different perspective of the question design to Ch2.

However, it is important to ask if the answers that Ch2 provides have been acknowledged adequately by In2. This entails an analysis of the answers provided by Ch2.

7.3.3 Child's Display of Interactional Competence

There are several observations to make about Ch2's answers in this piece of interaction. Firstly, she displays some hesitancy in providing disclosure of the alleged incident. In line 06, she avoids providing a direct answer about the alleged incident straightaway and instead refers to what she has told her dad. In line 09, she does go on to provide a disclosure of the alleged incident. However, there is a short hesitation and then a pause and then the description of the alleged act itself is uttered softly. The lexical item describing the act involves a form of child language – 'fumsels'. In line 11, Ch2 repeats the utterance describing the alleged act also in a soft, almost inaudible voice. In lines 19 -20, Ch2 again describes the alleged act in a soft inaudible voice. When asked to clarify, Ch2 repeats the answer but substitutes the phrase 'with our bum' with 'with us'. This substitution signals a shift in the sexual orientation of the allegation to a more neutral one.

These observations indicate that Ch2 is clearly very uncomfortable about providing the disclosure to In2. Although she acknowledges that it is an agreed part of the agenda of the interviewer (with a nod in line 02), she displays inhibitions in mentioning the sexual act that was involved.

Secondly, it can be observed that while In2 is pursuing category specific details of the sexual act, Ch2 is focussed on avoiding mention of the sexual act. When In2 persists

on using the action-based cue ‘what did he do?’ Ch2 provides an answer about her grandfather’s dislike of being in the bath (line 28) rather than the action involved in the alleged incident. In line 34, she repeats the answer that she first provided in line 09 about grandfathers’ fumbling. Particularly, Ch2 does not provide details about the motions, the body parts, position involved in the alleged incident. This type of cyclical answer to the question can be taken to mean that Ch2 has failed to understand that this question form ‘what did he do?’ requires category specific details of the incident rather than stating the allegation.

7.3.4 Observations

It can be concluded that in this piece of interaction, In2 is focussed on achieving the global agenda of the interview, i.e. obtaining category specific information relating to the abuse relating, i.e. details relating to ‘what’, ‘where’, ‘how’, etc, of the alleged interview. Ch2, however, seems concerned with the local level of interaction that involves revealing details that are of an extremely intimate and private nature. This can be a difficult task for a young child and she displays her inhibitions quite clearly in this piece of interaction.

However, it can also be noted that In2’s persistence in reformulating her questions to elicit further details to display evidence of abuse allows Ch2 to slowly address In2’s questions. And, especially after In2 changes her formulation of questions to a neutral design (i.e. ‘what you mean’) compared to the earlier ones which contain an accusatory tone (‘what does he do?’), she is able to provide further details that display evidence of abuse in line 38. It can be said that In2 has accommodated to Ch2’s inhibition in revealing embarrassing details by changing her formulation of the

questions. This in turn has allowed Ch2 to produce further details in her subsequent answers.

In the next fragment, I will examine a piece of interaction that involves another type of question –the open-ended time-segmented cue.

7.4 Dramatising the Escape

Fragment 7.3

((In1-Female, Ch1- Female Aged 5))

201 In1: Oh: right. put her bathings on? °Right°. (1.0)
202 Okay, (0.7) so: (1.2) e:rm, you were standing
203 in the bath, (0.7) and you said nanny got
204 into the bath with you?
205 (1.0)
206 So what happened then.
207 Ch1: A:hm (0.7) I- I picked my foot on
208 my other thing an I put my foot out then
209 I was ruhnnning downstairs quickly before nanny
210 comed out an she ffollowed down, sat over
211 there 'n wen like that, .hhan shoved- something
212 at me on the hand like and I fahhllded down. ((Child
213 demonstrates her actions))
214 In1: You fell down. right. okay, so you just showed
215 me then how you got out've the bath, have you?
216 What made you get out've the bath.
217 Ch1: Ah:m (1.0) Mummy was teahhched me how to get
218 out've the bath. She was wearing slack
219 and she lifted up her leg and she went and like that
220 and she lihhted up her other leg. I climbed out
221 I was copyin mu:mmy in the bahhth. ((Child demonstrates
222 her actions))
223 (2.0)
224 In1: Alright.
225 (1.8)
226 Ch1: Ah:m (0.7) I was standin I was in the bahhth
227 and I was like-I was [go- goin like thahht
228 In1: [(unclear
229 In1: Right. oka:y, I'm gettin a bit-
230 a little bit confused now. If we go back
231 to the time when you said nanny got into the bath
232 with you, (0.7) okay, er:m- what happened-,
233 tell me what happened again.
234 Ch1: Er:m (1.5) An the:n I- I- I was ruhnnnin
235 in the kitchen I was ruhnnnin, I was sayin 'HELP'
236 an granddad sahhying 'come on''come on' 'come on'
237 and he was goin round the kihhtchen I tried to open
238 the door but I couldn', so I was goin round again,
239 round again(0.7) [nanny was chasin]
240 In1: [Why were- (.) why] were you
241 shouting for help.
242 Ch1: Cos er- Nanny was chasin me down the stairs,

243 and she was ruhnnning like this.
244 (0.7)
245 In1: °Why was nanny chasing you downsta↓irs?°
246 Ch1: Cos she wanted (0.5) she wanted t'smack me.
247 In1: Why did she want to smack you?
248 Ch1: Because I wouldn't wash her bits.
249 In1: Because you wouldn't wash her bits. What do
250 you mean by bits.
251 Ch1: ((child beats her lap))
252 In1: What are bits.
253 Ch1: Body.

7.4.1 Positioning Talk to Display Evidence of Abuse

In this rather long piece of interaction, In1 is soliciting information about the incident that occurred in the bath between Ch1 and her grandmother. Although this piece of interaction occurs very much later in the questioning phase, it is clear that In1 is positioning the talk to elicit a free recall narrative from Ch1 about the alleged incident. The open-ended time-segmented cue, 'so what happened next', projects three claims in the answer. The first inferential claim embedded is that both Ch1 and In1 are attuned to the positioning in the narrative sequence. In effect, this means that Ch1 knows that she is supposed to describe the sequence of events when she was in the bath with her grandmother. This is an important requirement for a time-segmented cue as opposed to an action-based cue that does not rely on the temporal organisation for the basis of the answer. This orientation to temporal organisation is further displayed through In1's summary of the points in the narrative that Ch1 has already mentioned in an earlier section of the interview. In1's repetition of these details 'you were standing in the bath', and 'you said nanny got into the bath with you?' all serve to frame the temporal context for the following question so that Ch1 is able to position her talk to that point in the narrative sequence in order to tell 'what happened then'. The conjunction 'so' here functions to connect the action that happened earlier to 'what happened then'. Another point to note is that each of the repetitions that In1

mentions is followed by short pauses. This indicates that In1 is checking that Ch1 is able to follow these points and if she does show any indication of not doing so, then In1 can redirect her to this point in the temporal sequence.

The second inferential claim that is embedded in the question is that it will be an extended turn or a telling. In other words, 'so what happened then' projects a series of turn constructional units that will describe the action that happened between Ch1 and her grandmother. The third inferential claim embedded in the question is that the telling will contain a display of not just any action but one that contains evidence of alleged abusive action.

Ch1's initial answer, in lines 207-213, fulfils the first and the second inferential claim in the question, in that she does go on to produce an extended turn about what happened to her after the incident in the bath. However, Ch1's telling does not display any clear evidence of an abusive incident (the third inferential claim) and only hints that something 'bad' must have happened in the bath that made her want to run out of the bath.

7.4.2 Pursuing a Response to Display Evidence of Abuse

As this sequence of interaction unfolds, In1 displays that she is pursuing a response from Ch1 that displays abuse. In lines 207 - 213, Ch1 provides a telling describing how she got out of the bath. In1's initial response to this telling is to acknowledge receipt of this information and then she clarifies what Ch1 has just described. In this way, she is providing affirmation to Ch1 about the acceptance of her answer. Then in lines 214-216, she proceeds to design her questioning turn to elicit information about

the reason for her wanting to get out of the bath.

A noteworthy point about this question design is that, although it is formulated as a 'what' question, it is essentially asking 'why did you get out of the bath?' – a question that has been found to be difficult for young children to understand. By designing the question with "what made you" rather than 'why', In1 has avoided asking the 'why' question which may result in confusing Ch1. However, the cognitive demand of this question type is the same as a 'why' question. It seeks to elicit reasons for the action and therefore can be considered cognitively challenging for a 5-year-old child.

This question design also shifts the focus of the sequence of events back to before Ch1 got out of the bath. In other words, it is an antithesis to the initial time-segment cue of 'what happened then'. It is essentially asking, 'what happened before that'. The upshot of this type of design is that In1 is orienting to Ch1's answer as not answering the question asked. In other words, In1 is pursuing the details of the abusive action that occurred while in the bath which Ch1 has 'failed' to provide in her telling.

Further, in lines 223-225, In1 displays a less accepting stance of Ch1's answer compared to the previous turns. Firstly, there is a 2.0-second gap before she provides the response acknowledgment 'alright'. This again is followed by another 1.8-second gap before Ch1 takes up the turn and continues to give an account of how she got out of the bath. In1 interrupts Ch1's telling with an unclear utterance initially and then provides a token response. She then explicitly articulates that she is having problems with Ch1's answer- "I'm a little bit confused now" (lines 229-230). The design of the next questioning turn reinstates talk back to the time when Ch1 was in the bath with

her grandmother. She does this by repeating the exact same phrase as in the initial stage of this piece of interaction- 'when Nanny got in the bath with you?'. This questioning turn brings this piece of interaction back to the same point in the initial segment of the interview, as was done in Fragment 8.2, except that this time it is the interviewer who designs the turn this way, not the child. She then repeats the time-segmented cue 'what happened'. In this way, In1 treats Ch1's response as not having answered the initial question and indicates that Ch1 has effected a topic shift through her answers. She therefore reinstates talk to the topic of providing details of the alleged abuse. In1 also does a self-initiated repair of her initial question with 'tell me what happened again. The design of this repair suggests that In1 is accounting for the fact that Ch1 is being asked to repeat details of the alleged incident and it is not altogether new information. This design could also be an appeal aimed at dealing with Ch1's eagerness to provide new information rather than provide further details about the information already mentioned.

In the ensuing turns, Ch1 continues to provide new information about how she attempted to escape from her grandmother and fails to provide disclosure of the alleged incident. In1 displays her increased frustration at this form of answering with her interruptive turn in line 240. In lines 240-241, she formulates a question using 'why'. In fact, she proceeds to formulate a few more questioning turns with 'why' in lines 245 and 247 in order to elicit the causal information about the reasons for her wanting to escape from her grandmother. In effect, the reason for Ch1 wanting to escape her grandmother would bring the topic back to what happened in the bath. This goal is achieved when Ch1 discloses, in line 248, that her grandmother wanted to strike her because she would not 'wash her bits'. This detail indirectly provides

information about the abusive action that occurred while Ch1 was in the bath with her grandmother.

In sum, In1's design of the questioning turns in this piece of interaction pursues evidence of abuse and Ch1 does not provide this until line 248. By reformulating her questions several times in different ways, In1 finally manages to get Ch1 to provide an answer that contains such a display.

7.4.3 Child's Display of Interactional Competence

There are several observations to make about Ch1's answers in this fragment. In each of the tellings that she provides in this interaction, she is orienting to the topic of how she escaped from her grandmother. In lines 207-213, she describes how she got out of the bath and ran away with her grandmother chasing her. She also points out that she fell down while trying to escape. She provides non-verbal evidence by actually enacting this scene through her movements. In lines 217-222, she provides another telling of how her mother taught her to get out of the bath. This lesson by her mother is what helped her escape. In lines 234-239, she provides an expressive description of how she was trying to run away in the kitchen.

Evidently, then, Ch1's focus in this piece of interaction is the dramatisation of how she managed to escape her grandmother's clutches. Her interpretation of the question 'what happened next' appears to be 'how did you escape from Nanny' rather than 'what did nanny do to make you run away'. It appears that the time-segmented cue does not hold the same meaning for Ch1 as it does for In1. It appears that Ch1 is preoccupied with the incident that frightened her i.e. her grandmother chasing her.

There could also very well be another reason why Ch1 fails to provide an answer related to the alleged abusive incident. This relates to providing new information in story telling. Ch1 has already recounted to In1 in an earlier segment of the interview that 'Nanny asked me to wash her bits' (See Chapter 6, Fragment 4). However, at that point In1 chose to ignore this disclosure in favour of preserving the sequential organisation of the prior questioning turn. Therefore, as she had already provided the details of the abusive incident to In1 in the earlier segment, Ch1 may want to provide new information not already disclosed at this point in the interaction.

7.4.4 Observations

It is clear that Ch1 is orienting towards a very different interactional goal from In1 in this fragment. While In1 is persistently seeking to obtain details of the abusive incident, Ch1 is concerned with dramatising how she escaped from her grandmother. Thus, we can see, that while In1 is focussed on the global agenda of the interaction, i.e. to obtain details that prove abuse has taken place, Ch1 is concerned with the local interactional goal of telling her story effectively.

Secondly, it can be noted that In1 does not acknowledge the tellings that Ch1 has produced as valid in their own right. The reformulations of her questions and her persistence in producing questioning turns to reinstate talk to the temporal point of the alleged incident show that she is concerned with pursuing the global agenda of the interview rather than addressing the concerns of Ch1 at that point. In this way, In1 orients to all of Ch1's answers as not answering the original question.

The evidence presented in this piece of analysis suggests that there can be more to the

child's inability to answer time-segmented questions than just the cognitive demands of the question forms. This may very well have to do with the child's concern in fulfilling the local interactional goal of effective story telling where dramatisation of the unfolding events is essential.

And finally, I will examine a third fragment to show how the child can show her own interactional competence in avoiding moral implications with regards to answering the interviewer's questions.

7.5 Avoiding Blame Implication

Fragment 7.4

((In8-Female, Ch10- Female Aged 8))

01 In8: Right. (.) >you said somethin about< sittin on his lap?
02 Ch10: ye:ah.
03 In8: ye:ah?
04 Ch10: °he sat me on his lap,° °an made me feel his private°
05 In8: °okay°,so-(0.5)how did he make you feel his private. what
06 did he do.
07 (1.0)
08 Ch10: Eh::m (3.0) We:ll (2.1) he picked me up and sat me on his
09 lap.
10 In8: Ri:ght, okay,
11 (2.0)
12 an what about when he made you feel his private, what did
13 he do then. [when]
14 Ch10: [he fo:rced me to feel it.
15 In8: °Right.°an how did he fo:rce you.
16 (2.6)
17 Ch10: by givin me a stro:ng pull.
18 In8: Right. so- (0.5) if you said he- he had a really strong
19 pull, what did he pull.
20 Ch10: my a:rm.
21 In8: he pulled'ju a:rm?
22 Ch10: (nods)/(0.2)
23 In8: right..hhh and where did he pull you're a:rm.
24 (0.5)
25 Ch10: to feel his private.
26 In8: so did you feel his private?
27 (0.5)
28 Ch10: he's forcing me, an couldn' get away so:
29 (0.2)
30 In8: °okay°.
31 Ch10: I only touched it a li'l (0.2) an I just hit him.
32 In8: °Right.° (.)°okay.°
33 Ch10: an then I told my mum (0.2)bu:t (.)after that my mum
34 (0.8) he le:ft(.) then,

35 In8: Mhm,
 36 Ch10: an (0.5) I told them- (0.2)>I told my mum then,<
 37 In8: °right°=
 38 Ch10: =what he done an then (0.5)some police came three weeks
 39 lat:er.
 40 In8: °Right.°°okay° .hhh=
 41 Ch10: =people like you:r job
 42 In8: Right.okay, >so they came in< ordinary clothes, did they?
 43 Ch10: Yeah.
 44 In8: Yeah? okay. .hhhhhhh d'ju know you said(0.5),about his
 45 private.
 46 Ch10: Yea:h
 47 In8: D'ju know any other words for private.

7.5.1 Positioning Talk to Display Evidence of Abuse

In this fragment, In8 is soliciting information from Ch10 to display evidence of abuse. This interaction occurs after Ch10 had provided a free narrative about the alleged incident. In the free narrative, Ch10 had made a claim about what the alleged perpetrator had done - ‘°he sat me on his lap,° °an made me feel his private°’. In line 01, In8 initiates topical talk about this claim Ch10 had made earlier. In6 designs this turn with a general statement about this claim that Ch10 had made earlier. She does not repeat exactly what Ch10 had claimed but instead alludes to it as ‘>you said something about< sittin on his lap’. In this way, In8 avoids repeating the disclosure herself and provides Ch10 the opportunity to repeat her claim in the next turn.

7.5.2 Pursuing a Response to Display Evidence of Abuse

In line 04, In8 repeats the earlier claim of abuse produced by Ch10 and this is hearable as not being ‘contaminated’ by In8 because Ch10 had provided it at an earlier stage. In line 05-06, In8 designs a questioning turn to elicit information about the manner in which the alleged perpetrator acted during the abusive act. She also provides an action-based cue ‘what did he do?’ In this way, In8 pursues further details of the action/s involved in this abusive incident.

In lines 08-09, Ch10 provides an answer that does not provide new details of the abusive incident and merely repeats what she had said earlier. In lines 12-13, In8 designs another questioning turn by repeating the initial question. In this way, In8 seeks to reinstate talk about the abusive incident and makes explicit reference to the sexual nature of the incident with the phrase 'made you feel his private'. In line 14, Ch10 provides an answer that points to the alleged perpetrator as the instigator of the action (he forc:ed me to feel it') rather than a description of the action. Following this, In8 goes on to produce a few category specific questions. In line 15, the questioning turn elicits information of the manner in which Ch10 was forced to perform the sexual act. Further, in lines 18-19, the questioning turn design seeks to elicit category specific information 'what'. This is followed by another questioning turn in line 23 to elicit further category specific information 'where'. In line 25, In8 produces a closed-ended limited option posing question 'so did you feel his private?' This question design solicits information about the extent of the sexual act. Such information is considered vital to show the seriousness of abuse as evidence to the overhearers. By implication, this question design also seeks to ascertain the role played by Ch10 in the sexual activity.

The design of all of these questioning turns pursue category specific details about the movement, position and type of contact between Ch10 and the alleged perpetrator. There is a sense that Ch10's answers to each of the questioning turns are not adequate in fulfilling the claims embedded in the initial open ended action question 'what did he do?'. Each of the subsequent questioning turn seeks to redress this shortcoming by focussing on the specific details of the abusive incident that Ch10 has seemingly failed to provide.

7.5.3 Child's Display of Interactional Competence

It can be noted that Ch10's answers display a certain amount of defensiveness about her role in the alleged incident. In line 08, there is a 1-second gap and then there is a pause after a hesitation and this is followed by a 'well' before she provides a neutral detail of what the alleged perpetrator did. Although this is probably the true account, its design – 'he picked me up and sat me on his lap' – does not provide further details of the abuse. In line 14, Ch10's design of her turn shows that she was not a willing party in the abusive action. She uses the lexical item 'fo:rces' which is stretched for emphasis. In line 17, she describes the manner of the action with 'by givin me a stro:ng pull', again emphasising the lexical item 'strong' with a stretched sound. This goes to show that Ch10 was powerless against the alleged perpetrator's strength and that the action occurred without her volition. From lines 28-31, Ch10 again displays her helplessness during the act by stating that the alleged perpetrator was 'forcing me' and that she 'couldn't get away so:'. She then attempts to downgrade her agency in line 31 by minimising her part in the incident with 'I only touched it a li'l'. She then describes how she reacted against to the abusive act with 'I just hit him'. This again displays not only her helplessness in this abusive act but also that she was propelled to retaliate against the alleged perpetrator. Such an orientation acts to avoid being blamed for the incident and that she was aware of the wrongdoing involved.

From lines 33 to 41, Ch10 goes on to explain her actions after the abusive incident occurred. She goes on to recount that she reported the incident to her mother. She repeats this statement three times ('I told my mum' in line 33, 'I told them' in line 36 and 'I told my mum then' in line 36) and that this had prompted police action. In this way, Ch10 upgrades her agency in reporting the incident. This serves to display her

role in bringing the case to light and as such aligns herself with the right side of the law, as it were. This piece of telling also serves to move the topic away from details of disclosure to display evidence of abuse to a more neutral topic of what occurred after the abuse had occurred.

Overall, then Ch10 does two things in this piece of interaction 1)) she avoids the moral implication in the questioning turns that she was a willing participant in the abusive act and 2) she moves the topic of talk away from intimate details of abuse to the topic of what happened after the abuse. And in both of these ways, Ch10 exhibits her social competence in resisting the institutional goal pursued by In8.

7.5.4 Observation

The interaction in Fragment 3 focuses on what the alleged perpetrator had made Ch10 do. In a sense, it is not only the alleged perpetrator whose actions are being scrutinised but also Ch10's. In8's questions not only focus on the wrongdoing of the alleged perpetrator but also by implication, focus on Ch10's actions that can be construed as instigating such an activity. Ch10's persistence in exonerating herself during this interaction has the effect of avoiding such an implication. Hence, Ch10's answers in this interaction can be seen to be concerned with this aspect of questioning rather than providing further evidence to show that the alleged abuse took place.

In other words, while In8 is concerned with the global agenda of obtaining category specific details as evidence for the benefit of the overhearers, Ch10 is focussed on avoiding blame implication during the act and pointing the finger at the alleged perpetrator as the instigator of the act.

This piece of interaction shows there can be a clash of goals in the forensic interview. While the interviewer designs the questioning turn to display evidence of abuse so that this can be a convincing case in the court, the very same questions can be interpreted by the child to mean blame ascription and she acts to resist this implication.

It can also be observed that In8 does not acknowledge Ch10's repeated attempts to absolve herself from her actions. Apart from the token acknowledgements provided there is no indication from In8 that she is cognisant of the concerns expressed by Ch10.

7.6 Implications for Listening

In this chapter, I have shown how police officers can pursue particular responses to display evidence of abuse as part of the institutional goal of the forensic interview. Such questioning turns are not purely 'neutral' in terms of the implications the answers may have for the child's role in the alleged incident. Although for the interviewer the answers to such questions may be important as evidence in court, the analysis has shown that such questions can be treated as questioning the child's own role in the alleged incident. The conflicting meanings being constructed in the interaction can serve to present the child as one who is not able to answer the questions appropriately.

In Fragment 7.2, I have shown how In2 is concerned with the elicitation of details of abuse and Ch2 displays her inhibitions in mentioning the abuse and resists providing

such details. I have also shown how In2 accommodates to Ch2 and this produces an outcome where the details of the alleged incident unfold step by step in the interview.

In Fragment 7.3, I have explicated how In1 also displays that she is pursuing details to display evidence of abuse. However, Ch1 is preoccupied with displaying her competence in dramatising the actions that occurred after the abusive incident and resists In1's institutionally motivated goal of recounting the specified alleged incident.

In Fragment 7.4, I have illustrated the way in which In8 persists in pursuing details to display evidence of abuse and how Ch10 acts to avoid being implicated as a willing party in the alleged incident.

It can be seen in all three cases that the interviewers are concerned with the global agenda of the interview i.e. to elicit details that display evidence of abuse in order to obtain evidence for conviction in the case. At the same time, each child is engaged in displaying competence in attending to the local coherence of the interaction.

This suggests that there is a dire need for interviewers to recognise the local interactional goals that the child is orienting to in the interview interaction. Only then will they be able to understand the child's point of view and the way the child is assigning meaning to the questions that are being asked. Ironically, the implications that the questions may have for the child can only be ascertained *after* the questions have been asked and when the child provides an answer. Nevertheless, it is still fundamentally important to monitor the child's answers to detect the concerns they

may be having during the interview interaction. Listening to the child entails being cognizant of the ways in which the child may be differentially orienting to the questions asked.

Secondly, this analysis shows that when the child does not provide the answer being elicited in the questioning turn, this should not be hastily attributed to lack of language and cognitive development in the child or poor questioning strategies. As the analysis of this chapter shows, the child may be competently attempting to achieve the local interactional goals in the interview and hence avoiding answering the question. It therefore can be argued that the child's action and role in answering questions need to be taken into account when designing interview follow-up questions in the interview. If they fail to accommodate to the local coherence that the child is competently constructing, then they will not be able to address the concerns that the child may have in providing the answers to the questions.

Although the interview protocol states that interviewers need to maintain a neutral stance during the interview interaction, by not acknowledging the child's social competence i.e. the actions that the child is constructing in her responses, I suggest that the interviewer is not accommodating or listening to the child. This can frustrate the child who may not be aware of the significance of the design of the follow-up questions that may not take in account her displayed agenda.

As the analysis in this chapter shows, designing follow-up questions may not just involve a consideration of developmental attributes but also the social competence of

the child. It is my suggestion that the more attention the interviewers pay to the child's social competence, the more successful the outcome of the interaction will be.

7.7 Conclusion

In this chapter, I have examined the ways in which the interviewers can pursue responses that display evidence of abuse through the design of their reformulated questions. This is done in order to fulfil the interview agenda. On the other hand, I have also explicated how the child can exhibit interactional and social competence to resist this agenda. I provided three instances where the child was shown to exhibit inhibitions, to dramatise the events and to avoid blame implication in the incident.

My analysis has shown that while the interviewer is concerned with the overall global agenda of the interview, the child is attending to the local coherence of the interaction. I conclude that the interviewers will have to recognise and take into account the child's construal of the questioning turns and this consideration will greatly enhance the outcome of the interview interaction.

Chapter 8 Listening to Manage Non-Responsiveness: Restarting Progressivity of Talk

8.1 Chapter Summary

This chapter will provide an analysis of how the elicitation of evidentiary details in a forensic interview are managed, turn-by-turn, where the child is ostensibly non-responsive. Non-responsiveness, in this chapter, is defined as a situation where the child produces a silence (interturn gap), disclaims knowledge ('I dunno', 'I don't remember') or displays non cooperation (with utterances such as 'No' or 'Nothing'). Specifically, it will focus on how the police interviewers listen and assign meanings to the child's non-responsive strategies. This will involve examining the sequential organisation and the turn design of the occurrences of such 'non-responsive' answers.

It will also involve examining the sequential organisation and turn design of the interviewer's response to the child's non-responsiveness. This will add a much needed empirical dimension to already existing texts on police interviewing with children (see Aldridge and Wood , 1998 and Walker, 1999).

The analysis will focus both on the child's non-responsive strategies and on the police interviewer's orientation to these strategies. This chapter makes two contributions: first, it seeks to elucidate the social and communicative strategies of non-responsive children who are involved in interviews of sexual and physical abuse. Secondly, by analysing the way the adult interviewers develop differential responses to these strategies, it provides an understanding of the practices, discursive techniques and competencies of police interviewers involved in these interviews.

As mentioned, other researchers have already looked at non-responsive strategies of children and provided an account for them in police interviews (Aldridge & Wood, 1998, Walker, 1999). In this chapter, I will examine the way non-responsiveness is produced and sustained within the flow of talk-in-interaction. In order to show this I will focus on three ways in which the police interviewers in the current data orient to the various instances of non-responsiveness: 1) treating them as an attribute of child development 2) treating them as resistance to talk, and 3) treating them as a reflection of the differing cultural world of the child. Such differing treatment of the child's non-responsiveness also position the interviewer within a continuum of recipient roles i.e. from a knowing recipient to an unknowing recipient with respect to prior knowledge about information to be disclosed by the child, the child's developmental ability and the child's existent cultural world.

8.2 Child's Non-responsiveness

The main aim of the forensic interview is to obtain as much forensically relevant information from children as possible: the more talk the child produces, the better it is for the overall interview agenda. However, there are occasions where the child does not provide any details about either the alleged incident or aspects related to it when questioned. The progressivity of talk is then halted, and the onus is on the interviewer to restart this process.

On such occasions, where the child does not provide any information, she can be deemed non-responsive. The term 'non-responsiveness' in this study is loosely characterised as 'not forthcoming with forensically relevant information'. It can be manifested verbally through phrases such as 'I dunno' or 'I can't remember'. It can

also be manifested non-verbally through silences. For the purpose of this analysis, I will not make a distinction between these different forms of non-responsiveness. These different forms may occur in isolation or in combination to produce an occasion of non-responsiveness. For example, silences may occur together with disclaimer of knowledge 'I dunno'. The analysis will cover both such occurrences of non-responsiveness. This is because I seek to illustrate the interactional outcome rather than the classification of these types of non-responsiveness.

In this chapter, I will examine the ways in which the individual interviewer responds to occasions of non-responsiveness. In Section 8.3, I will explicate the way in which the interviewer treats non-responsiveness as an attribute of child development. In Section 8.4, I will show how the interview treats non-responsiveness as resistance to talk. In Section 8.5, I will explain how the interview orients to continued non-responsiveness as a reflection of the differing cultural world of the child.

8.3 Treating Non-Responsiveness as an Attribute of Child Development

8.3.1 Current Research on Language Difficulties

Research on communication difficulties in forensic interviews has centred largely on developmental issues involved in questioning the child. One of the main reasons for non-responsiveness of the child in the interview has been attributed to the child's cognitive and linguistic immaturity. It has been found that questions requiring the child to provide conceptual referents such as time, frequency, location, colour, kinship terms, age, period of time, are very difficult for very young children to answer. These concepts are learned gradually over the course of primary school years. Children who have not mastered these will be inconsistent if asked to verify time and dates. It is also

suggested that as children's experience increases and they gather more knowledge about their environment and the world around them, these conceptual skills become more reliable and effective. As a result, research has always emphasised that age appropriate questions need to be used when young children are being questioned in the forensic interview context (Aldridge & Wood, 1998; Achieving Best Evidence 2002; Walker, 1999).

Research has also pointed out that inappropriate questioning can influence young children's answers (Bull 1995, Aldridge & Wood, 1998; Dent & Flin, 1992). The quote below illustrates this point:

Insufficient developmental sensitivity by professionals (as a result of lack of training or the adversarial role) can frustrate children trying to answer questions that they are not yet capable of understanding. Often children are questioned in language too complex for them to understand (Saywitz, Nathanson & Snyder 1993: 60)

The present data corpus also finds several instances where the child is asked to provide conceptual referents in the interview interaction. In spite of the difficulty the child has in answering such questions, these questions are continually asked in almost every forensic interview. Such details are important for providing corroborating evidence in the case. This section of analysis will focus on the environment within which such questions occur as well as the manner in which the individual interviewer responds to non-responsiveness that occurs in such cases.

In this first fragment, I show how the interviewer implicitly orients to the child's non-responsiveness as a developmental issue.

8.3.2 Treating Development Issue Implicitly

Fragment 8.1

((In3-Male, Ch3- Male Aged 5))

01 Ch3: Yeah
02 In3: When did you last see your dad then?
03 Ch3: I dunno
04 In3: Was it a long time ago or was it a short time ago?
05 Ch3: Short, just er- yesterday
06 In3: Yesterday, is it?
07 Ch3: Yeah came back in a big hu:ge airplane
08 In3: Airplane?

In Fragment 8.1, In3 is engaging Ch3 to talk about his father. In line 02, In3 solicits temporal information about the last time Ch3 met his father. This question design requires a content laden response i.e. the child is required to produce a specific time referent. Ch3 responds by providing a disclaimer of knowledge 'I don't know' and in this way displays his non-responsiveness.

In3 pursues a responsive answer by reformulating the question asked. The reformulated question is designed with two sets of alternative time frames. This question form contains the binary options, 'a long time ago' and 'a short time ago. In3 treats Ch3's answer in the prior turn as one that reflects Ch3's lack of understanding of the question and not as a disclaimer of knowledge as it might otherwise indicate.

One of the guidelines in Home Office (2001) is that interviewers proceed with alternative questions when the child is not able to answer an open-ended question. The aim of providing alternatives is to simplify the language in the question so that the child will be able to understand it better. The alternatives serve to provide a frame to help the child answer the question. Therefore, In3 is adhering to these guidelines

when he designs the next turn to provide a set of alternatives. In this way, In3 also displays that he is aware of development issues in questioning the child. By reformulating the question, In3 positions himself as a 'knowing recipient', i.e. he is aware of children's cognitive/linguistic immaturity regarding particular concepts.

Ch3 designs his answer to the alternative question by first using the term 'short' as provided in the question formulation. He then abandons this term and after a short hesitation comes up with his own formulation of the answer - 'yesterday'. In this way, Ch3 has produced self-repair where the original trouble source is produced by In3 but the repair is initiated by Ch3. Therefore, Ch3 displays that he is aware now that he is required to produce a time referent and therefore he appropriately produces this type of answer. The time referent 'yesterday' situates the last time he saw his father to be sometime in the past. In this way, Ch3 displays his linguistic competency in rejecting the alternatives provided by In3 in this formulation and produces his own formulation of time. The alternative question design has triggered a specific time referent that Ch3 produces in his final answer.

In3 responds to this answer by performing a confirmation check, and thereby providing a tentative status to accepting the answer given by Ch3. Ch3 confirms this answer and then goes on to design his next turn to provide further details about his father.

Two observations can be noted about this example. Firstly, this fragment illustrates that although Ch3 initially disclaims knowledge about the time he last saw his father, he does provide a specific time referent when the question has been reformulated in

an alternative format i.e. a linguistically simpler variation of the initial question. This has come about because In3 orients to Ch3's initial non-responsiveness as one that indicates developmental problems rather than as one that indicates not knowing the answer.

Secondly, the fragment also exemplifies that such reformulations can help the child understand the question better and go on to provide an appropriate answer. In this example, Ch3's competence is enhanced because he produces his own formulation of the specific time referent after abandoning the ones offered by In3.

In the next fragment, I will examine an example where the interviewer also treats the child's non-responsiveness as a developmental issue but in a more explicit manner.

8.3.3 Treating Developmental Issue Explicitly

Fragment 8.2

((In5-Female, Ch5- Female Aged 6))

01 In5: Right. So yesterday, you went (.), to Lisa's.
02 D'ju know what time, th't would've been?
03 (1.0)
04 Ch5: Mhm:
05 (6.8)
06 About six 'o clock.
07 In5: Yeah?
08 (0.5)
09 What makes you think, it was about six o' clock?
10 (8.7)
11 Ch5: I dunno.
12 In5: Can you tell the time?
13 (.)
14 Ch5: No
15 In5: No?
16 (2.2)
17 so when you got to To:m's, what- what happened?
18 (.)
19 who was there? tell me who was there.

In Fragment 8.2, In5 solicits precise information about the timing of the alleged incident that is additional to the time referent 'yesterday' that Ch5 had already disclosed in the earlier section. In other words, In5 seeks to determine the precise time during the period of 'yesterday' that the event took place.

Ch5 initially displays difficulty in answering this question. Firstly, there is a long interturn gap after In5's turn in line 02 and then Ch5 provides a stretched continuer and then after another long gap, she finally gives the relevant second pair part answer 'six o' clock'. In this way, Ch5 exhibits that she is able to provide the relevant time referent, despite her initial non-responsiveness to the question.

It is interesting to observe the way In5 treats this answer. She provides a tentative acceptance of this answer by Ch5 making a confirmation check 'yeah?'. It can be noted that this turn does not contain a turn initial response token that would indicate receipt of Ch5's answer such 'right' or 'okay'. Neither does she provide a repetition of the answer given by Ch5 that can also function as receipting a Ch5's answer.

When Ch5 nods to confirm this answer, In5 solicits further clarification about how Ch5 is able to recollect this information. This is a standard trope used by police interviewers to test the accuracy of the witnesses answer. However, the design of this turn, 'what makes you think, it was six o' clock?' can be considered as not age appropriate (Walker, 1999). Ch5 again displays difficulty in answering this question. There is an 8-second delay and then this time she disclaims knowledge of the answer to the question. It can be argued that this disclaimer may be an indication that Ch5 does not understand the prior question or lacks the cognitive ability to understand this

question due to its age inappropriate design. Of course, it is not possible to ascertain this from the interaction itself. However, for the purpose of this analysis this is not the issue. The issue is how In5 is orienting to this non-responsiveness by Ch5. Therefore, what In5 does next is noteworthy.

She designs the next turn to check Ch5's mastery of telling time. In this way, In5 orients to the developmental issue of mastery of concepts such as time. In particular, she seeks to clarify whether Ch5 has mastered this skill. Additionally, this turn design brings the issue of child development explicitly to the forefront in this interaction. In this way, In5 also enacts a shift in footing with respect to Ch5's competence. The focus shifts from Ch5's competence as a witness able to disclose details of the alleged incident to her lack of competence in terms of conceptual ability relating to time.

In her turn in line 14, Ch5 then disclaims having mastered the skill of telling time. In this kind of sequential position, this answer is inconsistent. Ch5 has displayed that she is able to tell the time by providing a specific time in line 06 but in line 14 she discounts possessing the ability to tell the time.

In5 again refrains from total acceptance of this answer by, first, seeking clarification signalled by the upward intonation in 'No?'. When Ch5 nods to confirm, In5 continues with a shift in topic. It is interesting that In5 does not attempt to challenge this answer by referring to the earlier time referent given by Ch5. She also does not reformulate any of her questions to simplify them linguistically, as she does in Fragment 1. In this way, In5 treats Ch5's negative answer 'No' not as a form of

resistance but as a disavowal of knowing how to tell the time and the inconsistency is left to 'hang in the air' as it were.

It is not possible to ascertain from the data whether the specific time referent provided by the child is in effect an accurate one or not. And as to whether this is an accurate answer or not is also a moot point as far as this analysis is concerned. Produced in this kind of sequential position and in this particular interactional environment, the non-responsive answers (i.e. the silence and the 'I dunno' and 'No') produced by Ch5 do a specific kind of interactional work. And this has to do with displaying to the non-present overhearers that Ch5 may have difficulty in telling time in spite of the fact that she has managed to produce a time specific referent. This is done not only through Ch5's design of the turn but also through In5's follow-up questions in terms of their design and sequence which characterise Ch5 as a child who may not have achieved the mastery of telling time, in spite of the fact that she was able to produce a specific time referent.

In this way, In5 orients to Ch5's non-responsiveness as a display of her cognitive immaturity, particularly with reference to her mastery of telling time. And this is an important point to make especially in the courtroom context where the accuracy of the answer is of paramount importance. By highlighting Ch5's lack of mastery of the concept of time, In5 pre-empts any attempts by the defence counsel in the courtroom to discredit Ch5 as a credible witness based solely on the inconsistency of her answers.

It is also important to note that In5 evokes the issue of Ch5's lack of mastery in telling time and then leaves the inconsistency of the answers 'to hang in the air' as it were, without disputing or seeking to clarify this inconsistency. For the purposes of the video evidence, it is important that Ch5's developmental immaturity is seen as a possible factor for her non-responsiveness as well as her inconsistent answer. In5 leaves unspoken the implication that Ch5's lack of conceptual mastery is a factor in the production of her answers. It is possible that one reason that In5 does this is to leave the jury to draw its own conclusion about the veracity of Ch5's testimony. Also, there are possibly other sources of corroborative evidence that can be deduced in court to substantiate the time of the alleged incident.

This fragment illustrates how non-responsiveness is oriented to by the interviewer as an indication of a developmental problem and in an explicit manner. It also exemplifies how by bringing the issue of a developmental problem to the forefront of the interaction, In5 is able to let the jury draw its own conclusions about the veracity of Ch5's evidence.

This can be contrasted with other fragments where the mastery of the skill rather than the lack of it is emphasised.

Fragment 8.3

((In1-Female, Ch1- Female Aged 5))

30 In1: When did that happen.
31 Ch1: When I wa:s (.) fo:ur
32 In1: When you were four (.) .hhhwhere does Nanny live,
33 Lizzie.

In Fragment 8.3, In1 elicits information requiring a conceptual referent of time. In her turn, Ch1 displays hesitation with a slight stretching of the word 'wa:s' and a short pause before providing an answer related to the conceptual referent of age. In1 receipts this answer through repetition and then proceeds to initiate a topic shift by designing the next questioning to solicit information related to location. Therefore, it is not only Ch1's design of the answer that constitutes the unproblematic nature of the answer but also In1's readiness to accept this answer. In this way, Ch1's mastery of this conceptual referent is established for the benefit of the non-present overhearers.

Fragment 8.4

((In6-Female, Ch9- Female Aged 7))

01 In6: if it's clean, is it?
 02 right.okay, so- (.) when did he-
 03 what time of the day was it?
 04 Ch9: He does it, every time he done it,
 05 in the night=
 06 In6: =in the night, is it?
 07 so, is it er:,
 08 like when you come 'ome from school,
 09 is it before tea or after tea.
 10 Ch9: In the nights.
 11 In6: In the nights.okay,
 12 so er:
 13 Ch9: When it's kickboxing, we 'ave a little bita tea,
 14 then a drink,
 15 In6: mhm,

In Fragment 8.4, In6 elicits information requiring a specific time referent. Ch9 provides a specific time referent 'in the night'. In6 receipts this answer with a clarification request and when Ch6 confirms this with a nod, proceeds to solicit a more precise detail of the time. This is done by prefacing the question with a specific time-segmented cue 'when you come 'ome from school' and then going to design an alternative choice question with 'is it before tea or after tea'. This alternative choice question seeks to elicit more precise information about the specific time of the incidents. It also acknowledges the acceptance of the answer provided by Ch9 in the

prior turn by incorporating the notion of 'tea', which is a meal that is usually had at nighttime. This question is designed to obtain further details about the particular time at night that the alleged incident occurred. Ch9 however does not provide an answer that chooses between these two options. Instead, she chooses to repeat her earlier answer in a plural form 'nights' instead of 'night'. In6 receipts this answer by again repeating the answer and is in the process of designing the next questioning turn when Ch9 interrupts and provides additional details relevant to the sequence of events. She mentions a series of activities that occurred when the alleged incident took place.

In this way, both In6 and Ch9 interactionally achieve Ch9's mastery of telling time through the design of their respective turns. Ch9's consistent answer and her further elaborations of activities during the alleged incident form corroborating evidence about the timing of the incident. In6's receipt of Ch9's answer through repetition and the design of her question to ask for more specific information about the time also orient to this accuracy.

Fragment 8.5

((In8-Female, Ch10- Female Aged 8))

01 In8: °alright°(0.7)°okay°
02 (7.9)
03 so you said (.)that before, yeah?
04 so when did that happen.
05 Ch10: Ah: when I was-
06 (2.3)
07 si- five or six, that's how old I was
08 In8: when you were five or six,
09 an you told me you were eight now weren you?
10 yeah?
11 Ch10: ((unclear)) (.)three or t- two year- (.)
12 two or three years ago.
13 In8: Right.okay.

In Fragment 8.5, Ch10 is asked to provide details about the time of the alleged incident. Ch10 displays difficulty answering the question. Firstly there is a cut-off and then a long pause. Then there is another cut-off before Ch10 self corrects and answers the question by providing an answer that contains two possibilities for her age at that time. In8 receipts this answer with a repetition and then proceeds to recall her present age and seeks confirmation of this. Ch10 provides confirmation and then provides an accurate account of how long ago it was. In this way, Ch10 confirms the accuracy of her answer and by implication her mastery of the concept, by providing a consistent version of it in two ways: one according to her age at that time and another according to the period of time between then and now. In8 confirms acceptance of this answer with the turn initial response 'right. Okay'.

So again in this fragment, the child's conceptual mastery relating to time is interactionally achieved by the design of the turns by both Ch10 and In8.

In sum, although the indicators of non-responsiveness such as the silence, stretched words and cut-offs, and disclaimers of knowledge are produced by the children, these themselves do not represent the child's conceptual mastery or lack of. It is the sequential organisation and the turn design that are implicative of whether the child possesses such mastery. In a larger sense, cognitive and language developmental difficulties experienced by the child are not constituted by the non-responsive answers given by the child but rather they are jointly constructed by both the police interviewer through the follow-up questions and child through the follow-up answers.

An important by-product of this finding is that silences and disclaimers are not by themselves indexes of non-responsiveness. In the examples above, I have shown how silences can be produced in both the sequential environment where developmental problems exist and where they do not exist. It is the joint construction by both the interviewer and the child that determines whether the child possesses conceptual mastery or not.

8.3.4 Summary of Observations

Three main observations can be made from the analysis of the fragments above. Firstly, the analysis shows how the interviewer is able to orient towards the developmental ability of the child both implicitly through reformulated questioning and explicitly through direct questions about the child's developmental ability (e.g. asking the child whether she can tell time). Questions related to concepts such as time have been found in previous research to be problematic for very young children to answer. However, these questions continue to be asked at all the interviews in the present data corpus. This is probably because time is an important factor in the interview agenda. It also appears that such practice includes highlighting the child's potential developmental immaturity concerning such concepts. This way, the non-present overhearers will be able to make their own conclusions about the child's competence as a witness. Additionally as members of the jury are aware that the child may not potentially be able to understand certain concepts, then the implication is that this inconsistency is attributable to the child's development rather than her incompetency as a witness. This strategy is similar to the one identified by Drew (1992) where the defence counsel juxtaposes two contrasting items of the witness'

testimony in a summary sequence but leaves the implication about the veracity of this testimony unspoken so that the jury can draw their own conclusions.

Such a strategy provides an avenue for police interviewers to keep asking questions related to concepts even when the child is unable to answer such questions. By providing a tentative status in accepting this answer as accurate or by highlighting the developmental issues within the questioning sequence, the interviewer is able to orient to the child's non-responsiveness as an attribute of ability level. This allows the interviewers to 'get away' with asking such conceptual questions as required for legal reasons in spite of the difficulty the child may have in providing answers to them.

Secondly, the establishment of the child's conceptual mastery is an achievement which is jointly achieved through the interaction between the interviewer and the child. It is not the occurrences of non-responsive tokens which dictate the child's developmental ability but rather the orientations towards such tokens by both the participants. In this sense, the design of the questioning turn can be age inappropriate and this may predispose the child to not being able to answer the question. This inability to answer the question can be in the form of silences or even in forms of responses such as 'I dunno'. The fragments examined here support previous studies (Aldridge & Wood, 1998; Walker, 1999) - that the interviewers have to be mindful of age-appropriate linguistic formatting of questions. This involves accommodating to the child's ability level by reformulating the questions that are found to be difficult.

Thirdly, in negotiating such non-responsiveness, the interviewer's position shifts along a continuum of non-knowing recipient to knowing recipient with regard to

information about the alleged incident. This is because the interviewer's treatment of the child's non-responsiveness seems to be based on her prior knowledge of the facts relating to the case. As the interviewing officer is required to have some knowledge of the case before the interview, all of the interviewers may well be aware of the actual time when the alleged incidents took place. Therefore, their choice of tentative acceptance of the child's answer in certain cases may be reflective of the fact that the child's answer does not correspond with the ones reported prior to the interview. This may play an instrumental role in the decisions that they make in assigning particular meanings to the non-responsiveness displayed by the child.

In the next section, I examine further examples of non-responsiveness in the interviews that are not purely attributable to the child's developmental ability. Here I will analyse and explicate the way interviewers may orient to non-responsiveness as resistance to answering questions. I will examine two examples of such instances.

8.4 Treating Non-Responsiveness as Resistance to Talk

8.4.1 Current Research on Resistance to Talk

Several researchers have shown that the non-responsiveness of the child in settings such as clinics (Silverman, 1983, 1987), parent-teacher interviews (Silverman et al., 1998) and counsellor-child interviews (Hutchby, 2002) can be treated as a display of the child's interactional competence rather than a deficiency on the part of the child. This stance differs from the common assumptions exemplified in the previous section that children's non-responsiveness is a signal of their inability to understand the question.

According to Silverman et. al., (1998:220),

This is because silence (or at least the lack of verbal response) allows children to avoid implication in the collaboratively achieved adult moral universe and thus...enables them to resist the way in which an institutional discourse serves to frame and constrain their social competencies.

In Silverman et. al.'s (1998) study, the child in the parent-teacher interview is shown to be silent in the context of advice giving and advice receiving. The implication is that by being silent, the child is not necessarily agreeing to resolutions that arise in the interactions between the teacher and the parent, which would possibly align him to the adults and possibly against other young people.

The context of the forensic interview could also give rise to occasions of such resistance by the child, albeit for different reasons. The child might be unwilling to provide details of disclosure for various reasons ranging from fear of the alleged perpetrator to feelings of embarrassment in making such disclosures. However, the focus of the analysis is not to seek the explanation for such a phenomenon. Rather it is to investigate adequately whether there is indeed such a phenomenon, and if so how it is locally 'put together'.

In this section, I will examine two ways in which the interviewers orient to this resistance to talk. In the first fragment I will examine an example where resistance to talk is established and topic shift is effected. In the second fragment, I will examine another example where resistance is established and then countered in the interaction.

8.4.2 Orienting to Non-Responsive as Resistance I

Fragment 8.6

((In5-Female, Ch5- Female Aged 6))

01 In5: so:(.)has Tom ever been to your ho:use
02 Ch5: Yea:h.
03 In5: Yeah? When- when was that.
04 (2.2)
05 Ch5: I dunno.
06 (0.9)
07 In5: Please think f'me, sweetheart.
08 (0.4)
09 you've got plenty'a time.
10 (.)
11 oka:y,an you're gonna th- think hard f'me today,
12 becoz you know all these things,
13 an I don know any'f 'em, do I?
14 (0.9)
15 so what I- I need you to do is,is to tell me,
16 everything you can about To:m,
17 (1.8)
18 'n his house 'n your house,
19 (3.6)
20 'n things that've- have happened,
21 yeah think you can do that for me?
22 Ch5: Yeah?
23 In5: Yeah
24 Ch5: Yeah.
25 In5: Okay.
26 (.)
27 So:(3.6)you told me who your mum is,
28 yeah? So who's your dad

In the fragment above, In5 solicits temporal information concerning the alleged perpetrator's visit to Ch5's house in line 03. Ch5 answers by disclaiming knowledge of this information.

In5's next response is noteworthy. It consists of an extended turn. Also, In5 does not reformulate the question or simplify the language by offering alternatives as in Fragment 8.1. Instead, In5 launches into a multi-unit turn that contains several strategies. This multi-unit turn in effect signals the suspension of the question-answer

format of the interview. The role of interviewer as questioner and child as the answerer is also suspended.

In the multi-unit turn, firstly, In5 treats Ch5's answer disclaiming knowledge as a form of resistance. By requesting Ch5 to 'think hard' she is orienting to Ch5's non-responsiveness as a refusal to locate this information from her memory. She prompts Ch5 to remember this information by assuring her that she has a lot of time and therefore can afford to spend the time to locate this information. In this manner, In5 is orienting to her position as a 'knowing recipient' i.e. that is she actually knows that Ch5 is cognisant of the temporal information and her non-responsiveness is therefore a form of resistance to disclosing this information.

Secondly, In5 restates the purpose of the interview. This is evident when there is still no uptake from Ch5 after the initial prodding in lines 07 - 10. In line 11, In5 changes tack slightly. She still orients to Ch5's lack of uptake as a form of resistance but this time shifts the focus of the talk to the agenda of the interview. By using the time referent 'today', she orients to the purpose of Ch5's presence at the interview. Further, in lines 15 -20 she outlines a series of details that would be required as information.

Thirdly, she engages an extended turn sequence to persuade Ch5 to continue her efforts to talk. She highlights the gap in the knowledge between the two of them. She positions Ch5 as the authority who possesses the knowledge ('becoz you know all these things') and herself as the deficient recipient who does not possess any of this knowledge. In this manner, In5 provides a warrant for seeking cooperation from Ch5 rather than coercing the information out of her.

Fourthly, throughout this extended turn design, In5 maintains a supportive stance by firstly referring to Ch5 as 'sweetheart' in line 07. This term of endearment, identifies the child in an informal way and thereby shifts the footing of the interaction from a somewhat formal and rigid environment to more informal and relaxed one. This identity category may also serve to soften the force of the persuading statement in the previous turn. In this way, there is a departure from not only the routine question-answer format of the interaction but also in terms of the formal conventions associated with such interviews where no such terms of endearment are used.

Further supportive stance is maintained through the element of collaboration as In5 uses turn-yielding devices such as 'okay?', 'do I?' and 'yeah?' providing Ch5 the opportunity to take up the floor if she wants to. In this instance, Ch5 does not in fact take up the floor in response to these turn-yielding strategies. These response tokens and tag questions are also used to press for a specific form of turn from the next speaker. In this case, the production of these proposes that an agreement from Ch5 is required. So by recycling the transfer relevance place and providing another opportunity for Ch5 to speak, In5 is at the same time enhancing the likelihood that Ch5's next turn will address the topic of agreeing to cooperate. This is further reinforced in line 21 with the request form 'You think you can do that for me?' which again asks for an agreement of cooperation from Ch5.

And this is what Ch5 finally does in line 22, with her 'yeah' she agrees to cooperate in providing information. And after receiving this confirmation from Ch5 with regards to her cooperation, she initiates a new topic which seeks to elicit more details about

Ch5's father and does not pursue the earlier topic of establishing the time of the alleged event.

Unlike Fragment 8.1, where In3 orients towards Ch3's non-responsiveness as an attribute of linguistic immaturity and proceeds to reformulate the question, in Fragment 6, and in fundamentally a similar topic of establishing time, In5 orients to the non-responsiveness as a form of resistance.

In this way, I suggest that the meaning of the child's non-responsiveness gets constructed turn-by-turn and not just by the presence of non-responsive tokens such as silences or disclaimers of knowledge.

However, the interviewer may also design the turn to pursue the original line of questioning after an instance of non-responsiveness, as the next example demonstrates.

8.4.3 Treating Non-Responsiveness as Resistance II

Fragment 8.7

((In5-Female, Ch5- Female Aged 6))

01 In5: Yeah? Right.
02 (1.3)
03 so: you had your dance, so wh- what happened next?
04 (4.7)
05 Ch5: I dunno
06 In5: What about Sam then
07 (8.6)
08 Ch5: Dunno anymo:re.
09 (1.7)
10 In5: I think you do, don you?
11 you have done eve:r so well
12 coz you've told me lots 'n lots of things
13 but we're not quite there yet 're we?
14 (.)
15 So we need we need t'have a-

16 a little bit more of a chat oka:y?
 17 so you had your dance and (.) what did you do the:n.
 18 Ch5: An then Sam walked up to go to be:d,
 19 In5: Yeah,
 20 Ch5: till I said 'sto-p wha you're doin?'
 21 'n then he said 'I'm goin t'bed' 'n I said,
 22 I star'ed pretendin t'cry so he would come down,
 23 'n he said 'actually I'm goin t'go downstairs',
 24 'n I wen 'I'm coming too no:w'.
 25 In5: Right, that's little Sam, is it?

In the fragment above, In5 solicits information about the next sequence of events in the alleged incident that Ch5 has been recounting thus far. After a long delay, Ch5 disclaims knowledge of details of the subsequent event. In5 provides a prompt by designing the next turn to solicit further details, this time using the person reference 'Sam', one of the other children involved in the incident. Ch5 again answers by disclaiming knowledge of further details.

In addressing this non-responsiveness, In5's multi-unit turn uses similar strategies as in Fragment 6. This also signals the suspension of the question-answer format of the interview.

As a first strategy, she forcefully challenges the truthfulness of Ch5's disclaimer. She strongly asserts her opinion that Ch5 does in fact know what happened. In this way, In5 again orients to Ch5's disavowal as resistance to providing a description of the sequence of the alleged incident and explicitly positions herself as the knowing recipient with respect to Ch5's status of knowledge about it.

Secondly, In5 designs the next turn emphasising the positive aspects of Ch5's telling thus far. In this way, In5 seeks to counteract her face-threatening act in line 10. In5 offers praise to Ch5 for having provided a lot of information already.

Thirdly, she refers to the agenda of the interview and how the whole purpose has not yet been achieved ('but we're not quite there yet 're we?'). The proterm 'we' provides an element of collusion in achieving the interview agenda. The joint effort by both the interviewer and the child is highlighted with this proterm.

Both these strategies provide a warrant for seeking continued cooperation from Ch5 without being coercive. Then she shifts the topic back to the telling of the sequence of the events leading to the alleged incident and goes on to establish the need for further talk.

This final strategy that In5 uses is different from Fragment 8.6. This time In5 does not enact a topic shift. Instead, she reinstates talk about the prior topic by repeating the original question in the previous turn. This form of strategy reinforces In5's orientation of Ch5's non-responsiveness as resistance to talk.

Ch5 also provides confirmation that her non-responsiveness is resistance in lines 18 - 24 when she goes on to provide a telling of the next sequence of events leading up to the alleged incident, which she had earlier disclaimed any knowledge of.

In this example, both In5 and Ch5 display the initial non-responsiveness to be resistance to provide information about the next sequence of events. In5 treats the disclaimer as resistance and issues a challenge to Ch5 to provide a further account. Ch5 herself, who initially disclaims knowledge of the next sequence of events, then goes on to produce a description of these series of events. Therefore, this phenomenon of non-responsiveness as resistance is managed turn-by-turn by both the child and

interviewer. The outcome of this management is also a collaborative achievement. In Fragment 8.6, Ch5 did not go on to provide details of time because In5 chose not to pursue this and shifted the topic. In this Fragment, In5 persists on the topic in the prior turn and Ch5 goes on provide the details of the sequence of events.

These two fragments illustrate how the resistance to talk on a particular topic by the child in the police interview is constituted and constructed sequentially and is not just evidenced from the occurrences of indicators such as ‘silences’ or disclaimers of knowledge.

8.4.4 Summary of Observation of Fragments 8.6 and 8.7

In sum, the two fragments in this section exemplify the way in which resistance to talk is constituted and managed turn-by-turn. It is also evident that when the non-responsiveness is attributed to resistance there is a suspension of the question-answer sequence of the interview and a more informal sequence of ‘talking with the child’ takes over. The purpose of this sequence is to persuade the child to be cooperative so that the interview agenda can be accomplished. The strategies used in such a sequence are summarised below:

- 1) Explicit/Implicit Reference to Resistance
- 2) Providing warrants for disclosure through:
 - a) *Positioning the interviewer as the ‘unknowing recipient’ in relation to the information to be disclosed.*
 - b) *Restating/referring to the agenda of the interview*
- 3) Informalising the interview talk through
 - a) *Suspension of question answer format*

b) Providing reassurances

c) Providing praise

d) Use of terms of endearments

e) Use of response tokens to offer floor to the child

4) Topic Shift/Persist on Topic

In the next section, I will examine three fragments where the non-responsiveness is oriented to as an indication of the differing cultural world of the child by the interviewer.

8.5 Treating non-responsiveness as a reflection of different cultural worlds

8.5.1 Intersubjectivity as an Interactional Outcome

The fundamental aspect of any conversational interaction is the notion of intersubjectivity: the commonsense, shared meanings constructed by the participants in their interactions with each other and used as an everyday resource to interpret the meaning of elements of social and cultural life (Heritage, 1984)). A common assumption in intersubjectivity is that both participants share a common culture. However, intersubjectivity is not the result of participants' ability to coordinate their already existing cultural knowledge. On the contrary, as Schegloff (1992b:1298) states "an appropriate image of a common understanding is an operation rather than a common intersection of overlapping sets." As such, intersubjectivity is a practical concern for the participants. An intersubjective understanding is something that is continually shaped and reshaped throughout the course of the interaction. Language provides one set of resources that enable participants to show each other which parts of their shared knowledge are relevant for making the inferences necessary for some locally contingent purpose.

In the case of the forensic interview, the two participants involved – the adult interview and the child witness – do not share a common culture. As I have elaborated in Chapter 2, the child and the adult world can be conceptually very different. Therefore, there are bound to be breakdowns in communication in these interview interactions.

In this section, I will examine three episodes of what may be termed ‘communicative breakdown’. I begin by exploring the contexts in which and the means by which interactional sequences become ‘miscommunications’ and then analyse how the cultural norm of the adult world is constructed, established and shared in these selected interactions using the tools of membership categorisation. The point of this analysis is to provide insights to the way in which the cultural worlds of the adult and child intersect and how such intersections are woven into the very warp and weft of the forensic interviews. It also seeks to show ways in which police officers respond in such an environment.

Fragment 8.8 provides an example of how the adult concept of relationship is manifested in the question form of ‘who is Tom?’

8.5.2 Concept of Relationship

Fragment 8.8

((In5-Female, Ch5- Female Aged 6))

01 In5: So:,what happe:ned ye:sterday then(.) Tell
02 me about ye:sterday.
03 (1.2)
04 where did you go ye:sterday?
05 Ch5: Went t'sleep over at To:m's house.
10 In5: So you went t'sleep over at To:m's house.
11 so:,who's To:m.
12 (1.0)

13 Ch5: Er-(3.0)dunno
14 In5: You dunno? D'you know what To:m's last name is.
15 Ch5: (2.0)/((headshake))
16 In5: So: d'you know where he li:ves.
17 Ch5: (1.3)/((headshake))
18 In5: Alright, so how d'you know Tom then.
19 Ch5: I dunno what he loo:ks like.
20 In5: How d'you know him.
21 Ch5: Erm,
(1.8)
23 In5: Like(0.5)you said Rick 'n Graham are your brothe:rs,
24 aren't they? 'n you said your mummy is Jane,
25 so how- how d'you know To:m?
26 (2.0)
27 Ch5: Dunno
28 (1.9)
29 In5: who does- who does To:m belong to.
30 Ch5: Lisa:(.) big Sam 'n baby Sam.

In Fragment 8.8, In5 begins to elicit information about the alleged incident in lines 01-04. In line 05, Ch5 provides a statement about the event that occurred yesterday. In this statement she provides the nature of the event - 'went to sleep over' - as well as person specific referenced location 'To:m's house'. The use of the person referenced location rather than a geographical one (such as 'next door' or 'in London') is hearable as a description of a familiar relationship between the person that she has referenced as 'Tom' and herself.

In the next questioning turn, In5 checks to confirm this statement and then goes on to focus on establishing the identity of the person referenced as 'Tom'. Ch5 displays difficulty in responding to this questioning turn. Firstly, there is a hesitation, followed by a pause and then she disclaims knowledge about the identity of Tom. This is inconsistent with her earlier answer where she indicated a familiar relationship to Tom by using a person referenced location in line 05 ('To:m's house').

In5 checks to confirm this disclaimer and in the next few questioning turns performs a sequence of category-bound activities to establish Tom's identity. Firstly, in line 14

she asks for Tom's last name. In this way, she invokes the membership categorisation of 'Name' as a device to establish Tom's identity.

Secondly, in line 16, she asks for the location of his dwelling. This invokes the use of membership categorisation of 'Geographical location' as another device to establish Tom's identity. Thirdly, she asks for relational information about Tom. This involves the membership category of 'Relationship' as a device to identify Tom. The question 'how do you know him' is symbolic of the way in which relationships are categorised in the adult world where every person is 'pigeon holed' as being in a particular sort of relationship with each other. So this question could produce answers such as 'he's my neighbour' or 'my friend' to something more unspecific such as 'someone I met at the party'. In the adult world every relationship is categorised subconsciously and automatically that rarely do we stop and think about how actually we as adults are 'compartmentalising' or 'pigeon holing' all the relationships in our lives.

So an adult would be able to immediately relate to this question as asking for the relationship between the alleged perpetrator and the child. When Ch5 fails to provide an adequate answer for this question (she denies knowing what he looks like referring to the 'Physical Appearance' category rather than the 'Relationship category'), In5 provides examples of members in the category of 'Relationship' such as 'brothers' and 'mummy' to show Ch5 the sort of answer that she is expected to give.

Each of these membership categories, i.e. Name, Geographical Location, and Relational Indicators form the membership categorisation device 'Identity Descriptors'. By invoking categories of Name, Geographical Location and Relational

Indicators, In5 constitutes a commonsense understanding of how identity is established and constructed in ordinary talk. However, it is apparent that this cultural norm is not shared by Ch5 as she does not respond with an adequate answer to any of these membership categories. The use of the three membership categories above and the consistent non-responsive answer given by Ch5 suggests that such categories are not part of Ch5's conceptual world of establishing relationships. In one of the attempts, Ch5 guesses what the question may mean and answers that she does not know what the alleged perpetrator looks like instead of stating how she came to know him. This is consistent with the findings of previous research (Aldridge & Wood, 1999) which suggest that the child might choose to answer the question in the form that she does understand.

In providing this answer then, Ch5 displays a willingness to cooperate and take up the floor offered to her but is not able to provide the answer to the question posed. In this way, Ch5 orients to the possibility that the categorisations brought up by In5 thus far may not be part of her cultural world of constituting and representing relationships. By implication, then, such categories are indicative of how relationships are constituted and represented in the adult world although this may not be necessarily so for the child.

It is apparent that up until this point, In5 treats Ch5's inability to answer the question as being due to mishearing the question (as implied by her repeat in line 20, emphasising the word 'know') as well as not knowing how to answer the question (as implied by her reformulation of the questions in lines 14, 16 and 18). In other words, In5 is hearing Ch5's inability to provide an appropriate answer to the question as not

understanding the question rather than having a very different set of membership categories for relationships and therefore not sharing the perspective of the adult world. This is why she provides reformulations in an attempt to simplify the conceptual information required of the question.

In line 29, In5's orientation is very different. After failing to solicit an answer from Ch5 three times, in line 29 after a long silence she produces a new membership category. This has to do with the concept of 'Belonging'.

By asking whom Tom belongs to, In5 is still referring to the membership categorization device 'Identity Descriptor'. However, the membership category itself clearly is not reflective of the adult world but rather one is very much rooted in the child's world where 'whose doll is this?' or 'whose pencil is that?' are very much commonplace.

Here In5 has done more than just simplifying the linguistic form of the question. She has changed the perspective in which relationships are viewed. It can also be noted that Ch5 displays a more responsive orientation to this membership category. Not only does Ch5's provide an adequate answer, there is also an absence of delay and hesitation as was evident in the earlier part of the interaction. Ch5's ability to answer In5's question this time is implicative of this particular membership category as orienting to her conceptual world of establishing relationships. For the adult, however, such categorisations of relationship may sound rather odd.

The analysis of this piece of interaction has shown that representation of the adult

notions of relationships may vary from the child's. The reality of the child's world is not as highly circumscribed as the adult's. In5's response strategy in this case has shifted through various different membership categories and finally found one that accommodated to the Ch5's conceptual world.

Establishing relationships is a very common category-bound activity in forensic interviews. This example has shown that it is not an easy and straightforward task when the child is not familiar with the particular category. In this case, Ch5 seems to be familiar with identifying Tom with his first name only. She is not able to use another membership category such as 'neighbour' or 'friend' or any other membership category to refer to Tom. Such variations and differences need to be taken into account in forensic interviews and accommodating to such unfamiliarity is of importance.

The forensic interview protocol can further complicate the issues involved in the negotiation of the differing cultural worlds, as the next fragment elucidates.

8.5.3 Concept of 'Items on the Bed'

Fragment 8.9

((In5-Female, Ch5- Female Aged 6))

01 In5: So what was on the be:d.
02 Ch5: Quilt
03 In5: Quilt.yeah?
04 Ch5: ((Nods))
05 In5: so what else did you have on the bed?
06 (2.0)
07 Ch5: Nothing.
08 In5: °nothing?°
09 (4.0)
10 What d'you put your head on when you go to
11 be:d.
12 Ch5: a pillow.
13 In5: oka:y so what about pillows then.

14 (5.0)
15 Ch5: They're soft?
16 In5: yeah, so- we-were there pillows on the bed?
17 Ch5: yeah.
18 In5: Yeah?

In this fragment, In5 is soliciting information about objects on the bed. The category-bound activity here can be referred to as 'listing of items on the bed'. Such an activity is important in forensic interviews as they provide corroborative evidence to descriptions of the alleged incident. Also, if Ch5 is able to describe and list all the items on the bed accurately and such items are found in the property of the alleged perpetrator, then, Ch5 can be deemed a competent witness and her evidence as consistent.

In line 02, Ch5 provides information about an object that was on the bed, 'quilt'. In5 checks to confirm this answer and then goes on to solicit further information about other objects on the bed. This way, In5 seeks to build up the membership category device 'Items on the bed' with further members. One such member would be 'pillows'.

In line 06, there is a 2-second silence before Ch5 provides a negative answer indicating that there was nothing else on the bed. In5 displays her unwillingness to accept this answer in several ways. Firstly, she checks to confirm this answer. This is done with a rising intonation at the end of '°nothing?°' indicating a tentative acceptance of the answer. This is different from the confirmation check in line 03 where there is a final intonation at the repeat of the answer provided - 'quilt' - and the confirmation check is done through the response token 'yeah?' indicating an acceptance of this answer.

Secondly, there is a short delay before In5 goes on to design another questioning turn

which pursues the topic of the items on the bed. This time she provides a clue to this item that she is aiming for by describing its function ('what d'you put your head on when you go to be:d.').

This question is designed to trigger a recollection in Ch5's memory about the item 'pillow' on the bed, if she had indeed forgotten it. Ch5 is also expected to make a connection to the fact that the answer to the prior question in line 05 ('so what else did you have on the bed?) is also pillow. This question is meant to be answered with a 'Oh yes, there were pillows as well on the bed'. The aim of this exchange is to elicit further members for the membership categorisation device 'Items on the bed'. This sort of logic, however, is only accessible if one has organised their social world to represent such items when talking about membership categorisation of 'bed'.

However, such a design also serves another function. And this has to do with one of the guidelines in the interview protocol which advocates avoiding contaminating the evidence. As such, this turn design makes the sequentially relevant answer 'pillow' to be produced by Ch5. If Ch5 utters the term 'pillow' first, rather than In5, the contamination of this evidence can be avoided. It also means that In5 can proceed to use the term 'pillow' in her next follow-up questions without having to produce this term herself.

As can be observed from Ch5's answer, she is able to provide the answer 'pillow' correctly but this is not linked to the previous question about what other items were on the bed. Ch5's treats this question as separate from the previous questions and does not make a connection between this object 'pillow' and its relevance to the earlier

question about other objects on the bed. This is evidenced by the next sequence in the interaction.

In5 again seeks to make the connection with the previous question by asking 'what about pillows then' meaning whether there were pillows on the bed. However, Ch5 treats this question requesting general information about pillows and volunteers the information about one of the qualities of pillows - that they are soft. This answer is uttered with upward intonation, also indicating that she is guessing whether that might be the answer required by In5.

In5 confirms this answer and then goes on to produce a more direct reformulation of the previous question with 'were there pillows on the bed?'. There are two consequences of this direct reformulation. Firstly, this question does not contaminate the evidence given by Ch5 because it was Ch5 who initially produced the answer 'pillow'. This question, therefore, can be interpreted as a not leading the witness. Secondly, it allows In5 to establish a second membership category in the face of Ch5's failure to provide one of her own accord.

Although Ch5 negates the notion that there was anything other than 'quilt' on the bed in line 07 and then confirms this answer in line 09, she provides an affirmative answer when asked if there were pillows on the bed in line 16. This appears strange and makes Ch5 out to be inconsistent in her evidence. It is interesting to note also that Ch5 does not provide any indication that her failure to mention pillows earlier is due to memory issues. Although, she produces the term 'pillow' she does not mention this as an item on the bed of her own accord. Therefore, there might be another reason as to why Ch5

did not mention 'pillow' as an item in her original disclosure.

An important attribute of the membership categorisation device is that the categories of 'quilt' and 'pillows' are members of 'Items on the bed' only insofar as the participants orient to them as such. As far as Ch5's cultural world may be concerned, there may not be such a connection.

Sacks' (1992) ideas of categories involved a conceptualisation of an array of shared 'stock of common-sense knowledge' which membership categorisation device are seen to contain. As such, these categorisations and their devices are really part of the common-sensical framework of members' methods and recognisable capacities of practical sense making.

Herein then lies the paradox. The notions of 'members' and 'common-sense' clearly refer to the adult system of interaction and sense making. Such sense making mechanisms, although in operation amongst children in some form or another, may not be represented in a similar manner.

The inferential framework of categorisation and sense making which is seen to be in operation in In5's design of questions fails to provide an adequate outcome because Ch5 is clearly not using the same mechanisms. So, although in the adult conceptual world it would seem only natural that such items be part of this device, it must be remembered that such categories may not exist in Ch5's conceptual world. This is a possible explanation as to why she did not provide 'pillow' as a part of her original disclosure and not because she did not remember to do so.

In the next fragment, I will examine how the child's ability to articulate his lack of understanding of the question leads the interviewer to accommodate to the child's perspective of 'playing football'.

8.5.4 Concept of 'Playing Football'

Fragment 8.9

((In3-Male, Ch3- Male Aged 5))

01 Ch3 I play football
02 In3 You play football (.) an' you like playin'
03 Football is it? Yeah?
04 Ch3: nods
05 In3: How often do you play football
06 Ch3: (° I really dunno °)
07 In3: You dunno is it.
08 Do you w[ha]
09 Ch3: [I-] I really don know what that mea:ns
10 In3: What? how often?
11 Ch3: Yeah.
12 In3: How many times d'you play football (0.5) a week
13 Ch3: (holds up fingers showing ten)
14 In3: Ten?
15 Ch3: Yeah
16 In3: Don'tcha get tired
17 Ch3: from- from bein TEN times of football.
18 In3: Oh ri:ght. a:n' where on the field (.) d'you (.) play
19 Football >what position< (.) on the field (.) 're you.
20 Ch3: I (know) what that means too.
21 In3: Mhm?
22 Ch3: I (know)what that means too.
23 In3: You don't know what it means.
24 Ch3: No
25 In3: D'you play at the front, middle or back
26 when you're playin (.) in the team (.)d'you score
27 goals or d'you save goals.
28 Ch3: Score
29 In3: Scorin them do you?

In this Fragment, In3 is establishing rapport with Ch3 by attempting to develop talk on the topic of 'football'. Ch3 has already indicated in line 01 that one sport that he plays is football. As Sacks (1992) suggests, one way of developing topical talk is using co-class membership. The membership categorisation that is occasioned by Ch3's answer in line 01 is 'I play football'.

The first category that In3 invokes in order to develop the topic is one of ‘frequency of playing football’. In line 05, In3 elicits information about the number of times Ch3 plays football. Ch3 answers by disclaiming knowledge of this information. In3 checks to confirm this answer and goes on to design the next questioning turn when Ch3 speaks in overlap. Ch3’s turn design explicitly clarifies that he is not disclaiming knowledge about the answer but rather claiming the inability to understand the question. So here, Ch3 explicitly states that his non-responsiveness is due to the inability to understand the question. This is similar to Fragments 1 and 2 that were examined in Section 8.2 where the interviewers responded to the child’s disclaimers as if they were displaying inability rather than disclaiming knowledge.

In line 10, In3 checks for clarification, through a partial repetition, that it is the phrase ‘how often’ that the Ch3 does not understand. Ch3 confirms this and In3 proceeds to design the next turn to rephrase the question but this time using the term ‘how many times’ to replace ‘how often’. In3 also adds the phrase ‘a week’ after a short pause. Clearly it is designed to provide Ch3 a simplified structure of the question through a different selection of lexical items.

This time Ch3 does provide an answer. In line 17, he says ‘TEN’, holding up all his fingers. Although the answer, in the form of figure ten, is a perfectly acceptable answer for the question of frequency, for the membership category device in which the frequency is being used i.e. ‘playing football’, this answer can be interpreted as being incredible. Ch3 displays that he knows that the answer involves a particular number. However, his inability to provide a logical answer also shows that he does not understand the question and has instead just chosen to blurt out a random number.

In3 also designs his next turn to treat this answer as an unbelievable one. He pursues this answer by going into a sort of play mode. In3's exclamation of 'ohh' and follow-up question of 'don't you get tired?' recharacterises Ch3's earlier turn as being non-serious. It is designed to treat Ch3's answer as one of child play rather than a serious and acceptable answer for the question.

A notable point here is that the answer that Ch3 has given has shifted the talk from a serious to a non-serious one. One outcome of this is that the shift into non-serious talk can divert the attention of the non-present overhearers from the inconsistent answer given by Ch3. By orienting to the answer as non-serious, In3 is drawing attention to the developmental attribute contained within this answer rather than the illogical aspect of the answer as would be the case if this diversion into non serious talk did not talk place.

In line18, In3 initiates the shift back to serious talk by eliciting information about another member in the co-class membership of 'playing football' This time the constitutive feature that is invoked of this category is the 'playing position'.

In3 designs the turn to promote further talk on this topic of 'playing football' in three ways. Firstly, he solicits the information in an open-ended question format. In3 first designs the question by using the term 'where' and then redesigns it by replacing the term 'where' with the term 'what position' on the field. It appears that In3 is catering for Ch3's potential lack of understanding by doing this replacement. As Ch3 has already shown that he does not understand the term 'how often' and 'how many', it is possible that the 'where' question may also pose difficulty for him.

In lines 20-23, Ch3 designs his turn rather inadequately to inform In3 that he does not understand the question.

In line 25, In3 reattempts topical talk by redesigning this turn and providing an option for answering 'front', 'middle' or 'back'. This third turn repair involves what Schegloff (1992) refers to as candidate specifics that are included in the earlier formulation of the trouble source. By providing these candidate answers, In3 is displaying to Ch3 the candidate answers for the question in the prior turn. However, there is still no uptake from Ch3 and In3 then moves to a different set of candidate answers this time with the option of 'score goals' or 'save goals'. Ch3 then answers the question by the option 'score'.

In tracing the reformulation of this question from lines 18 to 27, it can be noted that these reformulations involved not only a redesigning of the linguistic format of the questions but more importantly the membership categories in the membership categorisation device of 'playing football'. It is clear from the interaction that Ch3 is unable to grasp the concepts that are constituted in 'where on the field', 'what position on the field' and even the options of 'front, middle or back'. However, he does display understanding of the concept constituted in the category of 'save or score goals'. Clearly then, Ch3 displays that the membership category of 'score or save goals' is part of his field of understanding compared to the other membership categories that In3 had been using.

An important point of this observation then, is that Ch3's non-responsiveness is indicative of the differing cultural worlds in so far that the membership categorisation devices are represented for 'playing football'. Although it can be argued that such differences are part of the child's developmental ability, it is important to acknowledge that the child may possess his own representation of the conceptual world of playing football and that this representation is reproduced when the appropriate membership categorisations are activated through the design of the interview questions. So in asking questions to the child, the interviewers do not only have to be mindful of the language forms but they also need to have a sense of the kind of membership categories that would be constitutive of the membership categorisation device that they are using at the moment.

8.5.5 Summary of Observations

The problems in these three fragments stem from the misalignment of cultural identities across the police interviewer and the child. In this way, it is possible to say that alignment in the forensic interview is an interaction issue, i.e. that it is something that cannot be achieved unilaterally. It is negotiated through a series of reformulations in the face of non-responsive answers provided by the child. When the interviewers are successful in conforming to the cultural world of the child through their reformulated questions, then alignment can be achieved. As long as this alignment with the child's cultural world is not secured, then the interaction will be problematic with the child producing non-responsive answers. In this way, there is also a shift of understandings involved, where the interviewer moves from an adult looking in from an adult perspective (or unknowing recipient with respect to child's cultural world) to

an adult looking in from a child's perspective (knowing recipient with regard to child's cultural world).

In sum then, these three fragments have shown how the adult culture-in-action is initially enacted in the interview and then how the child's culture-in-action is negotiated and accommodated in the forensic interview contexts through the design of reformulated questions.

8.6 Implications for Listening

The analysis in this chapter has shown how questions that can be considered 'simple' in the adult world can be far more complex for the child. Research thus far has touched mainly on developmental issues as a cause of non-responsiveness. I have illustrated that there may be other ways in which 'non-responsiveness' is being oriented to by the interviewers and the child. Firstly, the child may be genuinely resisting providing disclosure so that she does not align herself to the implications of such disclosure. In such cases, the interviewer uses several strategies to 'break down' such resistance and seek cooperation from the child.

Additionally, it is important for police interviewers to recognise that the child's world may consist of its own set of membership categories that may not be shared by the adult world. As such, the lexis that the interviewer uses in the design of the questioning turns has to be sensitive to this differing world. Otherwise, as the analysis has shown, the trajectory of the interaction can go askew.

And finally, the analysis has also shown that the ‘developmental’ issue can be used in the interview interaction to mark out the child’s apparent inconsistencies. In other words, instead of displaying the child as an incompetent witness, it serves to show that the child has not acquired the mastery of the skill.

8.7 Conclusion

In this chapter I have examined three orientations to the child’s non-responsiveness in the forensic interview. The first is to treat non-responsiveness as an attribute of child development. In such cases, the interviewer can choose to reformulate the question in order to simplify its linguistic form. I have also shown how the interviewer can highlight the developmental issue during the interaction in order to let the non-present overhearers draw their own conclusions about the child’s answers.

The second orientation is to treat non-responsiveness as unwillingness by the child to talk about the incident. In such cases, the interviewer suspends the formal question-answer format of the interview and proceeds to talk with the child using several strategies to persuade the child to cooperate with the interview agenda.

The third orientation is to treat the child’s non-responsiveness as a reflection of the child’s differing cultural world. In such cases, there is attempt by the interviewers to accommodate to the child’s world by using membership categories that are reflective of their world.

An important implication of this finding is that it becomes an even more important task for the police interviewer to listen to the child in order to ascertain which of these

actually pose difficulty for the child. In order to be able to accommodate to the child effectively, the interviewers need to be sensitive to the questions they are asking and how these may affect the child's lack of answering. The reasons for children's reticence do not only vary from child to child but also vary for each child in the different segments of the interview.

For these reasons, listening to the child, making an assessment of the possible reasons for their difficulty and subsequently providing responses that accommodate to these issues becomes of paramount importance in police interviewing.

Chapter 9 Conclusion

9.1 Chapter Summary

This chapter will present the implications of this study for a) practice in the forensic interview context and b) further academic research. It will also address the limitations of the present study and conclude by summarising the positive outcomes of the research.

9.2 Implications for Practice in the Forensic Interview Context

In the four previous analytic chapters, I have shown the kinds of listening practices that can be observed in the forensic interviewers. I examined these listening practices along three main strands: 1) listening to promote the progressivity of child's talk, 2) listening to manage the progressivity of child's talk and 3) listening to restart the progressivity of child's talk. The purpose of the analysis was to present a contextualised, differentiated and situated account of listening practices as observed in the forensic interviews.

The findings suggest that police interviewers do listen, understand and respond. However, this is achieved in the context of organisational relevance and procedural requirements, professional cultures and personal understandings that are part of their day to day work. All of these consist of adult understandings and do not take account of the child's culture adequately. Such an orientation can be a hindrance to police interviewers in practising the form of listening that can be described as 'child-centred' where the child's concerns are addressed during the interview interaction.

9.2.1 Implication for Listening to Promote the Progressivity of Talk

9.2.1.1 Turn-taking in Forensic Interviews

In Chapter 5, I have shown how the turn-taking system in the forensic interview is organised in such a way that the child is provided with maximum space to continue with her talk. This is very much in line with guidelines in Home Office (2001) which advocate that the disclosure in the forensic interviews should be in the child's own words. This structural organisation sets the forensic interview with the child apart from other types of legal discourse such as courtroom questioning and adult police interrogation. Firstly, it avoids the hostile turn-taking organisation that is present in courtroom cross-examination (Drew, 1992). Secondly, it also provides the child the opportunity to construct her own version of the alleged incident without any interruption by the interviewer. Although there is an attempt to test the accuracy of the child's account, it is done in a collaborative manner, as the analysis of the summary sequence in Chapter 5.2.5 shows. Thirdly, the interviewer is able to take up neutral positioning with the use of response tokens in the third turn. I have shown how the interviewer is able to avoid both the outright affiliation as well as disaffiliation by choosing to produce these response tokens. This has two consequences. Firstly, deference and solidarity with the child is maintained. Secondly, the interviewer is positioned as both the elicitor of talk as well as the recipient.

In all of these ways, the organisation of turn-taking in the forensic interview maximises the child's involvement during the interview interaction rather than the interviewer's. However, it should be borne in mind that this structural organisation, whilst possessing features crucial to the attainment of institutional goals of the interview, may not be part of the child's own cultural routine. Previous research has

suggested that the child's cultural world involves a more direct and affiliative communicative style rather than an open-ended and neutral communicative style. Such a shift in style can be potentially perplexing for the child who might already be bewildered by the whole interview process.

9.2.1.2 Recommendation

One recommendation to consider in this regard is to give the child the opportunity to engage with this communicative style before the interview proper. This can be done in the presence of the child's carer so that the child becomes accustomed to this shift in style in a more secure environment. It would also be appropriate if the adult carer could take up the turn after the response tokens to expose the child to the mechanics of this kind of turn-taking organisation. This can prevent the child from being bewildered by the different style of communication in the interview. Additionally the child may also be able to recognise the opportunity to take up speakership more readily.

9.2.2 Implication for Listening to Manage Progressivity of Talk

The main finding of Chapters 6 & 7 is that the child in the forensic interview is not a passive narrator of the alleged incident. Each child has her own relevance and background factors that become an active component in the interaction. In other words, each is actively constructing her own agenda relevant to the interview. Each child provides an 'accounting' or builds up what is at 'stake' for her in the interview. The child's preoccupation in addressing her own agenda can lead to her failure to respond appropriately to the questions asked by the police interviewer. Therefore, the child's failure to provide an expected answer to questions cannot solely be attributed

to the fact that police interviewers are not asking 'age-appropriate' questions. It is difficult to resist the impression that the failure can also be due to the interviewer's inattentiveness in addressing the child's local interaction goal and choice instead to address the sequential and organisational relevance of the interview. In so far as there exists such inattentiveness, then opportunity to practise child-centred listening is lost.

9.2.2.1 Adherence to Sequential Relevance

I have shown through the analysis in Chapter 6 that one of the ways in which the interviewer can fail to practise child centred listening is by having an orientation that is fixated on the sequential relevance of the interview interaction. This occurs when the interviewer is more concerned with the content related to the topic in the initial questioning turn rather than the content addressed in telling that the child has provided in her answer to the question. It is easy to understand that this focus on the sequential relevance is for the benefit of the non-present overhearers. It is essential for these overhearers to follow the sequence of talk in the interview clearly and by focusing on the sequential organisation of the telling, the interviewer is able to sieve out the problems of clarity that may occur due to the child digressing when providing her account. Therefore, there appears to be a strategic purpose for preallocated 'interviewer-determined' segmenting in the interview interaction.

However, a preoccupation with sequential organisation can lead the child to feel that her telling is not being accepted. It can also lead to the failure on the part of the child to provide this information at a later pre-allocated 'interviewer-determined' segment in the interaction. I suggest that such sequential placement undermines the competence of the child to tell her narrative as and when she wants. Additionally this

kind of 'segmenting' does not guarantee that the child will provide the required information when it is solicited in the later pre-allocated stage of the interview. If the child has already provided details in an earlier segment of the interview, as far as the child is concerned, there is no need to repeat this information at a later stage.

9.2.2.2 Recommendation

I propose that there should be some flexibility in adhering to the interview agenda. In cases where the child is effusive and animated about providing central details of the alleged incident, it is recommended that the interviewers 'postpone' the ongoing topic of the questioning turn (e.g. to elicit peripheral details such as details of the scene of the crime or description of the alleged perpetrator) and addresses the child's concerns. After the child has completed providing the details, then the original line of questioning can be pursued once again. In this way, the child can be encouraged to give further details not just in her own words but also in her own time. Further, it may prevent difficulty in soliciting the same information at a later stage in the interaction through open-ended invitations.

9.2.2.3 Adherence to Organisational Relevance

The analyses in Chapters 6 and 7 have shown that there exist competing relevances in the interviewer interaction. One is the more global and legalistic relevance of eliciting forensically relevant information as evidence for the court. It was shown in the analysis chapters how this goal was fervently pursued by the police interviewers. The other type is a localised relevance that was shown to be the concern of the child. These included displays of avoiding implication of being a willing participant in the alleged incident, displaying competency in aspects of story telling such as listing a

series of actions, dramatising the events involved in the alleged incident as well as displaying inhibitions about mentioning the alleged incident. Such displays suggest that the child may not answer the question adequately not because she does not understand the question but also because she may have an alternative agenda relevant to the interview interaction.

9.2.2.4 Recommendation

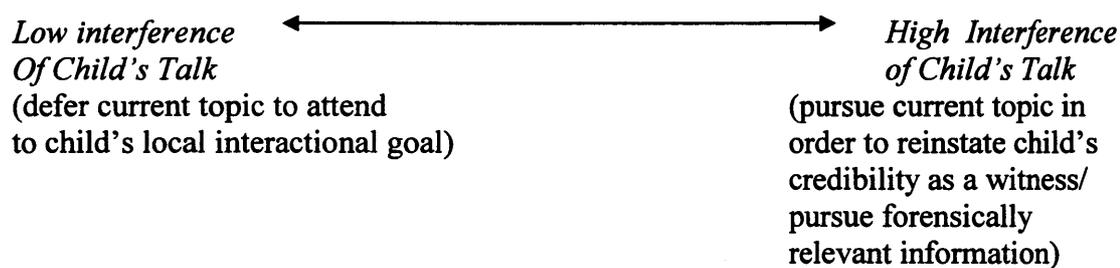
It can be recommended that police interviewers attend to the local interaction goals that are being pursued by the child before proceeding to attend to the global interactional goal. In this way, the child would feel that her point of view is being acknowledged by the interviewer. Attending to the local interactional goals inevitably requires the interviewer to pay attention to what the child is doing in her response instead of to what she is not doing. It involves the interviewer seeking to understand what action the child is orienting to in her answers. This may well involve the police interviewers obtaining training regarding some aspects of the study of discourse analysis in order to recognise the various propositions to which the child may be orienting.

In addition, the police interviewers could also practice flexibility in pursuing the agenda of the interview i.e. eliciting forensically relevant information. The task at hand in pursuing this agenda can be perceived to lie in a continuum of low interference to high interference. At the low interference level the interviewer can 'delay' the pursuance of the global agenda in order to address the more immediate concerns of the child, be it her display of inhibition or avoidance of morally implicating herself. At the other end of the continuum i.e. the high interference level,

the interviewer can pursue the agenda more vigorously in order to reinstate the consistency of the child's telling when she has enacted a cultural routine of storytelling that may seem fantastic to the non-present overhearers.

Figure 9.1 shows a diagrammatic representation of this continuum. The move from one end of the continuum to the other end would be entirely based on the particular need of the child as perceived by the interviewer at that moment in the interaction.

Figure 9.1 Listening to Manage Progressivity of Talk



In this respect, the decision to defer the current topic or to pursue it more vigorously would be dependent on the context of the local talk and how relevant it may be to achieving the institutional goal.

9.2.2.5 Stereotypical Worldview

The analysis in Chapter 6 also showed how the interviewer's stereotypical view of social background interferes with the clarity of the child's telling. The interviewer's questioning turn design to establish which one of her two 'dads' is biologically related to her is met with resistance. Such perceptions of relationships are indicative of the predominantly stereotypical worldview that is represented in the adult world. In effect, categorisation of relationships according to biological ties and non-biological

ties also predominate the legal arena as a means of authentication of facts. However, as the example shows, such a presumption on the part of the interviewer can meet with resistance from the child whose own view of such relationships may be far less circumscribed.

It is my opinion that this example is just of many stereotypical views that can exist within the adult cultural world. With the changing structure of familial lifestyle and values in the present day world, many children go through a lifestyle that may be completely different from those that present day adults may have gone through. This is because “radical social changes may have created new imbalances by increasing demands on children and adolescents” (Zeitlin, et.al., 1995: 23).

9.2.2.6 Recommendation

It is important for the police interviewer to obtain background information about the child’s social life. This is in aid of understanding and obtaining a sense of the way the child views the significant relationships in her life as well other characteristics of the post-modern familial lifestyle and values. It is possible that the child may possess atypical views of such relationships, lifestyle and values and this can vary from child to child. If this is found to be the case, the design of the questioning turns must also be sensitive to such differing social backgrounds. Otherwise, imposing a normative worldview on the child through the design of the questioning turns may end up confusing the child, who may go on to provide ambiguous answers as a result.

9.2.3 Implications for Restarting the Progressivity of Child's Talk

9.2.3.1 Sensitivity to the Child's Cultural World

The analysis in Chapter 8 has shown how the difficulty that the child may experience with answering the question may lie not only with the linguistic structure of the question but also with the cultural presuppositions embodied in the questions themselves.

The analysis has shown that it is crucial not only to use linguistically simple structures when questioning the child but also to have an understanding of the lexical and cultural categories that make up the individual child's world. In this sense, understanding the child's world using the notion of co-class membership becomes especially relevant. Although it can be generally assumed that a five-year-old male child would be fairly familiar with the topic of football, which therefore would be a good topic to use for rapport building in the interview, the analysis has shown that there are certain concepts within this topic which are more familiar to the adult world rather than the child's. So while concepts such as playing midfield, forward, goalkeeper, etc are part of the adult's categories, the child's may only consist of 'saving goals', and 'scoring goals'.

The analysis also showed how the child's cultural understanding of items on the bed did not necessarily include the pillows. Although she acknowledges that there were pillows in the bed after further questioning by the interviewer, she does not herself mention this as part of her description in the initial account or in her subsequent turns. The analysis of Fragment 8.8 shows that the question 'who is Tom?' which is designed to elicit information of a relationship category may not be obviously so to

the child, as it would be to the adult. All of these examples have provided evidence for the case that the child may view ordinary day-to-day concepts differently from the adult. The inference-making mechanisms in the child's world may operate differently compared to the adult's. Adult categories and categorisations which are based on adult inference making mechanisms are so ingrained in almost every facet of society that it is difficult to imagine such a system not existing in the child's world. The forensic interview is one site that is inextricably woven with the complex nature of childhood perceptions and values within which the adult and the child inference making system can clash. This inevitably gives rise to differing viewpoints and poses difficulty for the child when asked questions that are not part of their meaning-making world and understandings.

9.2.3.2 Recommendation

First, these findings suggest that 'age appropriate language' should not just include the linguistic structures that children can understand. It would serve the police interviewer well to become intimate with the child's cultural world in terms of the categories that comprise the membership categorisation device in the child's world. This may vary from child to child and therefore has to be ascertained for each interview encounter.

In other words, although children may be using terms that seem to be in accordance with the adult notions (e.g. the membership categorisation device 'playing football' and 'dad'), the categories that comprise them may vary from the adult notion of them. It is in this respect that the adult police interviewer needs to be attuned to the categories that make up these devices before being able to adequately listen to the

child. It might be worthy effort for police interviewers to undergo ‘acculturalisation’ by spending time with children in play activities. This could prove useful in obtaining understanding of the ways in which children conduct their world and how this might be different from the adults.

Additionally, it is also my contention that these vagaries in interaction or miscommunications occur not just because of the lack of awareness or knowledge on the police interviewers’ part about the use of age-appropriate linguistic structures or lack of interviewing skill but rather are reflective of the pervasive cultural preconception that is being overlooked so far in all research in forensic interviews. And this has to do with the way misunderstandings or communication breakdowns are perceived in the real world.

According to Ochs (1991: 126) misunderstandings are “culturally-determined structuring sequences during the socialisation of children, rather than points where the communicative order ‘breaks down’”. This suggests an alternative way of looking at the miscommunication episodes in the forensic interviews. Instead of defining them as ‘problems’ and retrospectively assigning them to be cases attributable to ‘poor questioning’ or ‘age-inappropriate questioning’, it might be a far more worthwhile enterprise to use such instances as ‘points of understanding’. In other words, it might be more useful to ask questions about what activities both the police interviewer and the child are involved in that have led to such irregularities. This is very much in line with McTear and King’s (1991) position that miscommunication can be considered a norm rather than an aberration.

Brown and Rogers (1991) also agree that literature on uncertainty reducing research has construed uncertainty as a miscommunication when in fact it may reveal many informative details in interactions to do with excitement and change.

Therefore, I suggest it might be useful for the police interviewers to review video-recorded interviews of children and study instances of interaction between the police interviewer and the child. This retrospective examination of interviews will help them understand better what the individual child is orienting to in the interview. The discussions and viewpoints generated by such reviews can provide further insights in future interviews with children.

9.3 Implications for Further Academic Research

9.3.1 Research with a Bigger Data Corpus

The present research has been able to present only a small slice of the entire interview interaction in the data corpus. It has been necessary to be selective in order to present the details of these interactions. However, this does not mean that there do not exist other examples of interaction that could build upon the findings of the present study and provide further understandings about the practice of listening in forensic interviews.

It is important that further research be conducted on different corpora of data from different police protection centres in the UK and in other countries. Findings from a larger pool of data will allow us to build a set of findings that can further inform the interview practices. In addition, data across different interview centres can be compared to ascertain good practices in listening. Data from different countries could

also reveal whether there exist differences in listening practices and if these vary according to specific cultural norms.

However, there is also the logistical difficulty of obtaining data that is highly sensitive such as this. Additionally, the research findings may have an effect on the outcome of the court case. Until such data can be made more accessible for research purposes, it would be difficult to gather a large enough data corpus for generalisation purposes.

9.3.2 Multiple Case Analysis vs. Single Case Analysis

Most of the analyses in this research have involved single case analysis of selected examples. Research involving multiple case analysis (Hutchby & Wooffitt, 1998) would allow us to see the way the same phenomenon is handled differently by different interviewers. Such an understanding can inform us on the systematics of listening attentively to the child and further provide cases for effective listening. Such findings may be useful for making general recommendations for improving interviewing practices.

9.3.3 Research on Variability of Response Tokens

The analysis of response tokens has invariably focused on all of the response tokens. It has not sought to examine all the differentiated functions of the varying tokens such as 'okay', 'right', 'yeah' and even the composite response tokens 'right. Okay'. A more in depth analysis of these individual functions in the forensic interview context may present further insight into variability of their uses and further inform the practice of listening in these interviews.

9.3.4 Research on the Variability of Non-Responsive Tokens

The analysis of 'non-responsiveness' involved the use of all types of non-responsive tokens including 'I dunno' and silences and 'no'. Multiple case analysis of the occurrence of each individual token in the forensic interview context could reveal further details about the meaning that the police interviewers are constructing about their production in a wider range of cases.

9.3.5 Employing Alternative Research Methods

It might be a worthwhile effort to triangulate the findings of the present study with other research methods. One way would be to interview police interviewers to obtain their comments on the discursive listening practices occurring in these interviews. Another would be to devise a questionnaire to elicit information about the listening practices in these interviews. A third method would be to conduct a focus group discussion with police interviewers following a viewing of an video interview with a child. All of these methods would enable more information about the listening practices to become available.

Cicourel (1975) recommends that discourse participants should take part in the analysis process. By using 'indefinite triangulation' (p.23) Cicourel suggests that researchers can elicit multiple interpretations of discourse materials from participants and compare these data with their own (researcher's) interpretations of the same and similar events. In this way, analysts can check the validity of their interpretations and possibly discover properties of the reasoning abilities of the social actors.

9.4 Limitations of the Study

I have argued in Chapter 4 that the conversational analytic method offers a useful tool to examine the way in which police officers listen to the child in forensic interviews. However, this method is not without its limitations.

One level of criticism is aimed at the way conversational analytical methods focus on selected fragments which are largely unconnected with the entire interaction. As Wetherell (1998:402) argues,

If the problem with post-structuralist analysts is that they rarely focus on actual social interaction, then the problem with conversational analysts is that they rarely raise their eyes from the next turn in the conversation, and, further this is not an entire conversation or sizeable slice of social life but usually a tiny fragment.[...].

The findings in this study can be described as only a tiny fragment of a much bigger world of forensic interviewing. Although the findings do provide insights in the mechanics of how police interviewers listen to children, they do not provide a comprehensive picture of such practices in the whole of the UK. It might be the case that the data corpus for this study consisted of video recordings that were rejected and rendered inadmissible for courtroom use. It is impossible to make any generalisations about the overall practices of listening in the forensic interviews based on such a corpus.

The analysis has also focussed only on the interview interactions. Other aspects related to the interview such as initial police reports, informal discussions with the parents/carers and informal discussions among other police officers were not made available to the researcher and therefore not used in the analysis. The findings of this study has suggested that prior knowledge about the case (such as the time of the

alleged incident according to medical or other forensic evidence) might have some bearing in the way the interviewer asks the questions following the child's answer. Therefore, information that the police interviewer possessed at the time of interview may have helped provide a clearer interpretation of the interactions.

Additionally, factors such as the age of the child, the social background of the child, personality of the child, the level of rapport built with the child in the initial stage of the interview interaction and the interviewer's experience may all influence the way the child is listened to. When these factors are taken into account, a clearer picture of how police interviewers listen to the child and the problems they face may well emerge.

The second criticism is levelled at Schegloff's (1991) notion that participant orientation seems to indicate that only what is relevant to the participants at that moment in the interaction. The argument goes that it is the analyst who selects the piece of interaction and makes the relevance obvious for the participants. So, it is not really the participants but rather the analyst who defines the relevance for the interaction and therefore imposes his/her (external) view on the participants' orientation rather than seek participants' orientation in itself. In the present study, it is not possible to establish the way the police interviewers and the child viewed the listening practices illustrated in this research without any interview data from all the participants. There is a possibility that the participants may have viewed the interactions in the analysis differently.

While it is acknowledged that all of these form valid limitations on the

generalisability of the findings of this study, it must also be noted that it is not possible to obtain an understanding of how all of these factors can actually influence the interaction. At best it can only be postulated that such information has been the basis for the interaction and this can only be described as proceduralised guesswork.

In other words, there is no way of empirically determining the effects of external contexts on the interview fragments. What can be empirically established is what is evident in the interaction itself, how the participants orient to what is evident in the piece of interaction. And this is what this research has sought to establish. As Heritage (1998:163) states:

The assumption is that it is fundamentally through interaction that context is built, invoked and managed and that it is through interaction that institutional imperatives originating from outside the interaction are evidenced and are made real and enforceable for the participants.

In this sense, the focus of this research is on providing insights based on very specific contextualised instances of the interaction rather than making generalised findings about the external context of the forensic interaction. It is imperative that such research be done to obtain an understanding of the listening practices in the interview interaction.

9.5 Summary of the Study

In this study, I have made a case for undertaking a practice-based research of forensic interviews. I have suggested that there is a need to move away from a 'protocol based mentality' as is currently prevalent in interviews. This is because there are many emergent factors within the interviews that also engender the outcome of the

interview interaction. I have proposed the notion of discursive listening as means of understanding how police interviewers respond to the child in the interview context.

I have shown, through in depth analysis of selected fragments in this study, some of the emergent factors that are involved in the practice of listening to the child. This certainly indicates that it is important to consider the context or environment in this research. In this respect, it might be a worthwhile enterprise for the police interviewers to undertake the practice of viewing recording of the interviews and discover for themselves the way in which particular actions are being constructed, by both the child and the interviewer, in order to enhance their interviewing skills.

I have suggested in Chapter 2 that listening to the child in the forensic interviewing context is akin to cross-cultural communication. According to Tannen (1984), cross-cultural communication “is like trying to follow a route on which someone has turned the signposts around. The familiar signposts are there, but when you follow them, they take you in the wrong direction” (p.212). Communicating with the child in the forensic interviews has that sense when the questions posed by the interviewer are answered in an unexpected way by the child. Although external factors such as age of the child, memory enhancing techniques as well the question types used during the interview do impact the interview outcome in one form or another, there are also emergent factors within each interview that can be attributed to continued existence of interactional problems between the adult and the child. This study has shown that such unexpected answers can be considered as a resource to obtain insight into the child’s cultural world rather than as a reflection of her linguistic inability.

It is in this spirit that I conclude with the assertion that more research into practice-based listening has to be carried out. This study has revealed what is only the tip of an iceberg of observable practices in the forensic interview. As with research in medical and health contexts that is now saturated with observable practice-based findings across a diverse range of settings, research in forensic interviews has to track a similar path if it is to gain important insights and enact significant changes to current practices.

The focus of research, I propose, has to shift from techniques and checklists of what should and should not be done in the interviews to one that informs the negotiation between two interactive positions: the adult's and the child's. Then the emphasis for further understanding does not depend on parameters that run along getting the right set of questions that will then (theoretically) lead to the right set of answers. Rather, it will focus on what the irregularities in the child's answers actually reveal about the orientations and perspectives of the child and what sort of understandings, knowledge, and expertise the adult interviewers may require in order to enhance the quality of these interviews.

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Appendix A

Transcription Notation¹

- . sentence final falling intonation.
- , continuing intonation (“more to come”).
- ? rising intonation at the end of clause.
- ↑yes upward intonation of sound it precedes.
- ↓yes downward intonation of sound it precedes.
- yes emphatic stress.
- (0.2) timed interval of tenths of a second.
- (.) indicates a ‘micopause’ of less than one-tenth of a second.
- = ‘latching’ or absolute contiguity between utterances; or to show the continuation of speaker’s utterances across intervening lines of transcript.
- [point of onset of overlapping talk.
-] cessation of overlapping talk.
- (()) indicates a non-verbal activity; for example ((child beats her lap)). They are also used to enclose the transcriber’s comments on contextual or other relevant features.
- () empty brackets indicate unclear utterances or other sounds on the tape.
- .hhh represents audible inward breathing. The more the h’s, the longer the breath.
- hhh represents outward breathing. The more the h’s, the longer the breath.
- : stretching of a sound at the preceding lexical item. The more colons the greater the extent of the stretching.
- sudden cut-off of a prior sound.
- Specific parts of the transcript discussed in the text.

°yes° indicates that the talk between the degree signs is noticeably quieter than surrounding talk.

<yes> shows that the talk between the outward chevrons is noticeable slower than surrounding talk.

>yes< shows that the talk between the inner chevrons is noticeably quicker than surrounding talk.

¹Adapted from system developed by Gail Jefferson, printed in J.M. Atkinson and J. Heritage (eds.) 1984. *Structures of social action: Studies in conversation analysis*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press:ix-xvi.

