

CHAPTER 5: THE ANALYST'S PERSPECTIVE

...at any moment we are prisoners caught in the framework of our theories; our expectations; our past experiences; our language. But we are prisoners in a Pickwickian sense; if we try, we can break out of our framework at any time. Admittedly, we shall find ourselves again in a framework, but it will be a better and a roomier one, and we can at any moment break out of it again (Popper, 1970, p. 56, cited in Sarangi & Candlin, *op. cit.*, p. 383).

5.1 INTRODUCTION

“Motivational relevancies” (Sarangi & Candlin, *op. cit.*, p. 368ff) and “practical relevance” (Sarangi & Roberts, *loc. cit.*) were incorporated into the theoretical framework in Chapter 3 to operationalise the analyst’s perspective. This chapter addresses the question of how they inform the relationship between the analyst’s and participants’ perspectives. As explained in Chapter 2, this question reflects the implication of Cicourel’s (*op. cit.*) challenge that the analyst, acting on tacit knowledge in “interpenetrating contexts” (p. 309), is acknowledged as a socially-situated in relation to the study and to the participants.

In addressing this question, the chapter first explains what motivational relevancies and practical relevance together offer the study, and develops the idea that they can be reflexively related through “joint problematisation” (Roberts & Sarangi, *loc. cit.*). This relationship is then developed into a framework with which to explain how I, as the analyst, am situated in relation to the participants, their workplace problems and to the study itself. In doing so, the account draws on the memberships I have held in the ELICOS sector to explain the resources I bring to the study, how these resources have

been shaped by the themes in contemporary society identified in Chapter 3, and how they have shaped the theoretical framework and my decisions in operationalising it in the study.

5.2 OPERATIONALISING THE ANALYST'S PERSPECTIVE

5.21 The analyst's perspective as topic and resource

“Motivational relevancies” (Sarangi & Candlin, loc. cit.) and “practical relevance” (Sarangi & Roberts, loc. cit.) draw attention to the analyst as both a focus of study and a shaper of research. This dual role creates a version of what Sarangi and Coulthard (op. cit., p. xxiv) have called the “topic/resource dilemma”. This refers to a paradox which results from the unavoidable fact that in studying social life the analyst is as situated within the social world as the participants. The paradox arises because the social resources on which the analyst draws in studying the social world as a topic are themselves drawn from this world, which is itself shaped by the social resources deployed by those who are studied.

The need, then, in the current study, is to explain the analyst's perspective, operationalised as motivational relevancies and practical relevance, as both a topic and a resource. As a topic, motivational relevancies and practical relevance are a focus of the study. As a resource, they shape both the study and the relationship between it, the analyst and the participants. The challenge is how to explain the analyst's perspective from within the study it simultaneously shapes, and in relation to the participants' perspective.

Sarangi and Candlin identify (op. cit., p. 383) this as a need to “critically reflect on one's own practices, without necessarily getting distracted to a meta-level of substituting one's descriptive practice with the practice of inquiry”. To meet this need, they recommend that sociolinguists view themselves as standing in a reflexive relationship to the social context of their research, their research practices, and their social-theoretical assumptions. They call this “a reflexive alignment of our accounting practices” (ibid.).

The following two sections develop this proposal into a framework within which to explain the analyst's perspective in relation to the study and to its participants.

5.22 The role of reflexivity, membership and members' resources

Both "motivational relevancies" (Sarangi & Candlin, *ibid.*, pp. 368ff) and "practical relevance" (Sarangi & Roberts, *loc. cit.*) emphasise the values and interpretive resources the analyst brings to the study, how these are deployed, and how this deployment positions the analyst and the study in relation to the participants. In drawing attention to these points, the two notions emphasise that analysts, like participants, have, in Fairclough's (1989, p. 24) terms, their own "members' resources", which guide their understanding of, and responses to, the context of the study, as well as to the context studied. The distribution of these resources between the analyst and participants is determined by the extent to which they share social/institutional memberships (Sarangi & Candlin, *op. cit.*, p. 382). These shared resources can assist the analyst to understand participants' practices as they do. Giddens (1976), in explaining the force of this point, has observed that

a grasp of the resources used by members of society to generate social interaction is a condition of the social scientist's understanding of their conduct in just the same way as it is for those members themselves (p. 16, cited in Sarangi & Candlin, *op. cit.*, p. 380).

It is the differences between the resources of analysts and participants which give rise to the questions addressed by motivational relevancies and practical relevancies.

Motivational relevancies emphasise how the analyst's tacit values and research assumptions affect whether a study "transforms" or "aligns with" participants' perspectives (Sarangi & Candlin, *op. cit.*, pp. 379ff). Sarangi and Candlin (*ibid.*) argue

that unless these values and assumptions are explained, the relationship between the positions of the analyst and participants will be unclear. The risk is that this lack of clarity will create uncertainty about whose “point of view” (ibid., p. 368) is being represented in research, and, more broadly, uncertainty about the social relevance and theoretical stance of discourse analysis itself. To address this problem, they propose that discourse analysts critically reflect on how their own practices situate analysts and participants, in “a reflexive alignment of ... accounting practices” (ibid., p. 383).

Sarangi and Candlin (ibid., p. 370) distinguish between motivational relevancies and practical relevance by explaining that this reflexive approach to the alignment of analyst’s and participants’ perspectives would not of itself warrant a claim that discourse analysis provided insights which were useful for participants, observing that “as analysts we should not be claiming practical relevance for our searched-for discoveries. That is a matter for practitioners to acknowledge and decide” (ibid.).

Practical relevance, then, focuses on the *effects* of discourse analytical research on the lives of participants, specifically on how discourse analysis can contribute to solving their workplace problems. With this emphasis on the potential of discourse analysis to benefit participants, practical relevance turns the situatedness of the discourse analyst into an ethical stance, described by Sarangi and Roberts (op. cit., p. 2) as the “ethics of practical relevance”. In order to maximise the potential benefits of discourse analysis to participants, Sarangi and Roberts (ibid., p. 43) – like Sarangi and Candlin - recommend a reflexive approach. Specifically, they propose a reflexive relationship between the participants’ perceptions of workplace problems and the researcher’s decisions on research theory and practice. This is an “integrated” (ibid.) approach to researching workplace problems which involves the analyst working with participants to achieve a mutual understanding of workplace problems in a process which Roberts and Sarangi (loc. cit.)

term “joint problematisation” – the aim being to “make a contribution both to solving problems and to knowledge more generally” (Sarangi & Roberts, *op. cit.*, p. 40).⁵⁵

In advocating this reflexive relationship between discourse analysis and participants’ perspectives, practical relevance draws the process of discourse analysis into the social-theoretical world developed by the analyst to explain the world of the participants. Extending this point a little, it implies that joint problematisation involves a reflexive relationship between motivational relevancies and practical relevance. In this relationship, the “members’ resources” (Fairclough, *loc. cit.*) of analysts and participants are mutually shaping: the analyst’s decisions on how to balance the analyst’s and participants’ perspectives both shape and are shaped by the analyst’s mode of engagement with the problems of participants. I employ this reflexive interpretation of the relationship in the remaining sections of this chapter.

Important to this relationship is the extent to which the analyst can be a member of the group being studied. Sarangi and Candlin (*op. cit.*) emphasise this point, stressing that reflecting participants’ perspectives in research is not simply a question of how analysis is conducted and represented. Rather, it concerns the analyst’s capacity to achieve a “mutuality of perspective and with membership” (*ibid.*, p. 382). Similarly, Sarangi and Roberts (*op. cit.*, p. 2) argue that “we, as analysts, need to immerse ourselves in specific workplaces contexts” in order to understand and explain these contexts and contribute to change. However, Sarangi and Candlin (*loc. cit.*) also emphasise that engagement in research risks disengaging the analyst from the participants’ perspective, observing that “the whole question of what constitutes ‘membership’ is open to critique, since analysts may break their membership criteria once they turn to academically sanctioned genres of interpretation”. The challenge raised here is how to develop a perspective which is shared

⁵⁵ I do not interpret ‘solving’ here to imply that discourse analysis could of itself solve workplace problems: rather that discourse analysis can raise awareness of the social/linguistic processes which contribute to the production and reproduction of these problems.

by both the analyst and participants. This is what Sarangi and Candlin (ibid., p. 383) term “an issue of access to mutuality”.

For this study, then, the task is to explain how my memberships and member’s resources shape my relationship with the participants’ perspectives, and influence how the study engages with participants’ workplace problems.

5.23 Membership as frontstage and backstage competencies

In problematising the notion of ‘membership’, Sarangi and Candlin (ibid.) emphasise that the analyst’s membership of one group may be interconnected with membership of another. Indeed, in the example they give, becoming a researcher may disqualify the analyst from membership of the group studied (ibid., p. 282). In explaining motivational relevancies and practical relevance, the challenge is therefore to acknowledge this interconnectedness of memberships under the auspices of the analyst’s perspective.

To do this, I have drawn on Sarangi and Roberts’s (op. cit., pp. 19ff) use of Goffman’s (op. cit., p. 110ff) distinction between “frontstage” and “backstage”, which forms part of his development of the “*nro selves* thesis” (Manning, loc. cit.), explained in Chapter 3.

“Frontstage” refers to areas where individuals are performing for an audience and where, therefore, the “situated self” (Goffman, 1961, p. 120) is socially at risk: where an individual’s performance “may be seen as an effort to give the appearance that his activity in the region maintains and embodies certain standards” (Goffman, 1959, p. 110). “Backstage” regions are where the audience does not intrude, and where the self as “performer” (Goffman, ibid., p. 244) is therefore free to prepare, defined by Goffman (p. 114) as “a place relative to a given performance, where the impression fostered by the performance is knowingly contradicted as a matter of course”. This freedom to prepare for a frontstage audience does not mean, however, that backstage regions are places where

participants can abandon frontstage behaviour altogether - only the frontstage behaviour for which preparation is currently underway. As Collins (1994, p. 71) explains, “there is a hierarchy of frontstages and backstages” in which each backstage region is in turn a frontstage region for another backstage region.

Sarangi and Roberts (loc. cit.) argue that the distinction is valuable for researching workplace practices for two reasons. First, it includes both the ways professionals present to non-members of the profession, including clients, and how they prepare for and work aside from these encounters, including their interactions with fellow members. They stress that, in studying professional discourse, it is important to focus on both these aspects of professional life because being recognised as a member of a professional group involves having the front- and back-stage “competencies” (Sarangi & Candlin, op. cit., p. 354) to recognise, maintain and operate within the backstage and frontstage regions associated with that group. The value of this notion of “competencies” for the current study is that it provides a way of drawing together the notions of membership and “members’ resources” (Fairclough.. loc. cit.) within the frontstage/backstage framework developed here.

Second, the distinction acknowledges the interconnections and blurrings of professional discourses. Front- and back-stage regions are not rigidly segregated, but interrelated (Sarangi & Roberts, op. cit., pp. 20, 23); specifically, they are *fractal* - regions occur within regions; *hierarchic*, as noted above; and *shifting*. Thus, the boundaries between backstage and frontstage regions may be renegotiated or become lines of tension depending on the members present, and whether the management of their professional identities involves “competing moves and stances” (ibid., p. 39).

With its focus on the interrelations and potential tensions between professional memberships and resources, Sarangi and Roberts’s use of the frontstage/backstage distinction completes the framework for operationalising the analyst’s perspective. Within this framework, the frontstage/backstage distinction is turned back on the analyst – the aim

being to make visible, and therefore accountable, those memberships and resources which shape the study and its relationship with participants. The following sections explain how this framework applies to the current study.

5.3 EXPLAINING THE ANALYST'S RESOURCES

5.3.1 Multiple memberships and workplace problems

The account of motivational relevancies and practical relevance developed here situates the current study within the broader context of my participation in the ELICOS sector. This is because my perspective as the analyst developed through working as a member of different groups in the sector, including teachers, educational managers, and the industry regulatory authority. Each of these groups has a different relationship to teachers, and a different perspective on teachers' practices and their workplace problems. The resources I developed through these memberships therefore reflect a range of assumptions and values, including those shared by teachers. These "members' resources" (Fairclough., loc. cit.) themselves shaped and were shaped by my involvement in researching, and thereby attempting to address, workplace problems in ELICOS. It was this process of "joint problematisation" (Roberts & Sarangi, loc. cit.) which led up to and informed the design and implementation of this study.

The following sections explain these multiple memberships, the relationships between them, how joint problematisation has shaped the relationship between the analyst's and participants' perspectives, and how the study engages with their workplace problems. This focus follows Sarangi and Roberts's (op. cit., p. 40) recommendation that in order to facilitate joint problematisation, research should "address explicitly issues of research purposes and sites, role relationships and ethical issues and, lastly, representations and discourses".

In explaining my involvement in the inception of the study, I shift from non-narrative to narrative mode. The aim of this shift is to communicate my perceptions in and of the contexts which gave rise to the study; in other words, to present myself as both participant and analyst. Narrative lends itself to the expression of this double 'voice' because, as Georgakopoulou and Goutsos (2000, p. 71) explain, narratives focus "on the re-creation of what happened", and in doing so offer "a mode par excellence for the construction of the self". They achieve this by encoding "the storyteller's selection and interpretation of what happened, his or her subjective views and attitudes towards what is narrated" (ibid., p. 73). Through these encodings, narratives can simultaneously communicate two versions of the narrator: from inside the "reconstructed 'reality'" (ibid., p. 74) of the story, and from the "here and now of the narrative's telling" (ibid.).

As well as being stories, the narratives below are forms of "accounting practices" (Garfinkel, 1967, p. 33), the term Hall, Sarangi & Slembrouck (1999, p. 542), drawing on Heritage (1988, p. 128), use to refer "to instances where actors reflexively stand back from everyday activity as they explain and justify to others what is/has been going on". As "accounting practices" in this sense, then, the narratives here seek to "explain and justify" the claim that workplace problems in ELICOS warrant investigation and change. This is a "moral activity" (Hall, Sarangi & Slembrouck, 1997, p. 267) which parallels the way numerous professions use narratives to provide "adequate descriptions of situations that require interventions" (ibid.). Like these, the narratives below juxtapose a range of "voices" (ibid., p. 271) in order to support my claim. These are the voices I have developed as a participant and analyst. This way of representing the self in narratives is supported by Georgakopoulou and Goutsos (loc. cit.) who, drawing on Schiffrin (1990), argue that the external and internal vantage points available for the self in narratives can be used by the narrator to "create a widened base of support for their views and beliefs". It

is, then, this capacity to present accounts of the myself as both internal (participant) and external (analyst) which motivated me to use the narrative mode.

5.311 The ELICOS perspective

5.3112 The teacher

I worked as a teacher at ELICOS colleges in Sydney between 1989 and 1998: full-time until 1994, and part-time for the remaining period. Like other teachers at these colleges, my primary responsibility was to teach classes of students from around twenty countries in Asia, South America and Europe. The standard full-time teaching load was 20 hours' classroom teaching and five hours' supervision of self-directed study a week. In planning lessons, assessing students and carrying out other teaching responsibilities, teachers followed curriculum documents developed and distributed by senior staff, usually the 'director of studies' (DoS).

My teaching duties were typical for the sector. I was responsible for teaching classes in four- or five-weekly blocks, often called 'modules'; two or, less commonly, three modules comprised a 'course'. Each course represented a 'level' of proficiency in English. The colleges where I worked ran five or six levels of courses, from 'beginners' to 'advanced'. Within these levels, both generalist and specialist courses were run. The generalist courses were termed 'General English'; other courses focused on specialisations such as 'Business English', 'Academic English' and preparation for various international language tests. In addition to classroom teaching, I was usually required to accompany students on excursions and to attend social events organised by the colleges.

The typical teaching day was divided between the staffroom and the classroom, as well as movements between the two, and meetings with non-teachers for a range of purposes. This time was organised around a weekly timetable, usually set by the director of studies. The timetable varied somewhat between colleges, but the common pattern was for teachers to arrive in the staffroom between 8.00 and 8.30 am. Teaching started at around 9.00 am, and stopped mid morning for a break of around 20 minutes. Lessons then continued until 12.30, when there was a one-hour lunch break. In the afternoon there were

generally two more hours of teaching, finishing at 3.00 pm. Teachers then returned to the staffroom.

5.31121 The staffroom as a 'backstage' region

Teachers treated the staffroom as their "backstage region" (Goffman, loc. cit.). Here they prepared for lessons and engaged in banter about students and non-teaching members of the organisation. These activities were backstage in relation to the classrooms and other areas where teachers' professional practices might come under scrutiny from non-teachers. Teachers, then, maintained the staffroom as a backstage region by engaging in a range of practices which they would have deemed inappropriate for scrutiny from non-teachers.

However, the backstage status of staffrooms was not assured. Some kinds of practice transformed part or all of the staffroom to frontstage. This happened when, for example, backstage regions developed around huddled conversations dealing in topics which members were careful to keep within the bounds of trusted relationships, such as problems at home, crises of confidence, and criticisms of other teachers. The staffroom would also be transformed into a frontstage region if a non-teacher entered. This might be a student, a member of management or some other person to whom competent teachers would present a frontstage performance. At these moments, it was common for teachers to adjust their behaviour comprehensively to accommodate the entrance of the non-teacher.

These adjustments reflected divisions between teachers and the other groups within the college. The major non-teaching groups were identified by teachers as students, management, and administration. These groups were subdivided in various ways: for example, into students who were easier and more difficult to teach, into the different levels of management, and according to how the members of the different groups treated teachers.

5.31122 Challenges to teachers' authority

It was not unusual for talk in these backstage regions to focused on situations which had challenged the speakers' ability to carry out what they saw as their professional role. These situations occurred in frontstage regions, and involved interaction with members of

the three main non-teaching groups. Teachers experienced in contributing to staffroom talk were skilled at raising and developing these topics – sometimes for the attention of the staffroom as a whole. The topics were usually of general interest and prone to draw attention away from other kinds of activity. The two dominant concerns were that students had excessive authority in interactions with teachers, and that teachers lacked support from management in this and other areas. These concerns were raised about situations in which, for example, students challenged teachers about how they taught; teaching was made difficult by either large classes or students with different proficiency levels; students started in classes after courses had begun; or when students complained about a teacher to management.

In my own teaching experience, I also perceived these problems, and with more experience also contributed to staffroom discussions about them. In general, I noticed pressure from management on teachers to be ‘nice’ to, and when talking about, students. I use ‘nice’ here to refer to a range of verbal and non-verbal behaviours which affect the student/teacher relationship. They included pressure to recommend that students move into classes of a higher level than was warranted by their language proficiency; to socialise with students in the evenings and at weekends, thereby posing for teachers the problem of how to maintain a frontstage demeanor while in effect feigning the use of backstage resources; to accept new students into classes outside course start dates; and to be generous in explaining students’ failure to progress – not blaming their ability or attitude to study but to look for solutions in changes to teaching methodology or classroom management.

Other teachers reported being similarly frustrated in trying to teach according to what they understood to be professional standards. Noticeably different were the solutions they proposed and their explanations for why the situations kept recurring. At each college, a range of views circulated, though the tendency was to argue that the management cared more about keeping students content than with ensuring that their learning needs were met. The explanation for this apparent bias varied. Some teachers claimed that management knew little about teaching and that they should be replaced with people who were better informed. Another line was that management’s lack of support

was evidence of a policy of minimising the time and money put into teaching and learning; and that teachers – and, some suggested, students - should protest against this policy. Another view was that members of management were not promoting the college effectively - the argument being that if they were, there would be more students and therefore more funds available to provide more support for teaching. The view common to these different explanations that management was ‘on the students’ side’. The effect was to reduce the confidence teachers felt in carrying out their teaching practices.

When meetings were arranged with management to discuss these concerns, the outcomes were usually perceived by teachers to be disappointing. Managers appeared not to address teachers’ pedagogic concerns, but to emphasise teaching as a means of enhancing students’ levels of satisfaction with the college and of thereby attracting new students. After these meetings, we left with the impression that our concerns had not been addressed but redescribed in a way which recast the problem in terms of its potential to reduce students’ satisfaction or enrollments. Teachers often left these meetings with a feeling that their concerns had been ignored or misunderstood. This impression tended to confirm my and other teachers’ doubts about management’s support for teaching standards, and for our view of ourselves as lacking professional authority.

I continued to hold only these perceptions until two new memberships changed my relationship with teachers: I became a director of studies and later a member of NEAS, the industry regulatory authority.

5.3113 The director of studies

I began work as the head teacher and later the director of studies of an ELICOS college in which I had previously worked as a teacher. It is a condition of accreditation that ELICOS colleges appoint a director of studies, who is held responsible by NEAS for the management of the quality of teaching and educational administration within the college, as defined in criteria set out in the NEAS regulations, explained in the previous chapter.

These regulations therefore shape the professional knowledge and determine the responsibilities of a director of studies, which include evaluating curricula and teaching, recruiting teachers, managing their professional development, and interviewing

prospective students. In addition to maintaining educational and administrative standards, the director of studies typically reports to members of senior management. These include the principal administrator – another position mandated by NEAS – and other senior managers, as well as the owners of the college. A director of studies usually meets regularly with members of these groups as well as other directors of studies, and representatives of relevant organisations. Among these are overseas agents, who, for a percentage of students' fees, recruit students to study in ELICOS colleges, and who, depending on the number of students they provide, can themselves exercise influence over managers based on the fees they bring to the college.

5.31131 Shifting front- and back-stage boundaries

For the teacher who becomes a director of studies, these responsibilities redraw the boundaries of frontstage and backstage regions. The staffroom is transformed into a frontstage region both for the director of studies, for whom it is a place where teachers' preparation and attitudes can be monitored, and for teachers in the presence of the director of studies. At the same time, for the director of studies, the management and administrative areas of the college take on a backstage status, whereas for teachers they typically have frontstage status. Contributing to these changing perspectives is the knowledge among teachers that the director of studies is not only familiar with their practices but, unlike teachers, has backstage access to the non-teaching groups within the college: the managers, students and administrators. Combined with the authority the director of studies has over teachers, this access to sources of institutional knowledge and influence creates a need to treat encounters with the director of studies as frontstage.

These changes in the interactional geography opened for me a different perspective on teachers' workplace problems. In terms of my members' resources, this change arose gradually as I acculturated into management practices in which the ELICOS college was interpreted as a business, with education as its primary product and commercial viability its driving motivation. This perspective dominated the management of the college. According to it, 'workplace problems' were those events which threatened the college's

capacity to attract new clients or in some other way might compromise their impression of the college as an attractive place to study.

The members' resources deployed here were not merely different from those of teachers, but potentially in conflict - the stakes being the professional credibility of managers and teachers. These differences were most noticeable in the ways managers and teachers cast the processes of learning and teaching. For example, managers would typically understate the demands and unpredictabilities of language learning, thereby minimising the onus on the learner for the success of learning outcomes. On the other hand, teachers were more likely to emphasise these aspects of language learning, indeed to argue that learners needed to understand the nature of language learning and their role within it as a prerequisite for successful language learning.

5.31132 Contradictory interpretations

Frontstage, managers and owners continually reinterpreted the significance of problems reported by teachers, who would in turn reinterpret according to their own perspective the managers' constructions of these problems. Backstage, each group tended to characterise the other as failing to meet their own professional standards. As noted above, teachers contended that their problems arose because management prioritised maintaining student contentment over meeting their learning needs; managers, on the other hand, tended to characterise teachers as out of touch with commercial realities and 'inflexible' or 'unprofessional' in their approach to teaching. One explanation that I had sympathy with was that teacher training had not prepared teachers for the commercial priorities which dominate ELICOS - indeed, had give them false expectations of what was possible within a commercial environment.

As both an ex teacher and director of studies, I found these competing ways of construing the 'same' workplace problems hard to reconcile; the problem became a dilemma when I was obliged to choose between adopting a manager's or teacher's perspective. Often the easiest recourse was to take the manager's perspective with managers and the teacher's with teachers. This was not always possible, and as time went on I began to feel that my loyalties were increasingly divided between teachers and senior

management. Through this raised awareness of situations in which these tensions arose, I began to see these situations as examples of more general patterns of difference between how management and teachers perceived teaching.

5.31133 Examples of tension

As a director of studies, I maintained and implemented policies which exemplified these differences. I use the word 'policy' to refer to those which were formally drafted as well as to those which were not stated but taken for granted, and displayed in managers' routine behaviour. These policies were difficult to justify to teachers but their merits were clear to management. The five examples below illustrate these policies, and the tensions they created.

The first example is the way students' complaints about teachers were handled by management. These complaints often focused on teaching methodology, which within ELICOS is usually described as 'communicative', meaning that it emphasises learning through the contextualised use of language. For students unfamiliar with this methodology, it may not look like 'language teaching', and the language teacher may in turn not be recognised as such. Management's decisions on students' complaints were often hard to communicate to teachers when these decisions appeared to focus on reducing the dissatisfaction expressed by the student rather than addressing the methodological and orientation issues raised. The complaints procedures typically encouraged this perception by suggesting students approach their class teacher first and, if this did not resolve their concern, or if the teacher advised them to do so, to take their complaint to a designated manager. Students wanting to complain about their teacher tended – understandably – to take the latter option, leaving the teacher out of the complaint loop until s/he was informed of it by management. Teachers saw this route as a way of excluding them from the complaints process, a perception which was reinforced by the lack of support management appeared to give teachers who had complaints made against them.

Second, owners and senior management at several colleges introduced moves to standardise the teaching practices. These moves came against a background of concern about student satisfaction levels, and a perception that unless management had more

control over classroom teaching, they could not ensure that students were receiving the instruction students expected. This concern about meeting students' expectations was linked to dealing with students complaints and the need to be consistent with the descriptions of courses and teaching methodology contained in marketing materials.

A phrase used to describe the aim of these standardisation policies was 'house style', a type of teaching for which a college might become known and valued in the marketplace. Examples of moves to establish a house style included requiring teachers' lesson plans to be submitted to the director of studies for filing in a 'bank' of reusable – otherwise known as 'teacher-proof' – lessons; creating checklists to record what each teacher had taught during a week; matching the checklists to a detailed syllabus; and collating and monitoring these documents as part of ongoing performance reviews.

These initiatives were generally unpopular with teachers, who felt that the 'reusable' lessons and proliferation of checklists were an imposition on their professionalism and did not reflect the realities of teaching practice. Teachers argued that lessons should be tailored to the needs of each class, and suspected that the reusable lessons were an attempt to make teachers more easily replaceable. They objected to the checklists on the grounds that they reduced the complexities of language learning to inventories of discrete activities and items, such as skills, vocabulary and grammatical structures and functions. Management, on the other hand, argued that the teachers objections were an example of their avoidance of 'accountability'. From a management perspective, then, this interpretation of the teachers' objections further justified the standardisation of teaching.

Third, I was required to introduce regular observations of teachers in classrooms: I was asked to draw up observation schedules, checklists and procedures and to explain the purpose of the observations with teachers. These observations were part of a new 'staff development' program, the idea being that I would observe teachers in order to discuss with them areas in which they would like to increase their knowledge and skills. Teachers found this implausible, arguing that my observations were inevitably part of the attempt to standardise teaching, and would function as a performance appraisal with implications for their employment prospects.

Fourth, a regular cause of tension was the number of students in each class, when they joined the class, and differences in their proficiency levels. As a teacher, I and other teachers had felt that there should be no more than around 12 students per class. This number, we thought, ensured that the learning needs of each student could be addressed. I knew also that students perceived these benefits and so also preferred having this number or less in their classes. Both teachers and students also preferred all students to start their course at the beginning, and not to arrive after its commencement because of the disruption late arrivals caused and the extra attention they required from teachers. For similar reasons, teachers and students preferred classes to include students of comparable proficiency levels.

5.31134 The distribution of authority

As a director of studies, I was aware of these preferences. However, I was under pressure from college owners and senior managers to maximise the average number of students in classes, up to the NEAS-stipulated maximum of 15. I was aware that there were tight financial margins dependent on the number of students in each class, and on the total number in the college, which could not afford to lose potential students. In overriding teachers' concerns, I had more authority than with students because students' satisfaction was critical to the finances of the college; any complaint they made to other students or to the overseas agents who had recruited them could lose the college students to other colleges. In comparison, teachers had less authority because they depended on the college for their – increasingly insecure – employment: the focus of the final example of policy.

In the early to mid nineties, a policy arose of hiring teachers on a casual basis whenever possible, as opposed to other less 'flexible' categories of employment. I saw this shift to casual contracts occurring in numerous colleges through this period. Teachers who had taught for some time on a casual basis often questioned me on why they were not transferred to a more secure arrangement. Their concerns were heightened by the comparison with teachers who had been employed on a long term basis in the late eighties. The casual contracts suited management because teachers could be easily 'let go' when student numbers were down; it was also possible not to renew a contract if a teacher was

perceived to have ‘underperformed’. This situation created an understandable fear among teachers that their contracts might not be renewed, and for reasons not directly related to their teaching competence - for example, if they were unpopular with students. It was difficult to explain these employment practices to teachers, who typically argued that, apart from their personal concerns, insecure employment and a high staff turnover would reduce the quality of teaching. Management did not usually see this as a serious risk, but rather emphasised that all teachers should be ‘professional’ and ‘flexible’ irrespective of their terms of employment.

The difficulty of simultaneously deploying the competing discourses of teachers and managers raised my awareness of the tensions between their different interests and motivated my own interest in how these tensions might be addressed. My perspective on this problem, and my relationship to teachers and directors of studies, then evolved again when I became a member of NEAS.

5.3114 The NEAS panelist

As explained in Chapter 4, NEAS is the regulatory authority which governs the accreditation of ELICOS colleges. In this role, it implements national standards of English language education provision.

NEAS employs a small management and administrative staff and, on a consultancy basis, ‘panelists’, who regularly inspect and report to NEAS on how ELICOS colleges comply with the “Standards and criteria” (NEAS, loc. cit.). The reports are used as the basis of decisions on whether to accredit colleges to operate as ELICOS providers. These decisions are taken by a committee called the NEAS Board, which includes representatives of the ELICOS sector, as well as members of other relevant bodies.

5.31141 The regulation of front- and back-stage regions

In 1996, while continuing to work as a director of studies, I became a member of the NEAS panel. The experience changed my perspective on teachers, directors of studies and the practices of ELICOS colleges. This is because panelists develop the members’

resources to investigate those front and backstage practices for which teachers and directors of studies are professionally accountable.

The panelist's role is to establish whether colleges provide the educational services they claim to offer in their promotional materials, and whether the quality of these services meets the NEAS "Standards and criteria" (ibid.). The panelist is responsible for investigating and reporting on any area which does not appear to meet the standards. In doing so, the panelist investigates how the backstage practices of the college shape and are shaped by those practices which are presented to students and other members of the public.

During an inspection, then, the panelist gathers information on the operations of the college in areas which affect the quality of teaching and educational management. This includes interviewing members of management and staff, checking documents and procedures, and inspecting college premises and facilities. Directors of studies in particular are subject to scrutiny during the inspection, which focuses on their professional expertise. Other employees may be told by management when an inspection is scheduled and advised of its purpose. There is, then, often preparation in anticipation of an inspection. During the inspection, this preparation is converted into a performance which transforms hitherto backstage regions into frontstage as the panelist passes through.

For the panelist, too, an inspection is a frontstage performance, using prepared questions, and standardised inspection and reporting practices. These practices are themselves based on evaluations conducted by NEAS into the effectiveness of its own regulatory practices. In conducting an inspection, the panelist draws on inspection guidelines, training materials, the NEAS accreditation documentation, annual workshops with other panelists, and confidential information about colleges.

5.31142 The generalisation of tension

Through preparing for and conducting inspections, it became apparent to me that the tensions I had previously perceived between teachers' and managers' perspectives were not restricted to the colleges in which I had worked. On the contrary, they appeared to pervade the sector. While the explanation of these problems might appear from the

teachers' or director of studies' perspective to lie with individuals or the circumstances of particular colleges, as a NEAS panelist I came to see colleges as situated within a sector which was itself shaped by diverse and changing educational, regulatory, market, and other national and international conditions – including teacher education and training, exchange rates, transport and technology, government policies, and tourism trends.

These insights gave me the impression that I understood better the struggles I had experienced and observed as a teacher and director of studies. However, this awareness did not reduce the difficulty I had in reconciling the competing discourses I had come to associate with teachers and managers. My perception, as a NEAS panelist, that these problems affected the ELICOS sector as a whole, and were therefore unlikely to result from the employees or circumstances of individual colleges, were usually not taken as relevant to the solution of problems teachers faced in the daily lives, or the 'inflexibility' which managers perceived them to exhibit.

5.312 Implications of the ELICOS perspective

5.3121 Three 'motivational strands'

The three narratives highlight how my perspective on teachers' workplace problems drew on the "members' resources" (Fairclough, loc. cit.) of teachers, directors of studies and NEAS panelists. They reveal how the convergence of these resources gave rise to three 'motivational strands' which led up to and shaped this study, strands which were themselves shaped by the themes, identified in Chapter 3, of increasing social order and control through discourse, and the attendant themes of struggle, insecurity and risk.

5.31211 Insecurity and risk

The first strand reflects the sense of insecurity and risk in social relations, and in social identity itself, which individuals experience in struggling to maintain established practices while their autonomy is undermined by forms of control which operate through the very practices by which they produce and reproduce their social lives. This theme is

instantiated in my narratives by the demoralisation experienced by teachers who perceive their professional autonomy and authority to be undermined within the teaching practices which shape their professional identities.

As the narratives make clear, I did not consider this hardship inevitable and was concerned to alleviate it, a concern which motivated the process of “joint problematisation” (Roberts & Sarangi, loc. cit.) – described below – which led to the practical relevance of this study. Concern alone, however, did little to clarify the kind of problems which teachers faced. This gradually became clearer as I accrued and combined the resources described above – a process which led to the emergence of the second and third strands.

5.31212 Discourse and control

The second strand reflects the theme that discourse is central to the maintenance of social order, and hard to resist precisely because it operates through taken-for-granted practices, with the implication that those individuals who stand to lose most from social change are complicit in bringing them about. This strand emerged from my perception that communication and struggles between teachers and managers were shaped – usually in unnoticed ways – by their different interests, and that each group appeared unable to acknowledge this in understanding the position of the other. As the narratives attest, they seemed not so much unwilling to understand each other’s positions as to find them incomprehensible, as if each group lacked the resources to communicate in a way that the other group could understand.

From my experience in managing competing discourses as a director of studies, it had become clear to me that the solution to this problem would not lie simply in each side finding out more about the other, or in adopting different ‘strategies’ in communicating with the other. As a teacher turned director of studies, I knew about both and was still

unable to communicate across the divide. Rather, it appeared that the tensions between teachers and managers reflected differences in their pedagogic and commercial interests, but that neither side realised that these conflicting interests shaped their workplace struggles. At the time, this realisation resonated strongly with work in critical discourse analysis and micro-sociology on how the social resources deployed by participants are situated within practices which are shaped in ways which may not be apparent to participants, but which nevertheless constrain how their actions are understood. In particular, Fairclough's (1992, p. 90) notion of "contradictory interpellation" appeared to capture the dilemmas I faced in simultaneously trying to manage competing discourses, both as a teacher and director of studies. As evidenced in the narratives above, this notion remained salient after I became a director of studies for, in escaping the contradictory pressures of the teacher's role, these pressures reappeared as a tension between implementing commercial policies and addressing teachers' concerns. It was these insights, then, which led to the use of discourse analysis and micro-sociology to investigate and raise awareness of ELICOS workplace problems.

5.3.12.13 The transformation of social practice

The third strand reflects how the transformation of established social practices, exemplified in my narratives by management's policies of monitoring and standardising teachers' practices while casualising their employment, is driven by the emergence and increasing domination of new forms of macro social order – exemplified by the globalisation of markets. My awareness of these micro-macro relationships emerged as I moved through the different jobs in ELICOS, and my perspective thereby shifted from the micro world of interactions within ELICOS colleges towards a more macro perspective on the sector as a whole. In travelling from micro to macro in this way, I noticed two things.

First, the terms in which I explained teachers' workplace problems changed from, as a teacher, the personalities of particular managers to, as a director of studies, the commercial circumstances of particular colleges, and finally, as a NEAS panelist, to sector-wide tensions between regulatory requirements and the competitive pressures of global education markets.

Second, while this macro perspective enhanced *my* understanding of teachers' workplace problems, I noticed that it did not provide me with the resources to communicate more effectively between teachers and managers. The difficulty was that, for participants, workplace problems were not 'micro' in the sense that they could be alleviated or otherwise subsumed by macro phenomena. I gained the impressions that these problems were, from the teachers' perspective, only understood *as* problems in so far as they compromised teachers' professional values and practices. My voice as a NEAS panelist was, then, perhaps of interest to teachers, but did not reflect their experience of workplace problems. The implication was that any investigation of these problems should include teachers' understandings of them. These insights, then, led to my including both micro and macro perspectives in investigating these problems.

5.3122 Summary

These three strands, then, were shaped by the key themes in contemporary society which characterise the social context and focus of this study, and in turn motivated three aspects of the current study: my concern about the human cost of tensions between teaching and managerial interests in ELICOS practices; my interest in using discourse analysis to investigate these tensions; and my awareness that both macro and micro perspectives should be included in this investigation. In the first instance, these insights motivated me to investigate teachers' workplace concerns through a number of research projects based within ELICOS colleges. The resources I developed through these projects, and how they

contributed to a process of “joint problematisation” (Roberts & Sarangi, loc. cit.), are explained below.

5.313 The research perspective

In 1990, the three motivational strands came together as I started collaborating with teachers, and a teacher trainer and discourse analyst, Ruth Wajnryb, in small-scale, workplace-based research projects at ELICOS colleges. These continued after I became a director of studies and later a NEAS panelist. The projects drew on discourse analysis to investigate a variety of concerns teachers’ expressed about their professional practices. The research questions emerged from my experience in teaching, and backstage and frontstage contact with teachers. The majority of these projects aimed to contribute to the alleviation of teachers’ concerns by raising awareness of the situations which gave rise to them, and how these were situated within broader social/institutional contexts. The themes which ran through these projects were developed in subsequent conference papers and publications which aimed to raise awareness of their significance in the ELICOS sector. Taken together, these themes reflect those raised in my own experience of ELICOS and by the experience of teachers more generally. They include the inter- and intra-personal tensions teachers experienced in teaching, and how these tensions are shaped by the teaching methodology and materials employed (Crichton, 1990; 1994a; Crichton & Wajnryb, 1997a; 1997b; 1997c), by the construction of students as clients (Crichton, 1994b), and by teacher training (Crichton, 1999); and the discourses which shape teachers’ interaction in their front- and back-stage regions (Crichton, 1995).

5.3131 ‘Joint problematisation’ as a reflexive process

These projects have shaped both my understanding of teachers’ practices and my engagement with teachers, and have led up to, and motivated, this study. This process provides an example of “joint problematisation” (Roberts & Sarangi, loc. cit.) in a reflexive relationship between motivational relevancies and practical relevance.

Many of the projects did not set out to investigate the affects of commercialisation on teachers’ practices. As explained above, I and other teachers’ did not identify or

explain our workplace problems in this way. However, as the projects continued and I began working as a director of studies and NEAS panelist, I became increasingly aware of links between the pedagogic concerns raised by teachers' and the commercial orientation of the ELICOS colleges in which we worked. This emerging awareness was also influenced by work in discourse analysis and social theory, in particular that of Fairclough, Goffman, and Bourdieu. Fairclough's work on the role of discourse in the social changes associated with commercialisation was particularly influential in shaping my interpretive resources, which I then employed back into researching teachers' concerns.⁵⁶

5.3132 Managing front- and back-stage boundaries

This reflexive process was complicated by the affect of the researcher's role on my backstage and frontstage relations with teachers, a complication which arose because the projects introduced practices in which I had not previously interacted with teachers. These included meetings about how teachers' practices might benefit from exposure to research, the design of projects, collaboration in data collection, and the evaluation of findings and their implications for teachers' practices. Our roles in these practices varied depending on how what kind of collaboration was possible. The main issues were the time available, teachers' perceptions of the likely benefits of research to their practices, and questions of confidentiality.

These issues were particularly pressing because of the multiple roles I held: by conducting research with teachers, I was attempting to enter, but minimally affect, their backstage and frontstage regions. As a director of studies I was entitled to enter these regions but, as explained above, would shift the boundaries between them. As a teacher I could enter these regions and leave the boundaries broadly in situ. As a researcher I needed a relationship with teachers which would allow both entry and minimal disturbance.

This relationship was, at least initially, difficult to negotiate, particularly when my memberships combined that of researcher and director of studies. This combination meant

⁵⁶ These social-theoretical resources are explained in more detail below.

that a researcher who was simultaneously a director of studies would be investigating problems teachers perceived in their professional practices. As explained above, teachers tend to present frontstage behaviour to directors of studies, as members of management. The director of studies role, therefore, had the potential to work against the aims of the research.

Relevant here is Sarangi and Roberts's (op. cit., p. 41) distinction between conducting studies "on" and "with" participants, a distinction which draws on Cameron et al.'s (op. cit., p. 15) notion of the "advocacy position" in research, which "is characterised by a commitment on the part of the researcher not just to do research *on* subjects but *on and for* subjects". Sarangi and Roberts (loc. cit.) emphasise that, in the discursive complexities of workplace relations, working *with* participants is unlikely to be a simple matter. This complexity was evidenced in the practices required for the projects I conducted, in which it was not possible to separate the roles of (co)researcher, teacher and director of studies – a complex of roles which exemplifies Cameron's (1992, p. 103) observation that "Our social identities (when we are researching, or doing anything else), are not unitary or simple". The only option "from among the available categories" (Roberts & Sarangi, op. cit., p. 475) was to seek a relationship of trust with those individuals who collaborated in the projects, to develop this relationship through the projects themselves, and thereby to become known a researcher with an interest in alleviating teachers' concerns.

The process, then, of "joint problematisation" (Roberts & Sarangi, op. cit., p. 473) and negotiation of relationships combined with my multiple memberships to shape the resources I brought to this study. The next section explains how these resources have shaped the study.

5.4 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE STUDY

5.41 Questions of motivational and practical relevance

In explaining how my "members' resources" (Fairclough, 1989, p. 24) have shaped this study, and been shaped by the themes of contemporary society identified in Chapter 3, two questions need to be addressed first. These concern how I qualify as a member of the

group studied, and how the study aims to contribute to addressing teachers' workplace problems. The first question focuses on motivational relevancies, the second practical relevance. Together, the answers to these questions bear on four further questions: namely,

- how the study is communicated to participants;
- whose perspective(s) the study includes;
- how data were identified as relevant; and
- what social-theoretical resources I bring to the study.

These questions are the focus of the remaining sections of this chapter.

5.411 Qualifying as a participant

As explained above, alignment with the participants' perspective depends on the degree of "access to mutuality" (Sarangi & Candlin, op. cit., p. 383) between the researcher and participants. In terms of the researcher's "members' resources" (Fairclough, loc. cit.), the need for this "mutuality of perspective and... and membership" (Sarangi & Candlin, op. cit., p. 382) means that having members' resources in common with participants is a precondition of being able to reflect the participants' perspective in the study, and, therefore, to investigate their workplace problems as they understand them.

As explained above, multiple memberships inform the resources I bring to the study. As a researcher, I am not a member of the group studied. However, because of memberships I have held within the ELICOS sector, I draw on their members' resources as an interpretive resource within the study. As a teacher, my perspective broadly aligns with that of the participants and is reflected in the data gathered in the critical incident diaries. However, any such alignment must be qualified by the resources I have accrued through other memberships, and the process of "joint problematisation" (Roberts &

Sarangi, loc. cit.) which motivated this study, resources which transform the participants' perspective. It is this complex of alignment with and transformation of the participants' perspective which shapes the practical relevance of the study: that is, how it seeks to address participants' workplace problems.

5.412 Addressing workplace problems

Consistent with the process of "joint problematisation" (ibid.) described above, the aim of this study is to raise awareness in the ELICOS sector of how and why commercialisation affects teachers' practices. To achieve this aim, the findings of the study will be disseminated through the ELICOS sector using channels similar to those employed for the previous projects. This process has started with a workshop conducted with teachers and managers, focusing on the possibility of reducing tensions between how teaching and learning are constructed within the discourses of marketing and pedagogy⁵⁷ (Crichton, 2002).

There remains the question of how an increased awareness of discursive practices can benefit participants⁵⁸. Bourdieu (1999, p. 3) cautions against optimism here, arguing that such awareness may only lead to what he calls the "*tragic consequences* of making incompatible points of view confront each other, where no concession or compromise is possible because each one of them is equally founded in social reason". Instead of anticipating that such research will effect social change, Bourdieu argues that it is more realistic to think of it as improving peoples' lives by helping them to understand the social origins of their problems. Echoing Wright Mills's (1970, p. 12) notion of the "sociological imagination", Bourdieu (op. cit.) explains that

⁵⁷ Appendix 12

⁵⁸ This question is taken up in Chapter 9. Conclusions, evaluation and implications.

Producing awareness of these mechanisms that make life painful, even unlivable, does not neutralize them, bringing contradictions to light does not resolve them. But, as skeptical as one may be about the social efficacy of the sociological message, one has to acknowledge the effect it can have in allowing those who suffer to find out that their suffering can be imputed to social causes and thus to feel exonerated; and in making generally known the social origin, collectively hidden, of unhappiness in all its forms, including the most intimate most secret.... Contrary to appearances, this observation is not cause for despair; what the social world has done, it can, armed with this knowledge, undo. In any event, what is certain is that nothing is less innocent than noninterference (p. 629).

This weighing of the benefits of social awareness against the costs of not trying to bring about change resonates with my experience of working in ELICOS and of using discourse analysis to investigate and raise awareness of teachers' concerns. This study, then, aims to raise awareness of the discursive practices in which teachers concerns arise, and is motivated by perceptions of a need for social change, but reflects Bourdieu's caution on the benefits likely to ensue for participants.

5.413 Communicating with participants

The challenge in disseminating information about the study is to resolve the problem of "incommensurable discourses" (Sarangi & Roberts, op. cit., p. 42). This is a problem of managing two related challenges. There is the need to adapt the discourse in which the study is designed and implemented to allow information about it to circulate within the discourses of participant groups. This requirement raises the further need to resolve the tension which Sarangi and Roberts (ibid., p. 43) identify between maintaining "continuing access to the institution and displaying relevance to its members on the one hand, and" the

researcher's "responsibility to the research community, the standards it demands and the inevitable scrutiny that any publications arising from the research will be subject to".

Within the backstage/frontstage framework developed in this chapter this is a problem of communicating across the regions associated with the members' resources of the researcher and participants. The problem is that the frontstage discourse of research – the "academically sanctioned genres of interpretation" (Sarangi & Candlin, *op. cit.*, p. 382) – draws on members' resources which differ from those employed by participants in carrying out and reflecting on their professional practices.

In the current study, though this issue could have arisen when explaining the value of the study and of participating in it to managers and teachers, as explained in Chapter 4, the particular memberships I brought to the study facilitated communication with the various groups who participated. The problem was further reduced by the process of "joint problematisation" (Roberts & Sarangi, *loc. cit.*) in which I had worked with and presented findings to different groups within the sector. However, the more general problem of how to communicate to participants about the study as a whole, in terms which draw on their member's resources, remains. Indeed, the argument of this chapter, that my perspective as the analyst has been shaped by a combination of memberships which I have experienced within competing discourses, would tend to support the case for a degree of irreducible 'incommensurability' – not just between the discourses of participants and researcher, but between the discourses of ELICOS colleges themselves.

5.414 Including multiple perspectives

As described above, each new membership opened for me a new perspective on the concerns expressed by teachers. While teachers tended to agree on the situations in which their ability to carry out their professional roles was compromised, they did not agree among themselves or with managers about the explanation of these problems. For their

part, managers tended to interpret the significance of the problems teachers reported in commercial rather than pedagogic terms. From the perspective of NEAS panelists, these tensions between commercial and pedagogic points of view are common in the sector, and are significant in so far as they affected a college's ability to meet the "Standards and criteria" (NEAS, loc. cit.). These differences within and between groups raised the need to include multiple perspectives in the study: those reflecting pedagogic, commercial, teacher training and regulatory interests. In going beyond the teachers' perspective in this way, the approach sought to recognise the perspectives of the other 'actors', in the sense explained in Chapter 4, which, my experience suggested, contribute to the discourses implicated in shaping teachers' practices.

The inclusion of multiple perspectives in turn problematised the notion of 'participants' workplace problems' by raising the question of who the participants are, and how they understand these workplace problems. Just as I bring multiple members' resources to the study, so there are – in the broader context of ELICOS - multiple participants. While the study focuses on teachers' workplace problems, there is, then, a need to recognise that the 'professional practices' of these other groups shape and are shaped by the commercialisation of teachers' practices, and of education more generally. These other groups therefore fall – at least potentially - within the practical relevance of the study.

5.415 Identifying relevant data

The different data sets selected for the study reflected the different members' resources of the groups implicated in teachers' practices – the data draw on both the backstage life of the colleges (diaries) and the frontstage presentation of the colleges and related institutions (brochures, the EA News, NEAS documents, and teacher training materials). This emphasis on backstage and frontstage reflected my own experience of their significance in

ELICOS, leading me to Sarangi and Roberts's (op. cit.) view that it is not possible to simply 'read off' the nature of the institution from its frontstage practices. Rather, they recommend that research move between frontstage and backstage in order to "tease out interconnections between professional and institutional discourse" (ibid., p. 19). Only by identifying "the different interaction orders of front and back stage and the relationship between them" is it possible "to understand in a more holistic way what is meant by institutional order" (ibid., p. 20), a point exemplified in this study by the investigation of interdiscursive relations between the 'personal' discourses of the teachers who participated in the diary study and the "institutional" (p. 15) discourse instantiated by the promotional brochures.

This focus on front and backstage regions narrows the search for data but does not address the question of what social resources and practices to reflect in the data. As explained in Chapter 3, the perspectives of the ontology (Figure 4) are not tied to particular types of data, and could include any deemed by the analyst to be relevant to the purposes of a study. The data gathered for this study were samples of written texts, rather than a combination of these and spoken texts, or interactional resources more generally.

This exclusive focus on written texts might appear to risk an unbalanced sampling of the social resources deployed in front and backstage regions. The decision to focus on written texts is, however, an example of what Layder (op. cit., p. 90) has termed "selective focusing". This refers to decisions taken on what data to include and exclude from a study. Layder (ibid.) explains that these decisions "should be deliberate and selective and not simply result from a tendency to see one aspect as more important than another". Rather, whatever the reasons for restricting the data focus, "selective focusing must only take place against a background of a wider appreciation of both macro and micro dimensions" (ibid., p. 124). As explained in Chapter 4, then, in identifying data relevant to this study, the aim was to select those which would best reflect the perspectives of micro and macro

actors represented in the study, a selection which was in turn shaped by the members' resources I had accrued through working and researching in ELICOS.

However, notwithstanding this rationale for "selective focusing" (Layder, *ibid.*, p. 90), there remains the question of how the analysis of written texts alone could provide a convincing account of how commercialisation affects teachers' professional practices. The answer to this question draws on the relationship between ELICOS institutions and practices, the written texts selected as data, and the resources I bring to the study.

In this relationship, my experiences in ELICOS had led me to focus on marketing brochures as a social resource which exemplifies the construction of teaching to serve commercial interests. Having been involved in designing, writing, and using these texts to recruit students, and, I had come to see them as exemplifying the resources drawn on in those frontstage practices whose *raison d'être* was to sell courses – and the college – to prospective students. In doing so, they provide a focal point for understanding commercialisation, to which my own ELICOS and research resources could be applied in tracing how teaching and learning are constructed to meet commercial interests.

A metaphor to describe this interplay of front- and back-stages, texts and analyst's resources is Hockney's (2001) explanation of the 'camera obscura'. This is an optical device incorporating a convex mirror which can project a sample of the world, a scene in all its three dimensional complexity, onto a flat surface as a two dimensional image. Hockney (*ibid.*) has argued that the development of such a device was crucial in the history of art because it enabled painters to capture the appearance and detail of the three dimensional perspective by painting over the projected image. In order to produce a convincing image, the painter using the camera obscura would not simply 'trace' the image but draw on numerous resources in taking decisions which would affect how the picture interpreted the original scene. In doing so, the painter would continually refer back

to the scene in order to determine the significance of projected details, the efficacy of different techniques, and to validate the picture as an accurate rendition.

Applied to the analysis of the data in this study, the camera obscura metaphor highlights the interplay of three elements: the ELICOS institutions, the participants and practices which are the focus of the study; the texts through which these are projected; and the members' resources I bring to the analysis of these texts, and which inform my decision making in the study as a whole. It is through this interplay that the study aims to provide an accurate account of how commercialisation affects teachers' professional practices.

5.416 Selecting social-theoretical resources

As explained in Chapters 2 and 3, no particular position on social theory is assumed within the theoretical framework, and the resources which are selected to operationalise the perspectives are held lightly, subject to revision in the light of incoming data and analysis. Though, then, the social/institutional perspective provides the link between the study and the key themes of contemporary society, the social-theoretical resources on which it draws evolve in response to the analyst's emergent understanding of the discursive practices which form the focus of the study. The framework thus aims to allow the integration of "theoretical development and practical relevance" (Sarangi & Roberts, *op. cit.*, p. 43).

However, notwithstanding this openness to social theory, the question remains as to what social-theoretical resources I bring to this study. These are the resources which I am *predisposed* to draw on in explaining the relationships revealed in the analysis of the data sets, and which operationalise the explanation of the key social themes instantiated in my experiences of tensions in ELICOS.

As the narratives attest, these tensions characterised the relations between teachers and managers, and were apparent in struggles both within and between members of the two groups. These struggles occurred in response to a range of management policies which aimed to change teachers' practices, and arose because teachers perceived these changes to compromise their ability to teach according to their professional standards. The struggles were not only carried out in the language used between the groups but appeared to shape how that language was produced and understood. Through my work for NEAS, I was confident that these local struggles were linked to larger scale social changes which shaped – and were shaped by – the actions of the ELICOS sector as a whole. These included the federal government's promotion of education as a potentially lucrative export commodity, a growing worldwide demand for English among people with the resources to purchase and study courses overseas, and wider social and economic changes associated with globalisation.

In seeking an explanation for these institutional tensions, and the broader social themes they evidence, I have drawn on the work of Sarangi and Roberts (ibid., pp. 1ff) on workplaces as "sites of social struggle", combining their account of workplace struggle with Fairclough's (1996, pp. 1ff) notion of the "technologization of discourse", and Bourdieu's 'theory of practice' (1991; Bourdieu & Wacquant, op. cit.). Together, these social-theoretical resources provide a way of linking the tensions teachers experience in maintaining their professional practices to the themes of contemporary society identified in Chapter 3 and reflected in the ELICOS narratives, above. The remaining sections of this chapter explain these resources and the rationale for adopting them.

5.4161 The ELICOS workplace as a site of struggle

In explaining workplaces as "sites of social struggle", Sarangi and Roberts (loc. cit.) provide a framework for explaining how divisions within institutions give rise to and

perpetuate tensions between these institutions and professionals who work in them. Elaborating their proposal – explained above – that Goffman's (Op. Cit.) frontstage/backstage distinction can be used to investigate institutions, Sarangi and Roberts (op. cit., p. 9ff) argue that workplace tensions increasingly occur between "professionals" and "institutions" and are realised in struggles between "professional" and "institutional" discourses. They make clear that these distinctions are not easy to make, particularly as the relations between institutions and professionals are increasingly unstable – due in part to the very struggles which these distinctions aim to explain. However they argue that, however problematic, the distinctions are essential for understanding the complexities of workplace tensions.

"Professionals", then, are those individuals, like teachers, who bring to their work a body of knowledge and standards of practice which they apply as "in a vocation in which professed knowledge is used" (ibid., p. 14). An "institution", on the other hand, is not an individual social agent, but "an orderly arrangement of things which involves regulations, efficient systems and very different kinds of knowledge from that of professionals" (ibid.). These differences are reflected in the way professional and bureaucratic members of institutions work as "institutional representatives" (ibid.). Whereas professionals are commonly viewed as providing "*professional advice*" (ibid.) to lay people, freely drawing on their professional knowledge and applying this in accordance with their professional standards, those – such as bureaucrats – whose work interest lies in running the institution will emphasise "objectivity and rule/procedure orientation of systems" (ibid.).

These distinctions fitted well with my perceptions of the different interests of teachers and managers in ELICOS. Moreover, Sarangi and Roberts's (ibid., p. 15) further distinction between "institutional and professional discourses" also reflected my

experience of how the conflicting interests of teachers and managers shape – and are reinforced by – the language in which struggles are conducted.

Sarangi and Roberts (*ibid.*) argue that professional discourse is a form of “habitus” (Bourdieu, 1994b, pp. 95ff), meaning that in order to become a member of a profession, an individual must acquire the disposition to articulate the discourses which characterise the profession (Sarangi & Roberts, *loc. cit.*). These are ways of both saying and doing (Hak, *op. cit.*) which are “not only durable, but also legitimate and authoritative” (Sarangi & Roberts, *loc. cit.*) for members and the lay people to whom professionals provide services. Institutional discourses, on the other hand, are associated not with individual members but characterise the practices of the institution. These discourses are “characterised by rational, legitimate accounting practices which are authoritatively backed up by a set of rules and regulations governing an institution” (*ibid.*).

The notion of institutional discourses has strong affinities with the ELICOS ‘policies’ identified above: specifically, both are revealed in the ways professional members and lay people - explicitly or tacitly - engage in institutional practices; they are associated with power and institutional authority; and, because of the different interests of professionals and institutions, they have the potential to conflict with and dominate professional discourses (*ibid.*, p. 16). Sarangi and Roberts (*ibid.*, p. 8) argue that this potential for conflict has been realised in a “redistribution of roles, skills and knowledge in the professions”, changes which exemplify the conditions and practices which are coming to dominate workplaces as economic globalisation increases, in what Gee, Hull and Lankshear (1996, pp. xiiff) have termed “the new work order”.

Again reflective of my ELICOS experience, Sarangi and Roberts (*op. cit.*, p. 10) describe these changes as constituting “a form of growing deprofessionalisation” in which “no one is indispensable for the running of an organisation, as individualised speciality and expertise is undermined”. This deprofessionalisation includes both bottom up and top

down ways of acting on professional discourse. The former includes the “casting of professional concerns in terms of what is allowable within the institution” (ibid., p. 18), a process which describes well ELICOS teachers’ perceptions that their concerns were recast by managers to reflect the college’s commercial interests. The latter involves attempts to change professional knowledge and practices to bring them into line with institutional requirements. Taking education as an example, Sarangi and Roberts (ibid.) argue that such changes have implications for “how professional knowledge is packaged and delivered”, and, redefines “the professional identity of educators in relation to the job market and the consumers of education”, changes to professional knowledge, practices and identities which are exemplified by the policies described in my ELICOS narratives.

For an explanation of *how* these changes occur, I have drawn on Fairclough’s (1992, p. 215ff. 1996, pp. 1ff) account of “technologization”, the focus of the next section.

5.4162 The technologisation of ELICOS discourse

“Technologization” (ibid.) is one of a cluster of terms Fairclough has developed to explain how discursive practices are changing in contemporary society, and how these changes are related to larger scale social transformations. The other terms in the framework include “marketization” (1992, p. 99) and “commodification” (p. 207). These terms form a framework which fits well both with Sarangi and Roberts’s (op. cit.) account of institutional struggle and my experience of tensions in ELICOS institutions. The value of “technologization” for explaining my ELICOS experience is that it provides links between commercially-driven changes in discursive practices, tensions between professional and institutional discourses, and larger scale processes of commercialisation, consumer culture, neo-liberalism and globalisation. “Technologization”, then, refers to the processes by which discursive practices are increasingly being (re)designed to serve institutional interests by experts whose work draws on knowledge of discourse itself (Fairclough, op.

cit., p. 216). In serving these interests, technologised discourses therefore illustrate Sarangi and Roberts's (op. cit., p. 15ff) notion of "institutional discourse", and the struggles they describe between institutional and professional discourses (ibid.) are exemplified by those which result from the changes wrought by technologisation.

Driving such changes is economic pressure on institutions to compete for market share, which creates an imperative to manage them according to commercial principles, and, in doing so, to subsume all other interests to commercial imperatives. It is these imperatives which Fairclough (op. cit.) explains in terms of "commodification" (p. 207) and "marketization" (p. 99). The former refers to the pressure to create and promote new products out of areas of life previously not viewed as "goods for sale" but which "come nevertheless to be organized and conceptualized in terms of commodity production, distribution and consumption" (ibid. p. 207). "Marketisation", on the other hand, refers to the spread, exemplified in neo-liberal economic policy, "of market models to new spheres" (ibid., p. 99), which, magnified to a global scale, has brought the pressures associated with globalisation to local social and economic life (Bourdieu, 1998a).

According to Fairclough (1993, p. 141), the shifts towards marketisation and commodification are related to the growth of "promotional" and "consumer culture". While he does not develop a distinction between these, I have done so to explain my experience of the relationship between producers and consumers in ELICOS. In doing so, I have drawn on Abercrombie's (op. cit.) account of consumer power and the rise of the "enterprising consumer" (ibid., p. 178), in which he has explained consumer culture as arising from shifts in power relations from producers of goods and services to consumers who are faced with increasing choices from producers competing for their attention⁵⁹. In

⁵⁹ Sulkenen (1997, p. 1) explains that the growing social significance of consumption has reshaped sociology itself, in which "it seems that production has lost its central role in organising social theory", and, more generally, has transformed "Public debate on social policy and the role of the state in a market

this account, he (ibid., p.72) has argued that the move from “producer culture” to consumer culture “means that the capacity to determine the form, nature and quality of goods and services has moved from the former to the latter. This represents a profound change in social relationships”. This change involves a reduction in the authority of producers over consumers and an increase in that of consumers over producers. As well as being consistent with the way teachers perceived students to be treated by management in ELICOS colleges, Abercrombie’s account suggests an explanation for my experience of the growing authority of those involved in marketing ELICOS courses over those who teach them. This trend exemplifies Abercrombie’s (ibid., p.177) observation that, with the decline in producer culture, and the authority over consumers it implies, companies increasingly focus their resources on efforts to attract customers, raising the importance of those employed in areas such as marketing, and reducing the authority of others.

The relationship between consumers and producers which results from this shift in authority to consumers is characterised, Abercrombie (ibid., p.180-1) argues, by “conflict and struggle”. It is this relationship of struggle which provides a link to Fairclough’s (op. cit., p. 141) “promotional culture”, which I interpret here as describing the producer side of the struggle, in which products are increasingly promoted through discourses which have hitherto not had a promotional function (ibid.). This is a process, Fairclough (ibid.) argues, which is characterised by the colonisation of “professional and public service orders of discourse on a massive scale” coupled with the “instrumentalization of discursive practices, involving the subordination of meaning to, and the manipulation of meaning for, instrumental effect”. These changes are exemplified by the ways in which, as

society”. These changes reflect the fact that “compared to production, which implies a plan, a deferral of gratification, integrated order and coordinated action, the logic of consumption collates action and its purpose in the here and now” (ibid., p. 2). In the current study, it is this “logic” which is evidenced in the construction of learning as a risk and obligation free ‘consumption process’ in a ‘community of consumption’, explained in Chapter 7. The social resource perspective.

evidenced in the narratives above and explained below, “technologization” (Fairclough, 1996, p. 73) has been employed to re-engineer teachers’ practices to serve the needs of the market.

Fairclough (ibid.) identifies five ways in which technologisation is evidenced. These are

1. the emergence of expert ‘discourse technologists’
2. a shift in the ‘policing’ of discourse practices
3. the design and projection of context-free discourse techniques
4. strategically motivated simulation in discourse
5. the pressure towards standardisation of discourse practices.

Though these characteristics are not equally represented in the narratives above, there are sufficient affinities to infer that technologisation describes the direction of the institutional changes I experienced in ELICOS. The discourse technologist, as “expert as well as outsider” (ibid.) has not clearly emerged in my experience of ELICOS. However, the policies described above signal an increasing awareness in ELICOS of how documentation can be designed to monitor and evaluate teachers’ compliance with institutionally standardised practices, reflecting the second and fifth characteristics. In the narratives, these include the transformation of syllabus documentation into checklists, requirements on teachers to create and record the use of ‘reusable’ lessons, and the moves to develop a ‘house style’, including the ambivalent combination of staff development and appraisal in practices associated with observations of teachers.

Reflecting the third characteristic, the discourse technologies employed in the examples are to a large extent “context-free”, applicable across a wide range of both teaching and non-teaching practices. In addition to this push towards context-free,

standardised practices, there is, as reported in the narrative 'The teacher' above, a pressure to be 'nice' to students. This pressure resembles closely the fourth characteristic, "strategically motivated simulation", which, Fairclough (ibid., p. 74) argues, commonly appears as fabricated "friendliness" involving "meanings and forms which imply and implicitly claim social relations and identities associated more with domains of private life than with institutional events". As reported in the same narrative, teachers felt under pressure to simulate this friendliness in numerous practices: some, such as assessing students' work, were part of their professional practices; other practices were introduced to promote this simulation, including socialising with students.

The conflict teachers experienced in maintaining their professional, frontstage identities in these situations has been identified by Fairclough (ibid., p. 77) as characteristic of the deprofessionalising effects of technologisation. Drawing on Billig et al. (1988), Fairclough (ibid., p. 78) describes these conflicts as "'dilemmas'" which are an effect of trying to operate simultaneously in accordance with divergent constructions of social relationships and social identities". The notion of "'dilemmas'" echoes Fairclough's (1992, p. 90) notion of "contradictory interpellation", and both have the potential to create what he has termed "moments of crisis" (p. 230), points of intra- or interpersonal conflict manifested when, in the current study, teachers struggle to reconcile the commercial and pedagogic interests which compete to shape their workplace identities.

Fairclough (1992, 1993, 1996) has identified promotional materials as texts in which the contradictory identities associated with technologisation and the colonisation are revealed. His analyses of university advertisements (ibid.) highlight the struggle between the "traditional professional-(or 'producer'-) oriented relationship between university and applicant.... and the 'consumer-oriented' relationship" (1996, p. 78). In promotional materials, the former orientation "would focally give information about courses and conditions of entry, on the latter model it would 'sell' courses" (ibid.). It is the

struggle between these orientations which creates the heterogeneous discourse of the university advertisements (ibid.). Fairclough's emphasis on how these tensions are revealed in the language of promotional materials drew my attention to ELICOS brochures, which I had previously written and distributed but within a discourse which was, at that time, taken-for-granted in its presentation of "persons, organisations and commodities, and the construction of identities" (Fairclough, 1992, p. 210). This awareness in turn led, in the current study, to the investigation of the "discourse of advertising" (Cook, loc. cit.) instantiated in the brochures to explain how commercialisation affects ELICOS teachers' practices.

In summary, then, the affinities between Fairclough's (1996) account of technologisation and my experience in ELICOS suggests that technologisation is relevant to the explanation of the struggles I have perceived. Moreover, technologisation also provides links between these struggles and the commercial interests which shape institutional policy in ELICOS colleges. Sarangi and Roberts's (op. cit.) account of institutions, struggle between producers and consumers, and thence to the production and reproduction of contemporary society - the focus of the next section.

5.4163 Social production and reproduction.

The question remains of how to link Sarangi and Roberts's (ibid.) account of institutions and Fairclough's (op. cit.) account of "technologization" to the production and reproduction of the themes of contemporary society, identified in Chapter 3. As explained in Chapter 3, this question draws general social theory into the study – again as a resource which is lightly held, open to revision in response to emergent findings, and explained in terms of motivational relevancies and the practical relevance of the study.

The social-theoretical resources I employ here draw mainly on Bourdieu's 'theory of practice' (1991: Bourdieu & Wacquant, op. cit.). Notwithstanding the need, outlined in

186

Chapter 3, for more developed accounts of institutions and power, the theory of practice provides the elements of a framework with which to explain how ELICOS colleges as sites of social struggle involving the technologisation of discourse shape and are shaped by the neoliberal and globalising tendencies of contemporary society. To meet the need, explained in Chapter 3, for an account of power to supplement Bourdieu's theory of practice, I have drawn on Gramsci's distinction between "coercion" and "consent" (1975/1988a, pp. 306-307).

While acknowledging Foucault's influence – through Fairclough – on the account of discursive practices developed in this study, I have not drawn further on his theory of discourse. This decision is based on the doubts, explained in Chapter 3, which have been raised about his account of institutions, the subject and power, and the subsequent challenge of operationalising these in research (Dodd, *op. cit.*, p. 102-103). Similarly, while drawing on Giddens's observations on contemporary society, I have not drawn on structuration theory itself because of the problems associated with its explanation of institutions, and the difficulties of operationalising it in research (Archer, *op. cit.*; Hekman, *op. cit.*; Layder, 1994, pp. 140ff) Likewise, the difficulty of operationalising Habermas's notions of "system", "lifeworld", and the "ideal speech situation", (Braaten, *op. cit.*, p. 91; Dodd, *op. cit.*, p. 122; Layder, *op. cit.*, p. 203) have led me away from employing these in the study.

The starting point for linking Sarangi and Roberts's (*op. cit.*) account of institutions, my ELICOS experience, the needs of the current study and Bourdieu's theory of practice was their observation that professional discourses are a form of "habitus" (Bourdieu, 1994b, pp. 95ff). Following this observation, and the explanation of the theory of practice in Chapter 3, the resources deployed by ELICOS teachers and managers in their professional practices can be seen as different forms of habitus, the former synchronised with the pedagogic field, the latter with the economic field. The capital each

group holds is valued within its own field, and, within their respective fields, teachers and managers represent influential “classes” (Bourdieu, 1994a, p. 113). My experience of ELICOS suggests that the economic field is incorporating that of English language teaching, thereby devaluing it because, within the economic field, English language teaching is construed, not as “social capital” (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 248), in the form of professional competence, but as a product, with a value determined by its capacity to generate “economic capital” (p. 243) by competing in the global market for education.

Interpreted in the light of Bourdieu’s theory of practice, then, the social capital associated with English language teaching is being reinterpreted by commercial classes exercising “symbolic power” (Bourdieu, 1991, p. 51), exemplified through the use of new workplace conditions and practices, such as casual contracts and new methods of monitoring/evaluation to control and standardise teachers’ professional practices. Relevant here is Fairclough’s (1993, pp. 140-141) account of “technologization”, which, he argues, exemplifies Giddens’s (1994b) “institutional reflexivity”. As explained above, this form of reflexivity involves continually evaluating and changing institutional practices to maximise their potential to meet institutional goals, thereby undermining the security of established forms of knowledge, and contributing to the insecurity and social instability which Giddens (1991, pp. 3ff) has termed “risk culture”. Broadly consistent with Fairclough and Giddens’s analysis of contemporary society, though with a different theoretical orientation, Bourdieu (1998a, pp. 94ff) argues that such changes in social conditions are the result of a shift from neoliberal economics as one economic theory among others to being a wide-scale political agenda, and the dominant discourse in the market.

As such, Bourdieu (ibid.) argues, neoliberalism is no longer just a theoretical stance on the operation of economic systems, but is resetting the value of social and cultural capital in non-economic fields on a global scale. This process has served the

188

interests of “classes” (1994a, p. 113) which stand to gain most from the economic and social environment created by neoliberalism. This process has driven and been driven by the “unification of the market” (Bourdieu, 1991, p. 50), the process by which the social, cultural and economic capital associated with neoliberalism become the most highly valued in fields beyond its economic origins, resetting the values for existing forms of capital in those fields, and thereby expanding the dominance of neoliberalism in the market as a whole.

This notion of the “unification of the market” provides a link within Bourdieu’s social theory between neoliberalism and “globalisation” (1998a, pp. 34ff). Thus, though there are different views on what ‘globalisation’ involves (Brahm, 2002), there is a consensus in the literature which is consistent with Bourdieu’s (loc. cit.) account: namely, that ‘globalisation’ involves the increasing national and international influence of free-market values and practices in communities and areas of social life which have previously not been subject to them (Brahm, op. cit.).

As well as suggesting how the habitus of teachers and managers is linked to the production and reproduction of contemporary society, Bourdieu’s theory of practice suggests a way of explaining the influence of other groups on ELICOS institutions. Students, for example, form another class, that of “enterprising consumers” (Abercrombie, op. cit., p. 78); with their economic capital and interest in English as a way to enhance their “life chances” (Postone et al., loc. cit.), they are valued and competed for within the economic field, and have increasing authority over teachers’ practices as these become incorporated into the marketing chain. As explained in Chapter 4, other groups which to varying degrees shape and are shaped by ELICOS institutions – and whose perspectives are included in this study – are the ELICOS Association (EA), the regulatory authority (NEAS), and the dominant teacher training organisation (UCLES). According to the

theory of practice, these groups represent further classes of interest which influence the different habitus and fields which characterise ELICOS.

There remains the question of how the actions of teachers, managers, students and others shape teachers' practices: in Bourdieu's (1991, pp. 50ff; Postone et al., op. cit., pp. 4ff) terms, this is a question of how the valuations of dominant classes are implemented in a way which both produces and reproduces these valuations through the habitus of subordinated classes. Here, Gramsci's (loc. cit.) distinction between "consent" and "coercion" provides a framework with which to explain how the colonisation of the discourses associated with teachers' practices are produced and reproduced through the habitus of the different groups involved in ELICOS.

Boggs (1976, pp. 36ff) explains that Gramsci made this distinction as part of his theory of 'hegemony', which involves a critique of Marx's deterministic account of social change and control. Within the theory of hegemony, social domination and resistance to it are explicable only if social control is construed as involving an "equilibrium" (ibid., pp. 38-40) between "coercion" which is the use of force through, for example, military or judicial means, and "consensus", which, Kendie (2000) has explained, involves the incorporation of the dominant class's values into those of other classes through "socializing mechanisms" (p. 1) such as schools. In his explanation of the distinction, Boggs (op. cit., p. 40) stresses both that the equilibrium between these forms of power is unstable and shifting, in response to changing social conditions and class interests, and that there are "many ways to induce the oppressed to accept or 'consent' to their exploitation". Among these, Gramsci (1975/1998a, p. 307) identifies as particularly significant the "prestige (and consequent confidence) which the dominant group enjoys because of its position and function in the world of production".

Consent, then, may be brought about by the acquiescence engendered by its prestige, but its effectiveness ultimately depends on coercive power "which 'legally'

enforces discipline on those groups who do not ‘consent’ either actively or passively” (ibid.). Notwithstanding this dependence on coercion, consent is required by the dominant group because it ensures the “habitual acquiescence to its authority” by subordinated classes (Kendie, loc. cit.). For the dominant group, then, a combination of coercion and consent provides the most effective means of social control, in which a population subordinates itself through consent, and coercion can be reserved for “moments of crisis of command and direction when spontaneous consent has failed” (Gramsci, loc. cit.).

“Consent” in this sense, then, fits well with Bourdieu’s account of how a class, understood in his (1994a, p. 113) sense, which is dominant in the market can consolidate its position by raising the value of its capital, thereby inducing other classes to devalue their own capital by seeking that of the dominant class, and thus subordinating themselves in an effort to improve their “life chances” (Postone et al., op. cit., p. 5).

Finally, the value of combining Bourdieu’s theory of practice with Gramsci’s (loc. cit.) consent/coercion distinction goes beyond providing social-theoretical resources to explain how ELICOS practices shape and are shaped by macro processes and structures. This combination also offers a framework with which to locate the analyst’s perspective, according to which the professional and social-theoretical resources I bring to this study have themselves, as the habitus of the analyst (Brubaker, 1993, p. 213), shaped and been shaped by relations of “coercion” and “consent” in ELICOS.

5.5 SUMMARY OF THE ANALYST’S PERSPECTIVE

The analyst’s perspective is operationalised using the notions of “motivational relevance” (Sarangi & Candlin, op. cit., pp. 368ff) and “practical relevance” (Sarangi & Roberts, op. cit., p. 43). These are reflexively related because the analyst’s “members’ resources” (Fairclough, 1989, p. 24) shape and are shaped by how the analyst engages with the workplace problems of participants. The resources associated with different memberships

are explained using the notion of front- and back-stage “competencies” (Sarangi & Candlin, *op. cit.*, p. 354).

My resources as the analyst derive from memberships I share with teachers, managers, and regulators in the ELICOS sector; and these resources have themselves been shaped by the process of “joint problematisation” (Roberts & Sarangi, *loc. cit.*) in which I have engaged as a researcher, and by the themes which characterise contemporary society. This process raised my awareness of the tensions between the discourses of teachers, managers and other groups implicated in shaping teachers’ practices. Furthermore, it highlighted the need to develop a theoretical framework with which to investigate and address teachers’ workplace concerns as they understand them, from both micro and macro perspectives, while including – but not subordinating – the perspectives of other relevant groups. My resources have shaped the operationalisation of this framework, including the focus on the “frontstage” and “backstage” (Goffman, 1959, pp. 10ff) regions of ELICOS colleges, the methods of communicating with participants and addressing workplace problems, the identification and analysis of relevant data, and the selection of linguistic and social-theoretical resources.

Against this background, the next chapter presents the participants’ perspective, as revealed in the analysis of the critical incident diaries kept by participating teachers.