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The discursive construction of literacy in a disadvantaged school

Volume 2

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Chapter 7 Making time for literacy lessons: On task and socially responsible

People know what they do; they frequently know why they do what they do; but what they don't know is what they do does. (Foucault, quoted in Dreyfus & Rabinow 1983, p.187)

I can think of no more important project for teachers and researchers than studying classroom discursive practices in relation to the part they play in alienating students from literacy by failing to articulate their students' representations of themselves as subjects different from their teachers. (Brodkey 1992, p.315)

What needs to be realized is that, in every case students are caught up in a particular relationship with a teacher, one which is always intimate, interactive, transactive and negotiated, and characterized by a certain form of the expression of pedagogic authority. (Green forthcoming)

7.1 Introduction

Literacy was a high priority at Banfield. The entire two hour morning period was usually devoted to language and literacy lessons. What did it mean to make literacy central at this school at this time? What were literacy lessons like? My initial question concerns the literate culture constructed at this disadvantaged school. What did students read and write? What did teachers make important? What came to count as literacy? Previous research I had conducted with colleagues presented us with two worrying findings. In one study teachers in disadvantaged schools suggested that they found it difficult to make enough time for literacy (Comber et al. 1991). In the other study teachers estimated that approximately a third of students failed to meet their teachers' expectations for literacy achievement (Badger et al 1993). These surveys made me curious to witness first hand the complexity of teachers' and students' work in literacy lessons.

In this chapter and the next I consider the literacy lessons in which I participated over an eighteen month period in four different classrooms. From all that I observed and audio taped, it is difficult to select lessons which might be considered typical. I do not wish to suggest uniformity where none existed. I see literacy lessons as discursive sites and as such as sites of contestation. My task then is to portray the complexity of teachers' and students' work in literacy lessons and the struggles to fulfil multiple and at times contradictory purposes that were often at stake. Here I explore the discourses and

practices which produced a multiplicity of literacies and student subjectivities in literacy lessons.

I examine the classroom discourse through which school literacies are constructed. Recent discourse analyses of literacy pedagogy focusses on the business of literacy, often singling out common school 'literacy events'. For example researchers have explored shared book experience (Baker & Freebody 1989; Baker 1991; Luke 1992), joint construction of narrative (Luke 1993c), hearing reading (Spreadbury 1992), morning talks (Christie 1990; Kamler et al. 1994), and sharing times (Michaels 1981; Dyson 1993). However in this study my intention is to consider literacy lessons as part of everyday school life, as something teachers do along with other institutional practices. Rather than editing out all that goes on around the literacy curriculum in order to better focus on 'literacy', I deliberately put the literacy lesson in the context of schools as workplaces, and the classroom as a 'work environment' as one of the teachers put it. My decision manifests itself in the use of extended transcripts which situate literacy events within other mundane discourses and practices of school life.

In this way I want to consider 'the other sides' of the literacy event - what takes place before, during and after. Because literacy theorists look at literacy events, that which appears to be non-literacy business is often edited out, leading to somewhat sanitised transcripts of literacy lessons - two to five minute segments which foreground the literacies being constructed. This has been important in building an analysis of how literacy is shaped in the classroom. In this study my object is to consider literacy pedagogy from the teachers' position hence I give the non-literacy business that goes on during literacy workshops a greater prominence. I consider teacher talk, such as 'pep talks' and 'voice-over', which at first sight may appear to have little to do with literacy lessons per se.

The chapter proceeds in four sections. First, I review one lesson where the complexity of teachers' work is foregrounded. I begin by considering the ways in which literacy teaching is embedded in teachers' institutional work as a prelude to my analysis of literacy lessons as normalising practices. Second, I identify and examine normative teacher talk during literacy lessons: pep talks, voice-over and on patrol. I consider these classroom discourse technologies as instances of institutional disciplinary practice where students are examined, classified, monitored and managed. Third, I examine occasions where teachers and students contest normalising and disciplinary practices. Last, I discuss the discursive construction of teacher and student subjectivity produced in literacy lessons.

7.2 Teachers' work in literacy lessons: the complexity of making space

In my own work I have promoted literacy pedagogical techniques and philosophies with the assumption that a space for literacy teaching already exists, that it does not have to be negotiated or that best practices in literacy teaching solve other problems of teaching. The unstated logic of this approach was that if the curriculum offerings were interesting enough, students would be won over, would want to read and write, would see it as pleasurable and would behave themselves; there would be stories that children would sit still for and literacy clubs that students could not resist joining. Resistant and troublesome students would be transformed by a meaningful and liberating curriculum they could see was in their best interests. At the same time because the literacy curriculum promoted self direction, self awareness, self monitoring and self assessment, students would manage themselves.

When academics and policy makers write about literacy pedagogy often the assumption is that if only we could arrive at the right formula we could make it simple for teachers to produce students with high levels of literacy performance, however literacy might be defined. By this account there are two independent variables: teachers' methods and approaches and students' internal capacities, whether construed as skills, competences, abilities, stages or IQs. These assumptions are the legacies of meritocratic definitions of education. The mundane routine work that teachers do in classrooms is distanced from our discourses of empowerment and liberation or even from discourses of quality and productivity. For example student misbehaviour is an absent category for many whole language, genre or critical literacy theorists. The assumption is that if the language curriculum is authentic and interesting problems of behaviour would diminish or disappear. Our student teachers learn about behaviour management separately from the Language, Maths, Environmental Studies curricula. In the classroom however teachers must bring these different knowledges and discourses into play at the same time as they orchestrate events and manage students. This may seem obvious. Teachers have to be able to 'control the class', whatever methods they employ - whether teachers train students to control themselves or whether teachers maintain control through their own force and explicit exercise of power. I argue that theories of literacy pedagogy, and curriculum more widely, have for the most part ignored the mundane realities of teachers' work (exceptions include Edelsky et al. 1983; Luke 1993a; McNeil 1986).

7.2.1. Caring, managing and teaching in the early literacy classroom

In this section, I take my fieldnotes from one lesson to foreground the complexity of teachers' work at Banfield. On the day in question in this first week in November, Ngan, who is five years old and having arrived in Australia from a refugee camp in Vietnam just

weeks earlier, has just begun her school life. Before the school bell sounds she is already quite distressed. She speaks no English and her teacher speaks no Vietnamese. She knows no-one from the school community. These notes represent what I recorded during the lesson. The extended transcript is considerably longer. Still, the fieldnotes indicate what I was able to take in and get down at the time and are interesting in that regard. I made notes about the time as teachers had expressed concern that it took them so long to get things done and that they never finished what they had planned.

[Before school chat. It's 8.55am. One of the children starts to cry - Ngan - new child who doesn't speak any English. She cries and coughs and the teacher picks her up.]

Teacher Who was away yesterday?[Teacher records attendance in roll. Leona comes in late. Sean shows teacher his watch.]
Who's got something to show and tell the whole class this morning?
I think Daniel has. Come here Daniel. [Daniel brings an encyclopaedia from home to the front of the class and begins to turn pages and show them to the group gathering on the mat on the floor.]

Any book clubs? OK. Tomorrow's the last day Sunshine Room.[Teacher collects forms, writes lunch orders and fills in the roll book while Daniel continues to show the encyclopaedia.]

Teacher In a big big voice people cannot hear you.[To Daniel]
[A parent walks in with Tabatha who is late. Tabatha looks worried. Larry (from another class) brings in a note to the teacher, which teacher opens and reads and gives him a return message.]

Teacher It's going to be one of those days today. It's one interruption after another.[To researcher]

Teacher What shall we do this morning? Reading journals,[Children agree enthusiastically.] Daniel's been showing his excellent book. Do you want me to read it later?

Students Yes

Teacher Everyone eyes on Rebecca. Look at her beautiful dress.

Rebecca It's my party dress. I got it today.

Teacher It's your birthday today isn't it. Everyone it's Rebecca's birthday.
[They sing Happy Birthday to Rebecca.]

Teacher So how many claps do you want us to give you today? Six. What else did you get for your birthday. Rebecca explains what she got for her birthday. Ah Robin listen in please. Who's that coughing like that? Is that you Amy? You're sick. [It's 9.10 am. Many children start to cough. Child reads the print at the bottom of the bobcat poster.]

The teacher comments that it's going to be 'one of those days' when in the first few minutes she deals with latecomers, parents and children with messages from other teachers. In her view the scene is set for interruptions. Ten minutes into the language arts lesson the teacher has already provided pastoral and physical care of children as well managing clerical matters such as marking the roll and collecting forms and money for lunch orders and book club. While she does these things Ngan is either on her lap or at her side. The literacy lesson becomes ancillary to these other institutional demands that go with managing and caring for thirty five and six year old children, some of whom are sick or fearful and some of whom have birthdays or show and tell. The negotiation and management of lifeworlds is primary and the literacy agenda struggles for space. In continuing to turn the pages of his encyclopaedia, Daniel and the patient child onlookers provide an illusion of literate activity, supporting the teacher to get the morning underway.

Teacher Yes Melinda. I'm not listening to you Jasmine, not if you call out like that. [Ngan starts to cry and coughs.] It's a bit scary for her. Let's see how quietly we can get started this morning and do our work. [Sophie from grade six comes in and says her teacher sent her in because the others are going on an excursion and she wasn't allowed to go. Teacher smiles and says she can help out or do her own work. Teacher hands out the reading journals, cuddles Ngan and does Ryan's lunch order. Leona shows teacher some new clothing.]

Teacher Oh they're groovy aren't they? [Teacher finds the pages in the reading journals for some children.]

Look at that class - a bit off today.[To researcher. Children are talking loudly. Ngan starts to cry again.]

Teacher Alright Sunshine Room you should be on task. [Ngan cries and coughs and comes back to sit on teacher's lap.] Right Kirby if you used it yesterday.[He has lost his reading journal.] Come on Shelly. Right, good to see everyone is settled down now. The people on this table have almost finished - very good; excellent. I think these can be the best workers this morning. Or is it this table

or this. Maybe everyone. Perfect beautiful. [The children are doing their reading journals. They copy the title of the book they took home to read the previous night and draw a picture.]

Teacher OK Sunshine Room, five more minutes and then we're going to have some big books together. [It's 9.26 am. Ngan cries very loudly again. The children at the table where I'm sitting chat about TV programs and draw their pictures. Then they talk about the ghost train at the show. As the children finish they go to sit on the mat. The teacher is over that side of the room already with Ngan, hearing individual children read. Sophie wanders around and chats with the children.]

Teacher OK. Two more minutes Sunshine Room.[It's 9.31 am. Teacher checks reading journals and reads any writing they have done aloud and hears children read.]

Teacher At least they've settled down a bit now. See what it's like. [To researcher]
How are we going over here? You've got one minute to go. [It's 9.34 am. Teacher goes with Ngan to check out what the others are doing]
Pack up now please. OK. Let's pack up now. Oh reading books are we? [To group of children gathered on the floor reading big books together.]
We'll have some together. [Ngan starts to cry very loudly again. Several children start to fight as they put back their books.]

In this next phase of the lesson the teacher sends children off to do their reading journals, whilst she listens to individual children read. Doing reading journals in this class means that the children write the title and author of the book they read at home the previous evening; they draw a picture about the story and, if they are able, write something about the story. Some children copy parts of the story. This was a daily activity in this classroom. The teacher's prediction that it was going to be one of those days appears to be coming true. In this twenty five minute period, the teacher deals with a child sent to her from another class, Ngan who appears to be sick as well as unhappy, and the continued chores of forgotten lunch orders and lost books. As well she hears individual children read and provides words for those children trying to write their own texts in their reading journals. Conscious of my presence she also apologises for the class - 'a bit off today'. In all of this she makes time for comments to individuals about clothing and to the class and groups about being on task. She and the children keep the lesson moving along as they engage in their everyday routines. With promises of having some big books

together she brings the children together on the mat and moves into the next phase of the lesson.

Teacher OK. Hands on heads, shoulders, in the air. On your bottoms. 'With my hands on my head'. [Sings song. Teacher does the actions with Ngan on her lap. Jasmine starts to cry and cough too. Teacher looks at me. Checking my reaction to the song and how involved the kids get.]

Teacher What's wrong Jasmine? Change your home book. [They sing another song.]

Teacher I was going to say... Stop that Cynthia and turn this way Leona. See what happens. I cannot concentrate on two things at once. [They go back to their rhyme. It's a clapping, clicking rhyme. Benjamith from grade seven comes in to borrow the staple gun. Ngan starts to cry very loudly and teacher stops what she's doing and talks about how she might be feeling.]

Student I saw her crying when I was coming home with my mum.

Teacher I think she's sick and yesterday I didn't think she was too bad but.

Student I thought she'd hurt herself.

Teacher No I think she's really sick. You know when you didn't feel well and you felt really sad and you said, 'I don't know what's wrong with me'.

First the teacher, with the distressed Ngan on her lap begins to chant poems, and songs which many of the children know by heart. She begins with one intended to get all the children attending to her, a variation of the Simple Simon game. Here the child body is trained to respond to the teacher demands through the game-like format. The teacher loses direction when she is distracted by the behaviour of two students. When another child from the senior class comes in with a request for the staple gun, Ngan begins to cry very loudly and the teacher cannot proceed. Cuddling Ngan on her lap she talks with the children about how she might be feeling, reminding them of times when they have been ill. The real issue of health care becomes most urgent in the lesson. The difficulty of not being able to communicate with Ngan is foregrounded in this episode. Ngan is unable to tell her teacher what is wrong and the teacher finds no way to ask. Given these circumstances and her need to manage all the children she continues with the familiar morning activities whilst trying to comfort Ngan physically as best she can. When Ngan

is quiet again the teacher begins to lead the children in reading a big book 'Bubble gum' emphasising some words loudly as she reads.

Teacher Why do we say it louder Rebecca? Remember.

Rebecca Cos it's got a question.

Teacher Is that a question mark?

Rebecca An exclamation mark. [Teacher points and reads aloud. Kids join in.]

Teacher 'No bubble gum at school - cos it's trouble gum.' [Teacher reads aloud. Child starts talking.] Charlie I can only hear one person at a time.

[Teacher starts to read 'Dear Zoo' a teacher made big book version. Ngan starts to cry again. One of the students complains about how loud she is.]

Teacher Don't listen to anyone who calls out. Choose someone with lovely manners, who's sitting on their bottom. [To Sophie from grade six who's helping and allowed to choose students for special jobs like pointing to the text.] On your bottom, and she might choose you. Ah, don't call out. [Ngan starts to cry again very loudly. Jasmine starts to cry.]

Student Jasmine's crying.

Teacher I don't think there's any reason for Jasmine to cry. [They continue to read the story.]

Teacher Can we read this together? Dzung, Dzung, Dzung turn around, sit down, good girl. Who can read this sign? [Sophie starts to read the zoo animals book.

Sophie 'Aa alligator eating apples a a a'. [They sing to time of 'Skip to my lou'.]

Teacher 'Cc camel eating carrots c c c.' Who thinks they can remember the next one?

Teacher Next one Daniel. Cannot remember. Doesn't matter. Bruno.

Bruno Elephant eating eggs e e e.

- Teacher The next one's a tricky one. Melinda.
- Melinda Ibis eating ice cream i i i.[They sing this.]
- Teacher Jaguar eating jellybeans j j j [They continue singing until Leona puts up her hand.] Leona.
- Leona Jasmine went like that to me.[Indicating what Jasmine did.]
- Teacher You need to decide if you can sit nicely with us or go to time out.[To Jasmine]
- Student Some of the animals are eating junk food and I don't think they should be.
- Teacher No I agree with you one hundred percent. Next one. Oh. Now what's that next one do you think. Dzung, Tabatha. Give you a clue it's a 'm'. 'Monkey's eating muesli bars.' [They continue to sing their way through the book. Ngan cries again.]
- Teacher I don't really know what to do with her.[to researcher re Ngan]
- BC Is there is anyone who speaks her language in the school, so you can find out if she's homesick or sick or..?
- Teacher Yes Tran - I might have to get Tran. [They go back to their book. It's 10.00am.] 'Zebra eating zucchinis z z z.'

It has taken a long time to get to the lesson itself. The teacher's literacy agenda here is to have the children notice the initial sounds and letters of words by reciting together a class made text using alliteration and based upon a published book. As they work their way through the entries for each letter of the alphabet, Ngan continues to be upset and her crying interrupts the academic agenda. As the lesson proceeds the difficulty for the child and the teacher in this situation is highlighted. The troublesome Jasmine begins to cry as well. The teacher proceeds and the visiting child from the senior class helps out. As they consider the text on each page one child is invited to read it before the class sings it together. Just as things seem to be running smoothly Leona complains about Jasmine and the teacher invites her to decide between sitting nicely or time out. Here the teacher employs the behaviour management policy, aimed at training the children in self-control and making choices about their behaviour and its consequences. When Ngan begins to cry again the teacher says to me anxiously that she doesn't know what to do with her. She decides to see if a child from another class can translate for Ngan. In order to get this organised she first sets the rest of the class to work on another task.

- Teacher Right now we're doing 'flamingo eating . . . and giraffe eating'. I got two pictures from this excellent animal dictionary. OK. Rebecca. Hands up if you can tell everyone what we're going to do. Start colouring in when you go to your table if you can and I'll give out your zoo books. Ngan cries. [Teacher tries Dzung and Minh as translators. They say that Ngan wants to go home.]
- Teacher Ask her: 'Is mummy home?' [Ngan cries. The children are noisy as they sit down.]
Excuse me - that's not how we normally work Sunshine Room. Excuse me Sunshine Room. I also think that Ngan is scared because of the noise level and I don't blame her. Now you know what you're meant to be doing and I want you to do it quietly. I don't need to tell anyone. [Tran comes in to translate for Ngan.]
- Teacher I think we might need to practice at recess time. That's not how we do our work. [Teacher is going to take Ngan to principal's office. She gives them an instruction about working quietly or otherwise time out and leaves them with me for just a few minutes. Teacher returns. She has been unable to see the principal because she is down doing an enrolment.]
- Teacher Shelly you're wonderful you've finished your work, packed it away, pushed your chair in.
- Student Excuse me [teacher's name]. Everyone on my table is teasing me. [Teacher goes to this table and begins to check what the children are doing. Tran and Sophie are still in the room. Teacher bobs down at a table and starts to read one of the books. Ngan watches. The children chat as they stick their pictures in and copy from the board. Ngan starts to cry again. It's 10.28 am. Sophie points out the words on the blackboard.]
- Teacher OK. Sunshine Room. Hands on heads please and listen. Put your work on your desk. Push your chair in. Let me see which table is ready. You can be my leaders Ryan and Jasmine because you were ready so quickly. It's so noisy in here I cannot believe it! [As they get ready to go off for a singing lesson the principal arrives and introduces a prospective new parent to teacher.]

In the final part of the lesson the teacher organises the children to illustrate the next part of their shared text about zoo animals and enlists the aid of other students as translators for Ngan. She moves between directing questions for the translators to ask Ngan and keeping the rest of the class on task. She suggests that Ngan's crying may be partly

because she is scared of the children's noise. Here she uses Ngan's crying as part of her plea for quiet working. As things become quieter she begins to check what children are producing. When Ngan is still not calmed after having talked with the other children she leaves me with the class and takes her to the office in order to get some assistance from the principal. However the principal is busy enrolling a new student. When she returns she recalls that the children are due for a singing lesson and she interrupts them to prepare them for that.

7.2.2. What do teachers do in literacy lessons and what are the effects of what they do?

What can be said about this literacy lesson? Many different critiques could be made of this lesson from different educational positions. Educators may point out the problem with interruptions to the time spent on the academic tasks at hand. Others may question the effectiveness of a shared book approach for instructing children about letter-sound relationships. Still others may question the challenge of the content. My standpoint warns against any hasty critiques of the teacher. She is an experienced and highly respected teacher. Parents were eager to have their children placed in her class. Children demonstrated considerable affection and respect for her and she towards them. Worried or distressed children regularly spent time on her lap as she went about her work. Other teachers spoke of the 'warmth' of the classroom atmosphere. I witnessed children's growing competence with interpretation and production of texts in her classroom. My concern here is not with what the teacher didn't do, nor with her effectiveness. My concern here is with all that she had to do - the work required from her in order to make a space for a literacy lesson of any kind or substance. Much of this has little to do with the key variables of pedagogical method or student capacity - it is about establishing an institutional and moral order in the classroom. It is about survival in the complex ecology of a classroom community.

Teachers' classroom work involves caring for the bodies of children, inculcating children in classroom routines, managing institutional business, connecting with the absent family and dealing with the academic content. In this ninety minute period this teacher deals with a multiplicity of demands: including legal, organisational, personal, physical, emotional, disciplinary, collegial and academic. As well as the competing pressures of her classroom work, there are other interruptions from outside as well: children coming late, a child to mind from another class, requests from other teachers for equipment, a visit from the principal and prospective parent. She juggles her competing roles without losing good humour. She lets me know that this is 'what it's like'.

Readers might respond that a day like this is unusual. New children who are sick, who don't speak English don't begin school each day. However days like these were not unusual. In comparison with other days this lesson was relatively straight forward. I observed other more stressful and difficult occasions - circumstances involving family trauma, severe child injury and so on. The circumstances vary continuously; this constant variation being a problem for teachers in its own right. Teachers develop, as one teacher put it, a kind of 'crisis mentality'. They begin to expect family trauma to impact on school; they begin to expect interruptions; they begin to expect high absenteeism. Teachers frequently made statements to this effect - the continual feeling of not getting enough done, of being interrupted, of sick children at school, of the academic agenda being short circuited by more immediate needs. How teachers deal with a classroom community of children from many different cultures and speaking many different languages is sometimes ignored in considerations of teachers' work and formulations of literacy pedagogies. The effects of language and cultural differences allied with the effects of community poverty on everyday school life are rarely considered. In this lesson we see the teacher working hard to construct the classroom space as a place of work and self-discipline whilst at the same time a place of comfort, fun and academic learning.

My purpose here is not to prove that teachers' work is complex. This requires no proof to those who have taught in schools such as Banfield. My purpose is to understand the circumstances of teachers' work at Banfield in order that the excerpted transcripts of classroom discourse which follow may be read with these echoes and images in mind. I document these local circumstances so that the discourses and practices of literacy lessons can be read against this broader, though brief, portrayal of teachers' classroom work. In considering why certain discourses and practices are employed at this time in this school I foreground the everyday classroom lives of these women teachers. Why some discourses and literacy practices become dominant at Banfield at this time is contingent on these wider institutional and community realities.

To conclude my brief comments on the above field notes, I make reference to the literacy work which was achieved in the above lesson. The teacher heard a number of children read, read a big book and checked a number of reading journal entries; children wrote and illustrated their reading journals, wrote and coloured in two entries for their zoo animal alphabet books and sung or recited a number of poems and songs. It is not that nothing happened, far from it. Even on those days, where it was 'one of those days' the teacher and children did read and write; however on this particular day the literacy business was not the most urgent; it struggled to stay on the agenda.

As a participant observer of this lesson I felt keenly the teacher's concern for the distressed child and yet her frustration at a lesson somehow wasted. I welcomed the time when the class went to singing and she would have the space to organise for Ngan to be 'looked after'. How then do teachers make space to do more than survive, to make time for the academic agenda as they see it? In the next section I pursue these questions by looking at repeated discursive practices across each of the four classrooms.

7.3 The other side of the literacy event: Normalising practices

Because literacy is a social practice it cannot be separated from and constitutes the forms of social organisation and institutional practices and beliefs within which it is exercised. My aim here is to look not only at what goes on during specific literacy events but to consider what goes on during the entire 'language workshop', usually from 9.00am - 11.00am. Thus my interest is not only in which texts are read and which genres are written, though these are important, but more broadly in what gets spoken about, how students are addressed, what gets made important, what is teachers' and students' work like during literacy lessons. My intention here is to recontextualise literacy pedagogy as a form of teacher labour which in turn produces specific student labour and behaviour. I identify particular kinds of teacher talk during literacy lessons and consider how students are constituted in this classroom discourse.

Over the past decade researchers and academics have encouraged teachers to move to a workshop approach where for a significant segment of the school day students focus on reading, writing, listening, speaking, handwriting, spelling - whatever is counted as part of the literacy and language curriculum. At Banfield the entire morning period was usually set aside for the language and literacy workshop. The idea was to get this work done while the children were freshest and engaged. Discourse analytic research typically focusses on specific literacy events within this workshop time, for example listening to a child read, morning talks, sharing time, a shared book experience segment or a jointly constructed text being produced. Insights from this work has included analyses of the ways these events work ideologically - telling students what literacy is and how they should practise it and shaping student identity. In the next section of this chapter I examine how school literacies are constructed at Banfield through institutionalised pedagogic practice.

I am interested here in particular in instances of normative discursive practices where teachers exercise power in managing the class to be made literate (Fairclough 1992a). During my observations of the language workshops I noted that teachers employed a

repertoire of discursive techniques designed to keep students on task and to produce the ideal student. I have named these: voice-over, pep talks and on patrol. These techniques were often used as a cumulative strategy, hence I consider them together. Voice-over is what teachers say while students work. Pep talks are what teachers say to students about how students should be. Teacher on patrol is the individualised checking teachers do during literacy lessons. Table 7.3 provides a summary and examples of these techniques.

Table 7.3 Discursive techniques to produce the ideal student

Technique	Definition	Examples
Voice-over	What teachers say while students work	'That's not how we normally work' 'You're on task straight away' 'I'm finding your noise level too high' 'Focus on journal please' 'Some lovely quiet workers'
Pep talks	What teachers say about students to students	'Some people have cleaned up beautifully' 'So you know deep down inside what your responsibilities are' 'When I saw you were a bit sloppy at the end of the day you were forgiven' 'Because we are looking at working together'
On patrol	Individualised checking of students	'This shouldn't be in your journal' 'Adam have you started work?' 'It's not drawing time Daniel, it's writing time.' 'Adrianna, are you on task?'

I see these discursive techniques as normalising practices because they make explicit the teachers' norms for classroom behaviours, where they should be, where their bodies should be, when and how they can speak, what they should be doing, how they should be doing it and how they should be using their time. I move now to illustrate and discuss in turn voice-over, pep talks and on patrol. I use extended examples from across the classrooms as I make the case that these practices are not part of teachers' unique styles, but available resources within the institutionalised repertoires of schooling.

7.3.1 Voice-over: A reminder of what you should be (doing)

Voice-over refers to the running commentary produced by teachers after students begin the set task. To illustrate: the teacher has given the instruction about what students are to do, how they are to do it, and how long they have to do it. The students return to their seats and engage in all manner of activities from doing exactly as they are told, chatting, organising books and so on. At this point, and in fact any time whilst students are supposedly engaged in independent work, teachers make statements to the class. These statements may include reminders, additions, clarifications, comments on student behaviour, comments on student products. Students are usually free to stay at their seats

and to keep going about their set tasks, unlike other kinds of teacher talk, which does not proceed without eye-contact, silence and pens down; in fact its object is to keep students in their seats and keep them on task.

I call this form of teacher talk voice-over because it runs over the top, as it were, of the other activity that has already been put in place, and provides a meta-commentary upon it. Here the teacher, a little like the sporting commentator, tells the audience what it is they can see. In this instance however the audience are also the participants; hence the analogy falls short. However it is suggestive of the kind of talk which occurs. If the voice-over does not produce the required result it can easily be transformed into other forms of discipline. I discuss voice-over as occasions of specific kinds of discursive practice constitutive of student subjectivity. Examples of voice-over from each of the four teachers follows, beginning with the junior class, the children at the beginning of their schooling.

Teacher Look at this wonderful table here - organised straight away - excellent.

Several minutes later same lesson

Teacher You're on task aren't you this morning. Excellent. Come on Kirsty and Leona.

Several minutes later same lesson

Teacher We've got about five more minutes left before we need to be organised.

Several minutes later same lesson

Teacher Right Jasmine and Scott how are you going there? I'm going to come and see what you're doing in a minute. Great workers on this table. Could you quieten down please. How are you going here boys. Excellent. Wow. Well done. Some people decided to do their look-cover-write-check straight away.

Towards the end of the same lesson

Teacher Oh let's see what's happening over here. How are you going Bruno? Right nearly recess. I don't think you've got it done - you might not be allowed to go. Right Allan let's see how you're going. [Child complains of noise and a headache.] It's very noisy in here. Obviously people are not really working. If I have seen you really

concentrating this morning then you might be able to go out, but if I haven't seen you concentrating then when the bell goes you can stay in and do your work.

The teacher's voice-over did a number of things. It named groups of children, 'tables', who were on task and organised. Individual children who were not 'on task' were encouraged with 'Come on Kirsty and Leona', reminiscent of a sports coach enthusing team members to play harder, run faster. The voice-over also reminded children of time limits. It reminded children that the teacher would be there to check what they were doing. It reminded children of the teacher's desire for them all to be 'great workers'. It reminded children to be quieter. It reminded them of task options for early finishers (look, cover, write, check). It reminded them of the consequences of not getting things done, such as losing their recess time. It reminded them of the need to concentrate. In this classroom then the voice-over lets the children know where their teacher is and what they should be like: quiet, organised, concentrating, on task, self-directed, great workers. Such people would be rewarded with recess time. Non-conformers would 'stay in and do your work'. Punitive consequences are spelt out. Surveillance is maintained. The proper student subject is identified, described and promised reward.

As a cumulative strategy voice-over has different effects at different stages in the lesson. In the emergent phase children are encouraged to be on task and organised. As the lesson proceeds it signals surveillance, examination and time limits. The teacher often begins by naming individuals and moves out to include the whole class. Starting with positive naming of specific children has the effect of having each child listen in the hope of being identified also. When the children are all listening then the generic message can be delivered to the whole class.

I move now briefly to voice-over from each of the other classrooms and make brief comments indicating how this discursive practice is deployed in each context. Firstly I consider teacher talk from the other junior primary class, comprised mainly of six and seven year old children, with a small number of five year olds. These children have been at school on average longer than the class discussed above.

Teacher Sofia, you're getting yourself organised in a very adult way. Martin
 I really like the way you're on task.

several minutes later same lesson

Teacher I really like the way Liam's table is working so quietly and they're
 getting so much done.

In a lesson a day later

Teacher Oh Luke - you're on you're task straight away. Do you know what Adam, I have forgotten to give out the books. Stop. Shoot me. Billy are you ready to start love? Bruce - would you like to start straight away dear. Mark I've got to talk to you about your voice darling. It cannot be that loud.

Same lesson several minutes later

Teacher I'm finding your noise level too high and Zlata is finding it too hard. So I want you to check that you have all three things in your illustrations and I can tell you that we've only got ten more minutes left so noses down bottoms up.

In this classroom the teacher voice-over again identifies students who are on task, who are getting organised 'in a very adult way'. Once again groups of children, 'tables' are named as doing the right thing, 'working quietly' and its implied desired consequence, 'getting so much done'. Teacher voice-over publicly names and describes the good students. Children are reminded to be 'on task straight away' through the public naming of model students. These criteria 'starting straight away' and 'working quietly' can then be used to name and encourage those who have not automatically produced the required behaviours. Would-be recalcitrant individuals are addressed with terms of endearment - love, darling - to coerce them gently into the right behaviours. A final reminder repeats the message about noise, reminds students of the task, gives students a time limit and metaphorically insists that they work harder: 'noses down and bottoms up'. Praise is associated with being adult, organised, on task, 'working hard', 'working so quietly'. Thus the formation of the ideal student subject once again is as quiet worker meeting deadlines.

I move now to grade three/four class. Here the teacher voice-over is more extended in length and frequency.

Teacher Focus on journal please. Are you on task?

Several minutes later same lesson

Teacher OK. Can you finish up what you're writing now and spend a little bit of time checking your writing. No don't come to me. I want you to do it. For example I sent one person to check the title. Make some changes to your writing that needed to be made. I want *you* to add the 'ses' and 'eds'.

Towards the end of the same lesson

Teacher Right there are two people out in the garden at the moment because they achieved their goal.

A day later

Teacher OK. You can refer back on yesterday's notes to fix the word goal and sentence beginnings.

Teacher My learning goal, my goal for today. So that's a start for everyone.

Several minutes later same lesson

Teacher OK. You've got a couple of minutes left to get your two goals down. If you've got spare time you can do a recording of something you want to remember from last night or last day. Please make sure you have a date on the top. Are you finished Adam?

Adam No. [Starts writing.]

Teacher Can you try to keep the noise level down. Clara have you finished your goals? OK one minute left. I would really prefer that I don't have to give people extra time to finish their goals. I think with some people it's staying on task that's the problem.

In this voice-over similar discourses dominate. The student subject in literacy lessons is 'on task' achieves their 'goals' and works quietly within time limits. However in this class, detail about how the literacy task should be done is provided. Students are reminded to make changes to their writing themselves, not to come to the teacher. Here is a case of forced independence, where the individual is pushed to be proactive and autonomous. A little later in the same lesson the students are informed that two students who have already achieved their goals are out in the garden. The discourse of work is more sophisticated here in that students are working not only towards finishing tasks by the deadlines. Now they are working towards completing their self-set learning goals. Those who complete goals early are rewarded with free time in the garden. In the language lesson the following day students are reminded that they can find correct spellings for the word 'goal' in their previous entries and that possible sentence beginning for their journal entries are on the board. In 'spare time' they are given permission 'to record something they want to remember. Potential non-finishers are questioned about their progress for all to hear. Finally students are reminded of the noise level, the need to finish within the set time limits and the need to be on task.

In the grade three/ four class the same discourses are repeated. The student subject still sounds very much the same. In addition the teacher makes it clear that the literate student checks their writing themselves and refers to previous entries and the blackboard. Students should not come to the teacher for these things. The ideal student is able to set their own goals and complete them ahead of time in order to have free time in the garden. The teacher prefers 'not to give people extra time'. The teacher ultimately controls the organisation of time, whilst students are apprenticed into discourses of management of the self.

I move now to the teacher voice-over in the senior class, the five/six/seven class.

Teacher Perhaps you could be more specific about your goal. If you usually read two pages in silent reading you could read four.

Same lesson several minutes later

Teacher I think we might need a silent time. It doesn't look to me like too many people have finished.

Same lesson several minutes later

Teacher As soon as you're organised show me that you've organised by sitting quietly. [*Teacher names kids as they sit still..*] It's interesting to see the people that can get their act together.

Same lesson several minutes later

Teacher I'm pleased to see people checking the spelling of "adjectives" as they write it.

Same lesson several minutes later

Teacher Can we stop. There's a lot of giggling and stuff. Everyone has the right to work in a quiet environment. You know the rules so can you use it please.

Same lesson several minutes later

Teacher Remember you people I have the right to move you if working in friendship groups does not work.

Towards the end of the same lesson

Teacher Thankyou to those people who came down quickly. It's time to finish now please Julia. Mark we have a rule. Could you use it please.

In the grade five/six/seven class the ideal student subject is again consistent with each of the other classrooms: quiet, organised, working and finishing on time - 'people who can get their act together'. Students need to 'be specific' about their goals. This is exemplified in terms of the amount that they might read during silent reading time. Lack of finishing is once again explained by noise level and 'a silent time' is suggested. Students are asked to demonstrate their organisation by 'sitting quietly'. Students are reminded to check spellings. Students are reminded that 'giggling and stuff' does not fit with their class rule and that 'everyone has the right to work in a quiet environment'. They are reminded that failure to abide by the rules may have consequences. The teacher has 'the right to move' them away from their friendship groups if sitting in their groups doesn't work.

In the senior class the ideal literate student is able to get 'organised', set 'specific' goals and 'use the rules'. The class has agreed to rules of behaviour to protect their rights as learners. Sitting with friends is a privilege. Ultimately the classroom is a work environment. The teacher reminds them of her authority in deciding whether they are keeping the rules and can maintain their privileges.

7.3.2 Voice-over: The construction of student workers

Banfield teachers prided themselves on their own individualistic approaches to teaching. Indeed there were differences. However, the uniformity of their statements in voice-over was striking. The construction of the literate student subject - from five year olds to thirteen year olds - was remarkably consistent across teachers and classrooms. The formation of the sensibilities of self-regulating workers was put in place from the earliest days of primary school and evident across the grade levels. Students are constituted as 'great workers' and their organisation complemented as 'very adult'. The voice-over reminds them of the need to be 'on task' to ensure productivity within the time limits. The school day begins with setting goals and reviewing yesterday's achievements. Students are reminded that they are in a 'work environment' where their relations and rights as co-learners must be prioritised over their relations as friends.

These teacher comments occur over the top of other classroom activities. Students are not usually expected to respond verbally to these statements, but they are expected to hear them and perhaps alter their behaviour. In summary, teacher voice-over congratulates the hard-working, quiet, on task students and simultaneously reminds all students of these norms. Voice-over also reminds students about reducing noise. In addition specific

literacy behaviours are reinforced, such as the need to check spellings and refer to previous material. The teachers' voice can be seen as a oral reminder of the teachers' presence. It lets students know that the teacher is there - ever watchful and aware of student misdemeanours and transgressions, conformity and achievements. Teacher voice-over then is a reminder of the continual surveillance to which each student is subjected and for which each teacher is responsible. What were the objects of teacher voice-over in these classrooms? In other words what did teachers talk about while students worked?

Across the four classrooms the most common themes of teachers' voice-over talk were what students should be doing ('working', 'on task'); how students should use time (meet 'deadlines'); students' responsibilities ('tidy up', 'not to disturb others'); what different students should be doing ('people writing in roller pen', 'people who are doing spelling tests') and preferred literacy behaviours for the task at hand ('be independent', 'without asking me').

As a disciplinary practice, voice-over defines and articulates, through repetition, the classroom norms. It overrides all other classroom activity to tell students once again who they are, who they can be and how they should be. These were not isolated or rare instances. Below I reproduce a selection of voice-over from one classroom across a school term to illustrate its frequency and consistency. My aim is to show how this technique was put to work in the classroom of children newest to school. My interest here is how the 'new students', the five and six year olds are inducted into school discourses in literacy lessons.

In this classroom the student as worker construction was reinforced regularly, as the field notes below illustrate.

- | | |
|----------|---|
| 20/10/92 | Some lovely quiet workers. See this table's nice and quiet. Goodness me, busy beavers. |
| 29/10/92 | Very good table here. On task table. I reckon the girls talk the most! [said teasingly] This is the chatterbox table. [Leona interjecting, 'I'm not a chatterbox.'] Jasmine. Remember quieter voice. I'm going to come and see how much you've done. |
| 29/10/92 | OK. Sunshine Room you should be almost finishing that off now. So you can do your 'Dear Zoo' books. A few people already have. That's excellent. Right Stephen and Robin that table is very noisy at the moment. Apart from Bruno. You're obviously not on task. Are you on task? |

- 29/10/92 Some people are complaining that they cannot do their work properly. There's too much noise.
- 29/10/92 That's a much better noise level now. You can work much better.
- 29/10/92 Beautiful and fantastic. I know you're just working so hard.
- 3/11/92 Right, good to see everyone is settled down now. The people on this table are excellent. I think these can be the best workers this morning. Or is it this table? Or this? Maybe everyone? Perfect, beautiful. OK Sunshine Room, 5 minutes more and then we're going to have some big books together.
- 12/11/92 Remember no cheating. Does that help you to learn? If I hear people talking does that mean that people are concentrating and on task? No. All I want to hear is those brains ticking and your pencils clicking. Let's see who's going to start straight away today. Because I'm going to choose someone who's working hard.
- 12/11/92 She's a lovely worker Sharon isn't she - nice and quiet.
- 12/11/92 I think Melinda's almost finished her work as usual - always the first to finish.
- 12/11/92 I think Mrs K [principal] is going to say to me at recess time. Your class was working so well apart from Robin who was playing with his chatterbox. Robin I'm talking to Bruno. I cannot listen to you at the same time. I'm not Wonder Woman even though I wish I was. You don't need any help - smarty pants. Five more minutes then we're going to pack up and if you haven't finished your work you'll do it at lunch time. Gee I'm mean aren't I? [children interject 'No, no.'] If they weren't working in worktime then they have to finish it at play time.
- 16/11/92 You don't seem to have worked too well at that table. Two minutes more before we pack up. Two more minutes.
- 21/11/92 Look at these people working down here - very good.
- 22/11/92 There are some very hard workers here. Researchers is what your called. Researching is what you're doing. Finding information that you need. You are working very well. Kylie and Sarah and Kirby are working extremely well. I am very, very proud of you people. Yes Rather excellent (...) do you think. Robin that looks beautiful. There are some great workers in this class like Matthew and Sean, Rebecca and Daina.[Some students call out 'and me'.] OK what,

why are we all doing here? Laura what are you doing here again?
Hey, always clinging around, always, always, always. No do
something without me asking every second of the day.

- 22/11/92 The quiet workers are going to be ...(pause)... organise it.
- 22/11/92 Rachel are you doing your work? No you're not. You're jumping
around like a kangaroo. We're going around the Sunshine Room
please. We've got excellent work in this room today. Isn't that right
Sammy? [Sammy answering, 'Yes'.] Hard working people in the
Sunshine Room not kangaroos.
- 2/12/92 This table here is usually is always organised first. This is the noisy
table, this is the chatterbox table. This could be the [Child interjects,
'Good table'.] This is 'both' table. Sometimes it's quiet sometimes
it's noisy.
- 7/12/92 Sit down and start your work straight away please. I can see Allan is
really on task. I'm watching this table's here. So nice and quiet.
Goodness me Jody well done. Melinda finishes again - Speedy
Gonzales. [Child interjects, 'But he's a boy'.] This time she's a girl.

In the reception/one classroom the teacher voice-over establishes what a good student is. The students themselves must shape their behaviours in line with the hypothetical ideal student. How is the ideal student subject talked about in this classroom?

- 'some lovely quiet workers'
- 'busy beavers'
- 'great workers'
- 'on task table'
- 'girls talk the most'
- 'chatterbox table'
- 'best workers'
- 'a lovely worker'
- 'nice and quiet'
- 'some very hard workers here'
- 'researchers is what you're called'
- 'the quiet workers'
- 'hard working people in the Sunshine Room not kangaroos'
- 'the noisy table'
- 'the chatterbox table'
- 'Melinda finishes again - Speedy Gonzales'

For the most part, with the exception of students as 'researchers', they are constructed as workers. An essential characteristic of workers is being quiet. An implied characteristic is sitting still, 'not jumping around like kangaroos'. Also suggested in the voice-over is the judgement and comparison of workers or groups of workers - girls talk *the most*, these can be *the best* workers, *the noisy* table, *always the first* to finish, Speedy Gonzales. In these statements the teacher's monitoring, categorising and differential naming of students is publicly announced. Students are also singled out as exceptions for negative evaluation 'apart from Robin who was playing with his chatterbox', making them targets for peer criticism for not working in the collective interest of the group. Again the genres of sports broadcasters, such as a race caller, is called to mind. The present tense narration of the classroom lifeworld constructs the school student. It provides the collective student body with scripts for how we work, how we listen, how we read, how we sit and so on. It could be assumed that students ignore the teacher's ongoing patter as just the same old thing - that this kind of talk does not have effects. In some ways students are a most captive audience at this point, in their own places at their desks with their own 'work' in front of them, rather than a student body grouped together on the mat. Here their individualised placement in the classroom space positions them as vulnerable, as open to individualised checking.

Indeed students did respond to these messages overlaying their work, bodies were re-arranged, pencils were picked up, work was re-commenced, voices were lowered, students whispered 'quiet' to noisy peers at their table who had prevented them being named as best, in response to the teachers' voice-over: 'Sh Sh I cannot concentrate'. Sitting at the tables with children I was also privy to whispered conversations between peers that resulted and sometimes children commented directly to me.

- | | |
|---------|---|
| Teacher | I think Melinda's almost finished her work as usual - always the first to finish. |
| Charles | I've nearly finished. |
| Teacher | But Melinda's also finished her words in her word study book - all eight of them. |
| Leona | Isn't that good Mrs Comber? She must be really concentrating. |

Charles wants to be recognised in the same way as Melinda and puts the case that he's almost finished as well. His teacher points out that Melinda has already gone ahead and done the next task as well. Leona does not attempt to compete on this occasion but

displays to me that she remembers the logic of 'early finishers' as spelt out by her teacher on many occasions. To be a great worker you must 'really concentrate'.

In these ways the ideal school subject (which Leona was not at this point) is constructed. Melinda comes to embody the goals of all would be ideal students. The voice-over works almost subliminally, telling students over and over the criteria for success, telling them who they can be, who they should be. The teachers' voice-over constructs a hegemonic 'technology of the self' (Foucault 1988) for internalisation by the student. The differential judgements which are made of students have immediate effects when the identified best students are chosen to do special jobs, such as sit on the seat by the teacher and be the helper who gets to choose people to answer questions, read aloud and so on.

I am interested in the conditions under which it becomes possible to talk about children in this way - to make the literacy classroom a work environment and students as workers. This way of talking differs from literacy education discourses which name students as readers and writers, as language users making meaning. In the exceptional instance where the teacher names students as 'researchers' it contrasts sharply with the dominant discourse of work. However I would not argue that these students in a disadvantaged school are being trained for working class jobs, for 'learning to labour' in Willis' (1977) sense (see also Anyon 1980; Jones 1989). Rather the discourse of work employed here constitutes the worker of 'New Times' of 'fast capitalist societies'- the self-regulating, productive information user meeting deadlines (Gee & Lankshear 1995; Fairclough 1993; Harvey 1988; Miller & Rose 1993). I continue this exploration of the constitution of the disadvantaged school child as an ethical subject by examining another common discursive practice of the literacy lesson - 'pep talks'.

7.3.3 Pep talks: A reminder of who you should be

During my time at Banfield I observed each of the teachers conducting what I describe as 'pep talks'. Usually the pep talk began as a teacher monologue, but student participants were sometimes asked to contribute on the teacher's theme. On some occasions the 'pep talk' seems to have been brought on by student transgressions from classroom rules or teacher expectations. On other occasions, however, such talks seem to have been a response to students' following the rules and displaying the kinds of standards and behaviour the teacher is looking for. Sometimes it is simply the beginning of the day and the teacher begins with a 'motivational' speech.

Pep talks may last a minute or up to ten minutes. On these occasions the teacher lays out expectations for behaviour, standards, ways of being a student and responsibilities.

Teachers may return to the same theme later in the lesson or follow up a pep talk with voice-over and patrol. In this teacher talk the student is publicly constructed as an ethical subject. The 'pep talk' should not be seen simply as a punitive lecture for naughty students. It has positive and productive effects. An analysis of the pep talks across the four classrooms indicates dominant themes in terms of how teachers constitute the ideal student:

- Responsibility ('Just ask yourself; 'Deep down inside you know what your responsibilities are'; 'Right you have a responsibility on your own work and a responsibility on other people's work'; 'Whose responsibility is it?')
- Use of time ('How am I using my time?'; 'How much can I get done in a certain time?'; 'We haven't got time to waste'; 'Some people are going to ask [teacher's name]. for more time to achieve this goal because they aren't using their time well')
- Rules for behaviour ('a quiet level of working'; 'One thing we are going to practise today is using a ten centimetre voice; 'You know how I feel about coming in to our work environment')
- Language and literacy behaviours ('take a risk'; 'a good stable form of handwriting')

The ideal student takes responsibility for their work, uses their time productively, follows the rules and displays particular language and literate behaviours which match those valued by their teacher. In this section of the chapter I examine how such a student is constructed in specific classroom literacy lessons. I begin with a pep talk made by one of the junior primary teachers in a lesson near the middle of the school year.

Teacher OK. Can I just have stillness and eye contact. Some people have cleaned up beautifully. Adam I asked you for stillness and eye contact and that's what I expect. There's not one rule for you and one rule for everybody else. Do you understand that? OK. Um, we haven't done reading journals for about a week. Um I'll talk, I'll just talk about the expectations about reading journals. I'm going to give you your words. Um I want you to do the title, an illustration and if you would like something about that book, whatever you want to do about that book. Now I'm going to be seeing, watching today to see if you can actually make a comment about that book on your own wishes, not what I've asked. Whether you choose to write about the story. I'm waiting for stillness from some people, whether you choose to write some of the new words, whether you choose to write something out of the book, like the artist. Listen carefully, whether you choose to write about what you think about the book. It's up to you and that's what we're going to be looking for when V (parent) and I come around for hearing reading. I hope to hear this table and this table read today. Tomorrow that table and V(parent) we can probably get through those tables. OK Now I also

expect a quiet level of working. That's out of consideration for others and out of being on task and I'm going to crack down very very very [said loudly] hard on people who choose to step outside that expectation. Is that understood?

Children Yes Mrs. [teacher's name].

Teacher What do I mean by that expectation about quiet working Larry?

Larry Um.

Teacher Adam I asked you to be, to do what we asked. Fold your fingers and have eye contact. Do it.

Larry ...(inaudible)... and sitting in our seats.

Teacher Right, because when we're nattering away and wandering around like Brown's cows we don't get our work done. OK. We've only got half an hour to complete this task. It is now ten past nine, by twenty to ten we will be winding up and coming down ready to look at one of our other fascinating facts.

In this pep talk the teacher states her expectations for listening behaviour, reading journal entries and how students must work. Initially her approach could be seen as similar to that of the teacher described by Edelsky et al. (1983) in that the teacher explicitly reminds students of the groundrules which have been negotiated and lays out her expectations for the tasks at hand. First off the teacher tells students how they must listen - 'stillness and eye contact'. A student who does not immediately comply is singled out and the teacher repeats her expectation, this time referring to it as a rule. The teacher continues her theme of expectations this time in reference to the reading journal. She outlines what must be done: the title, the illustration and 'something about the book'. She goes on to explain what that might be. Here her discourse shifts from rules, expectations and requirements, to the progressive discourse allowing for student choice. Students must make a comment, but what kind of comment they make is up to them. However, she warns that she will be checking what the students decide. Choice is framed as selection between task options that the teacher can and will check. In her introductory statements behaviour and academic work are addressed together within a regime of rules and expectations.

Anticipating different proficiencies, the teacher ensures there is an option for the range of student development, from commenting on the text, to copying out new words, to writing something out of the book, to writing what you think about the book. The student listeners are expected to hear and select the option that fits them. After directing the parent

helper, she returns to her expectations for student behaviour. She warns that she will 'crack down very very very hard' on people who step outside her expectation 'for a quiet level of working'. She calls on a child collaborator to translate for his peers what she has just said. Before Larry can answer, Adam transgresses again and is corrected instantly, thus demonstrating for his peers how failure to meet the teacher's expectations will be dealt with summarily. Larry finishes his answer, on which the teacher elaborates. Nattering and wandering around will not help them get their work done in time.

The pep talk provides an official reminder of how a student should be - responsible - both for academic work and for fellow students. The student's behaviour becomes a moral issue. The teacher begins her second scolding of Adam with the statement, 'I asked you to be', then stops and continues with the reframed demand 'to do what we asked. Fold your fingers and have eye contact. Do it.' While the teacher cannot directly ask Adam 'to be' anything, she can work on his actions, his observable behaviours, where he puts his hands and how and where he directs his vision. These are reasonable demands within an ensemble of behaviour management discourses which exhort teachers to be explicit about the behaviours they require. Such imperatives also exemplify how action upon the action of others, what Foucault (1983) describes as 'government', happens in the moment by moment practices of institutions. In pep talks such as this, the school literacy lesson becomes the site of normalising practices, even as the teacher simultaneously deploys a progressive discourse of choice.

Another instance of pep talk from the same teacher two months later in the year (and Adam having transferred to another local primary school) makes it clear how the teacher's professional authority and diverse school roles allow her to work on the child across a range of fronts.

Teacher Anyway what I thought yesterday was when I came in at clean up time there was Mrs... uh, what's her name? McG. saying, 'Do this do that'. Not one person in my class was listening. I thought, this isn't my class. They know they can pack up chairs and do ordinary things. I thought, 'What is happening here?' Because you don't do that for me. Who are the best cleaners up in the school? [Students point to themselves.] Yes the very best. Who are the most ...(inaudible)... Yes, that's right. So I think we need to get those whole listening things organised. I'm not cross. I'm not saying to you I'm cross and I'm not saying I'm disappointed because you're not like that for me. I'm really impressed, but I guess I was surprised that what you are for me you're not for somebody else. So um just think about that and just reflect on that; it's not up to somebody else outside to say 'do this, do this, do this'. You know

deep down inside what you need to do. So you know deep down inside what your responsibilities are, what your responsibilities are towards each other, how you treat each other, how you listen, how you stop. How you avoid...(inaudible)...[Baby in the classroom calls out several times.] How you tidy up. It's not up to me. I think all I need to say ...(inaudible)... And it's done isn't it? And I say to a couple of people ...(inaudible)... Rosa, Zlata ...(inaudible)... making table. Edward will you be responsible for this corner and you just do it. And I come back at the end of the day when you've gone and I think, 'Gee Mark L. was very responsible with tidying that cupboard', and I look over at the making table and I think, 'Gee they worked really hard on that making table'. I don't even tell you. I just kind of expect it. And I know you will do it. And I'm very proud of you and I'm very proud of you sitting here listening to what I'm saying. We're going to begin our day with Sister C who's going to take you for a prayer and a story from our special book, because it's um one of the most famous stories in this book. This is the book that changed the lives of lots of people because it's Jesus name for sorts of ways we are and sorts of things that we do and so let's have one of my favourite stories today that. Have you had 'The shepherd and the sheep'? No Um and ah, and Sister C can read you 'The shepherd and the sheep'.

And while she's coming and maybe Judy you can go and get her darling, I'd just like to say that I thought the sorts of costumes were for every one of you without exception, were very very authentic. And I was so impressed was that five year olds six year olds and seven year olds could get up on that mike and be so articulate and say the sorts of things you say. You know your characters inside out and that was just wonderful and your parents gave you lots of support with that. Say, 'Good Morning' to Sister C.

Same lesson several minutes later

Teacher And I'd also like to say that you as a group really showed how much you valued Jenny and Jack yesterday by the kind of food that you brought. It was just beautiful. By the way you ate your party. By the way you sang for her and Jack, by the lovely farewell cake Anna made and you ate beautifully. The way you sat and you kept all your food on your plate. Nobody was greedy and it was just wonderful and I again felt so proud of you and I felt so proud of the way you listen to me when I talked about how much you meant to Jenny and Jack and I. So I guess I went away yesterday feeling very proud of those times that I was lucky enough to spend with you yesterday, so then when I saw that you were a bit sloppy at the end of the day you were forgiven, but I know that I don't want you

to do that sort of thing and I really want you to do, how you treat me and rise to those expectations. I want you to do that for other people as well, that's really important. Can you think about those things today?

In this pep talk the teacher focusses on two recent events where she has observed her students. On the first occasion she had returned early to see her class at pack up time with a relief teacher and on the second she had watched them during a farewell party for two children leaving the school.

The teacher does a number of things in this pep talk. My interest here is her statements that relate to what students 'are' and to student responsibilities. She begins by telling her class what she observed. She characterises the other teacher as saying, 'Do this and do that' and claims that not one of her students was listening to the teacher's instructions to pack up chairs and other 'ordinary things'. In these opening sentences the teacher dismisses the other teacher in that she doesn't remember her name and implies that the other teacher's instructions were not the kind she would give herself. She describes the children as 'my class' thereby connecting herself quite directly with the children. In these moves she foregrounds her ownership of the class and positions the other unmemorable autocratic teacher as an outsider.

The teacher then recalls her response to seeing her class with this other teacher. She states that she is not saying that she is 'cross' or 'disappointed', though in naming those possibilities she reminds them that she might have been and might be in the future. She signals that they are part of her repertoire as a teacher subject. She reassures students that she is 'impressed' with them, but that she is 'surprised that what you are for me you're not for someone else'. What students 'are' is her business; however, her comments signal that what students 'are' is not in itself unproblematic or unchanging. This is a particularly interesting point in terms of teachers' work and student subjectivity.

The teacher's commentary foregrounds the central role teachers have in constituting students as ethical subjects. However whether students take this subjectivity on board or simply display it as required poses a theoretical and practical problem. While she may put in place rules and expectations that construct particular kinds of disciplined subjects there is no guarantee that this repertoire will be employed by students with other teachers. Given this problem, this teacher begins to work on the students as people who can govern themselves, who do not need other people to tell them what to do. In her words, 'It's not up to somebody else outside to say 'do this, do this'. You know deep down inside what you need to do'.

As was evident in the previous pep talk, earlier in the year this teacher had made her expectations explicit and employed disciplinary practices in order to produce students who conformed. Here, however she moves to a different regime. Two months further into the year she no longer threatens cracking down very hard or specific punitive consequences. She is now for the most part 'impressed' with how they 'are' for her. Now she wants something different. She wants them to be the way they are for her even when she is not there. Here the teacher works on training of the self-regulated student who does not need anyone outside of themselves. They have self control. She doesn't even tell them, so why should they need to have anyone else tell them? They know what they need to do and how they should do it.

The student subject then is constituted not as one who will abide by teachers' expectations when asked or told, but as one who will do what they have to do because they know it and accept it as a moral responsibility. They know it inside. No threats need be issued in this pep talk. These students are already 'docile' in her presence, but she works here on another form of training, where students govern themselves because they aspire to 'be' the kind of subject their teacher constructs; they internalise the responsible student model. She can now 'just kind of expect it'. She finishes this part of the pep talk with a compliment to the class group: 'I'm very proud of you', and then exemplifies the behaviours she wants once again, 'and I'm very proud of you sitting here listening to what I'm saying'. This pep talk signals a move in this classroom from training based on outside teacher control to inside student control.

Having worked on student responsibilities the teacher moves to talk about her plans for the day. Here a Catholic discourse is introduced unobtrusively. The ethics of the New Testament Bible story merge with the self-regulating student already mentioned. The themes of 'what we are and what we do' are repeated with reference to this 'most famous' book. Simultaneously the discourses of children's literature and personal response - 'one of my favourite stories' - are invoked in the context of the religious text. These discourses conflate to produce the child of whom the teacher can be proud.

Next the teacher reflects on other recent events. The object of commentary is the recent book week activity where each child dressed up as a chosen book character and acted the part in front of the assembled school community. The valued formation of literacy on this public occasion is made clear. Students are given positive feedback for authentic costumes, for being articulate - 'the sorts of things you say on that microphone' (even though they are only five, six and seven year olds!) and that they 'know their character inside out'. Here again she returns to the inside outside theme. They were able to be 'wonderful' because of their 'inside out' knowledge of the character they had taken on.

Once again there is a sense of getting to the depth of things, knowing what the character is really like and being able to be authentic.

In this pep talk in a matter of minutes students are spoken to and spoken about in ways that outline for them an ongoing project on themselves. Publicly as a class they are assessed and found impressive: they listen, they are articulate, they know their responsibilities, they know their characters, they dress authentically in role. In this way the texts of the literacy lesson overlap and intersect, together producing the ethical student subject.

Not content to leave it there, the teacher recalls the recent farewell party and lists the approved behaviours which students displayed at that party, where they rose to her expectations:

- the kind of words - they were just beautiful
- the way you ate your party - you ate beautifully; nobody was greedy
- the way you sat - you kept all your food on your plate
- the lovely farewell cake Amanda made
- the way you listen to me

She states that she feels proud, so much so that she forgives them when they 'were a bit sloppy at the end of the day'. The teacher then exercises the power to observe and judge, to say what counts as proper party behaviour and to forgive when children transgress. Here she forgives because she knows what the students 'are for me' but reminds them of her earlier theme, 'to do that for other people as well'.

I have given this pep talk considerable attention as many literacy lessons at Banfield began with, or were interrupted by, monologues such as this. Calls for a particular repertoire of student behaviours were made throughout the literacy lesson, though not always at such length. Teachers referred to these talks on other occasions: 'Remember when we talked about'. The literacy event takes place in an ethical milieu which is produced not only by the teacher's pedagogical approach around literacy.

Teacher talk, in this location, drew on religious, moral, psychological and educational discourses and produced the literate student as an ensemble of subjectivities. The teacher voice-over and pep talks provide scripts, spelling out criteria by which self-reflective students might judge themselves - 'grids of specification' by which the student 'deep down inside' will come to know him or herself. How they eat their party food is not unrelated to the listening behaviours for stories, nor is it unrelated to what is required for good writing. All require sitting still, being in one's place in the classroom.

In a school, groups of students come to be 'Mrs E's class' or Miss D's class. When they perform in public or interact with another teacher, in a sense the class teacher is judged: 'they are Mrs E's children after all!' In this situation, children behaviours are not only a reflection of who they are themselves 'deep inside', but come to represent their teacher. Teachers are judged on the basis of students' performance at the assembly, with the relief teacher, when parents come to parties and so on. How students behave becomes central business for teachers to negotiate in making a space for academic work.

In the next transcript, taken from the beginning of the lesson in the grade three/four class the teacher's pep talk focusses on students' voices and their physical placement in the classroom.

[Beginning of the day. Students come in, sit on the mat and talk with each other for several minutes.]

Teacher Adam I can hear you over the top of other people. I'd like you to start using a ten centimetre voice which is about that long [demonstrating the distance with her fingers]. Excuse me I don't want you working on your trays now. I just asked you to get them and bring them to the floor. A fairly simple precise instruction. OK We have a new system for where we sit. Last week we changed around where we had the girls at this table here and the boys there. Now we have a card system and we are going to shuffle the cards. Gee it's good to be back everybody, particularly those people who are keeping our rules. One thing we are going to practise today is using a ten centimetre voice. Each time you speak to someone try to keep your voice down. Use your fingers to estimate ten centimetres. That's about how far your voice needs to go. If you hear me say 'ten centimetre voice' you'll know that your voice is going a lot further. The system is this. Everybody's name is on one of these cards. I'm going to shuffle them and put them in a spot. You remain in that spot for a week. Because we are looking at working together. Friendship groups are good for out in the yard. The only way you can get to know people in the class is to sit next to them listen to what they say. Now if anyone has got a black roller pen I would dearly love to borrow it. [For writing their names on the cards] When you have found your spot, which we're going to do non-verbally, and then we're going to get our trays and put them there. [Teacher puts the cards in a spot at the tables.] Now I have either put two together. Yes I have. [Student: 'I found it'.] Non-verbally. Sh. Sh. Non-verbally. That means without talking. [Children talk as they find their new places.] Stop. Non-verbally - you're not

following instructions. The instructions were to find your places non-verbally. Non-verbally that means not speaking.

In this pep talk the teacher, Ms D, works on a number of fronts in governing student behaviour. She begins by reprimanding Adam for the loudness of his voice and then asks the whole class to use a ten centimetre voice, a distance which she illustrates with her fingers. She interrupts students who have begun to tidy their trays. She didn't ask for that, only that they bring them to the floor. She comments, 'a fairly simple precise instruction'. Her opening comments address students in the physical environment of the classroom. It is a place where they must control the volume of their voices and the movement of their bodies and property. The implication is that students do exactly what they are asked when they are asked and that is all.

She then introduces 'a new system for where we sit'. She interrupts herself to comment that it's good to be back (she had been away at a conference), but she qualifies her pleasure in being back, reserving it for 'particularly those people who are keeping our rules'. Thus the compliment is redirected mid-delivery to students who keep the rules. Having been interrupted by students breaking the rules, she returns to her earlier theme of ten centimetre voices and has students estimate ten centimetres. She explains they will practise this today and that she will remind them by saying 'ten centimetre voice' if they get too loud. Here she introduces a code phrase 'ten centimetre voice', which she will use on other occasions as a reminder of this pep talk. Noise in classrooms is a perennial problem for teachers, as it is associated with issues of teacher control. As long as the quiet classroom is taken as an indicator of effective teaching, noise control will remain a central site for disciplinary action. In this instance the teacher's strategy is to specify a distance for which students' voices need to be heard.

The teacher then explains the card system for seating. She, not 'we' as she had implied earlier, would shuffle the cards (each marked with a student's name) and then place them in a spot. The students would remain there for a week. She explains her rationale for the new system: 'Because we are looking at working together. Friendship groups are good for out in the yard. The only way you can get to know people in that class is to sit next to them listen to what they say.' What counts here are working relationships. Her stated aim is to have students get to know each other in order to work together.

By shuffling a pack of cards she gives the appearance that placement of students is random and that she has absolved herself from deciding who will sit where. However as each card comes to the top of the pack she decides where to place it. It is simply the order of decision which is left to chance. The result is the separation of would-be

troublemakers and talkers with well-behaved and quiet students and the intermingling of popular and high status students with their less popular peers. Thus the class is spatially divided and silently judged by the teacher. The use of cards makes it seem as though where students sit is simply the luck of the draw rather than the result of a teacher decision. How can students argue with that? In a week's time they will go through the process again. In creating a work environment the teacher assembles individuals in the classroom space in ways which will reduce the chances of the interactions between friends and, if her plan works out, enhance the interactions of the students as co-workers.

Despite the rationale that students get to know each other by listening to what each other says, on this occasion the teacher requires they find their new places 'non-verbally'. This strategy minimises the complaints when students discover who they are sitting next to. However facial expressions still cause conversations to erupt despite the teacher's reminders. Audible groans, complaints and angry and disappointed faces are evident as the teacher surveys the classroom. Notwithstanding her attempts to prevent students' negative reactions with the instruction to find their places 'non-verbally', considerable anger simmers in the classroom as children find their places. Some students dump their trays in their assigned places and glare at their new neighbours. Popular and high status students who have been placed between less popular and lower status students begin to wave or call to their friends. The teacher repeats her instruction, 'non-verbally', until all students are in their new places.

In this pep talk at the outset of the literacy lesson, new regimes for seating and talking are put into place. The classroom is defined as a place where working relationships are more important than 'friendships groups' and where ten centimetre voices and students operating 'non-verbally' are valid teacher instructions. Part of being a responsible student involves training in sitting with and working with peers whom you might not like. The literacy lesson can now proceed.

The teacher's use of pronouns in this episode is illuminating. She begins with 'I' when giving her opening instructions. When the class is assembled on the mat in front of her she moves to the use of 'we' in referring to the new system for where 'we sit' and to what 'we are going to practise'. The use of 'we' signals the community nature of the new rules. They embrace the collective student body. The teacher then moves back to what she will do, 'I'm going to shuffle' and then outlines what each student, 'you', will do in response, 'You remain in that spot'. She then returns to the collective 'we' to explicate the rationale, 'We are looking at working together'. In the next instruction she uses both 'you' and 'we'. When *you* have found *your* spot, which *we're* going to do non-verbally

we're going to get *our* trays and put them there. The teacher's moves between 'I', 'you' and 'we' indicate her shifts between specific instructions and broader classroom rules, regimes and rationales.

The use of the collective 'we' suggests a shared agenda for decisions which were in fact made autocratically, for example 'We have a new system...'; 'because we are looking at working together. When students deviate from teacher instructions the composite student body is addressed as 'you', which simultaneously targets each individual student wrong-doer, for example 'I don't want you working on your trays now' and 'You're not following instructions'. The teacher's use of pronouns indicates an ongoing dilemma for teachers in the exercising of power in classrooms. Some educational discourses promote democratic decision-making - shared rules and collaborative communities, yet other educational discourses require student behaviour management, explicit teaching and a well-behaved population.

Teachers employ contradictory discourses in constructing contexts for literacy lessons. The relations of power which these discourses and practices produce do not disappear, nor become less relevant when the literacy agenda begins. Thus despite stating theories of literacy pedagogy which promise student empowerment, teachers' institutional positionings impact on their everyday classroom practices. The social organisation and institutional practices and beliefs produce particular kinds of student subjectivities and particular kinds of literate practices.

The pep talk which follows focusses more directly on students' work in literacy lessons and is taken from the grade five/six/seven classroom. The lesson occurs two weeks before the end of the first term and the teacher's agenda is to review deadlines and students' progress on tasks. Here I show how the discursive production of the literate student intersects with work and behaviour management discourses. At this point in the lesson the teacher has already been talking some time about the work due for submission by the end of the week. A number of students interject, claiming not to know about specific assignments.

Teacher	I don't remember asking anyone to comment yet. You've got your procedure work. Now we've started the rough drafts. I gave you some homework time and that's meant to be in good copy in your sampler books by today. It always comes around suddenly; the day that it's due you all look at me with shocked faces. Yes and we went through all this last week. How many people? Excuse me, Carlo. How many people remember? Yes. You knew you had to do it.
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Now I've talked to Mrs E. She's going to be talking to you about that today so it looks like you'll have a bit more time, but it will have to be done as well. There's another thing. Not only is there procedure writing to that, there's also the actual stitching work.

At this point there is a brief interlude where students clarify the task and some discover they have been away from school when one assignment was set. The teacher continues, reassuring them that they will get the help they need.

Teacher Just know if you weren't here the day it was happening then Mrs E. will probably give you some special attention today. OK Don't panic, if you weren't here you can't be expected to do it, can you Grant. Alright, but we'll also set someone else up to help you someone who knows how to do it. Now, all these things except for that, the biography and the autobiography work, will all be due next Friday so you've got two weeks. Have a think about how much you achieved in the last two weeks and know that all your publishing and everything has to be done next two weeks.[Students groan, 'Oh no'.] So in your, this is your task, in your evaluation book go to week three and fill in what you hope to achieve this week. You might like to think about the next two weeks actually so that you know that you're fitting it all in. Remember you've got a half an hour a day at school but you'll also have homework time and I haven't been giving you any extra homework on top of that so there's a lot of time there. How many people have been using that time? Yep, good and I know you have because you've been showing me what you've been doing. So, one, set [Student interjects: 'Your goal'.] Yep.[Student groans.] It's a shame you called out.[Student: 'Whoops'.] Set your goals for this piece of work and include the biography, OK, put that in your plan as well, because you, that's part of the work you have to do (writing on the blackboard). Um Tatiana, um Quoc can I just borrow your book, your self evaluation book.

In this part of the pep talk the teacher specifies the tasks and the deadlines, 'your procedure work', 'rough drafts', 'good copy'. The teacher uses the vocabulary of both process and genre academic discourses - 'biography', 'procedure', 'rough drafts', 'good copy'. Here composite school literacies are constructed from competing educational discourses. The teacher's focus here is time. Given that their teacher has fulfilled her responsibilities, given students homework time and reminded them, the students' right to be shocked is challenged

Overriding the literacy pedagogy again is a discourse of work. Students have 'biography work', 'procedure work', evaluation books, plans, checklists and 'things you have to get

completed this week'. They will set what they are going to achieve this week. The self-regulating student who can plan their time and achieve their goals is the object of this pep talk. Such a student would not be shocked by deadlines. The ideal student brings work done at home to show the teacher even without being asked. There is the promise of 'feeling good about yourselves' for those who get things done. Implied is that panic is the result of poor planning and poor use of time.

It is not enough for students to write a procedure or to read a biography, they must learn how to plan their time in order to produce these assignments by due dates. In constituting the literate student it is not only what students can read and write, but whether they can produce on time which counts. The formation of the literate student in this disadvantaged school involved the production of an ethical subject which requires the deployment of an ensemble of pedagogical discourses and practices. The disadvantaged child is transformed in the literacy classroom. Students are trained to plan and manage work within set deadlines, to take responsibility for themselves, their noise, their workspace, their peers. Students will feel good about themselves when they achieve these things.

I return now briefly to the transcript at the point where as the teacher waits for a student to fetch her self evaluation book, Mark raises a problem about the use of a plan in meeting deadlines.

Mark Um, I don't really stick to my plan, because I don't get much time to do the things I've got left now and I don't really feel like doing that and I do something else.[Other students joining in: 'Yeah'.]

Teacher I suppose that's your choice, so long as you know that you are, getting your work. [Students start to talk. Mark: Yeah I've, I've done it.' Teacher continues more loudly.] But there's a bit of a trap with that Mark. Often, often if you leave the things you don't like till last you've also got the least amount of energy. You've also probably got the least amount of time.

Mark [interjects] No that's not, that's not what I meant. Like um it could be something that you really like doing, but you, say it's the drawing, most people would like doing the drawing, but you just don't feel like it at that time and you want to do something else.

Teacher That's OK. I don't think that that's a problem. You might want to swap the days around so that you know why you're doing, why you're doing it.

Mark I haven't even really used it that much (the planner). I just wrote it down (...inaudible...).

Teacher Well when we're doing the evaluation Mark you can write all that down because I'd be interested to hear. Does anybody else have a different idea of whether or not this is useful? [No response] Just for my interest. [No response. Using Quoc's book explains task again.] Set here your goals for this week in language and for your biography. Yep. OK. What you hope to achieve just in those two things, that's all. I just want you to focus on that this week. 'Cos I think this is a really important week as to whether or not you get your stuff finished by next week. Right. So you rule up that page and do it on that page and then fill it in here. OK.

Here a student challenges the prescribed way of organising time and tasks - the use of a written plan, by claiming not to stick to it. Even though he may have written a task on his plan, if he 'doesn't 'really feel like doing that', he does something else. Mark asserts his right to veer away from the specified plans according to how he feels at the time. This represents a contradictory discourse yet the teacher responds with the same progressive vocabulary of 'choice', which she allows so long as he's getting the work done.

However she warns of a trap with his approach. Her strategy here is to paraphrase Mark's earlier comment. The thing 'I don't feel like doing' (Mark) becomes 'the things you don't like'(teacher). Mark, recognising that the teacher has changed his statement, interrupts and explains with an example. This time the teacher condones Mark's approach, but still suggests he records that change by swapping the days around. Temporarily on safe ground Mark next makes a more general criticism of the plan. He admits that he hasn't 'really used it that much', 'just wrote it down'. He rejects the utility of the written plan.

The teacher listens briefly and then suggests that he 'write all that down' when they're doing the evaluation. This is quite ironic as Mark has been questioning the need to write down plans; he is one of the students who regularly groans at writing goals. Now his teacher tells him to put his criticisms in writing and continues to demonstrate using Quoc's book how the students should write their goals. Thus the teacher promotes the use of writing for planning, reflection and evaluation. Being a student is not simply learning to read and write but writing to organise and record one's 'studentship'.

In this pep talk and the interaction between Mark and his teacher a version of the literate subject is constructed and contested. Here the ideal student deploys his or her literate competence in managing work deadlines. Yet students are less than inspired by setting and recording their goals. Audible groans occur throughout the audio tape. That this is a common discursive practice in this classroom is evidenced by the student's finishing the teacher's instruction: 'So, one set', with 'your goal'. These students are highly familiar

with the language of goal setting, due dates, self evaluations, checklists, planners and achievements. It is a script they know well. Some do it so well that their books can be used to show others how to do it.

The object of this training is the production of a highly self-regulated and sophisticated literate worker. The literate self-managing student records plans, achievements and evaluations - providing evidence of work habits, attitudes, success and failure. These ways of organising, monitoring and recording one's use of time are cultural and class related. While some Banfield students were familiar with some of these techniques from their out of school lives, for many this regime represented alien territory. For Mark who had transferred from another primary school at the beginning of the year it was not the only, nor the best way to do school.

What is of interest to me is the ways in which teachers draw on different discourses in producing the literate student in this disadvantaged school at this time. In other words why and how do discourses and practices of behaviour management, work, literacy, and social justice come together at this time and location and what effects are there in the construction of student subjectivity and literate practices?

To summarise, the student is constructed in the pep talk as an ethical subject who conforms to a particular set of practices and behaviours. The teacher employs psychological discourses, including behaviour management and child literacy development, a work discourse including time management, noise and movement reduction. The good student in the literacy lesson sits still in his/her place, cleans up, listens with eye contact, knows the teacher's expectations and rules and abides by them, makes the appropriate choice from a range of academic options and finishes on time.

None of this is surprising. It is school after all! What is interesting is the multiple construction of the self-disciplined student subject within the progressive discourses of choice, child development, and personal response with the contradictory educational discourse of behaviour management and the adjacent work discourse all of which come together in this local site at this time to produce the child subject, indeed to transform the disadvantaged child to the productive self-regulating literate school student. The literacy lesson becomes a site for the shaping of desired social practices and hence the production of particular kinds of young people. The pep talk becomes the vehicle for teachers to portray the ideal student. When the teacher talks in this way an ethical subject is constituted a norm against which students are required to examine their own behaviour.

7.3.4 On patrol: Surveillance of the individual

While on patrol teachers either physically move around the classroom or visually scan the class checking what individual students are doing. How teachers patrolled varied somewhat from teacher to teacher and how the classroom was physically organised in terms of tables. Some teachers patrolled often and with verbal commentary that could be heard by everyone. Some teachers sat down next to a student and checked their work. Others simply moved from table to table; others checked at a distance what was going on. One teacher often approached students silently and then leaned over them from behind in order to check their work. She placed one arm over either shoulder and read or corrected the child's writing from this position, talking to them as she did it. In this classroom I observed students looking around the room as they worked in order to check where the teacher was. Usually however instances of teacher patrol were accompanied by verbal warnings such as the examples listed below, taken from each of the four classrooms.

- Oh let's see what's happening over here. How are you going Bruno?
- Jasmine. Remember quieter voice. I'm going to come and see how much you've done.
- OK. Let's see who's started. Come on Leona.
- What did I ask you to do, Rosie, Anne?
- Adam have you started work? Would you please?
- Adrianna ten centimetre voice please.
- Right I'm coming around to see what people are doing.
- Adrianna are you on task?
- Carlo, can I see?
- Tran do you have a problem?
- Where's today's recordings? Where's the date? What have you been doing while I have been talking to Angela?
- You're going to run out of time Jessie.
- So Sophie what have you done?
- How is that singing helping you to achieve your goals?

Statements made to students by the patrolling teacher echo the themes already discussed for voice-over and pep talks, the difference being the clearly individualised and targeted nature of the comment. These themes include being on task, using a quiet voice, getting a lot done, starting straight away, achieving goals. Occasionally positive feedback is directed at specific students, but usually teachers' comments identified deviations from the required literacy behaviour. At this time teacher examined the student against the classroom norms she worked to produce.

My interest is in what the teacher sees as transgressions in literacy lessons and what this implies for the student subject. Teachers on patrol were engaged in surveillance of the individual student, their use of space and time, their productivity, the positioning of their bodies and their literate practices. Referring to illustrative examples I discuss each of these in turn.

Teacher Geoff get rid of that please. I don't ever want to see it inside again.
 It's turning into a playroom.

Teachers made many comments about the classroom as a workspace. Here a student is asked to remove a toy from his desk. Having toys in the classroom, even if simply on the desk, is an affront to the managerial discourse which has students as workers and classrooms as work environments. Toys are barred from the classroom, lest they turn it into a 'play room'. The progressivist discourses which encouraged children to bring objects from home to show, talk about and perhaps to write about is denied on this and many other occasions. There is no free play in this classroom and only rare and limited sessions of show and tell even in the younger classes. I have no wish to advocate a return to these practices; I simply observe the change in the discursive construction of the child subject.

Teacher Kylie, this is not a tray, it's a wardrobe.

Students had trays where they kept their school books and stationery. Periodically or when things were lost the teacher allowed time for students to clean out and organise their trays. On this occasion the teacher observes as Kylie cleans out her tray during the literacy lesson. In the process several items of clothing are found amongst her school things, which leads to the teacher's comment. While her comment could be heard as facetious it is just one of a litany of similar remarks about the work environment, the removal of baseball caps ('Take your hat off Charley. That can affect eye contact.'), about concern for property and using the right books. Managing one's tray is a part of proper studentship. Clothes and fashion items, a key interest of Kylie's and her peers are not the business of the classroom. These items of personal property make the tray, not a tray but a wardrobe. How the student uses property and space assigned to them by the school, such as the tray becomes an object of surveillance.

The teacher's monitoring of the classroom space can be seen as part of the whole school emphasis, triggered by the principal, on cleaning up the school environment, including the banning of graffiti from students' books, the removal of rubbish from the yard. New rules for what can be brought in to the classroom space discipline the student subject.

Objects from home, such as toys or fashion items which may be related to student identity or popular culture have no place in the official classroom world.

As was clear in the analysis of teacher voice-over and pep talks, student use of time was a continual subject of teacher talk and close monitoring. Teachers on patrol often focussed on students' use of time and warned them of the need to monitor time, 'You're going to run out of time Jessie'. It was not simply enough to look busy, as teachers actually checked how time was used by individual students. In a number of separate incidents, for example, one teacher discovered students drawing rather than writing in journal time.

Teacher It's not a drawing time Daniel, it's a writing time.

Teacher Are you drawing pictures? I said to you, 'Don't spend your time drawing pictures.' This is a writing time. And you chose to draw pictures ?

Journal entries in this classroom meant writing, not drawing. What are allowable behaviours for the literacy student come to change over time. In previous grades these children had been permitted to draw in their journals. However at this stage the expectations shift and as grade three and four students they required to write rather than draw. Also at this stage in Banfield's history children's written products became the focus of considerable anxiety as I have discussed in Chapter Six. It was not that aural and visual modes were not valued at all, but there was a sense of the urgency about making time for literacy and increasingly the stress was on students' writing. One week later again the status of drawing in the literacy lesson creates confusion once again.

Teacher These people with your hands up would you check that you have done both your draft copies and review them. If you have done all of that just do a quick picture down the bottom. What was your goal today Adam?

Adam To put in fullstops in my writing.

Teacher Have you done that?

Adam Yes.

Teacher Well you could go on with your good copy.

Adam No I'm going to do a rough sketch.

Teacher But you're ready to do your writing. That's just doubling up on your workload.

Adam I don't mind. I'll do the sketch twice.

Teacher That's saying I'm not going to be responsible for doing this writing. You're avoiding it. I want you to make a start and do that before recess.

Here the teacher reverses her decision about drawing and allows 'a quick picture down the bottom' for those who have finished everything. Thus drawing can be reinstated as a time filler for early finishers, but it must not replace writing as is clear in the teacher's interaction with Adam. Doing the sketch twice is judged first as unnecessarily doubling the workload, second as not being responsible and third as an avoidance of writing. The teacher on patrol checks on student transgressions, the improper use of time being a key target as assessed as an indicator of the irresponsible student and in need of correction.

Students' use of time was seen as directly related to their productivity. Teachers on patrol regularly asked students to account for themselves by showing their books. Lack of writing was taken as an indicator of wasted time.

Teacher Where's today's recordings? Where's the date? What have you been doing while I've been talking to Angela?

One of the most common forms of checks on students was in terms of the amount of work they had produced during a given period. If students cannot produce 'the goods' to show the teacher they are judged as having wasted time. Teachers on patrol have a similar function to a workshop supervisor in checking the output of the workers. The student output which is valued in the language classroom is writing. On this occasion the non-productive student is asked to account for her time. This form of questioning forces the deviant student to confess to their misdemeanours and of all crimes in the language classroom, non-productivity is the worst.

Teacher Adrianna on your story task please. Just concentrate on the piece of paper.

Non-productive students are often diagnosed as having concentration problems. Here the teacher presses Adrianna (who is yet to be allowed the privilege of writing in pen, as discussed above) to be 'on your story task'. The reminder is made more specific by adding the genre. The advice given to Adrianna, an outgoing chatty student is to 'just concentrate on the piece of paper'. The teacher has already individually assisted and reminded Adrianna of the task twice about thirty minutes into writing time. Earlier in the lesson she read Adrianna the list of journal rules (for example, conserving paper) and

talked with her about what she could write. After this piece of advice Adrianna asks, 'Can we write letters Miss D.?', to which her teacher replies, 'Yes, you know that.' Some forty minutes into journal writing time Adrianna had written only a few words, erased them and then written them again. She then switches from writing a story to writing a letter. At this point the teacher interrupts to set a different task. This example illustrates a common pattern of teacher interaction with regular non-producers such as Adrianna. Regular teacher reminders to be on task or to concentrate fail to make a difference to Adrianna because her problems with encoding are substantial.

Teacher Basia have you been conferenced? Have you asked anyone to help you?

As the teacher moves around the room she asks students to specify which step of the designated process they have reached. There can never be an excuse for simply doing nothing because the procedure for writing is laid out. Basia is spied not working and must account for herself. Similarly Geoff is asked to explain his lack of productivity. 'Geoff what have you done today other than drawing a circle and a square? That's really great. You've just been wandering around and disturbing others. You could have done a heading and be ready for a conference.' In the writing classroom there is always something to do. Students should anticipate the next step and keep progressing - get a conference, get help from a peer, do a heading, get ready for a conference.

Much teacher surveillance is done on the basis of where and how children place their bodies (Luke 1992; Kamler et al 1994). Schools, along with other disciplinary institutions construct norms for holding and positioning the body (Foucault 1979). Across the different literacy events the teacher observer makes judgements about whether the student is properly engaged with the task on the basis of 'reading the student's body'. At Banfield teachers became vigilant observers of their students.

Teacher Adrianna are you on task?

Adrianna: Yes

Teacher Actually your head was not down. On task behaviour when you are writing usually means having your head down.

In checking whether Adrianna is on task, the teacher explains how the body should be positioned for on task writing behaviour. A working student looks a particular way, is physically oriented to the desk in order to write. This interpretation of student behaviour again contrasts sharply with progressive whole language discourse. From a whole language perspective teachers were encouraged to view behaviours such as pauses,

chatting with friends as reasonable, perhaps as evidence of rehearsal. Teachers were not to assume that simply because the child wasn't holding the pencil no writing was going on. However on this occasion at Banfield the teacher interprets Adrianna's body as off task. Students are expected to use the time to produce and to do it as quickly as possible. When the student is constituted as worker, rather than as a developing language user, and the classroom as workplace, new rules apply.

A focussed self-starting worker is required here. There is never a point when the student has finished enough to chat with friends. The pressure to know the expected classroom process for writing and to know where you are in that process and to be able to account for your behaviour in those terms is considerable. Students must learn to describe their activities in the teachers' script. If they convince the teacher their talk is work-related and directed towards meeting their goals they are on safe ground.

Across the classrooms, positioning and directing of the body was a daily theme, as teachers physically patrolled or visually scanned the classroom. The student working at their table is expected to position the body in certain ways. Different literacy events in the classroom required specific regimens of bodily positioning. Teachers specified particular body behaviours, postures and positions for listening to stories and instructions, spelling tests, answering questions, class discussion, thinking time, working on assignments and reporting to the class (See Table 7.3.4).

Table 7.3.4 Training the literate body

Listening to a story or instructions:	
•	'People put your bottoms on the ground please.'
•	'Eye contact.'
•	'One of the rules is good listening and good listening is looking at the person who is talking. See if you can keep those brown eyes my way.'
•	'Oh Lenny you have got the straightest back in the whole room. It's just gorgeous.'
•	'Sitting up properly Melinda. Remember attitude. Sitting attitude.'
•	'Fingers folded in your laps.'
Spelling test:	
•	'Watching my face when I say the words'.
•	'Look at my lips and see the way I say words.'
Answering questions:	
•	'I'm going to look for people who are sitting up nice and straight to give in some information.'
•	'Wait up sweetie. We put our hand up so we all have a turn.'
Class discussion:	
•	'knee-to-knee'
•	'Can we look at the person who is actually speaking.'
•	Adrianna and Carly if you cannot sit up properly you'd better leave the group'.
•	'Sit up properly please boys. They listen to you. You listen to them.'

Thinking time:

- 'Put your heads in your hands and think of things that scare you. It's thinking time.'
- 'Shut your eyes. Pop your hands on the table. Heads on hands.'
- 'Put your hands down and close your eyes. Think about the shape of those words we talked about yesterday.'

Working on assigned tasks at tables:

- 'You just asked for a texta and you just looked at the cat. Is that on task?'
- 'Adrianna ten centimetre voice please.'

Reporting to the class:

- 'Stand up Adrianna. Now you're Miss D. Tell them what you learnt. See if you can use my voice.'
- 'Daniel you need to speak up in my type of voice.'
- 'Selina, if you've got something important to say, speak loudly'.

In these events there is an overall concern with children presenting themselves as student subjects, which typically entails maintaining eye contact with the authorised speaker, keeping still, sitting on their bottoms, having straight backs and adjusting the volume of their voices. Any alteration to these norms is directed on special occasions by the teacher, as in the case of the suggested poses for 'thinking time' in the junior classes. The student is to learn an ensemble of postures which display the right 'attitude'.

The literacy classroom is a confined and crowded space where one adult must manage and instruct around thirty children. In the grade five/six/seven class many of the students were physically as big or bigger than the teacher. Here personal space is scarce and noise quickly escalates. These work conditions are not separate from the disciplining of student bodies which occurs throughout literacy events. Teacher orders for student to put their bodies in particular ways can sound ludicrous out of context. They can be critiqued for their autocratic tenor. However these statements need to be considered along with the physical environment and work conditions foregrounded.

Progressive literacy pedagogy advocated more physical freedom for students, moving around the room to talk to peers, gathering with the class community on the carpet square to share a story or students' writing. These practices were regularly employed at Banfield in all classes. In language lessons this meant children spent considerable amounts of time packed closely together on the mat, listening to stories or instructions, watching the teacher write or having discussions and class meetings. Teachers then developed sets of criteria for bodily posture and positioning for different literacy events. The physical display of these behaviours was required in order for the lesson itself to proceed. The teacher did not begin reading until students were sitting still and upright. Children in the younger classes competed to have 'the straightest back', the most continuous eye contact and so on.

Older children had been accustomed to a more liberal approach in previous years of schooling and story time had meant relaxing and lying down. Now they were required to demonstrate 'attitude sitting', to show by sitting up straight that they were listening and attentive. Being 'sloppy' was out. Hence the reading lessons of progressive literacy lessons are transformed. Books are still 'shared', but within a new regimen of self-discipline and concern for others.

The management of space, time and bodies are a high priority in the primary school literacy classroom. The removal of rows of desks and bells does not remove the need to contain children in a confined space for a specified period and have them produce objects which can be examined. The language workshop must be managed just as surely as the spelling lesson or the grammar lesson. When children sit on the carpet to hear a story they must limit the space they take up and sit as though they were in a chair. When children work in groups they must control their voices. When children are assigned trays for their school materials they must treat them as the container of school objects only. The classroom remains a classroom, with constraints of space, time and bodies.

What come to count as 'appropriate' literacy practices is situationally specific. In practice then literacy events may be constructed very differently in different classrooms. For example, journal writing may be practised in various ways which are classroom specific. In addition teachers may develop their own idiosyncratic rules and regulations about how lessons should proceed, how books should be ruled up, what kinds of pens and markers may be used and so on. Students need to learn their teachers' ways of doing these mundane things. While such issues may seem trivial, they can however be the site of intense teacher checking and a significant part of the way in which a teacher seeks to establish and maintain authority.

As teachers patrol the classroom monitoring children's literate practices, they spell out how particular formations of school literacy should look. I discuss two examples of minor transgressions where the students have contradicted the teacher's expectations for a classroom literate practice.

Teacher This work shouldn't be in your journal. You're just turning it into a book that can be used for anything.

Here the teacher points out that there are specific books for specific kinds of work. The journal cannot be used for just 'anything'; it has a designated function. The student is required to demonstrate that he knows which of the assigned notebooks are for which

aspects of the literacy curriculum. This is not simply an isolated incident, nor is it restricted to this classroom. Students often had a number of books for language related assignments, such as self evaluation, draft book, journal, learning partners and so on. The logic of teachers' divisions was rarely self-evident to students. Many student questions focussed on which book should be used for which task. Students need to observe the oftentimes arbitrary, but nonetheless important, divisions of school writing into different places. Thus it not only matters that the writing is done it must be done in the correct book. Part of the literacy agenda is having the right materials at the right time and place.

Teacher Have you been told to use pen?

In this instance the teacher questions a child about whether they have been given permission to use pen. Using a pen is not something that can be taken for granted in the primary school. In this classroom using pen rather than pencil was considered a privilege, as the teacher explained to the offender. 'Adrianna I would prefer you to write in pencil. They have the privilege to write in pen when I feel they are making the effort to write and it doesn't need a lot of rubbing out'. In this classroom, whether a student is allowed to write with a pen depends on the teacher's decision. Students must measure up first, make the effort and not need to make corrections. This was a visible practice which publicly divided the class in terms of writing competence. Students commented to each other about who was and wasn't writing in pen and the teacher frequently made it an issue for public display. 'Hands up those people writing in roller pen at the moment. OK. I'm going to be looking at your handwriting.' Even students who have graduated with a 'pen license' can be demoted if their performance doesn't measure up. Being forced to write in pencil became a marker of failure in this middle primary classroom.

Individualised surveillance was unevenly distributed towards the children whom teachers assessed as problem students. Teachers on patrol identified the non-working student using a grid of behaviours, including bodily position and posture and noise production. Closer checking involved an examination of the student's work books and teachers' questions sometimes resulted in students confessing to a lack of productivity. When students are individually named and the choices they should have made are spelt out, the rest of the class hears again what the ideal student should do. Thus teachers on patrol both individualise their judgements and discipline, whilst using the public performance as an occasion to remind all students of the expected norms.

In this section I have examined the normalising practices of literacy lessons, the apparently mundane everyday techniques through which teachers manage the students to

be taught. I have suggested that through techniques of voice-over, pep talks and individualised patrols teachers work on the student subject. Through specifications of responsibilities, behaviours, expectations and goals an ideal literate student is constituted against whom others can be compared. Despite protests from teachers that their approaches were unique, there were considerable similarities in their discursive practices. However I do not wish to imply that teachers or students always operated in unified, consistent or predictable ways. In the final section of this chapter I illustrate how the literacy lesson became a site of contestation and resistance.

7.4 Contesting subjectivities

Normalising and disciplinary practices in literacy lessons discursively construct the well-behaved, hard-working self-regulating student as the ideal product of teachers' work. However the dominance of this discourse of the 'new worker' did not mean that there were no other available ways for teachers or students to be. Subjectivity is multiple and contradictory. At Banfield both teachers and students worked against the institutional constraints and disciplinary practices. I suggest that the use of humour was central to the teacher's maintaining the space for other ways of being in school. For students, direct action and continual questioning of the teacher were the main strategies in evidence.

7.4.1. Having a laugh on the literacy lesson: Teacher's humour at work

Chapter Seven suggests how disciplinary practices are deployed in literacy lessons. Indeed it may be read as a consistent discursive onslaught to which the students are subjected. However at Banfield the literacy classroom was also, on occasion, a site for humour. For instance, the teacher of the reception/one class regularly used humour as a form of commentary on school situations. Through several examples, I illustrate how humour was a key strategy of her pedagogical repertoire.

To get children's attention this teacher regularly employed a 'hands on heads' routine. The game involves children putting their hands wherever they were told, very quickly, a little like 'Simon says'.

Teacher	Everyone's nearly ready. Show and tell now. Yes we are. Hands in the air, on your knees, toes, ears, in your laps. Listen to Melinda while she reads.
---------	---

This technique becomes a signal for students to stop whatever they're doing and to listen to the teacher. A little later in the lesson the children become noisy while the teacher scribes words they may need in their journal entry.

Teacher Righty ho ratbags, hands on heads, toes, in the air, on your bottom, on your nose, on your bed.

Calling the children 'ratbags' and then asking them to put their hands on their 'beds' could be seen as ridiculous, or even as inappropriate teacher behaviour. Using the slang and derogatory term '-ratbags'- could be seen as a form of verbal abuse. However in this classroom the use of such colloquialisms in the teacher's teasing repertoire was a source of pleasure and delight and contrasted sharply with the school regime of order, seriousness and work. Changing the expected contents of the hands on heads game, by including the non-school object 'bed', demonstrates the teacher's sense of irony about the ridiculousness of many school routines. Her humour highlights the nature of her own routines and school ways of talking. It disrupts the school discourses.

Children were usually quick to 'catch on' to instances where the teacher was playing, where the classroom rules were temporarily redrawn to allow for absurdity and silliness and usually joined in with their own ideas in response. Often these exchanges were very brief. On the first morning I observed in this classroom a child was sitting on the teacher's seat when she came to sit down and begin the class. The teacher commented: 'I know where I'll go. I'll go home', and headed for the door. At her comment the offender moved and there were calls for the teacher to stay, plus lots of laughter at the very idea that the teacher could go home. 'You cannot go home. You have to stay here with us!' The teacher played along with these comments, continuing to joke about why did she have to stay and so on. These instances of non-teacher like behaviours gave both children and teacher a space to be irreverent about schooling - about teacher seats and the mandatory nature of being at school, for students and teachers alike.

On another occasion the teacher promises an early recess break, with the following proviso, 'But we have to work first'. Late in the lesson the following exchange takes place.

Gemma I've finished my whole book.

Teacher You know why? You've been on task the whole time. Hands on heads Sunshine Room. We cannot go out to recess early because people weren't really working quietly. Tidy up and down on the mat. Look at all this work you've got to do here Brian. Have you been daydreaming? Did you put your chair in?

Brian Yes.

- Teacher Is your book on your table?
- Brian Yes.
- Teacher Are you sitting on your bottom quietly?
- Brian Yes.
- Teacher Are you calling out?
- Brian No. [The bell goes for recess.]
- Teacher We'll read this page here Gemma. Our book looks fantastic. Don't you think? We're not going out to recess yet. We just can't. Do you know why?
- Student We're too noisy.
- Teacher No.
- Student It's raining.
- Teacher No.
- Student The room's too messy.
- Teacher No.
- Student It's too wet.
- Teacher No.
- Student Too noisy.
- Teacher No. Something special! A nice reason. Something special. You have to finish your work Raymond [teasing]. We've got to cut the cake up. [referring to birthday cake]

Despite her earlier promise, the teacher withdraws early recess on the grounds that people weren't really working quietly. At first students read the situation as one where their transgressions are being punished. What follows is an interaction where criteria for proper studentship are rehearsed again - chairs in, books on table, sitting quietly on bottom, not calling out. Not realising immediately that their teacher is playing a trick the children produce reasons for not being allowed to go to recess early. Here they demonstrate how well they have learnt the teacher's official expectations. Finally the

teacher then reveals her trick! She is 'keeping them in' for birthday cake. The dry unelaborated transcript does not indicate the shared recognition of a trick being played here. Some children realised early on in the teacher's interaction with Brian that something odd was going on and began to look at her quizzically. Others didn't understand the joke until the revelation about the cake.

This trick could be seen as somewhat cruel, but students in this classroom were aware of their teacher's playfulness about school routines. On occasions they reversed roles to trick her. For example, in one lesson a group of students teasingly persuaded her to spend over an hour singing their favourite songs. Seeing how long they could keep their teacher singing rather than setting them tasks was a familiar ploy. Thus students reciprocated in using humour to 'disrupt' the literacy lesson.

In this classroom the texts of the literacy lesson themselves sometimes became occasions for humour and disruption. Innovating on the story structure of *Trouble in the Ark* (Rose 1975), a children's picture book, the teacher and the class had written and illustrated two books about their classroom life, 'Peace in Sunshine Room' and 'Trouble in Sunshine Room'. The text, with original names changed, is reproduced in figure 7.4.1.

Fig 7.4.1 Trouble In Sunshine Room

One day troubled started in Sunshine Room.	(from previous column
There was total chaos.	James barked at Melinda.
There were children everywhere and so much	Melinda growled at Cim.
noise.	Cim slapped Tabatha.
Darren stepped on Peter's finger.	Tabatha squealed at An.
Peter yelled in Allan's ear.	An scratched Kasia.
Allan pulled Bruno's ear.	Kasia called Sophie names.
Bruno flicked Larry	Sophie smacked Tim.
Larry pinched Angela.	Tim dipped Darren's head in the fish bowl.
Angela kicked Rebecca.	Then Ms Campagna said, "I can't stand this
Rebecca teased Mui-Ny.	chaos any longer!"
Mui-Ny whispered to Shezza.	Just then Mrs Kelly walked in and asked,
Shezza tickled Matthew.	"What's going on?"
Matthew pushed Laura.	"We are just having FUN!" replied Sunshine
Laura screamed at Daina.	Room.
Daina poked Rose.	'It doesn't look like you're having fun Ms
Rose talked to Dzung.	Campagna. Why don't you go to the staff
Dzung laughed at Ngan.	room and have some peace."
Ngan touched Maja.	Now we'll have some peace in Sunshine
Maja punched James.	Room.
(to next column)	PEACE AT LAST.
	(Copyright Sunshine Room 1993)

The teacher had used the occasion of jointly constructing the big book to consider the way power is exercised in schools. Through the construction of a humorous text about school life the students consider the relations of power in schools and can discuss who

can say and do what and what the effects might be. In another text, *Peace in Sunshine Room* she had explored with students alternative positive ways of operating. However it is how she uses the text about trouble which is my interest here. She had just began reading *Trouble in Sunshine Room* when the principal arrived at the classroom door. After greetings the teacher asks the principal to act out part of their book - the principal's line, 'What's going on in here?'.

- Teacher Dzung sit on your bottom Melinda can't see. OK the title is 'Sunshine Room'. You're in Sean's way. He can't even see.[Teacher reads class written story 'Sunshine room'. Before we do that. (read the end of the book) I'm talking. Shush. OK hands on heads, shoulders, in the air, ha, ha tricked you shoulders, hands on heads, hands on bottoms, hands on tummies, OK and hands in the air. Say good morning Mrs K. everyone. [Principal enters the room]
- Children Good morning Mrs K.
- Teacher Say good morning everyone.
- Children Good morning Mrs K. [A lot louder].
- Principal Good morning everyone how are you.
- Children Good.
- Teacher I know. [Showing principal 'her part' in their big book.]
- Principal I'm in the Sunshine Room.
- Teacher You're in here and you come in here and you say, 'What is going on in here?' She wants to see your pictures. [Shows principal the story.]
- Principal Alright OK OK. [Read her part] "What is going on in here?" [Dramatically]
- Students We are having fun. [Reading their part]
- Principal It doesn't look like you're having fun Miss C. Why don't you go to the staff room and have some tea.
- Teacher Oh thanks.[Lots of laughing as she heads for the door.]
- Teacher Sorry about that.

- Principal That's alright.[Teacher and principal talk together and principal leaves.]
- Teacher No tickling. That's in the Sunshine Room. Or you'll all be in trouble you'll all have time out and I'll be real mean.
- Child Miss C. I think ...(inaudible)... [lots of laughing]
- Teacher OK there's ..(inaudible)... today. There's enough chaos for now. Good evening Vanessa. Julie is the best person listening easily and waiting and ready. So sensible. Don't laugh Debbie. Remember serious. You're not allowed to laugh in here. Just kidding. Right, oh are you alright ...(inaudible)...? Take your hat off and don't call out. The sun shines in that's why we're called Sunshine Room. What's going on Daniel, Dillon, please tell me. Let's get organised in here now. Poor Mrs. Comber. She probably thinks it's chaos in here.

It may be difficult to follow the above transcript. As a researcher it was difficult to record events such as this. When humour intervenes the predictable classroom scripts are missing. Further as I have suggested above transcripts provide limited portrayals of the richness of classroom life. Much of the humour and relationships constructed collaboratively by teachers and students is done through physical action.

A brief summary may provide extra contextual information. On this occasion the teacher sees the opportunity to act out a section of the class written story, 'Trouble in Sunshine Room' by involving the school principal. The principal is given her line, a line that is funny because it is the generic principal's line to a troublesome class: 'What's going on in here?' The principal joins in with little explanation. The class reply, taking their line from the written text: 'We're having fun'. The principal, reading her lines, says that it doesn't look like fun to her and sends the teacher off for a cup of tea. The teacher, acting the teacher in the text, says thanks and heads for the door, at which point the children laugh very loudly. As the teacher returns, as teacher, she says sorry to the principal. The play is over and the principal and the teacher discuss the principal's business.

This exchange disrupts what these five and six year old children already know as the usual regimes of school life. Just for a few seconds the classroom of their class made big book becomes the 'real classroom'; the real actors of their actual classroom play the roles of the characters in their big book. The absurdity of the situation and the joy in being able to play with the principal who acts the role of principal is not lost - on any of the players. By involving the principal in the script the teacher escalates the humour of the original text a little further and students get to see and their words acted by the teacher and the

principal. When the principal leaves the teacher vacillates between restoring order and continuing to play.

The children however are in 'play mode', tickling each other and giggling. The teacher returns to the theme of the book to deal with this. She threatens time out and being really mean, but she's still playing the role and a child makes a suggestion which causes more laughter. At this point the teacher decides 'that's enough chaos for now' and tries to restore order, but when a child arrives late she cannot help but quip: 'Good evening Vanessa'. She then moves back to teacher talk to acknowledge Julie's proper school behaviour. She begins to play again by teasing the serious Shirley; 'You're not allowed to laugh in here.' She follows this with, 'Just kidding', in case any one is in doubt. Next she makes another move to regain order and asks two children to tell her what's going on, the beginning of the principal's line from the book. Finally she states: 'Let's get organised in here now', and refers to me suggesting that I probably think it's chaos.

This teacher employed humour as part of her everyday practices. She slipped easily from the 'seriousness' of classroom work to the 'chaos' of play and humour, where children were given permission to be other than sensible and serious. Some children needed lots of reassurance to risk playing in the classroom. Having learnt the codes of behaviour which ensured they remained out of trouble they employed these even when the teacher tried to change the rules. These children were acknowledged and individually invited to play.

Similar themes are repeated just a week later when the teacher is acting principal in the principal's absence. In this small school being acting principal does not mean leaving the classroom for the day, but being the person who deals with any issues which might emerge in her absence. The transcript below is taken from my field notes and what was audible on the tape.

Teacher An I'm going to be mean today.

An 'Cos you're the principal.

Teacher play acts being the principal by making stern faces.

Teacher OK. Let's start off with the song we learnt this week. [She puts tape on song: 'Living and Loving and Learning'. Teacher has the words written up on the chart. Child comes to door with a message.] Because I'm the principal everyone's coming to see me.[Teacher puts on another tape.]

- Teacher What have I got here. I've got the wrong tape. [She plays it anyway and kids join in enthusiastically. Another child comes in from another classroom to get a glue pot.]
- Teacher I'm Mrs K. today. I'm not Miss C. [To visiting child, who smiles.]
- [Children ask if they can have the song again. They argue about which ones they like. Teacher puts another song on and gets her home made big book of 'Special songs.' They ask for the ones with love hearts drawn through. Sing chorus.]
- Class But of all the things
 that I can do
 best of all is saying
 best of all is saying
 'I love you'.
- Teacher points to the words as the children sing along. Teacher turns back to the chorus each time it occurs. Another teacher comes in to ask her about who went to the swimming pool every day.
- Teacher See that didn't take very long did it. See you do things fast if you're [the principal]. This is a request from Angela. Last song then we're going to do some work. [They sing song.]

The teacher lets students know she is acting principal and acts out the principal, who is 'mean', has many visitors, and does things fast. The generic principal is constituted in managerial discourses and draws on the literary archetypical hierarchical head teacher. When a second student from another class comes to visit she the class become insiders in her joke: 'I'm Mrs K. today. I'm not Miss C'. In taking on the principal's role she claims to take on the principal's identity. When she deals with the organisation of swimming with a co-teacher she comments to the class how it doesn't take long to do things when you're Mrs. K.

This teacher's humorous treatment of the traditional roles of school personnel meant that aspects of school identities and practices could be laughed at. The usual object of criticism of this teacher was the teacher herself. On many occasions throughout the six months I observed in her classroom during 1992 and 1993 she was the butt of her own jokes. Her use of humour and self-critique disrupted the very serious work agenda.

While one can observe some of the immediate effects of the teacher's discursive practices it is difficult to predict their long term effects. My observations in this classroom indicated a classroom ethos where pleasure and fun were permitted. Students became

well tuned to the teacher's 'playful' signals. Her use of humour positioned students as co-conspirators in a series of tricks and jokes. It was not restricted only to the teacher. Students reciprocated - trying to stall lessons through 'one more song', swapping cassette tapes whilst the teacher was not looking. Thus through humour, the discursive construction of the normalised and disciplined student and teacher was interrupted. A space was made for other kinds of student identities, limited still to this play time, but nevertheless a space.

These instances may seem rather trite. Yet on these brief occasions taken for granted school practices and roles are called into question. Being able to joke about these otherwise very serious matters contributed to a classroom ethos where literacy lessons became sites of pleasure. There was lots of laughter in this classroom. Often the audio tapes were difficult to transcribe due to the noise of children's laughing. This was unusual. There were few instances of laughing in other rooms in language lessons. While discourse analysis is extremely useful in demonstrating how power is exercised in classrooms it is more difficult to employ this approach in showing how teachers and students positively employ humour to disrupt disciplinary practices.

I turn now to rather different forms of resistance where students and teachers took up different positions and where students actively disrupted teacher's pedagogical regimes.

7.4.2. Students fight back

Wherever power is exercised, argues Foucault (1978), there is resistance. In the classroom power relations are dynamic and continually renegotiated (Gore 1993; Walkerdine 1989). Students may work strategically, deploying other systems of domination, gender, for example, in the classroom (Walkerdine 1989). The important point here is that there can be no easy assumptions about teachers' control or power over students. While their employment within the institution invests teachers with 'pedagogic authority' the everyday relations of power are contingent upon the relationships constructed between teachers and students (Green forthcoming). Banfield teachers as I have discussed in Chapter Six, saw management of student behaviour as a high priority. Yet historically Banfield had attracted a large percentage of students whom teachers described as living an alternative lifestyle. Parents saw it as community-based, nontraditional education.

Many of the senior class students had attended Banfield for their entire primary school life. Others had recently transferred from other schools. It was in this classroom where student contestation of the teacher's authority and resistance to disciplinary practices was

most obvious. Here an articulate group of students made their feelings known from the first week of school. This group were disappointed that their teacher from the previous year was no longer available to teach them and from the beginning they made their new teacher aware that they would have preferred someone else. In addition their class teacher had previously taught the younger grades and she was somewhat nervous about teaching the senior class, doubting both her professional expertise and her management skills. However she was appointed to teach this group in part because she had a strong reputation as a literacy educator and the principal was hoping she could lift the standards of this class, some of whom were due to graduate from primary school at the end of that year. This background is important as it suggests the ways in which power relations in classrooms are contingent upon wider institutional practices and student and teacher histories.

Transcripts made in this classroom indicate what and how students contest in the literacy classroom. I begin with an account from the teacher taken from her comments early in the school year.

They just walked off, went off, went to the office. Everything I did several of them went and complained to [the principal] or to [the secretary] about me, 'She says that we have to do this and we have to do that'. And it seemed as if learning, the responsibility for learning, the responsibility for their own behaviour was *my* problem. The responsibility for how they treated each other was *my* problem. So often I said to them things like, 'Look if I had wanted to be a private detective I would have gone out and done that. I don't think I should need to follow you up. Like I...But I trust you. And I mean if we decide as a community and agree that we need a bell and if we set up structures for a roster for that bell then that's done, it's no longer my responsibility. Things like the garden were being used for, oh, an excuse, an excuse to waste time.

The teacher's assessment demonstrates that student opposition was public. Unhappy with the first weeks of their school year students took complaints directly to the principal and the secretary. In the classroom they used a number of strategies, some of which I have described in previous discussions of Mark, to fight against the systems their new teacher tried to put in place. The discussion below occurs early in the morning. The teacher has just completed the roll, lunch orders, messages and so on and is ready to get into the lesson.

- | | |
|---------|--|
| Teacher | This morning before we get into the rest of the workshop... |
| Mark | Workshop? [Interrupting the teacher who has turned to write on the blackboard '1. 1. Did I achieve my goal? 2. Why/ Why not 2. Set Today's Goal 3. Cartoon'(Text on blackboard)] |
| Mark | Why have you got '1 1 2 2 3' ? |

Teacher [Teacher explains her numbering system for the different tasks]
Simple. Is that OK? Anyone got problems with that?

Only several minutes into the lesson the teacher has already been challenged twice by Mark. I have already discussed Mark earlier on in this chapter (see 7.3.3). In this lesson he again takes the teacher on directly in disputing her professional discourse and her numbering of the text she has written on the board. The teacher does not respond to his first comment, but explains her logic for the blackboard numbering. She concludes her explanation with a comment: 'Simple' and asks if anyone has a problem with that. This comment constructs Mark as the one with the difficulty rather than herself.

In this short exchange both Mark and his teacher attempt to exercise power over one another and in so doing the rest of the class. Mark disrupts the lesson flow and questions the teacher's authority and competence. The teacher works even harder to keep the lesson going and to construct Mark's behaviour as problematic in front of his peers. The teacher continues to explain the tasks for the lesson, writing a self-assessment of yesterday's goals, writing today's goals and discussing a cartoon which she has copied for them. When the students go back to their desks there is a ripple of questions goes around the room: Which book do we have to do this in? What do we do first? What do we do with the cartoon? As the teacher explains that they do tasks one and two in their self evaluation book a number of students, including Mark, Tran, Tatiana, Sophie, and Julia are chanting 'self evaluation' over and over so that it can be heard by other students around them. The teacher may not hear as she continues her explanation about the tasks and then apologises for not telling them what goes in their self evaluation book and what goes in journal. The teacher is patient and takes all questions seriously.

She then begins to patrol the room to check how different students are progressing on the tasks. As she passes one desk she picks up a piece of paper from the floor near Julia. Before the teacher says anything Julia comments critically, 'That's my book mark'. The teacher offers her a piece of coloured paper to make a new one. It seems as though everything the teacher does is the subject of criticism. As I sit at the tables with the children I hear their complaints about the task, said loud enough for the teacher to hear as she passes by.

Damien I forgot what I have to do.

Tatiana Where do you stick this? I don't like this. Do we have to do this?
There's not enough time.[Tatiana starts to talk to Mark about
international test cricket]

Teacher Right you've got ten minutes left. [There is a rush at this announcement and many audible groans except for Mark and Tatiana who continue to discuss the cricket.]

Tatiana is an able and articulate student and her reluctance here does not indicate a difficulty with academic work. She is part of a group of students who actively resist what is asked of them by their new teacher. This group of children from diverse cultures and language communities form alliances and contest the teacher's educational discourse and practices through direct questions, criticism and by continuing to talk about out of school subjects which interest them and connect them with each other, including cricket, video games and popular songs. As the teacher approaches the table with bundles of newspapers and magazines, Tatiana asks for an explanation. As she does so, the other students at the table continue to talk about other topics.

Tatiana What's newspapers and stuff got to do with language workshops?

Teacher 'Cos we're going to look at some punctuation. [Julia asks to read words in my writing and asks me to help her with the cartoon and what it means. She says that she finds it difficult to get the point of the poem. Joel and Damien and Benjamith talk about BMX bikes and SEGA.]

Joel Copying disks is very illegal.

Julia I want some story writing time. [Julia starts to sing a pop song.]

The struggle for power in this classroom continued. As the teacher prepares the materials for the next task a student is already alert and obstructive. Taking on the teacher's discourse she asks about the relevance of 'newspapers and stuff' to 'language workshop'. The teacher continues to answer the substantive content of the question and shows no signs of being intimidated by the continual questioning of her competence, although her comments in interview indicated that she was extremely unsettled by her early weeks with this class. In her presence and mine the students continue to talk about topics not related to the task at hand and to make comments about the nature of the lesson. For example Julia states that she wants 'some story writing time', when no one responds and her comment is addressed to no one in particular she begins to sing a pop song.

These students give their new teacher very cool treatment; further they do so conscious of my presence and my research focus about literacy. As the teacher gathers them together on the mat again to discuss the next task, investigating how punctuations is used in

different texts, the principal arrives to explain how library time will work. A number of students ask if they can go with her then and there, just one more affront to their teacher. The lesson proceeds however with all the children remaining, the teacher pushing on with the next task. She finishes explaining what they are to do.

Teacher Do you all understand the task?

Students Yeeesss [Drawn out and exaggerated]

As the students return again to their tables to work in groups the teacher writes the instructions for the task on the board so that students can refer to it later. Back at her desk Tatiana is ever vigilant and says loudly enough for the students at her table and for me to hear, 'What is that? Write so that we can actually understand it.'

These challenges in the early weeks of the school year occur as the teacher tries to construct a working relationship with the students. It is at this point where student strategies for resistance to the teacher's exercise of power are highlighted. In these early weeks the groundrules and values are contested material as students and teacher negotiate a new deal (see also Edelsky et al. 1983; Kamler et al. 1994). In this class, students used a range of strategies to dispute the teacher's professional expertise as a literacy educator, targeting her vocabulary, the logic of blackboard notes, the task, the time for the task, the relevance of tasks, the genres, her interactive style and her handwriting. However their resistance should not be seen as simply a personal response to the new teacher. They resist the teacher's regime for them as students and they contest the formation of literacy produced by the literacy program.

Students contest the 'language workshop', its name, its content and its process. Their statements and questions indicate that self evaluations, journal entries, studies of punctuation, discussing cartoons are not the kinds of activities they want to do in language workshop. 'Story writing time', mentioned by Julia, was a common request. Thus the students work against the version of literacy their teacher offers them. In broad terms the teacher seeks to formalise the literacy lesson by naming it 'language workshop'; she plans phases of activity within the two hour period with time limits; she requires that students plan and self evaluate on a daily basis; she sets explicit tasks with immediate consequences.

In these early lessons we see her attempting to put into place what she describes as 'that kind of working mode'. As she organises students' time, place and activity within the language workshop the literacy lesson becomes a site of disciplinary practice. These students resist by continuing to talk about cricket, computer software, BMX bikes and

singing pop songs, by not meeting deadlines, by questioning her pedagogic authority and curriculum competence and by mocking her professional discourse. Their comments suggest they know better ways of teaching literacy. This resistance was not an isolated incident as I have illustrated elsewhere.

Yet this teacher continued to have high expectations for her students and to employ pedagogical techniques with which they were initially unfamiliar. She continued to answer their questions and take their challenges seriously. When she believed that she could trust students to work and to follow the rules they had decided upon, she began to open up the time and space of the literacy classroom to students' agendas and suggestions. At the same time she maintained her attention to productivity, correctness and to the unpopular self evaluation. She continuously required that students performed in ways of which she believed they 'could be proud'. For their part these students continued to view their teacher with some scepticism and they continued to question her professional decisions. Yet they began to deliver the written work to the 'standard' their teacher required and to initiate with enthusiasm projects which they could do as a class. When she was seconded to another position in the middle of the year they overtly expressed their feelings of disappointment at her leaving. Having taken on her goals and aspirations after considerable and ongoing struggle, they were less than accommodating with her replacement teacher.

7.4.3 Disrupting the discipline

Teachers worked hard at Banfield to make the space and time for literacy teaching. In some cases according to the teachers this required training students in new regimes of self-regulation and order. However, the emphasis on productivity, goal-setting, quality, time management and self assessment was not uncontested by teachers or students. While teachers' discursive practices repeated these themes through techniques of voice-over, pep talks and patrols, both teachers and students disrupted this new regime of managerial discourses and practices which threatened to limit who they could be as teachers and as students and to constrain the pedagogical relationships they formed.

7.5 The Banfield student - Self-regulating, on task and socially responsible

Theories and policies about schooling require that teachers do many things, but what teachers' work actually does is difficult to address through empirical investigations in classrooms. In the present study my questions concern what teachers' work - their talk, actions, writing, watching, touching, silences - does and how children are constituted as students in these sites. How does what happens in literacy lessons delimit who students

can be? Teachers' everyday pedagogical practices are both constructed by and construct the school environments in which they and their students 'live'.

In particular localities and points in history certain ensembles of discursive and institutional practices are employed together and produce specific social effects. Teachers' work is the production of 'good students', however they might be defined at a specific historical moment or location. How was the 'ideal student' constituted in literacy lessons in this disadvantaged school at this time? In what ways do teachers' discursive and institutional practices produce student subjectivities and identities? Further, what are the effects of these practices?

In this disadvantaged school serving poor communities in the early nineties teachers worked on the production of hard-working, self-regulating, socially responsible, literate students. Indeed much teacher time in literacy lessons was devoted to disciplinary practices, focussed upon the student as an ethical subject. They scrutinised students' use of time, talk, work habits, bodily attitudes and whether they infringed on the rights of their peers.

Foucault (1979) explains how disciplinary practices are employed in institutions to produce the modern individual through the detailed management of time, training and space.

The workshop, the school, the army were subject to a whole micro-penalty of time (lateness, absences, interruptions of tasks) of activity (inattention, negligence, lack of zeal) of behaviour (impoliteness, disobedience) of speech (idle chatter, insolence), of the body ('incorrect' attitudes, irregular gestures, lack of cleanliness, of sexuality (impurity, indecency). (Foucault 1979, p.178)

In modern institutions the individual is monitored closely and correct training is administered to normalise deviant behaviour. Foucault identifies key instruments of power as hierarchical observation, normalising judgement and the examination. In this chapter I have employed a Foucauldian analysis of teachers' discursive practices during school literacy lessons. In considering teacher voice-over, pep talks and patrol there is consistent evidence of minute by minute teacher surveillance and judgement of student activities, behaviours, bodies and use of time. In addition, exhortations are made for the student to manage themselves - to act responsibly, to check themselves.

Modern schools are subject to legal restrictions and inherit architectural constraints which maintain their historical function in terms of social regulation and surveillance of young people. The apprenticeship of young people into literate practices happens alongside their

training in institutional behaviours and societal responsibilities. Ultimately teachers work to shape students' identities in specific ways and not in others.

At Banfield, teachers' discursive practices constituted the ideal literate student as hard-working, productive and socially responsible. However what is meant by these words in different contexts requires critical analysis.

Socially contested words get caught up with different Discourses - different ways of being in the world, different forms of life, different integrations of words, deeds, values, objects signalling different social identities. (Gee & Lankshear 1995, p.11)

In scrutinising how discourses are employed in different locations and their effects, Gee and Lankshear point to the need to check who gets the opportunities to do what kinds of learning, who misses out, who gatekeeps and how.

Different constructions of (self-directed) learning and knowledge produce different outcomes in terms of who benefits from and or is disadvantaged by them, and in what ways. It is always of the greatest moral, educational, and political importance to keep open the question: what are the consequences, and for whom, of organising learning and knowledge in *this* way as opposed to *other* ways? (Gee & Lankshear 1995, p.15)

A key problem for teachers is to anticipate these social and material effects. By employing a discourse of work alongside others, such as quality, behaviour management, social justice and critical literacy what is produced and how can teachers predict the consequences? What is needed are ways of analysing the consequences of discursive and pedagogical practices.

If we accept that literacy has malleable social, political and cultural consequences, then our focus has to be on developing ways of discussing the possible material consequences and narrative outcomes of particular plottings of the literate subject. (Luke forthcoming)

An unresolved question for literacy educators concerns the identity formation of the disadvantaged school student. How can Banfield teachers know what their taking up of these contradictory discursive practices and positions will do in the lives of their students? What difference will undertaking critical text analysis or setting goals or meeting deadlines or sitting up straight in grades one to seven make in students' life trajectories? If students take on these identities and employ the discourses that go with them, what does teachers' work do and what else might it do? If different communities are introduced to different literacies and have different levels of capital, on what basis can teachers and school communities make decisions about the literacies which count?

At Banfield, and perhaps in other disadvantaged school contexts, the pressure to hear new discourses, try new solutions is intense. At the same time the risks of ignoring 'the basics' reverberate. When teachers see themselves as advocates for disadvantaged

children they may be particularly susceptible to discourses of innovation and change. In communities already named as disadvantaged, a problem is always in search of a solution. Thus discourses of literacy promising empowerment offer hope for teachers in poor communities. Literacy becomes the problem rather than poverty. If the children are made successful within school, like the 'enchanted workplaces', to which Gee and Lankshear (1995) refer, then surely success will follow them and their communities will be transformed. These can be seen as the 'folk theories' (Ogbu 1987) of teachers who work in disadvantaged schools. Teaching in disadvantaged schools makes everything urgent, every new competing discourse a possible answer. New techniques for student management, moves for accountability and standards, equity, mandatory reporting of violence and abuse, critical literacy, book week, all happen together and have a different impact than they might on a middle or upper class school.

Literacy can be alienating if teachers ignore students' subjectivities, subjectivities which are different from their teachers (Brodkey 1992). Banfield teachers and administrative staff made statements attesting to their valuing of student difference, both in terms of culture, race and class and also of individuals as unique. Yet the literate subject constituted in everyday classroom discourse was less accommodating of difference. Literacy lessons involved serious work and commitment from students. Teacher priorities were on lifting the standards in terms of productivity and correctness. Writing was the desired outcome. Students were required to be self-regulated and responsible, to be able to organise themselves to meet deadlines. Student literacy is the intended outcome of teachers' work and at the same time it is an apparatus of control; literacy is essential for productive school work. Literacy is in fact students' work.

Teachers have institutional authority over children, yet simultaneously other discourses define them as serving children, meeting children's needs, empowering children. Achieving higher targets for school enrolment numbers involves re-constituting children and their parents as clients. Of central concern to this chapter is the question of how educational discourses produce a particular kind of subject? How do these discourses limit who students and teachers can be? Which discourses are employed in local sites and in which combinations and to what ends? Under what conditions has the urgency of childhood literacy become possible? While it is possible to consider the immediate construction of subjectivity through discourse analysis, understanding long term material and social consequences will require additional sociological tools and further empirical work over extended periods of time.

If, 'there is no guarantee that literate cultural capital, however apparently necessary for success, is sufficient for it', then some citizens may be denied access to certain futures

(Luke forthcoming). The absence of other aspects of symbolic capital - social or economic - makes the literacy cultural capital an insufficient entry ticket. School literacy does not come as a separate package but along with behaviours, tastes, attitudes, life styles, and discourses. Literacy is not simply about text interpretation and construction. It is also an instrument of ordering one's life, setting goals, planning, recording and self-monitoring. Teachers work at more than just literacy. They construct potential citizens.