

*Anything but the Ideal Speaker Listener in
Anything but a Homogenous Speech Community*

A study of communication through the medium of lingua franca English

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Submitted to the University of Limerick, July 2016

Dedication

Dedico todos estos años de trabajo a la memoria de Manuel Fernández Sanjurjo. Echo de menos la sonrisa de aprobación al contarle cosas sencillas o enseñarle cosas sencillas, como por ejemplo un árbol que plantemos en la huerta. Hoy, más que nunca, echo de menos esa sonrisa de aprobación.

Abstract

Anything but the Ideal Speaker Listener in Anything but a Homogeneous Speech Community

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This thesis characterizes the English spoken as a lingua franca by a community of asylum seekers, none of whom spoke English as a native language, and it examines how they use this lingua franca to interact with the English-speaking staff and with one another in the reception centre in which they live.

The methodological tools and techniques of ethnography, corpus linguistics and conversation analysis are harnessed in a synergistic, cyclical blend.

The ethnography, influenced by the work of Goffman and Hymes, highlights the troubled histories of the residents, including accounts of alleged persecution in their native countries, their flight to perceived safety in Ireland, and their new institutionalized lives, all which impacted on their daily communicative behaviour. Newly-arrived residents made a bigger effort to talk, but the routine of everyday life gradually undermined their communicative efforts. However, this routine and daily social practice also led to the manipulation and economization of language. For example, adjacency greeting pair parts, routinized through daily social practice, were manipulated for use as requests.

The analysis of recorded and transcribed data, using methods associated with corpus linguistics, and following parameters set by McCarthy (1999), presents a picture of a notably reduced language system - the lingua franca used by the residents.

The last two chapters focus in detail on the pragmatic use of the language at the disposal of the residents. It is argued that at the micro level, the residents exploited to the maximum, discursively and semantically, *yeah* and *okay* and other minimal responses in combination with pauses, silences, intonational contour, pitch and intensity, to negotiate their way through difficult interaction with the staff of the centre, and that at the macro-level such strategy camouflaged the lexicogrammatical limitations, minimized the impression of disfluency, and allowed the residents to maintain subliminal control over the trajectory of talk. It is argued that the residents, in interaction with one another, maintained the orderliness of turn-taking, principally due to mutual collaborative support and recourse to the natural to and fro of communication.

Acknowledgements

Away alone so long from academia, I thank my immediate family for being such a creative replacement. The dinner-table talk regularly focussed on Grammar and linguistics in our own *lingua franca*, and while Owen introduced me to semiotics, and Hugo to the importance of active listening and minimal response, everything always brought us by *commodus vicus* of recirculation to Chomsky and *la estructura profunda*, as Eugenia calls it.

Away alone so long from academia, I thank my supervisors, Dr Anne O’Keeffe and Professor Michael McCarthy, not only for welcoming me back into the fold, but for welcoming the lateral creativity. I feel privileged to have had them as my supervisors. Their body of work is, to use the word in its original sense, awe-some. But it is their humility, that *happy in their skin* vibe that has inspired me most.

I am grateful to Dr Eugene O’Brien, Head of the Department of Language and Literature at Mary Immaculate College, for his patience and assistance, and I acknowledge his genuine concern for students in his department.

I would like to give special thanks to Mr Pat O’Riordan of the Department of Justice for giving me permission to undertake the study, for facilitating my work and giving so much support to a fellow Corkman.

I would like to thank the staff of the Reception and Integration Agency, the catering companies, the HSE and the local Vocational Education Committee for initial and on-going support during my period of ‘residence’ in the particular reception centre for asylum seekers.

I would like to thank Sandra Gorman, Lorna Cunningham, Dr Owen Harrington Fernández, and especially Hugo Harrington Fernández for initial help organizing the transcriptions.

I acknowledge the External Examiner, Professor Steve Walsh, and the Internal Examiner, Dr Brian Clancy

For ethical reasons, the name of the location of the study and all the names of the participants have been anonymized. It is a shame that I cannot acknowledge each one of the participants in writing as some of them had wished, but hopefully those with whom I am still in contact will pass on my gratitude. They know how grateful I am to all of them for answering my questions and allowing me to record their conversations in the midst of the ordeal of living in confinement and waiting for *the* decision.

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Chapter One

Introduction

A basic social arrangement in modern society is that the individual tends to sleep, play and work in different places, with different co-participants, under different authorities, and without an overall rational plan. The central feature of total institutions can be described as a breakdown of barriers ordinarily separating the three spheres of life.

Irvine Goffman (1961)

1.1 Background

Ireland received only 39 applications for asylum in 1992.¹ The figure rose steadily during that decade, coinciding with the boom period in the Irish economy known as the Celtic Tiger. In the year 2000 Ireland received applications from a total of 10,938 non-nationals. One of the most pressing problems to be addressed with regard to the large number of asylum seekers - defined by the 1996 Refugee Act as persons who are awaiting a decision on an application for refugee status according to the terms of the 1951 Geneva Convention - was where to accommodate them whilst they went through the legal process. The terms *asylum seeker* and *refugee* are frequently used indiscriminately, leading to further misunderstandings. It is therefore useful to clarify the difference. An asylum seeker, according to the Reception and Integration Agency (RIA) of the Department of Justice, is

a person who seeks to be recognised as a refugee in accordance with the terms of the 1951 Geneva Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees and the related 1967 Protocol, which provide the foundation for the system of protection for refugees generally.²

A refugee, on the other hand is defined in the Refugee Act, 1996 as

a person who, owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his or her nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself or herself of the protection of that country; or who, not having a nationality and being outside the country of his or her former habitual residence, is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to return to it.³

Crucially, while refugees (those who have been awarded asylum) live freely in Irish society and enjoy the same rights as Irish citizens, asylum seekers live in direct provision centres where food and lodging are provided. Their rights are limited as they are not citizens of the state or refugees. Contact with wider society is minimal, as they are banned from working and given an allowance of only €19.50 per week. Contact with wider society is even more limited if the

¹ Office Refugee Application Commissioner 2010.

² http://www.ria.gov.ie/en/RIA/Pages/Helpful_Advice_FAQs

³ <http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/1996/act/17/enacted/en/print>

centre in question is not within walking distance of urban centres, as in the case of the Dun Cluain Centre, where the present research is situated.

While it may be apt to label refugees as a marginalized group in much the same way as we label the Travelling Community, that is, if their rights are infringed or if they suffer social slight, the same process may not follow with asylum seekers. Although they are restricted situationally in reception centres, and excluded in this way, they cannot be said to be marginalized in society in the normal sense of that sociological term, because, during their stay within reception centres, they do not have any normal citizenry rights. Marginalization is a multi-layered concept and there have been many debates and protests about the situation of asylum seekers and human rights, and while the opinions of the residents of the Centre themselves may be heard in the ethnographic and linguistic analysis, this researcher respects the request of the RIA (on conceding permission to undertake the study), to avoid reference to direct provision policy or comment on the living conditions of the residents. This study may be classified under a number of fields, such as linguistic anthropology, but sociopolitical analysis and comment will be avoided.

In November 1999, in response to a lack of accommodation in the Dublin area, the Government announced its intention to ‘disperse’ asylum seekers to locations outside the capital city. Since then large numbers of asylum seekers have been resettled outside Dublin. The accommodation provided is generally in shared hostel-type centres, under the direct provision scheme, on a full-board arrangement. The Department of Justice also decided ⁴to build special three system-built accommodation centres and the first of these came into operation in Dun Cluain⁵ on the borders of a large city. The Centre⁶ filled to its capacity of 350 within months.

In the same period the Department of Education and Science made a commitment to develop a national adult education framework. In its White Paper on adult education – *Learning for Life* (2000), it recommended that asylum seekers be allowed free access to adult literacy provision, English language classes and mother culture support. This enabled a local education authority to appoint an English Language Training Coordinator at the Dun Cluain Reception Centre. I was the coordinator at the Centre between 2002 and 2005. The position evolved from English language training coordination into full adult education programme coordination and the

⁴ See Committee of Public Accounts 4/12/2003 www.oireachtas.ie/documents/committees29thdail/pacddocuments

⁵ Anonymized name of the area after which the centre is named.

⁶ Note I use Centre (capitalized) when referring to the Dun Cluain Reception Centre.

management of funding schemes. The position gave me the opportunity to gain direct access to an adult population which fluctuated between 150 and 200 residents over the three years I worked in the Centre. None of the residents spoke English as a native language. Their nationalities and the principal languages that I documented figure in Table 1.1 below.

Table 1.1 Nationalities and languages of the Dun Cluain residents

Nationality	Language	Nationality	Language
Algeria	Arabic, French, Berber	Kenya	Swahili, ESL
Angola	Portuguese, Kikongo, Lingala	Kuwait	Arabic
Benin	Edo, English	Latvia	Latvian
Bulgaria	Bulgarian	Liberia	Kreyol, ESL, Kreyol, Vai, Kru
Burundi	Rundi, French	Morocco	Arabic, French, Spanish, Berber
Cameroon	French, Bulu, Pidgin	Nigeria	Yoruba, Igbo, Hausa, Edo, EL
Croatia	Serbo-Croatian	Pakistan	Urdu
DR Congo	French, Lingala, Kikongo, Tshiluba	Poland	Polish
Egypt	Arabic, Coptic	Rwanda	Ruanda
Ethiopia	Amharic	Rumania	Rumanian
Eritrea	Amharic	Russia	Russian
Fiji	Fijian, ESL ⁷	Sierra Leone	Sierra Leone, Krio, ESL
Ghana	Twi, Ewe, ESL	Somalia	Somali, Arabic, Italian
Jamaica	Jamaican English	South Africa	Zulu, Afrikaans, ESL
India	Urdu	Sudan	Arabic
Iran	Farsi	Togo	Ewe, French
Iraq	Arabic, Kurdish	Ukraine	Ukrainian, Russian
Kazakhstan	Russian	Zimbabwe	English, Ndebele, Shona

1.2 Rationale

The Centre provides a rich ground for linguistic, sociological and anthropological study. The focus here is on the communicative interaction of people who do not share a common language through the medium of lingua franca English. I have always been interested in the human capacity to interact, especially in the context of linguistic, pathological or environmental limitations. My experience in cross-language situations tells me that people will communicate no matter what the limitations. As Watzlawick *et al.* (1967) say, ‘one cannot *not* communicate.’

⁷ ESL = English as a Second Language. Only one speaker (A Jamaican female) spoke English as a first language. All the other residents, mainly Africans, who spoke English, had a tribal language as their mother tongue. Similarly, those spoke French or Portuguese, spoke a tribal or indigenous language as their mother tongue.

Additionally, there is a paucity of research on the use of English as a lingua franca in non-pedagogical, natural contexts, or in contexts in which speakers have a broad range of levels – from the very basic level of those who have knowledge of only a few words and phrases to the more advanced levels associated with speakers of English as a second language. At the outset it is important to establish that the term *lingua franca* is conceptualized and employed here in the sense of the reduced vehicular language that the residents of the Dun Cluain Centre *use* in real-world interactions (which is what is being investigated here), and which contrasts, as Firth (1996: 241) points out, with the more ideologically-fused cognates such as ‘foreigner talk’ and ‘interlanguage talk’, which connote *a priori* ‘incomplete or deficient communicative competence,’ with the speaker ‘putatively striving for the “target” competence of an idealized “native speaker”.’

1.3. Research field and framework

The major concern for linguistic enquiry for Noam Chomsky (1957, 1965, and 1975) was the cognitive language competence of the ideal speaker-hearer in the homogenous speech community. Its study, he maintained (1965: 3) did not require empirical data because these contained material or *performance* errors associated with ‘grammatically irrelevant conditions’. In the early 1970s objections began to materialize against the marginalization of performance, principally from Dell Hymes, an anthropologist-sociolinguist who had already been developing an analysis framework (1962) – the Ethnography of Speaking – to study both homogeneous and heterogeneous speech communities. Hymes (1972) formulated his theory of communicative competence as the knowledge necessary to use language in social contexts, later elaborated on and redefined by other researchers, particularly those involved in the field of English Language Teaching (ELT), such Canale and Swain (1980), Canale (1983), and Savignon (1997). The concept of *pragmatic competence*, ‘the ability to communicate your intended message with all its nuances in any socio-cultural context and to interpret the message of your interlocutor as it was intended’ (Fraser 2010: 15) came to the fore in the work of Faerch & Kasper (1983), and especially Bachman (1990), whilst the importance of the co-construction of meaning and the exploitation of resources mutually and reciprocally was established by Kramsch (1986) and further developed by He and Young (1998) and (2003).

The cognitive and environmental context of the residents of Dun Cluain bears no resemblance to Chomsky’s idealization, principally because none of the members of the community speak

English as a mother language. Speakers then cannot be asked to report on introspection. The situation is also very different from the idealization of communicative competence by Hymes *et al.* in relation to both societal and pedagogical contexts. The members of this multilingual community are not language learners in the formal sense and most of them, as will be seen, are not learning English with the typically associated instrumental or integrative motivations. Similarly, the speakers are not part of ‘normal society’. They are disenfranchised immigrants living in conditions that Goffman (1961) associated with what he called a ‘total institution’.⁸ They do not have control over aspects of life which others take for granted: they cannot eat what they want and have no decision in what their children eat; they cannot get up when they want, and they have to request supplies of basic items such as toiletries. Others dictate and control their daily movements and activities: they have to sign in at a reception desk every day, otherwise they will be evicted; they have to request permission to participate in certain activities. Their rooms are searched. They cannot have visitors after 11pm.

The present research lies within the field of general linguistics, and more specifically, in the field of studies of interactional competence (especially in relation to the collaborative interaction among the residents themselves), but as insights from other fields of research such as sociology, psychology, sociolinguistics, psycholinguistics and applied linguistics will prove to be invaluable to the analysis of the atypical linguistic and contextual situation of the residents of the ‘total institution’, the whole study could be situated within the realm of linguistic anthropology.

For this reason, I will adopt a multi-framework research approach, principally comprising of a synergistic cyclical process of investigation which combines ethnography, conversation analysis (for the blend of corpus linguistics and conversation analysis see Walsh, Morton and O’Keeffe (2011) and O’Keeffe and Walsh (2012), Clancy (2011) for the blend of corpus linguistics and variational pragmatics, and Cogo and Dewey (2012) for the blend of corpus linguistics, conversation analysis and ethnography). It is sequential but also cyclical: the ethnographic analysis provides the initial contextual clues of communicative patterns; corpus linguistics (more of a research tool rather than a framework) identifies specific frequent (and also non-frequent) language items that aid and abet these patterns, and conversation analysis

⁸ See 4.2 below for elaboration on the concept of ‘total institution’ and the ethnographic work that Goffman undertook in Elizabeth’s Hospital in Washington DC in 1955.

reveals how exactly these frequent items behave in interaction and how they contribute procedurally and semantically. I journey back and forth from one framework to another in constant interdependent macro- and micro-analytical elucidation.

1.4 Outline of the study

The overarching concern in Chapter Two, the literature review, is the contextualization of the lingua franca spoken by the residents in the Dun Cluain Centre. It is contextualized with reference to the term *lingua franca* itself in sociolinguistics, with reference to acculturated or ‘nativized’ varieties of the language, and with reference to the controversial concept of English as a Lingua Franca. I also include a section on Irish English given the geographical location of the Dun Cluain Centre, before embarking on a review of studies of the use of English as a lingua franca in communities of speakers of other languages, which is prefaced by consideration of the concept of community and terms used in the literature to refer to units of linguistic analysis. This is followed by a general review of communicative competence, with specific focus on the concept of interactional competence, which is more concerned with how the resources that are available to interlocutors are used mutually and reciprocally in the co-construction of meaning. The chapter ends with a brief review of the concept of Second Language Acquisition (SLA), without prejudice to the fact that this is a study of the *use* language.

In Chapter Three, I review the methodological and theoretical frameworks of this study, comprising principally ethnography, corpus linguistics and conversation analysis. This review will include an introduction to the data used in the study, with an explanation of the process of data collection and the important issue of ethics. A cyclical blend of the three methodologies has been used in the thesis and I explain how this process works. Reference is also made to issues of reliability, validity and generalisability, and to the fact that the ethnography deals with a community with no one common culture or language and that the conversation analysis is applied to a reduced lingua franca. There is also a brief review of exchange structure and discourse intonation.

In Chapter Four, *Contexts*, I uncover the background of persecution and flight of the asylum seekers through their own words, collected by means of ethnographic interviews. Such background information, and consideration of the schematic knowledge of the residents, is vital

to an understanding of their communicative activity and their use of English. Additionally, employing a generalized three-fold framework of the ethnography of communication, I describe the communicative activities and practices of the residents under the headings of speech situations, speech events and speech acts as a prolegomenon to the more detailed linguistic analysis that follows in the remaining chapters.

In Chapter Five, *Words*, the typical techniques of corpus linguistics - word frequency listing and keyword analysis - will be used to characterize quantitatively the lingua franca used by the multilingual and multicultural residents. This detailed analysis will provide information on the core working vocabulary of the residents, and it will gauge the corpus for the presence of common components of spoken English as per McCarthy (1999). I will also examine the corpus for the use of clusters, and I then switch the focus to points of morphology, considering the expression of past time by the residents, specifically their use of regular and irregular verbs and their use of the third person singular present tense morpheme. Finally the word frequency lists of the corpus of lingua franca English is compared with CANCODE, in order to identify key items, and the frequency lists of three sub-corpora of different speech situations (negotiation, transaction and casual interaction) are examined with the purpose of informing the final two chapters which analyze the use of the lingua franca in detail.

In Chapter Six, *Negotiations*, I analyze the interaction in the Education Office, focusing now on how the residents negotiate their way through long exchanges in the requestive process pertaining to the application for funding. This chapter features a preliminary review of discourse markers and minimal responses, especially the items *yeah* and *okay*, as these will feature strongly in the analysis. The main focus of the chapter is on how minimal responses, not only facilitate turn by turn sequences, but also how they facilitate a level of control of the trajectory of the interaction.

In Chapter Seven, using conversation analysis as the research framework, I analyze how the residents successively interact with one another in the face of linguistic difficulties and deficiencies, non-access to the shared schematic knowledge of a common cultural, and issues of racism that emerged in the Centre. I will show how the residents succeed in the co-construction of meaning by mutual and reciprocal collaboration.

1.5 Limitations of the study

This was a study in one reception centre at one point and time. The conditions of this particular centre were unique in that it was the first system-built reception facility in Ireland and the first to have a full-time education coordinator. Most other centres were located in large towns and in former hotels, which gave the residents certain freedom of movement and the possibility to interact with local people. The Dun Cluain Centre was located in a rural area, offset from the main road, affording the residents little opportunity to interact with local Irish people. It is therefore inadvisable to generalize with respect to the situation of other centres. When I use the word *situation*, I refer to the use of English by the residents to interact with one another and with staff. As mentioned previously, I cannot comment on the sociopolitical aspects of the asylum seekers in the Dun Cluain Centre. The conclusions reached, therefore, will refer to the English used by the residents of one particular centre as they interacted with one another and with native-English speaking staff.

Because of the context and setting and community of the present study, the members of which had fled from persecution, and many of whom considered themselves still to be in danger, it was not possible to video the interactions. This constituted an important limitation, given that gaze and gesture, for example, which played a significant role in the communicative styles of the residents, could not be analyzed in detail. Detailed ethnographic field notes were taken, but these can never substitute for filmed interaction.

Although recording equipment was placed in various offices and in the reception area of the Centre, I had to take detailed notes of conversations that took place in other areas, especially in the canteen and corridors, *post factum*. Therefore, this discourse was only used for the description of speech situations in the ethnographic section of the thesis (Chapter Four) and not in the corpus that was used for analysis of the residents' discourse. Some of the residents had also agreed to place recording equipment in their rooms and record whenever a conversation took place. However, these conversations, when played back, were found to appear choreographed and also too intrusive, so only one of them, a short conversation was included in the corpus of the discourse exclusively pertaining to the residents.

It also important to bear in mind that not all the residents of the Centre were observed or recorded, although 50% of the total adult population do appear in the analysis. Similarly, I was

not able to record or observe all interactions – such as those of meetings that the residents had with lawyers, social workers and medical personnel. Although permission was given by the Centre physician to record visits of his ‘patients’, and many of the residents agreed to be recorded in such interactions, I decided that these would be too intrusive and would interfere with the work of the physician and inhibit the communication of the ‘patient’. Permission was also given by the Community Welfare Officer to record transactions, but this was withdrawn after a ‘rehearse’ recording.

The study was further encumbered by the delicate nature of the asylum application process. The residents of the Centre were careful with the information that they gave so that it would not undermine their applications for asylum. At first, some of the residents felt that I would transmit the information I received from them to deciding officers in the Department of Justice. However, after about six months in the Centre, the residents accepted me as an independent educator and researcher. I managed to build rapport with the residents by helping them with the redaction of their asylum applications, by playing sports with them, by having breakfast and lunch with them, and by going on excursions with them. However, despite such rapport, I was not a full member of the community - by which here and henceforth I mean a group of multilingual and multicultural asylum seekers living in the same institution while their applications for asylum were processed.

It is an evident difficulty of the study that the conversation analysis, within which framework it is commonly assumed that the analyst can make observations based on co-membership and ‘use information which we have as members of the same society’ (Sacks 1992: 116), is not carried out by a co-member of the community. No matter how integrated I was in the community I cannot make assumptions that are commonly made in conversation analysis. I cannot make ‘intuitively plain observations’ (Jefferson and Schenkein 1978: 170).

But what makes this study unique is that neither can the residents make assumptions, while they are engaged in interaction, that are based on typical co-membership. They cannot draw from the shared schematic knowledge (Bartlett 1926) associated with one unifying language, culture or ethnic identity (Fought 2002). And while it is possible that the residents prepared for their meeting with regard to negotiating financial funding (Chapter Six), their responses as they interact with other members of the community (Chapter Seven) are realized on the fly, so to speak. They are influenced in the way they talk by their own languages and cultures, and

perhaps by a possible universal motivation to collaborate in interaction; but their interaction is also impacted by the unifying bond of the experience of fleeing their countries (for whatever reason) and the experience of temporary confinement in the same architectural structure. Limitations of space and scope obviate an exposition of all the cultural and linguistic backgrounds of the residents of the Dun Cluain Centre, thus the ethnography chapter will focus on this bond of the experience of flight and the experience of confinement, in order to inform the reader, to express it common parlance, *where the residents are coming from*. The corpus linguistics chapter, on the other hand, will focus on the linguistic bond, which is the use of a reduced form of English as the vehicular language. It is hoped therefore that this inter-informational triangulation of methods will counteract the limitations to some degree.

1.6 Research questions

The main questions investigated in the five analytical chapters are:

1. What are the characteristics of the English the residents use?
2. How do the residents use this English to interact with the English-speaking staff in the daily communicative situations and events?
3. How do the residents use this English to interact with one another?

The study may also provide insights into other areas of linguistics and communication, and as such the following associated questions will also be considered:

- Are there any insights for research methodologies?
- Are there any insights as far as lingua franca communication are concerned?
- Are there any insights for the concept of interactional competence?
- Are there any insights for the concept of language universalism?

Chapter Two

Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

This literature review will focus primarily on the use of English as a lingua franca. I begin, however, in Section 2.2, with a review of the concept of Englishes, with special reference to acculturated or ‘nativized’ varieties of the language, given the presence of speakers of such varieties in the Centre. I also include a section on Irish English given the geographical location of the Dun Cluain Centre, notwithstanding the consideration of Irish English as an inner circle native-spoken ‘variety’ which, as Crystal (2003: 336) states, ‘is usually considered alongside Great Britain when investigating English language use’ (although see O’Keeffe (2012) and Barron (2008) with regard to more recent tendencies to view Irish English in the context of international varieties of the language). In Section 2.3, I will consider the use of English as a lingua franca, prefaced by a review of the term *lingua franca*, as used in sociolinguistics. In Section 2.4, I will refer to studies of the use of English as a lingua franca language in communities of speakers of other languages, prefaced by a short section on terms used in the literature to refer to units of linguistic analysis and studies of the use of English in other communities in Ireland. In Section 2.5, I provide a general review of communicative competence, with specific focus on the concept of interactional competence. Finally, in Section 2.6, I consider the relevance of the study and concepts of Second Language Acquisition (SLA) for this thesis.

2.2. Englishes

English can be considered a veritable global language not only because of the increase in the number of speakers - 1.5 billion at the beginning of the 2000s according to Crystal (2003: 2-6) - but also due to the fact that over 100 countries in the world consider it a priority subject in their education. Even a country such as Algeria (a former French colony) has replaced French with English as the main foreign language studied in the schools (Crystal 2003: 4). Additionally, English is the main language (or lingua franca) of the Internet, and it is used by business-people and academics to consult with one another. Crystal (2003) points to this spread and growth of English around the world, not only in countries where the language is spoken by native speakers, but also in post-colonial countries such as India and Nigeria, and in countries where it is learned as a foreign language, as the determining factor in the use of the term *new Englishes* to refer to the new varieties. Given the presence in large numbers in the Dun Cluain

Centre of people from the former colonies of Great Britain (Nigeria, in particular), I will focus here on what are known as ‘nativized’, ‘acculturated’ or ‘indigenized’ varieties.

2.2.1 Nativized Englishes

Kachru, (1965,1981, 1990), Bailey and Robinson, (1973), Kandiah (1998), Modiano (1999), Schneider (2007), Strevens (1980), Quirk, (1985), Phillipson (1992) Pennycook (1994) McArthur (1987), Canagarajah (1999 and 2006) Bolton (2006), and Jenkins (2006) have all researched the indigenized, nativized or acculturated varieties of English emerged or emerging in territories for the most part influenced by the United Kingdom or the United States. The research has principally been undertaken in the fields of linguistics, sociolinguistics and applied linguistics, but the discussion has taken on a political tenor as well in some of the work and research being done.

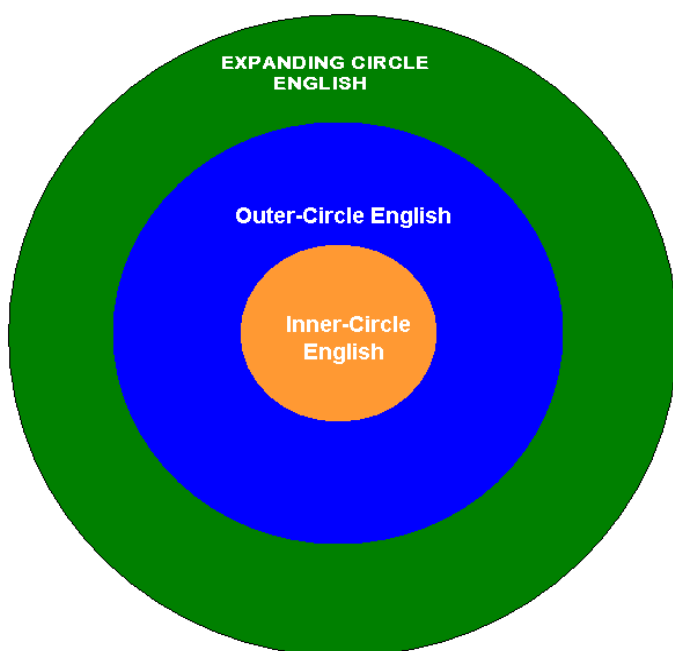
The adjectives *indigenized*, *nativized*, and *acculturated* refer to the influence on English of cultural, lexicogrammatical and phonological systems of the indigenous languages of the people who speak English as a second language. The terms *World Englishes* and *New Englishes* are now commonly used to refer to the varieties spoken around the world and reflect the plurilinguistic and non-ethnocentric nature of the language. Bolton (2006: 240) identifies the term *World Englishes* as ‘... an umbrella label referring to a wide range of differing approaches to the description and analysis of English(es) worldwide.’ On the other hand, ‘new (without the capital letter) Englishes’ tends to be used to describe English in the former colonies where it is now spoken as a first language – America, New Zealand, Canada, and Australia, whereas ‘New Englishes’ is used for the variety spoken as a second language in the former colonies where it is spoken as a second language. Kandiah (1998:9) associated these New Englishes with the following continental regions, naming the particular variety after the country where it is spoken:

- Africa
 - Kenyan English
 - Nigerian English
- South Asia
 - Indian English
 - Lankan English
 - Pakistani English

- Southeast Asia
 - Filipino English
 - Malaysian English
 - Singapore English

Researchers such as Strevens (1980), McArthur (1987), Modiano (1999), have outlined models of such Englishes which capture the spread and variation of different varieties around the globe, but it is Kachru's model of three concentric circles (1992) which has been the most influential, despite the fact that some scholars (Canagarajah, 2006; Jenkins, 2006b; Pennycook, 2003; Seidlhofer, 2004) believe that the new complexity of global English and geopolitical changes render the model unfit for purpose. The circles in the model (see Fig. 2.1), according to Kachru (1992: 356) 'represent the types of spread, the patterns of acquisition, and the functional allocation of English in diverse cultural contexts' (1992:356). In the 'Inner Circle' Kachru placed native speakers of English from the United States, The United Kingdom, Canada, Australia and New Zealand. In the 'Outer Circle' Kachru (ibid) placed people from the former British colonies who 'represent institutionalized non-native varieties.' In the 'Expanding Circle' he placed people who are learning English and where the language has no official status. The Outer Circle and the Expanding Circle correspond respectively to countries where English is spoken as a second language (ESL) and to where it is taught as a foreign language (EFL).

Figure 2.1 Kachru's Expanding Circles



As mentioned previously, some scholars see the model as unfit to describe the nature of present day New Englishes. Canagarajah (2006: 3), for example, says the circles ‘have now started leaking outside their borders,’ by which he means that it is no longer possible to limit people to the specific circles as Kachru has done, due to both historical and current migration and the fact that modern technology connects people using different Englishes who would not normally come into contact. For example, many multinational call centres are now located in India and native speakers of English from the UK and the USA interact with these outer circle speakers.

The pluricentric perspective of New Englishes and varieties has immense implications for the teaching of English, and the globalization of English does not occur in a social vacuum and raises numerous political, ideological and economic issues. However, what most concerns the present thesis (given the number of speakers of nativized varieties of English in the community) is the linguistic characterization of these varieties.

Although the varieties are quite diverse, Platt *et al.* (1984: 2-3) considered they have the following elements in common:

1. They have been developed through the school system.
2. They have been developed in area where English is not the main language spoken by the majority of the population.
3. They are used for a variety of functions.
4. They have become localized or nativized by adapting phonological and lexicogrammatical features of autochthonous languages.
5. The levels of deviation in comparison with Standard RP English include phonological, lexicogrammatical, idiomatic and discourse variations

As most of the speakers of English as a second or nativized language in the Centre come from Nigeria, Liberia and Ghana, in the next section I will describe variations in West African English.

2.2.1.1 Phonological, lexicogrammatical, and idiomatic variations in West African English

In this section I will focus on West African English as most of the speakers of English as a second language in the Centre came from this region. The following classification of variations was sourced in Jenkins (2003) and Swan and Smith (2006) and only includes those variations that I noticed myself in the community.

Phonological variations (which particularly annoyed other residents in the Centre) include:

- /tθ/ is used for the dental fricative / θ/
- /dð/ is used for the dental fricative / ð/
- Devoicing of final /d/, /v/ and /p/ takes place
- There is little distinction between long and short vowels: /i:/ pronounced as /ɪ/ for example
- The full vowel is used in final unstressed position instead of schwa in RP English
- Certain diphthongs are monophthongized (for example *take* > *tek*)

As most indigenous West African languages are tonal - different tones change the meaning of words, patterns of intonation across utterances are rare except for the rise on yes/no questions and a fall on wh-questions.

Grammatical variations of West African speakers of English include the following features:

- Progressive forms commonly used for stative verbs.
- Infrequency of the present perfect.
- Omission of the third person marker - /s/ - of the present simple is omitted.
- Rare contraction of *I will* and *I am going*.
- Confusion between countable and uncountable nouns.
- Confusion between *little* and *few*.
- Variation in the meaning of phrasal verbs.
- The use of *he* and *him* for females as well as males.
- The use of the plural reflexive pronoun (*themselves*) instead of or confused with *one another*.

Lexical variations include:

- *Caravan* for *tent*
- *Tight friends* for *close friends*
- *Storey-building* for *skyscraper*
- *Actually* – used for agreement
- *Aunty* – used for an older woman
- *Can* for *do* in questions
- *Compound* for *buildings*
- *Free woman* for *prostitute*

Despite the foregoing classification of variations, it would be wrong to think that even at the level of national Englishes there might be homogeneity. The case of Nigeria, of special interest in this study, illustrates this point. Brosnahan (cited in Bamgbose 1992:149), describes different ‘gradations’ that at one extreme resemble standard British English and at the other are ‘limited to a few words of a pidgin variety.’ He described four levels:

Level 1: Pidgin, spoken by those with no formal education

Level 2: Spoken by those with primary school education

Level 3: Spoken by those with secondary school education

Level 4: Graduates - close to standard English

Banjo (cited in Bamgbose 1992) also identifies four levels and describes the characteristics of each. The use of deviations similar to those described above, such as the reduced vowel system, the use of *he* for either *he* or *she*, the pluralization of mass nouns, the different use of verbs and phrasal verbs and even the different use of words in context, such as *sorry* when somebody sneezes, depend, according to Banjo on the level of English that people speak. In the Dun Cluain Reception Centre, two broad levels of Nigerian English were noted – one which was at a high accuracy and fluency level, but with the deviations described above still present, and the other which was pidgin Nigerian English, which the speaker spoke fluently, but the native English speaking staff and other residents struggled to understand.

2.2.2 Irish English

A consideration of Irish English is germane in the context of the asylum seekers living in Ireland, although the latter, in the context of the Dun Cluain Centre, had little interaction with wider society, and had in most cases learned the English they had in other English-speaking countries before coming to Ireland. The residents were reluctant to speak about this, as such admission (if it were transmitted to the Department of Justice) could have compromised their applications for asylum, as such application is only permitted in the first country visited by an asylum seeker after fleeing his or her country. Because of the delicate nature of this matter, therefore, I was reluctant to delve any further, but it was obvious to me, even though some residents had only minimal control of English, that lexical, phonological and pragmatics aspects had been picked up in the United States and in the United Kingdom.

English was brought to Ireland by Anglo-Norman knights toward the end of the 12th century, but it did not supplant Gaelic until after the more intense phases of conquest and colonization which took place between the early 17th century and the late 18th century. Ireland, officially, was incorporated into the United Kingdom by the Act of Union (1801), and it remained so until the War of Independence ended in 1921, at which point the country was divided into the 26 Irish Free State Counties, and the six Ulster Counties which stayed under the rule of Great Britain. Despite many campaigns by successive governments to reignite the Irish language, it is spoken as a native language only by circa 30,000 speakers in the Gaeltacht areas of Galway, Mayo and Donegal in the west of the country. While the influence of the Irish language on Irish English is undoubted (see for example Greene 1979, Kallen 1990, 2004 and Hickey 2000), it is important to note that despite initial resistance of Irish English to shifts in the language taking place in England (such as resistance to the great vowel shift), a process of supraregionalization (Hickey 2013) - the substitution of vernacular terms by standard forms - made the variety more palatable to external communities. Hickey (2016) assumes that a similar process has pertained for other varieties of English as well and thus has helped limit the differences. Another future possible linguistic and cultural influence will come from the languages of immigrants from Eastern-European countries granted access and free movement in the countries of the European Union in 2004, in particular Polish, considering that the 2001 census showed 123,000 living in Ireland at the time (see Diskin and Regan 2015 and Hickey 2016).

2.2.2.1 Differences of Irish English

There are several phonological differences between Irish English and RP English, and there are even gradations of these differences within Irish society itself dependent principally on sociolinguistic variation (Hickey 2007). The principal difference, and one which is similar to that found in Nigerian English, is the pronunciation of the dental fricatives /θ/ and /ð/ as /t/ and /d/ respectively. As far as vowel sounds are concerned, one of the most noticeable differences is the shortening of the long vowel /ɑ:/ to /æ/ in words such as *glass* and *path*.

Lexical differences abound, not only with regard to RP English, but also from region to region within the country. The words *bold* and *naughty*, for example vary in meaning with regard to their use in RP English, and words such as *sleveen* (a person who is sneaky), and *poteen* (illegal alcohol), show direct influence from Gaelic.

One of the most noticeable grammar differences is that of the Gaelic influenced construction of the preposition *after* followed by an –ing form, instead of the English present perfect (see Fillupa, 1999, McCafferty, 2004, Ronan 2005 and Hickey 2007). Other studies such as those by Kallen (1991), and O’Keeffe and Amador Moreno (2009) highlight more specific uses of this feature.

As mentioned previously, O’Keeffe (2011) and Barron (2008) have signalled more recent tendencies to view Irish English in the context of international varieties of the language, and O’Keeffe (ibid) especially signals those facilitated by the collection of corpora of Irish English and technology tools used in corpus linguistics.⁹ Much research has been undertaken in the past 15 years, some of which looks at the English used by ‘newcomers’ and the presence of features of Irish English in their discourse. As mentioned, many of these studies have availed of corpora, and correspond principally to the fields of variational pragmatics and sociolinguistics. In addition to those studies mentioned in the previous paragraph, Cacciaguidi-Fahy and Fahy (2005), Binchy (2005), Kelly-Holmes (2005) and Martin (2005) focus on Irish English in institutional settings, while Farr (2005) concentrates on teacher discourse. O’Keeffe and Adolphs (2008) look at the use of response tokens in Irish English discourse.

⁹ 1. The International Corpus English- Ireland (see Kirk *et al.* 2003)

2. The Limerick Corpus of Irish English (see Farr, Murphy and O’Keeffe 2004)

3. The Corpus of Irish English (see Hickey 2007)

Many of these studies have focused on pragmatic differences in Irish English, such as what appears to be a greater tendency toward indirectness (for example Farr and O’Keeffe 2002; Kallen 2005 and 2013; Farr, Murphy and O’Keeffe 2004; Barron 2005; Keating and Martin, 2007, Barron 2008). Farr and O’Keeffe (2002) found that the hedges *I would say* and *I’d say* are twice as frequent in Irish English than American English, while Clancy (2005), also examining the frequency of hedges in Irish family discourse found that *like* was the most frequent hedging item. Barron (2008) looking at possible differences in request structure (using discourse completion tests) between Irish English and English English, found no difference in the choice of head act strategy,¹⁰ both tending towards conventional indirectness, although there was evidence that Irish requests used a great degree of external modification through syntactic modification. For a more expansive review of the pragmatics of Irish English see Vaughan and Clancy (2011).

Murphy (2010), within the fields of sociolinguistics and variational pragmatics, uses a corpus-based approach to study pragmatic features among Irish women of different ages, although she does not specifically refer to Irish English as being the focus of the study. Clancy (2011), in the field of Irish English variational pragmatics, demonstrates how corpus linguistics can complement such investigation in his study of hedges in a settled Irish family and in a Traveller family. Nestor, Ní Chasáide and Regan (2012) found that the use of *like* by the eight Polish participants (one of whom had been living in Ireland 55 years, one over 35 years, three of the participants up to six years, and three up to four years and all but one employed, and all of third level education) in their study corresponds to that of native speaker usage. Migge (2015), looks at the use of the item *now* in the English of newcomers (from France, Finland, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain and the UK), and establishes that while temporal usage was prominent (see Clancy and Vaughan (2012) for the usage of *now* as a feature specific to varieties of Irish English), all other uses (as a discourse marker included) accounted for less than 10% of its total usage. Diskin and Regan (2015) examine the acquisition of discourse pragmatic features of migrants in Ireland, focussing on recently arrived Polish and Chinese migrants and native Dubliners. They pose pertinent questions in relation to the effect of the migratory experience on second language acquisition, and the effect the length of stay,

¹⁰ See Blum Kulka and Olshtain (1983) for the terminology and coding adapted by Barron from what is known as the Cross-cultural Study of Speech Act Realization Patterns (CCSARP)

gender, education and nationality. The average CEFR level of the participants was B2 – and of 41 non-Irish participants, 14 were at Level C1 (advanced and proficient users of English).

2.3 English as a lingua franca

Before moving on to the topic of English as a lingua franca, I will diverge briefly to review the definition of the original term *lingua franca*. As far as the origin of the term is concerned, there are varying explanations. According to Trudgill (2000), the term *lingua franca* originated as the literal description ('French language') of the form of Provençal used by the crusaders. Knapp and Meierkord (2002:9) on the other hand maintain that the term *lingua franca* referred to a variety that was spoken along the South-Eastern coast of the Mediterranean between the 15th and the 19th century.

While Hudson (1996:8) speaks of historic lingua francas used as trade languages, Trudgill (2000:132) says that a modern lingua franca is 'a language that is used as a means of communication among people with no native language in common.' Crystal (1997) makes the point that lingua francas exist in communities where there are many mutually unintelligible languages in contact, as in Africa and South East Asia. Thus, languages such as French, Spanish, Portuguese and English serve as lingua francas in post-colonial situations in countries such as Nigeria, where 50% of the population of 126.5 million speak English as a second language, but none speak it as a first language (Crystal, 2003:109), and where there are hundreds of mutually non-intelligible tribal languages (see Blench, 1998).

Wardhaugh (1998:55) includes an element of obligation:

People who speak different languages who are forced into contact with each other must find some way of communicating, a *lingua franca*.

and touches on the political agendas (see also Phillipson 1992) when pointing out that lingua francas such as Latin, Spanish and English have been used in a more premeditated fashion, for example, by missionaries from various European countries operating in Africa and South America. Lingua francas are also used to exclude – for example by physicians who wrote prescriptions in Latin and the elite classes in Russia in the 19th century who used French. An important point made by Wardhaugh (2003) is that lingua francas can be spoken in a variety of ways. Greek and Latin, for example, spoken as *lingua francas* across Europe, were not

homogenous entities, and English itself serves as a native language, a second language, a foreign language, a lingua franca in a multilingual community or country and a global lingua franca for business people and the lingua franca of the Internet. Thus language use may vary from the very basic to the native level.

This leads me towards the definition of the original term by scholars interested specifically in the field of study of English as a Lingua Franca (ELF) as a separate variety of English. Jenkins (2007:1) says that essentially ‘a lingua franca is a contact language used among people who do not share a first language, and is commonly understood to mean a second (or subsequent) language of its speakers.’ She points out that historical lingua francas – she lists trade languages, pidgins, and jargons - had no native speakers, whereas English, which is used as a lingua franca in politics, academia, business, and on the Internet, does, thus creating a problem for the definition of English as a lingua franca and raising the question of whether native English speakers be accommodated within a definition. Firth (1996: 240), for example, excludes native speakers from his definition:

A ‘contact’ language between persons who share neither a common native tongue nor common (notional) culture, and for whom English is the chosen *foreign* language of communication.

House (1999:74) also points to ELF interactions by participants ‘for none of whom English is the mother tongue.’ Seidlhofer (2004:211-212) warns that ELF can involve members of Kachru’s inner (native) and outer (second language) circles and is therefore not limited to the expanding circle of learners and speakers of English as a Foreign Language (EFL), although she advises that research on ELF should not include too many native speakers in order not to corrupt the data, that is, to avoid confusion between emerging ELF forms and native English. Seidlhofer (2005: 339 – emphasis in the original) says that ‘when English is chosen as the means of communication among people from *different* first language backgrounds, across linguacultural boundaries, the preferred term is “English as a lingua franca” ... which is being shaped at least as much by its nonnative speakers as by its native speakers’ (see also Jenkins 2000).

After the publication in 2000 of Jenkins *The Phonology of English as an International Language*, the debate that centred around ELF being considered qualitatively different to English as a native language with the implication that the former could be used as a teaching

model, has continued to the present day (see also Young and Walsh 2010 on preferred varieties for teaching).

Jenkins (op.cit.) introduced the concept of ‘The English Lingua Franca Core’ (LFC), segmental and suprasegmental phonological features that obstruct intelligibility in lingua franca interaction. Her intention (Jenkins 2007: 23-23) was on the one hand to promote intelligibility, but on the other hand ‘to encourage acceptance of those pronunciation features that are regularly and systematically pronounced “incorrectly” and found not to impede intelligibility for an NNS listener.’ The (empirically-based) core features considered necessary for ELF intelligibility are listed under EFL Target below, and those that are considered non-essential to intelligibility but nonetheless a target for students of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) are listed under EFL Target.

ELF Target

1. Consonant sounds except voiced /ð/ and unvoiced /θ/; and dark *l* /ɫ/
2. Vowel length contrasts (e.g. the difference between the vowels in ‘pitch’ and ‘peach’)
3. Aspiration after /p/, /t/ and /k/
4. Word initial and medial consonant clusters
5. Nuclear (or tonic) stress production/placement (Adapted from Jenkins, 2000)

EFL Target

1. Vowel quality except for the vowel sound in RP ‘fur’
2. Consonants in (NS English) clusters separated by the addition of vowels (e.g. Japanese English ‘product’ as *peroducuto*), as well as vowels added to consonants at the ends of words (e.g. Korean, English ‘luggage’ as *luggagi*)
3. Features of connected speech such as elision, assimilation, weak forms
4. Consonant sounds *th* (e.g. German English ‘think’ as *sink*), and dark *l* (e.g. in French English, the ‘l’ in ‘hotel’ pronounced by raising the tip rather than the back of the tongue)
5. Word stress placement
6. Pitch direction

Seidlhofer (2004) also listed deviant grammatical items of speakers of English as a Lingua Franca in response to Jenkins’ on common core phonology. The following forms are, Seidlhofer claims, usually unproblematic:

1. Omission of the –s morpheme from the third person of the simple present
2. Omission of the article
3. Treating *who* and *which* as interchangeable
4. Use of the infinitive after certain idiomatic expressions (which take –ing in native English)
5. Using *isn't it?* As a universal tag question.

Subsequently, Seidlhofer (2001a, 2001b, 2003, 2004, 2007, 2010), Jenkins (2000, 2005, 2007, 2009), Mauranen (2003), Guido (2008), Cogo (2012) and Dewey (2013) became the main proponents of separating this ‘English’ from mother tongue English as a variety in its own right and researching its characteristics and uses. Those who reject such a stance, that is those who defend the continued relevance of English as a native language, include Sobkowiak (2005), Rubdy and Saraceni (2006), Prodromou (2006, 2008) who signals (2008: 28) the conflation of terms used by Jenkins, as an appropriation of ‘the discourse of WEs to the rhetorical position of ELF,’ and Snowden (2012), who argues that the ELF paradigm still manifests theoretical (in the sense that it has not been defined ontologically) and practical limitations, that English continues to serve as a unifying force in the post-colonial context and that a comprehensive picture of the entity has not been expounded.

According to Jenkins (2009: 202), there are two principal positions: those (‘business people, technicians and suchlike’) who see ELF as non-controversial, versus those (‘scholars working in the field of WE’) who argue that ELF is monolithic, and those who say it lacks standards and contains mistakes (constituted by departure from native norms).

Unfortunately, there is evidence of circular hegemonic and anti-hegemonic polarization in the deliberations of both sides that vaticinates interminable debate. The ELF side seems to deviate into linguistic naiveté by promoting ELF as a superior alternative to so-called native-speaker norms. Jenkins *et al.* (2011: 282), for example, cite the Lingua Franca Core research of Jenkins (2000) to support the argument that native English pronunciation is not a guarantee of intelligibility in ELF contexts, a position which clearly flies in the face of the evidence provided over time by many linguists to refute such claims (see for example Labov’s study (1976) on African American Vernacular English, the same author (1982) on the Ann Arbor case and see also Trudgill 1975: 26). Sweeping statements inherent in claims such as Jenkins’ (2009: 210) ‘ELF also contains forms that differ from ENL and that have arisen through contact between ELF speakers’ also diminish general credibility.

Evidence for the other side straying into the territory of emotional antipathy, which is probably related to the prospect of such changes being adopted in English language teaching (an accusation which Jenkins (2009) refutes), is seen in the pronouncements of Sobkowiak (2005: 121), who talks of ELF pronunciation 'bringing the ideal into the gutter,' and Prodromou (2006: 412), who calls ELF a 'broken weapon'.

An example of the circularity is Jenkins' claim that the other side is anglocentric, forgetting that English is the language of ELF, and that any language that is used as a lingua franca in transient communities will probably exhibit deviant features that prove to be non-fatal for communication and may be exploited by speakers for interaction (see Jordan and Fuller 1975). This is, I contend, where the veritable research interest of lingua franca studies lies (and not just in English as a Lingua Franca): in the 'discursive accomplishment' (Firth 1996) of the speakers of particular communities in their negotiation of meaning. This 'processual turn' (Canagarajah 2007: 924) which constitutes greater focus on interaction has, fortunately, now begun to be espoused by the supporters of ELF as evidenced in Cogo (2012).

Firth (1990, 1991, 1996, 2009) has provided positive and insightful reflection on English as a Lingua Franca by highlighting the interactional achievement of Danish cheese wholesalers and Middle Eastern and European customers using English as a 'contact language' (1996: 240) while negotiating on the telephone. I will elaborate on his findings on interactional achievement in the next chapter when I deal with co-construction in turn-taking. Here, it is his reflection on the entity of English as a lingua franca that is pertinent to the present review of literature. His conceptualization of the term *lingua franca* is vital for this thesis as it corresponds to how the term is conceptualized and used here. I reproduce the conceptualization in its entirety:

As a conceptual categorization, however, the 'lingua franca' epithet does have some advantages, particularly when contrasted with more ideologically-fused cognates such as 'foreigner talk', 'interlanguage talk', or 'learner interaction'. For in contrast to these latter-mentioned categorizations, the term 'lingua franca' attempts to conceptualize the participant simply as a *language user* whose real-world interactions are deserving of unprejudiced *description*, rather - as these latter categories - than as a person conceived *a priori* to be the possessor of incomplete or deficient communicative competence, putatively striving for the 'target' competence of an idealized 'native speaker'. (1996: 241)

With respect to ongoing debates, however, Firth (2009: 147) asks a pertinent question: ‘Is lingua franca English a *form* or *variety* of English in its own right, capable of being “codified” and “modeled”?’ He says that the ‘proverbial jury’ is still out as the research that has taken place has only been able to observe, as Seidlhofer *et al.* (2006: 9) say, ‘the first signs of something like a characteristic emergent European English.’ Firth (2006) also points to the ‘narrow database’ of such research (for example, House 1999, 2002, 2003; Jenkins 2000, 2007; Mauranen 2006; Seidlhofer 2001a, 2001b, 2002, 2004; Lesznyak 2004; Prodromou 2008) undertaken mainly in Western European settings of education and business.

Firth (2009: 150) answers the question as to whether an ELF *sui generis* exists affirmatively, but with the caveat that the lingua franca is not constituted by forms but by ‘the inherent interaction and linguistic variability that lingua franca interactions entail’ (which he calls ‘entailment’) wherein (referring to his own investigations) ‘the interacts are nevertheless demonstrably communicatively competent’ despite ‘non-standard’ articulations’ (op.cit: 152). Competence, Firth (2009: 163) subsequently claims, *entails* ‘a mastery of strategies for the accommodation of [the] diverse practices of modes of meaning’ rather than the mastery of still unestablished ‘stable and standardized’ forms. As such, crucially, Firth concludes that it is near impossible to categorize this ‘language’ as a *variety* of English or that it may ever move from the *emergent* stage (see Prodromou 2008) to a standardized form as indeed Meierkord (2004) concedes.

2.4 Communities of speakers of English as a lingua franca in the literature

It is evident that any study which analyzes the language and the interaction of a particular group of people needs to consider that group in the larger context of types of community studied in previous literature and must delimit it, for example, in terms of membership and boundaries. Such concern to define the unit of linguistic study began with Bloomfield’s (1933) seminal work *Language*, when he introduced the term *speech community*, and devoted a whole chapter to the concept. Since the inception of sociolinguistics in the early 1960s, different understandings and definitions of community have been posited and these principally focus on *linguistic communities* (Gumperz 1962), *the speech community* (Gumperz 1964, Chomsky 1965; Hymes 1974, Labov 1972), *the discourse community* (Swales 1990), and *the community of practice* (Lave and Wenger 1991, Wenger 1998 and Eckert and McConnell-Ginet 1995

specifically in the field of sociolinguistics). Introductory works on sociolinguistics (for example, Wardhaugh 1998) and reviews of the concept of community in the literature (Morgan 2007, Patrick 2007, and Meyerhoff 2007) provide comprehensive accounts of the development of these terms, and what becomes evident in their definition and usage is their dependence on the constitution of the particular group being studied by the particular linguist. Wardhaugh's (2003: 16) simple definition of the speech community provides perhaps the most neutral definition upon which to build. It is 'some kind of social group whose speech characteristics are of interest and can be described in a coherent manner.'

There have been many specific studies undertaken in the area of sociolinguistics on the use of language in communities ranging from larger scale studies carried out in 'speech communities' (Gumperz 1964, Labov 1972) in the 60s and 70s, though smaller scale studies in the 80s, such as that undertaken by Dorian (1981, 1982 and 1989) in her investigation of Gaelic speakers in Sutherland, Scotland, and Watson (1989) in his comparison of Scots and Irish Gaelic and his focus on the *Gaeltacht* in Connemara in the west of Ireland.¹¹ In the 90s and up to the present day, as mentioned previously, sociolinguists have found the concept of community of practice easier to work with, especially at the level of social categories, as in Bucholtz's (1999) study on the language of 'nerd girls'; but researchers such as Eckert and McConnell-Ginet (1992) have also used it as the framework for their studies on broader aspects such the connection between language and gender.

A lot of work in Irish English has been done over the last 15 years, but very little of this research corresponds to natural communities, with the exception of work in the field of variational pragmatics by Clancy (2010, 2011, 2011a, 2011b) on the Travelling Community, in which, principally, he compares the pragmatic use of English by a Traveller family and by a family from the 'settled' community; by O'Sullivan (2004, 2008), who looks at accommodative phenomena in the speech of female Travellers attending secondary school in Ireland; and by Rieder (2015), who provides a summary of the distinguishing phonological, morphosyntactic, lexical and pragmatic features of Irish Traveller English

Research of other types of community undertaken includes that of Vaughan (2007, 2009) who looks at teacher-teacher talk in the context of a workplace community of practice, but

¹¹ *Gaeltacht* is a Gaelic word referring to regions where Irish Gaelic is spoken

importantly and uniquely, of the natural occurring discourse *outside* the classroom; that of Riordan (2013), who looks at the discourse of a community of student teachers; and that of Healy and Horan (2013), who look at the use of English as used by both native and non-native speakers in the hospitality industry, within a framework of a community of practice of trainee hotel managers in the Shannon College of Hotel Management (County Clare, Ireland).

A good deal of work has also been undertaken on the English of newcomers to Ireland, especially immigrants from Poland, as cited previously, in the work of Nestor, Ní Chasaide and Regan (2012), Migge (2015), Diskin and Regan (2015), and in Singleton *et al.* (2013). However, the term *community* in these studies is not used in the sense of a closed or bound community, but simply in the sense of a known group of people who have immigrated to Ireland. In fact, in Singleton *et al.* (2013) the use of the term *community* in the title refers to Polish people who live in Ireland, France and Austria.

There are few studies which focus on communities of the type described in this thesis. Most of the data considered by Jenkins (2000, 2009 for example) and Seidlhofer (2010) have come from a range of ELF settings over a number of years, and most of the participants were students. Other studies, subsequently, used the VOICE or ELFA corpora for further research. Researchers who have built their own corpora and bear similarities to my own research (at least in research questions) include Dewey (2007), Cogo (2007), Guido (2008), Prodromou (2008), and Cogo and Dewey (2011).

Dewey (2007) collected a corpus of naturally occurring ELF discourse through audio recordings made at a language school, a teacher training centre - what Dewey and Cogo (2012: 39) call an 'affiliate network' which 'can be described as a working example of a community of practice' in which English is the primary means of interlingual and intercultural communication,' and subsequently at a third level campus. The corpus comprises 42 different communicative events and 55 participants who represent 17 first languages. Eight hours of natural talk was transcribed for analysis, the primary focus of which was 'emerging innovation' in lexicogrammar.

Cogo's data (2007) was collected from audio recordings of a community of ELF speakers (see Cogo and Dewey, 2012) in their workplace. The members were teachers of modern languages in the Institute of Higher Education, London. Although a total of fourteen participants are

represented in the corpus, the main setting was an office and the main participants were four teachers who shared that space. Fifty hours of recordings were undertaken and of this, twenty hours were fully transcribed. The research focused on the pragmatics (see also Cogo, 2009) of casual conversation. One of the main findings of this piece of research was the part played by small talk in facilitating transition to content-oriented talk.

Guido's (2008) research comprised a series of ethnomethodological and ethnographic case studies of non-native speakers of English – Italian 'experts', and African migrants. The communicative events examined were interviews between welfare and emigration officers and asylum seekers, most of whom spoke a nativized form of English. The study argued that the principal communicative difficulties were caused by the transfer of native language structures and native sociocultural schemata into English as a lingua franca. One of the main conclusions was that there are as many varieties of English as a lingua franca as there are communities of speakers of other languages using it.

Prodromou (2008) compared the role of idiomaticity in native English and English as a Lingua Franca and concluded that idiomaticity (although posing a formidable acquisition challenge) helps learners to achieve a greater degree of native-like fluency. His corpus data is gathered from university graduates, teachers, lecturers and applied linguists. The speakers are 'advanced' users of English, or more specifically 'Successful Users of English' (SUE) as Prodromou calls them. He collected 200,000 words, of which 160,000 are exclusively L2 user discourse. The recordings were made in homes, offices, cars, trains, restaurants, cafés and hotels. The topics of the conversations were varied and the participants came from 24 different countries. The main analytical framework used was quantitative corpus linguistics which developed into qualitative discourse and ethnographic analysis.

2.5 Interactional competence

In 1965 Chomsky published his *Aspects of the Theory of Syntax*. It laid the foundation of 50 years of interdisciplinary research on how the human mind can host and manage the extraordinary complexity of language. However, it was his definition of competence and performance and subsequent reactions to this which are of importance here. Chomsky stated that linguistic theory should only be concerned with the ideal speaker-hearer's knowledge of his language - which he defines as competence - within a homogenous speech community, and

not the actual performance or output. Hymes (1966), in reaction to Chomsky's viewpoint formulated his theory of *communicative competence*, which considered the *everyday* speaker-listener, and was concerned with the use of the language in social interaction. For successful communication, according to Hymes, the speaker-hearer needs to know what is formally possible, what is feasible, what is appropriate and what is normally said or done (attestedness). These ideas were the basis for further research by applied linguists, principally Canale and Swain (1980), Canale (1983), Faerch & Kasper (1983), and Bachman (1990), the latter applying an elaboration of the theory to work on assessment and testing. Researchers in the field of pragmatics also elaborated on the concept of pragmatic competence as introduced in Bachman's work (1990), and defined by Thomas (1983: 92) as the ability to use and understand language effectively for specific purposes. Both Thomas and Leech (1983) proposed the subdivision of pragmatic competence into pragmalinguistics and sociopragmatics, the former referring to resources for speech acts which include the mitigating or intensifying pragmatic strategies of directness and indirectness, as well as a large range of linguistic forms, the latter referring to the social perception of power and distance (see Brown and Levinson 1987) as well as the knowledge of conventional procedures.

Central to all of these studies on communicative competence is the concentration on the individual; *interactional competence* (a term introduced by Kramsch 1986) on the other hand, while building on these preceding theories, is different in that it focuses not only on what the person knows, but, as Young (2011: 430) says, focuses on 'what a person *does* together with others' (emphasis in the original). In other words, interactional competence is how the resources that are available to interlocutors are used mutually and reciprocally in the co-construction of meaning.

Kramsch (1986: 367) wrote that successful interaction presupposed

not only a shared knowledge of the world, the reference to a common external context of communication, but also the construction of a shared internal context or 'sphere of inter-subjectivity' that is built through the collaborative efforts of the interactional partners.

Although the participants in this study do not have a shared knowledge of the world, as they come from many linguistic and cultural backgrounds, the 'sphere of inter-subjectivity' is important in that, as I will show, specifically in Chapter Seven, that although typical schematic

knowledge (Bartlett 1926) is not shared, the residents of the centre orient collaboratively to the rules of turn taking in their co-construction of meaning.

Young and He (1998) added to the four components of Hymes' communicative competence, and included:

- A knowledge of rhetorical scripts
- A knowledge of certain lexis and syntactic patterns specific to practice
- A knowledge of how turns are managed
- A knowledge of topical organization

Young later (2008) added the following seven 'resources' that participants bring to the communicative event:

- Register
- Modes of meaning
- Speech acts
- Turn-taking
- Repair
- Boundaries

Young (2011: 440) summarized the use of the term by various scholars as involving spoken and paralinguistic interaction, the relationship between forms of talk and social context, of involving not just the knowledge of one speaker, 'but the construction of a shared mental context through the collaboration of all interactional partners,' and finally the consideration of talk 'beyond the horizon of a single interaction'. In general, then, interactional competence involves the management of conversations and the negotiation of meaning, and not only includes the knowledge and use of typical lexicogrammatical and segmental phonological features, but also knowledge of register and suprasegmental features such as prosody, and the use of paralinguistic features of gaze and other body language.

2.6 Second Language Acquisition

Second Language Acquisition (SLA) refers to both how people acquire a second language and to the systematic study of how this process unfolds (Ellis 2002). It is systematic in the sense that usually samples of the acquisition and development of a learner's language are recorded longitudinally or cross-sectionally. Early SLA study focussed on the acquisition of linguistic forms, but more recent research focusses on pragmatic aspects (see for example Barron 2003). Typical questions that an SLA researcher might investigate relate to the effect of the learner's age on the acquisition process, the impact of learning in a formal setting or acquiring language in a naturalistic setting, language aptitude, that is the possibility that some people acquire second languages more quickly and more easily than others, and developmental and sequential patterns. Central themes in SLA are interlanguage, input hypothesis and comprehensible input, interaction hypothesis, different types of motivation universalism and critical period hypothesis.

Selinker (1972) coined the term *interlanguage*. He hypothesized that interlanguage constitutes a systematic language system in its own right with its own rules, independent of the target language and the first language (L1) of the learner even though it draws on the L1 (see also Ellis 2003, Gass and Selinker 1994). Interlanguage is in essence, according to Selinker, a mental grammar the learner has subconsciously constructed with independent rules for comprehension and production. Interlanguage is transitional in the sense that rules are added and also abandoned as the learner develops further in the second language, resulting in an *interlanguage continuum*, a series of interlanguages. Different kinds of 'errors' also give evidence of different learning strategies used by different learners. For example, errors of conscious omission may suggest that learners are simplifying language before they are fully ready to use the particular feature. Fossilization refers to the cessation of learning at a particular plateau level without reaching native-level proficiency. Selinker (1972), in fact, suggests that only 5% of learners achieve native-level language.

Comprehensible input (Krashen 1993) refers to that part of total input which the learner already understands and which is essential for him or her with regard to further development and acquisition. Krashen (ibid) claims that comprehensible input is all that is needed for acquisition to take place. Closely related is his posited *input hypothesis* (Krashen 1993), which claims that acquisition takes place when new input is only slightly above the existing level of the learner.

Language output, on the other hand was considered by Krashen to have no effect on the learner's ability. Further linguistic development is acquired unconsciously, according to Krashen, and this, of course, has serious implications for traditional language learning, both as far as teaching methods and resources are concerned, as these are formally structured. Long's (1983) *interaction hypothesis* is an elaboration of Krashen's work on comprehensible input, but it deals specifically with the process of negotiation of meaning in native-non-native speaker interaction. Long claims that the feedback provided by native speaker interlocutors to utterances from non-native speakers facilitates improved acquisition of forms they have not yet mastered. Related to native non-native interaction is Schumann's (1978 and see also 1986) *acculturation model* which theorizes that social and psychological factors which impact negatively on the learner's adaptation to a new culture may thereby impact negatively on the acquisition of the second language in question. This theory is based on a case study that Schuman (1978) undertook with a 33 year-old Costa Rican emigrant in the USA, who over the ten month period of the study did not progress beyond a reduced form of English. Schumann concluded that such fossilization resulted from failure to 'acculturate' socially and psychologically due to the social distance existing between the learner and the target culture. Of relevance to this position (and also to this thesis) is Peirce's (1995) work on social identity and the importance for second language acquisition (in the case of adults) of identity construction and identity exposition which facilitate a learner's right to be heard, becoming thus the subject *of* the discourse rather than they being subject *to* the social conditions of the interaction or discourse. Learners, Pierce says, will only make the effort (the investment) if they see a possibility of increasing their cultural capital which in turn will facilitate success in social contexts. I mention that Pierce's work is important for this thesis in the sense that the residents of Dun Cluain make that extra effort, but not to satisfy needs that are more elevated on the Maslow pyramid of needs (1943) (for example), but to satisfy basic physiological needs of everyday survival.

Giles' (1973 and 1980) *accommodation theory* also revolves around social factors in that, he contends, speakers who wish to show cohesiveness with others, adjust their language to that group by attempting to make it more similar. He calls this process 'convergence'. The opposite, 'divergence', occurs when speakers wish to manifest the uniqueness of their own social identity.

The concept of motivation is also important in SLA. In psychological terms motivation is usually defined in terms of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation (deCharms, 1968; Lepper and Greene, 1978). Intrinsic motivation is driven by the enjoyment of the engagement in the task itself, while extrinsic engagement relates to the performance of an action in response to a desired outcome. Within SLA a similar separation has been identified. *Integrative motivation* (Gardner and Lambert 1972, Dörnyei 1990, 1994, 2001a, 2001b and Dörnyei and Csizér 1998) refers to the desire to learn a language in response to a special interest or love of the particular language or culture. *Instrumental motivation* refers to the necessity to learn a second language for a functional motive such as passing an examination or getting a job.

I turn now to general linguistics to further elucidate second language acquisition. Linguistic approaches to SLA consider language as unique and separate from other types of knowledge or processing. The linguistic approach is primarily influenced by Universal Grammar (UG). Chomsky (1957, 1965, 1986, 1995) proposes that language acquisition is an innate, genetically determined feature of the human species. Chomsky posits that children are born with a language acquisition device (LAD) which triggers the development of language. Universal Grammar, entailing fundamental principles for constructing sentences in all languages, is considered to be genetically present at birth and helps the child formulate the necessary rules of grammar and phonology of the particular minimal social (usually family) speech he or she hears. As far as SLA is concerned, the proponents of UG consider that second language learners do not have complete access to UG, or at least the level of access is debated. The problem of discontinued access is one (of many) that accounts for or supports the *critical period hypothesis*, which contends that there is a period in life (usually up to puberty) when language acquisition (including a second language and more) is easier or more natural. After this period, it is contended, language learning is mechanical and that native speaker proficiency is rarely attainable. Long (1990), for example presented evidence to show that native-like accent is not possible if a child starts learning after the age of six and that native-like grammatical competence is rare for learners who begin after puberty. Scovel (1988), on the other hand, presented evidence which places the critical age for acquiring native-like pronunciation at around 12. Proponents of critical period hypothesis will also point to cases of feral children such as Genie who was isolated from any language stimulus for most of her childhood. Although at 13 put into the care of linguists who helped her to develop some communicative skills, she did not acquire full grammatical competence (Curtiss 1977). Studies undertaken in the USA also present evidence that immigrants who arrive before puberty acquire native-like

English (see Johnson and Newport 1989). Although exceptions have been identified, it is generally thought that even though it is not possible to agree on a specific cut-off age, the ‘capacity to achieve full competence seems to decline gradually’ during the puberty phase and that ‘age of arrival is a much better predictor of ultimate achievement than the number of years of exposure to the target language’ (Ellis 2003: 68).

I close this section on second language acquisition with a consideration of interlanguage pragmatics, the study of non-native speakers’ use of and acquisition of L2 pragmatic knowledge, (Kasper and Rose 1999). Kasper (1998:184) also extended Austin’s (1965) book title definition of pragmatics - *How to do Things with Words* to define interlanguage pragmatics as ‘how to do things with words in a second language.’ While most SLA studies focus on the sequential acquisitional patterns of development of interlanguage knowledge, the majority of research into interlanguage pragmatics has not been developmental (Kasper and Schmidt 1996). Bardovi-Harlig (1999a: 678) points out that ‘The study of how L2 related speech act knowledge is acquired is more of a desideratum than a reality,’ and Barron (2003) affirms that acquisitional issues have remained largely neglected in interlanguage pragmatics. The main reason for this phenomenon owes much to the alignment of interlanguage pragmatics with the field of empirical pragmatics, or language in use. Nevertheless, the number of developmental studies has increased in recent years (see for example Cohen & Shively, 2007; Félix-Brasdefer, 2004 and 2007; Kinginger & Belz, 2005; Barron, 2007; and Dings, 2007)

Some of the findings of studies in interlanguage pragmatics provide a referential background for the residents’ use of English in the Dun Cluain Centre, although most of these studies do not use naturally occurring language and most investigate the development of pragmatics in the interlanguage of students in the study abroad context. With regard to developmental aspects, Kasper and Rose (2002) posit that there are five stages in the acquisition of requests, the amount of repetition and dependency on formulaic expressions decreasing as the learner interlanguage progresses. Félix-Brasdefer (2007), finds evidence to support this claim in a cross-sectional study of learners of L2 Spanish. In the same study, Félix-Brasdefer also found positive correlations between a longer length of residence and the greater use of lexical and syntactic downgrading (mitigation) in the expression of refusals. This confirms earlier work by the same author, Félix-Brasdefer (2004), by Bouton (1999), and by Olshtain and Blum-Kulka (1985) who had found positive correlations between more extended stays in the L2-speaking country and more native-like pragmatic expression.

2.7 Summary

The overarching concern in this chapter is the contextualization of the lingua franca spoken by the residents in the Dun Cluain Centre. As mentioned above, a lingua franca is a vehicular language used by people who do not share a common language. Any of the world's languages can be used as a lingua franca. In the Dun Cluain Centre, English was the main lingua franca, but it was not the only one. As the language of the country wherein the centre is located, as the language of the catering company which ran the complex, and as the language of the Department of Justice under whose aegis the asylum system functions, the residents were forced to communicate in English. And I have used the word *communicate* deliberately, rather than *learn*, as the residents were not learners in the formal sense, although there was an education facility in the centre. Most of the residents were indifferent to learning (although there were some exceptions) in the sense of the context of language classes or even in the sense of naturalistic learning. Principally, their motivation to speak English obeyed the exigencies of the satisfaction of basic physiological needs (Maslow 1943).

Nativized English was also used as a lingua franca by the residents, chiefly by those from Western African countries, and for this reason I have reviewed the concept of 'nativization', and have described the principal differences with Standard English. I have also referred to different levels or gradations of Nigerian English as described in the literature. Such information will facilitate interpretation of the use of English by Nigerians in the interactions examined in subsequent analytical chapters.

Other major languages, Russian, French, Portuguese, and Swahili were also used as vehicular languages. For example, all the residents from eastern European countries communicated in Russian (as best they could). But even minor languages such as Lingala (a Bantu language principally spoken in the DR Congo) was used by the Congolese and the Angolans at times when they did not want me to understand what they were saying, given that they knew I understood their principal lingua francas, Portuguese and French.

It follows that it is pertinent to distinguish between English used as a lingua franca by the residents and the entity of English as a Lingua Franca, not because the latter is the subject of debates encompassing evident polarized and circular points of view, but because this thesis, although it characterizes the English spoken by the residents through methods associated with corpus linguistics, principally focuses on *how* the residents used this reduced form to interact. To that effect I have also reviewed the concept of communicative competence, but with specific

focus on interactional competence, with its greater concentration of how people collaborate in conversation, in their co-construction of meaning.

I have looked at Irish English in the context of the geographical location of the Centre. The findings from some of these studies will be referred to in later chapters as a point of comparison. However, given the nature of the community, a concept which I have also briefly reviewed above, located as it is within a total institution, with little contact with broader Irish society, and whose members had picked up the English they knew in other English-speaking countries, the principal reference corpus in this thesis will be the Cambridge and Nottingham Corpus of Discourse of English (CANCODE), which is a five million-word collection based on recordings undertaken in Britain and Ireland. As Carter and McCarthy (2006: 11) say, CANCODE 'is a finely-grained corpus' comprising 'examples from a range of sociolinguistic contexts and genres of talk.' Moreover, the main point of comparison of the language that the residents use, with regard to working vocabulary and specific components, follows McCarthy (1999) who used CANCODE (see Chapter Five for elaboration).

I have looked at Second Language Acquisition studies and have reviewed the main associated concepts and theories, and these provide a useful linguistic background to the present study. I have also reviewed, in brief, acquisitional interlanguage pragmatics, as there seems to be a greater emphasis in recent studies on how people acquire the pragmatic aspects of a language. But as Schmidt and Kasper (1996), point out, the main focus of interlanguage pragmatics has not been acquisition because of the alignment of interlanguage pragmatics with studies on language in use. This thesis is primarily a study of language use. And although a variable such as length of residence is an important research consideration, in the context of the speakers Dun Cluain Centre its relevance is limited because of the transient nature of the community, and because of other variables such as educational background, motivation and most importantly, age on arrival.

In the next chapter I introduce the data of the corpus of lingua franca English pertaining exclusively to the residents, and the data of larger corpus which contains interaction between the residents and the native speakers of English and interaction among the residents themselves. The next chapter will also discuss the blend of methodological frameworks that were used to analyse the data.

Chapter Three

Data and Methodological Frameworks

3.1 Introduction

This study sets out to characterize the lingua franca of a community of speakers of other languages and to elucidate how this ‘language’ is used. The principal methodologies adopted are ethnography, to provide a contextual background, corpus linguistics to characterize the lingua franca English, and conversation analysis to analyse in detail how the residents used this reduced form of English. These methodological frameworks will be described, followed by an explanation of how they are adopted here, how they facilitate the triangulation of research, and also how they blend synergistically.

The data will then be presented, followed by a description of the collection methods, and an explanation of how the difficulties that impacted both the collection process and the analysis were resolved. Finally, the transcription system is explained.

3.2 Ethnography

Ethnography, according to Duranti (1997:85), ‘is the written description of the social organization, social activities, symbolic and material resources, and interpretive practices characteristic of a particular group of people.’ Traditionally, there are four aspects to ethnography (Goetz and LeCompte 1984:3). Firstly, real-world settings are studied and nothing is ever staged or elicited (using decontextualized texts, for example). Secondly, the approach is holistic. Thirdly, the data is collected and analyzed by using a variety of research techniques. Fourthly, it is interpretive – the actual words and opinions of the informants are highlighted. Another important distinguishing feature of ethnography is, as Agar (1996: 119-127) points out, the fact that the ethnographer’s research questions surface during the process of participant observation. There is no initial hypothesis.

Ethnography was first developed by social anthropologists who studied the cultures of communities, usually far removed, both in distance and in development, from their own. Agar (1996:119-12) distinguishes ethnography from other social science approaches in that the researcher goes to the subjects’ home turf. Malinowski (1922; 1935) was one of such pioneering ethnographers. During the First World War he was exiled to the Trobriand Islands and during his time spent there he conducted fieldwork on the Kula exchange, the ceremonial system of gift-giving performed by the natives of the islands. He subsequently (Malinowski

1922) emphasized the importance of daily contact with informants and detailed note-taking as part of ‘participant observation’.

Although one of the principal objectives of ethnography is to provide an insider’s perspective, what anthropologists and sociologists call an ‘emic’ view (as opposed to an ‘etic’ view, the outsider’s perspective), much of the early discourse seems to embrace cultural bias – even Malinowski referred to native people as ‘savages’. Most contemporary ethnographies, conversely, are done by researchers in their own countries, such as Heath’s study of literacy development in the pseudonymous townships of ‘Trackton’ and ‘Roadville’ in Carolina which resulted in *Ways with Words* (1982) and Barton and Hamilton’s study of literacy practices in Lancashire in England, which resulted in *Local Literacies* (1994). There are also contemporary ethnographies done in the industrial world, as researchers ply their way through workplace practices. These ethnographies entail not only the observation of people as they go about their work, but also detailed examination of documents. Significant ethnographies done on specific groups (weavers, tailors, drug addicts, doctors), activities (classroom interaction, musical performances, juggling), events (trials, marriage ceremonies, gift exchanges) and social processes (socialization, acculturation, marginalization), demonstrate that in definitions of ethnography as the study of culture (Johnstone 2000:80), the word *culture* is used in a very broad sense. There is, then, a significant difference between the first ethnographers and contemporary ethnographers: the former observed and studied exotic civilizations; the latter, observing and studying contemporary and local communities, have to make the familiar strange and look for telling instances in ordinary and routine practices (Heath and Street 2008).

Irvine Goffman, a sociologist who has also made significant contributions to linguistics in the field of conversation analysis, produced an ethnography (*Asylums*, 1961) that is important for the present study in that it is an analysis of a ‘total institution’, whose central feature is characterized (ibid: 17) as constituting a barrier to the three areas of life normally controlled by the self, that is, that normally people tend to sleep, work and play in different places. Without going into the elaborate detail of the controversial living conditions in Dun Cluain at the time of writing, it is clear that such a dehumanizing barrier existed in the Centre. Goffman’s year-long presence in St Elizabeth’s Hospital in Washington DC between 1956 and 1957t was partially camouflaged by the remit of ‘athletic director’, although the hospital’s hierarchy were aware of his aims. As such it is similar to my own presence in Dun Cluain. I was there officially as a public servant involved in the organization of education programmes. I spent the day with

the residents but did not sleep in the Centre. Most of the residents were conscious of the research aims, but this awareness faded into the background in time.

Goffman reports on his ethnographic study in an unencumbered narrative fashion (much like Heath's *Ways with Words*). The ethnography and the text essentially humanize the dehumanized. I hope to follow similar lines in Chapter Five when I describe the contexts of the participants - their histories of persecution, their flight from their countries, and their present contexts and communicative situations. I do this because, just as our schemata (usually taken for granted in linguistic analysis) as native speakers of English influences the way we speak, these previous experiences, their flight and their present situations influence the way the residents communicate. As Duranti (2003: 281) explains, 'To think about speakers as participants means then to move beyond speech and even beyond speech as action to include the fuller experience of what it means to be a member of a speech community.' An example of such a holistic consideration in this study involves Ervin, the Albanian (see Chapter Four). He insisted on saying 'Give me a biro,' no matter how many times I told him that it might be better to say *Could you loan me a biro?* or *Can I borrow a biro?* Looking at such communication in a more holistic way involves not only consideration of the possibility of first language interference (see Blum-Kulka 1989) or pragmalinguistic transfer (see Thomas 1983), but also consideration of the environment and context in which Ervin was living and the circumstances which brought him to Ireland. Communication has to be considered and analyzed in the context of a man who had killed eleven men, who had fought with Kosovars and Croatians (of which nationalities there were other residents present in the Centre), and in the context of his status as leader of the Albanian community in the Centre at the time. Ervin simply did not want to lose face in front of the other residents).

3.2.1 Participant-observation

Johnston (2000: 81) defines participant observation as the primary research technique of ethnography. It was developed by anthropologists in order to describe foreign cultures from the perspectives of the 'natives'. Stocking (1983:7) pinpoints as follows the main features of traditional participant observation:

Entering as a stranger into a small and culturally alien community, the investigator becomes for a time and in a way part of its system of face-to-face relationships, so that the data collected in some sense reflect the native's own point of view.

Participant observation usually entails living in the community under study for a lengthy period of time while collecting data. The ethnographer keeps field notes of the significant events of each day and records them along with the informants' interpretations. Initial observations focus on background cultural information and help the ethnographer gain a footing and building rapport in the community. The researcher then commences a more systematic programme of formal interviewing. Duranti (1997:99) describes two distinct types of participant observation, passive, where the ethnographer is as unobtrusive as possible; and complete, where the ethnographer interacts (at times competently in the native language) with community members, live in the same conditions and carry out similar tasks or jobs (see Gold 1958 and Spradley 1980 for more detailed descriptions).

When the focus is the language of the community, complete participation entails interacting with the community in the native language, which of course necessitates learning the language before accessing the community, or in the case of an unknown language, spending the first year or so of contact with the community learning the language. There is then an opportunity to ask native speakers such questions as *What would you say in this situation?* More importantly there is an opportunity to listen to and observe interaction, and observe language in use. Complete participation, unfortunately, may interfere with data gathering, so there must be a balance between complete involvement and the necessity to stand back at times and be a 'bystander' or 'professional overhearer'. This, as Duranti (1997:101) points out, entails finding a 'blind spot', the place in the scene where the ethnographer's presence is not intrusive. Ochs (1982), for example, studied Samoan children from the 'back' region of a house.

My chief strategy to combat 'observer's paradox' – the effect of the observer's presence on other participants (see Labov 1972: 61-62 and Saville-Troike, 1982: 114) and the concomitant risk of the other participant changing their 'natural behaviour' (Meyer, 2002: 157; see also), was to allow time to pass until the residents accepted me as part of their daily routine. This was easier for me than perhaps the typical ethnographer who might need to adopt a particular pose (see Goffman 1961), as the primary purpose of my presence in the Centre was as a member of staff. The residents, after initial suspicions, eventually began behaving and speaking in a very

natural manner around me. Over time, they became very used to my presence in the Centre and focused more on my position as a provider of education and advice rather than as a researcher. They became oblivious to the presence of recorders, the presence and purpose of which of was explained to them when they arrived and was signalled by different notices on the notice boards and in the researcher's office.

Ethnography in Dun Cluain, which will be described in detail in Chapter Four, principally entailed the following:

1. General observation
2. Observation of communication in Centre canteen
3. Observation of visits by the residents to the Reception Desk¹²
4. Interviews

All observations and any interaction that was overheard or in which I was involved were recorded by means of field-note taking. I carried a Dictaphone machine and notebook with me at all times and maintained a daily log. I transferred all note-taking to this ethnographic log as soon as I could, which was especially important in the case of communicative interaction. Sometimes I resorted to taking notes on paper napkins in the canteen in order to remain as unobtrusive as possible.

3.2.2 Interviews

Duranti (1997:102) distinguishes between two types of ethnographic interview. The first is the loose and informal questioning that takes place during the ethnographer's daily interaction with informants. The second is the more formal, structured type in which the ethnographer interviews a particularly knowledgeable informant. Duranti (ibid) also distinguishes the value of the interview depending on the analytical framework. For linguistic anthropology background cultural information is paramount and 'crucial for understanding particular speech exchanges,' while for the sociolinguist (see Labov 1972a, 1972b), the interview provides the opportunity of recording the interaction and creating a linguistic corpus. In the latter case, the

¹² Capitalized when referring to the observations carried and recordings made at the reception desk

research is not so much interested in speakers as ‘experts’, but in speakers as users of the language.

In the present study there are various types of interview used for research purposes:

1. The formal ethnographic interview: the participant is invited to take part in a structured interview about life and the use of language in the Centre.
2. The informal ethnographic interview: the researcher questions a member of the community on a particular event or issue that has arisen.
3. The non-ethnographic interview or the interview as a natural speech event in the community (interviews with members of the Centre staff relating to personal issues, such as the petition for funds).

Johnstone (2000:112) says that, ‘It is debatable to what extent an interview can approximate a “normal” speech event.’ The point is made with reference to the collection of ‘natural’ data and varieties of language and the possibility of the data being ‘manipulated’ by the researcher and by the very artificial nature of an interview which is convened for the purposes of discourse analysis. In the Dun Cluain Reception Centre, interviews were actually frequent and natural speech events within the Centre. The residents interviewed with the medical personnel, the Department of Justice personnel, with solicitors, with social welfare personnel and with personnel from voluntary bodies who came to the Centre for the purposes of assisting the residents in their pursuit of asylum, and housing in some cases. In the Education Centre they interviewed with me and my staff for ‘natural’ purposes - such as educational guidance, registration and the pursuit of funding. The ‘unnatural’ interviews, if they could be termed as such, were those I convened for ethnographic purposes. These *were* structured in the sense that I always asked the same questions - with regard to their lives in their countries of origin, their flight, their lives in the Centre and their communication with other nationalities. But I did not manipulate them in the Labovian sense of eliciting specific language samples, as I wanted to foster natural speech reactions as much as possible. It could also be considered that the ethnographic interview has become a natural speech event anyway in that more and more studies are carried out using this methodology and more and more people are involved in them on a daily basis. And in fact, the presence of other researchers was quite common in the Centre.

In order to foment greater comfort and trust, I waited until one year into the study before carrying out the ethnographic interviews. In that time the residents became more familiar with

me, any initial suspicions were addressed, and the recording equipment had become a part of the routine. The ‘artificial’ ethnographic interview, in fact, unleashed the metaphorical and physical voice of the residents and facilitated the use of the data for linguistic analysis. There was no need for Labov’s (1972:92) ‘danger of death’ question as the ‘natural’ emotional involvement in the discussion of the normal everyday events which impacted heavily on their lives was catalyst enough. I was, however, conscious of my own occasional anxiety for the participants to ‘produce’ more language. Any information that was gathered in which I can be perceived to be leading has been discarded. I was also conscious of the fact that the main contributors to the ethnographic interviews were the higher level speakers of English. When I used the discourse of the interviews for linguistic corpus analysis, I was therefore careful not to create an imbalance by using too much of these data.

3.3 The Ethnography of Communication

As discussed in Chapter Two, Hymes (1971) was critical of Chomsky’s (1965) distinction between *competence* and *performance*. Hymes pointed out that a competent speaker needs to know more than simply how to form perfect grammatical sentences; he or she, Hymes posited, also needs also to be aware of the feasibility, attestedness and appropriateness of the language employed. If perfectly formed sentences depend on the rules of grammar, then appropriateness depends on the rules of speaking which people acquire in their families and communities. The Ethnography of Speaking was developed as a way of analyzing these rules, and it takes into account the various factors that are relevant in speaking, and how objectives are achieved in the communicative event, the focus being on the interdependence of language and social activity. The three essential steps or phases of this analytic approach are, 1) the use of ethnographic methods, 2) analysis of communicative events that form an integral part of life in the community, and 3), a model that outlined the components of the communicative event. The following quote from Hymes’ first article on the Ethnography of Communication shows how he intended to make the connection between language use and the community:

The starting point is the ethnographic analysis of the communicative habits of a community in their totality, determining what count as communicative events, and as their components, and conceiving no communicative behavior as independent of the set framed by some setting or implicit question. The communicative event thus is central. (1964: 13)

Hymes proposed three units of analyses, the speech situation, the speech event and the speech act. The speech situation is the social context in which the language is used, a family meal for example. Speech events are activities which constitute language itself, such as an interview, a lecture, or a confession, and they contain speech acts such as requesting and apologizing. The speech event can be analyzed by focusing on eight components which are further sub-divided into sixteen smaller units. Hymes used the acronym SPEAKING to label each component:

Situation: 1. *Setting*. 2. *Scene*

Participants: 3. *Speaker*. 4. *Addressor*. 5. *Hearer*. 6. *Addressee*

Ends: 7. *Purposes – outcomes*. 8. *Purposes - goals*

Acts: 9. *Message form*. 10. *Message content*

Key: 11. *Keys*

Instrumentalities: 12. *Channel*. 13. *Forms of speech*

Norms: 14. *Norms of interaction*. 15. *Norms of interpretation*

Genre: 16. *Genres*

Setting refers to time and place, which in the present study, for example, would be the asylum seeker Centre in Dun Cluain, on the borders of an Irish City, between 2002 and 2005. *Scene* is the psychological setting, which here could be said to be the circumstance of seeking asylum, the circumstance of being exiled, the circumstance of speaking a foreign language. The *participants* can assume the different roles of speaker, addressor, hearer or addresser, which generally correspond to social roles. The roles may change as in a normal conversation. In an interview, however, the role stays constant. *Ends* refers to outcomes and goals, which may be different for each of the participants. In the interviews that I carried out with the residents, for example, my goal was to get as much information as possible about the community and also to stimulate natural talk; the goal of the resident in the funding interviews (Chapter Eight) was to obtain money for sporting activities. *Acts* is the actual form and content of the speech event – the words and phrases that are used and how they are used. *Key* refers to the tone or manner of what is said. *Instrumentalities* refers to both the channel, whether the message is oral or written, and to the form of speech, such as register, dialect and code-switching. *Norms of interaction* refers to ‘norms of speaking’ and whether these norms are maintained in the behavior of the participants. Genre refers to clearly marked text (in the broader significance of this word) types, such as poems, notes, sermons, jokes and proverbs.

Hymes’ Ethnography of Speaking (later (1964) amended to ‘Ethnography of Communication’ to accommodate non-vocal and non-verbal characteristics) constituted a useful framework for ethnographers who travelled the world and carried out fieldwork and cross-cultural analysis in

both older and newer (tribal) communities. The idea was not to study speech events in order to illustrate the sixteen components of the SPEAKING grid, but rather to provide a framework of factors involved in the study of language within a community, the starting point and the unit of analysis. Hymes considered that speech events form and bind communities, constituting thus units of participation.

As far as the present study is concerned, the Ethnography of Communication does not fit smoothly due to the special circumstances of Dun Cluain. As mentioned before, the community is temporary and does not have a homogenous culture or language. Rather than speech forming and binding the community, it simply takes on a functional role in the satisfaction of basic needs. Speech is not important in the sense of forming or bonding the community of asylum seekers, the members of which are all in Dun Cluain by force. However, the broader framework embodied by the speech situation, the speech event and the speech act, does provide a structure for a precursory analysis of the communicative situation of the residents in Chapter Five in preparation for the more detailed linguistic analysis in later chapters.

In both the broader ethnography and the precursory analysis of speech situations, difficulties between Nigerians residents and staff, and indeed other residents, were highlighted. In order to verify the criticisms levelled against the Nigerians (as far as communication is concerned), within the precursory analysis of communication in the education facility and in classes, I turned to Sinclair and Coulthard's 'Exchange Structure', a brief description of which follows below.

3.4 Exchange structure

An influential model of discourse analysis was developed by the English Language Research team at the University of Birmingham in the early 1970s (see Sinclair *et al.* 1972, Sinclair and Coulthard 1975) known as 'Exchange Structure Analysis'. Research was initially carried out in school classrooms and rigid patterns of interaction between the teachers and the students were discovered. This research work predated seminal work in discourse analysis and interaction in the United States, specifically that of Hymes' theory of communicative competence and Sacks' research on conversation. As Coulthard (1985) remembers, 'there was no existing description of interaction, let alone a linguistic *theory* of interaction...' at the time.

The discourse of the classroom, the lesson, was presented as having a hierarchical structure formed by:

- transaction
- exchange
- move
- act

where the transaction is the larger unit comprising the other three. The boundaries of the transactions were typically marked by five words – *okay, well, right, now* and *good* uttered with ‘high stress’ and falling intonation. The structure could be used to analyze discourse outside of the classroom as well, as demonstrated by Burton (1984) and Francis and Hunston (1992), but it was particularly useful in cases where power situations such as teacher-pupil existed.

Detailed analysis of interactional behaviour in the tradition of ethnomethodology is more suitable when the talk is not so tightly controlled (as it is in the classroom by the teacher), and as reviewed below in the section on conversation analysis, turn-taking and pairs of utterances called *adjacency pairs* can be investigated. Malouf (1995:1) mentions as a limitation that exchange structure ‘has only been applied to two-party discourse and would seem to fall short of the full range of linguistic communication.’ Francis and Hunston (1992:125) point to the possible shortcoming of the non-consideration of paralinguistic features, but, of course, this criticism extends and applies to many types of analysis (conversation analysis, corpus linguistics) if such features are not recorded in detail, as in, for example, multimedia analysis (see Reder *et al.* 2003). Hoey (1991 and 1993) argues that exchange structure is unsuitable for casual conversation, while Clancy (2002), in an exploration of multi-party family discourse, finds the traditional model of exchange structure unsuitable for the analyses.

Notwithstanding the limitations as far as talk as a social activity is concerned, the discourse hierarchy of structures of classroom exchanges as described by Sinclair and Coulthard (1975: 26-7) in the form of Initiation Response Feedback (IRF) ‘moves’, provide a powerful tool for the analysis of classroom interaction. Rather than the binary pattern of adjacency pairs described in conversation analysis, in Sinclair and Coulthard’s analysis, a three-part pattern emerges in which the teacher usually seems to have the last word in classroom exchanges, producing a pattern of Initiation (the teacher’s question), the student’s Response, and the

teacher's evaluation or Feedback. The following simple example from my own data illustrates the pattern:

Teacher: To cut down is? One word for it::	I
Moti: to confine	R
Teacher: No	F

Not all exchanges are as simple as this, as answers may be delayed and the teacher may provide further talk (clues, elaboration) in his or her feedback and the exchange continues. An example of such would be the following:

Teacher: Okay music flat	I
Starry: Yes flat	R
Teacher: In music you have flat ...and sharp <pointing at Starry>	F
Starry: sharp	R
Boris: Uh flat and sharp	R

This IRF structure will be employed (Chapter Five, Section 2) to gauge the impact of the presence of second language speakers of English (chiefly Nigerians) in language classes in the education facility. Nigerians were considered rude and noisy by both teachers and other residents. The latter two cohorts therefore objected to the presence of Nigerians in class, claiming on the one hand that they disrupted proceedings, and on the other hand that they did not need classes in English. My own observations did not corroborate these perspectives, and the analysis of classroom interaction using the IRF structure proved to be a useful research triangulation tool.

3.5 Corpus linguistics

Corpus linguistics is now largely associated with computer and software programs that can perform a multitude of tasks on what are now known as machine-readable corpora. However, corpus linguistics (although it was not termed such), referring to the study of a large body of collected texts, spoken or written, has been in existence since the 19th century and only fell into discredit temporarily after Chomsky (1965) famously suggested that corpora could never

constitute a useful tool for the study of competence – the tacit knowledge of a native language. Field linguists such as Boas (1940) and Bloomfield (1934) had collected large bodies of language data for analysis, as had researchers into first language acquisition and bilingualism, collecting diaries and logs of the language of children as it emerged. Second language acquisition research had also availed of corpora (Fries and Trave 1940, for example), principally to facilitate the compilation of vocabulary lists (see Thorndike 1921, Palmer 1933, Ogden 1930 and West 1953). An example of its use in the field of comparative linguistics is Eaton's (1940) study of cognates in different languages. In other fields, such as literacy, researchers built the first frequency lists for spelling based on corpora (Dolch 1948 and 1942 and Käding 1879), while its use in the analysis of literary stylistics has increased with the development of software programs (see Fischer-Starcke 2010, for example).

A corpus, as the name suggest, is a body of collected texts. Biber, Conrad and Reppen (1998), addressing the issue of representativeness (one of Chomsky's criticisms), point out that a corpus is a 'principled' collection of texts in which the 'design matrix' should capture all the essential variables. On this issue, Hunston (2002:29) suggests that one approach to ensuring the representativeness of a corpus of spoken language is to make a list of variables such as age, gender, social class and hometown, for example, with the addition of settings and genre (service encounters, casual conversation, classroom, office, etc.), and to collect equal amounts of data of each variable. The same author puts forward the alternative of including whatever data is available, with coverage of as many settings and genres as possible – the British National Corpus (BNC) being the example of this (see Crowdy 1993 for more information on the compilation and design of the BNC). However, as Carter and McCarthy (2007) point out, size isn't everything. While larger corpora 'seek to represent general contexts' (O'Keeffe 2003: 52) and are used for larger-scale analysis and for searches of low-frequency lexical items, smaller corpora will facilitate greater qualitative analysis (see also McCarthy 1998). Biber (1990), in this regard, points out that smaller corpora might be adequate when examining discrete grammatical items, as in the case of Cutting (1999, 2000) who successfully uses a corpus of 25,000 words to investigate the use of high frequency grammatical items. Other examples of the use of smaller corpora include O'Keeffe (2003 and 2006) who used a corpus of 55,000 words to investigate media discourse.

The advent of the microcomputer has greatly facilitated modern-day corpus linguistics. A landmark in the development of computer-based corpora was the compilation of the Brown

Corpus and the subsequent publication in 1967 of its linguistic analysis by Kučera and Francis (1967). The BNC (which I will use here for comparative purposes), containing over 100 million words of varied genres and speakers of written and spoken English, was compiled in the 1990s and led to the publication of *Word Frequencies in Written and Spoken English* by Leech, Rayson and Wilson (2001). Other important corpora include the five million-word Cambridge and Nottingham Corpus of Discourse in English (CANCODE) (see McCarthy 1998), the one million-word Vienna-Oxford Corpus of International English (VOICE) (see Seidlhofer 2010), and the 450 million-word online Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA) (see Davies 2010).

The development of software concordancing programs, such as *Wordsmith Tools* (Scott, 1996) and *AntConc* (Anthony 2012), both of which will be used here, has led to a ‘relaxation’ in the criticism of the ‘pseudo-procedures’ of corpus linguistics (see McEnery and Wilson 2005) and has greatly facilitated analytic work which was previously done manually and necessitated large teams of personnel (such as the 5,000 people employed by West in 1953) who are prone to making mistakes. The principal tools of concordancing programs are 1) the compilation of word frequency lists (the ‘bedrock of corpus linguistics’ according to Baker (2010)), 2) the concordancing of a particular word or phrase in the corpus to study its uses and collocation and colligation with other items and 3) key word analysis of the relative word frequencies between different corpora, usually that of a smaller research corpus and a larger reference corpus, which reveals items which are either significantly frequent in or significantly absent from the corpus under scrutiny.

3.5.1 Corpus linguistics in this study

In Chapter Six, *Words*, Research Corpus B (the corpus of extracted lingua franca discourse – see Section 4.2.3) will be used to characterize the language of the residents. McCarthy (1999) tentatively explored the question of what constituted a basic core vocabulary for spoken communication. He used a 3-million word sample of the 5 million word CANCODE and came to the conclusion that the point at where there is a discernible sharp word frequency drop is the boundary between ‘hardworking’ core vocabulary and the rest. I will be following McCarthy’s lead in Chapter Six to gauge the coverage of the vocabulary.

I will also gauge the research corpus for what McCarthy (1999: 240) called ‘the nine broad categories of a basic spoken vocabulary’ (excluding grammar/function words) which constituted the high frequency items in his corpus. Additionally, I will check the frequency of the use of the *-s* morpheme for the third person present simple, and also the frequency of past irregular and *-ed* forms to reference past time. The use of multiword clusters will also be checked and I will close Chapter Six with a comparative keyword analysis of two transactional corpora and one multi-party interactional corpus.

3.6 Conversation Analysis

Generally, linguists had neglected cluttered interaction until the preoccupation with observing conversational behaviour in ethnomethodology (Garfinkel, 1967) and ‘interaction order’ (Goffman, 1959) inspired the sociologists Harvey Sacks, Emmanuel Schegloff and Gail Jefferson (1968, 1974, 1977) to analyze the social organization of conversation, or ‘talk-in-interaction’, by a detailed inspection of recorded conversations (see also Heritage 1984a and 1985, ten Have 1986 and 1991; Coulthard 1985; McCarthy 1998; Silverman 1998 and 2001, Hutchby and Woofit 1998; and Sidnell 2010). Conversation analysis focuses on ‘the comparatively restricted domain of talk-in interaction’ (Maynard and Clayman 2003: 176) and on the constituent systems of conversation – turn-taking, topic sequencing, repair, and gaze direction, and principally characterizes:

- how speakers open and close conversations (Schegloff and Sacks, 1973),
- how speakers decide when it is their turn to speak or finish what they are saying (Sacks, 1974),
- how turns pattern into adjacency pairs (Schegloff and Sacks, 1973),
- how topics are managed and monitored (Maynard, 1980),
- and how turns happen in sequences (Schegloff, 1982).

in what Sherzer (1983:154) highlighted as the ‘considerable interest in ... the ordinary’, and the focus on middle-class conversations in which the level of mutual understanding ‘depends on unsaid but shared principles and assumptions.’

With regard to the ordinary, Heritage (1984b:1) extends this to speakers:

The central goal of conversation analytic research is the description and explication of the competences that ordinary speakers use and rely on in participating in intelligible, socially organized interaction.

The reference to ‘ordinary speakers’ and the fact that proponents of conversation analysis avoid (or they are accused of avoiding - see Hymes 1974, for example) psychological explanation, consideration of cultural or historical context, suprasegmental phonology and interpretation by speakers themselves, may cast in doubt the value of such an analytical framework for this study. In conversational analysis, normally, researchers look at what people do and they inductively arrive at the idealization of the organization of public behaviour. For example, preference does not equate to psychological or cultural choice; rather it represents conversational tendencies and meaning is constrained by the routine tendencies of particular exchanges. Such an approach is not at odds at all with this study precisely because firstly, there is no unifying and cultural choice in the community, and secondly, what is of interest is the here and now of the everyday communicative interaction of *extraordinary* speakers who cannot resort to schemata from a unifying singular culture (not to mention language). Moreover, the use of a framework which is designed for ordinary speakers and the analysis of how their interaction is organized within sequences of here and now utterances and actions, in which ‘sequential implicativeness’ (Schegloff and Sacks 1973:296) pertains (in adjacency pairs, for example), should provide valuable insights into how order is achieved by *extraordinary* speakers, and how intuitive orientation to the need for order helps the participants to negotiate and co-construct meaning. It should provide insights into how their limited level of English and perhaps elements of universal communication are exploited to facilitate such interactional achievement.

3.6.1 Conversation analysis in this study

Given that speakers are said to monitor syntactic, prosodic and pragmatic features (see Sidnell 2010:43-56) in order to anticipate when they can begin *their* turns, it will be interesting to see how speakers for whom these syntactic, prosodic and pragmatic features are foreign, actually perform such a feat - if they do so at all.

Conversation analysis will be employed in Chapter Six where I will highlight the use of continuers¹³, especially the use of *yeah* as a facilitator of fluency at the micro-level in negotiational talk. Conversation analysis is used as an instrument rather than a theory. The turn by turn analysis is reinforced by reference to the ethnography and the corpus analysis and this is vital in this chapter for an understanding of the residents' exploitation of minimal responses. The ethnography provides insight into the particular contexts of each speaker, the corpus analysis highlights the frequent and key items that the speaker uses, and it is these which are focussed on, turn by turn in their work of maintaining a level of control over the trajectory of talk and minimising and even diverting attention away from the lexicogrammatical and phonological inaccuracies.

In Chapter Seven, the analysis adopts the principles and theoretical underpinnings of conversation analysis to analyse the talk-in-interaction of the residents with one another through the medium of lingua franca English. The main difficulty facing the researcher is that conversation analysis is 'predicated on an assumption that participants are linguistically and conversationally competent, that the competence is shared, fully developed, and stable' (Firth 1996: 252). There is no such difficulty for the analyst who uses conversation analysis in his or her own society, nor for the analyst who does conversation analysis of interaction in a foreign language, considering the potential access to existing linguistic knowledge. Co-membership of a community also allows access to a common culture; as with the case of the study of foreign language talk-in-interaction, the analyst also has potential access to the study of the culture of that society. But this does not pertain for the analysis of a lingua franca because there is no one common culture associated with a lingua franca. Co-membership of a society with a shared language and culture is not only a resource for the analysts (and an impediment in its absence); it is also a resource for the interactants (Sacks 1992a: 116) and an impediment when the medium of language is a lingua franca and there may be a multitude of cultures and other languages present.

As will be seen in Chapter Five, the lingua franca that the residents use is an extremely reduced form of English, (also evidenced in Chapter Six, where any long turn taken by the residents is seen to be marred by lexicogrammatical and phonological anomalies). Conversation analysts

¹³ Continuers include words such as *yeah* and vocalizations such as *uh huh* and *mm* that are usually associated with a listener giving a speaker a signal to continue. For elaboration, see 8.3

make the assumption that all talk is ordered (Sacks 1984), and as mentioned previously, they assume that even the hesitations, silences, interjections, all which might be considered conversational detritus (Chomsky 1965), have a place in maintaining such order and sequential management (Heritage 1984). The same assumption cannot be made of lingua franca talk, however. Thus, in Chapter Seven, I will examine if these assumptions hold true for lingua franca interaction. That is, I will examine how the residents interact with one another through a close observation of turn-taking sequences, adjacency pairs, overlapping and interruption, topic change and repair as described by Jefferson, Sacks and Schegloff (1974), a brief review of which follows.

3.6.1.1 Turn-taking

According to Sacks, Schegloff and Jefferson (1974), there are three basic facts about conversation: turn taking occurs, one speaker tends to talk at a time, and the turns are taken with as little gap or overlap as possible. Turns have two principal components - turn construction and turn distribution. The turn construction unit (TCU) is an entity similar to a clause or a sentence in linguistics or the tone unit (see Brazil 1985) in phonology. The TCU comprises two features, projectability, whereby participants can project unit type (such as request, invitation) and predict the end of the unit, and transition possibility, or transition relevant places (TRPs) where other speakers can take over after the end of the first speaker's turn. The word *possibility* is important in that speakers orient to possible places of transition (in their judgement) rather than real ones.

Sacks, Schegloff and Jefferson, in their seminal paper (1974), 'A simplest systematics for the organization for turn taking for conversation' posit a simple set of rules for the distribution of turns. There are two rules, the first sub-divided into three parts:

Rule 1

- A. If the current speaker has identified or selected the next speaker, this speaker should take a turn at that place.
- B. If no such selection is made, then any speaker may self-select.
- C. If no such selection has been made, alternatively, the current speaker may, but need not, continue talking with another TCU.

Rule 2:

Whichever option has operated, then rules 1A-C come into play again for the next TRP.

(Adapted from Sacks, et al, 1974: 704)

Knowledge of such rules is subconscious in the same way that our knowledge of grammar and phonology is subconscious. Nevertheless Sacks, Schegloff and Jefferson (1974) empirically observed that participants generally oriented to the above rules as they negotiated their way through conversations in an orderly manner.

Before embarking on the description of the framework of turn-taking as described by Sacks *et al* (1974), I will first review the concept of co-construction in conversation, as this is vital for the forthcoming qualitative analysis, wherein the residents' negotiative interaction with the staff of the reception Centre (Chapter Eight), and the residents' interaction with one another (Chapter Nine), is explored.

3.6.1.2 Co-construction in turn-taking

Goodwin (1995) studied the case of a New York lawyer who had suffered a massive left-brain stroke in 1979 which caused severe aphasia. The lawyer almost completely lost the ability to speak meaningful language, although he was able to understand what others said to him and utter nonsense syllables to produce meaningful intonation melodies. He eventually learned to utter and use meaningfully three words: *and*, *yes* and *no*. Thirteen years later, the lawyer's lexicon had not increased; he still used these three words to communicate and do so effectively.

But Goodwin (*ibid*: 3) wondered: 'Of all the words in a language why these three?' The answer is that all three link to other talk. The conjunction *and* links units of discourse, and *yes* and *no* are typically used in second pair parts (in question and answer sequences, for example) to respond to something that has been said already, as described by Sacks *et al* (1974) in their seminal article 'A simplest systematics for the organization of turn-taking for conversation'.

Goodwin goes on to say:

His talk does not stand alone as a self-contained entity, but emerges from, and is situated within, the talk of others, to which it is inextricably linked. (1995:3)

The point is, that no matter how linguistically limited one participant in conversation may be, the fact that conversation is co-constructed by two or more interlocutors (see Tannen (1987, 1989 and Biber et al 1999, and Goodwin and Goodwin 1987 and 1992), responding to the contextual contingencies (see Ford 2004) of the on-going to and fro dynamic, changes the focus from syntactic constraints to pragmatic concerns. In Goodwin's (1995:4) study of the aphasic lawyer, the latter eventually learned 'to produce a competent reply at precisely the place where such a reply is relevant' through conditional relevance (Schegloff, 1968), and using only the words *and*, *yes* and *no*, he was able to negotiate the delivery of commodities of his daily life.

Clancy and McCarthy (2014: 431) view co-construction as 'any conversational event where a second speaker jointly creates a formal artefact (e.g. a word, phrase, clause or sentence) or a functional artefact (e.g. a proposition, a speech act, a narrative, a trope) across turn-boundaries, in collaboration with a previous speaker or speakers.' The interactional responses of the hearer are vital, and these are composed of features such as the repetition of lexical items, agreement tokens (*I see*, *I know*, *correct* etc.), response tokens (*mm*, *yeah*, *hm*, *uh huh* etc.) and paralinguistic semioticity. Schegloff (2000), for example, talks about the use of 'continuers' (*yeah*, *mm*, etc) by listeners to indicate to the present speaker their awareness that the turn is not complete. Duncan (1974), Schegloff (1984), Schiffrin (1987), Lerner (1991), Ferrara (1992) and Ono and Thompson (1996) have also all referred to sentence-completions and expansions by a second speaker as another means of co-construction. While many researchers focus on the completion of grammatical syntactic units (for example, Lerner 1991; Helasvu 2004; Thompson and Couper-Kuhlen 2005) wherein, as Rühlemann (2007: 100) says 'a participant produces an utterance that is grammatically fitted to the ongoing trajectory of another participant', Schegloff (2000) also mentions the scenario where a speaker is simply at a loss for words or has something on the tip of his or her tongue, and a second speaker supplies a missing term.

The linguistic situation of the lawyer can be compared to that of the residents of Dun Cluain, in that most of them used a sparse lexicon (see Chapter Six). But they exploited *ad maximum* the words they did know, resorted to continuers and response tokens to negotiate their way

through conversations with the staff, and demonstrated facilitative collaboration in interaction with one another.

Ford (2004) mentions that grammatical, lexical and prosodic features may converge to facilitate speaker transition. But what happens if none of the speakers share a common grammar, lexicon or prosody? One of the compounding factors of communication in Dun Cluain was that the community was culturally and linguistically heterogeneous at the time of study. Consideration of cross-cultural variation in turn-taking and universalism is taken up in the next section.

3.6.1.3 Turn-taking across languages and cultures

Many anthropologists and ethnographers have suggested that turn-taking varies in different languages. Lehtonen (1985), for example, reports on long delays (sometimes lasting from morning to evening) between turns in Nordic cultures (Finland and Sweden). Others who report long silences include Reisman (1974), Gudykunst and Nishida (1994), Dorais (2010) and Mushin and Gardner (2010) whose conversation analytical study supports the ethnographic reports of silences in aboriginal conversation. Tannen (1985), reports the opposite tendency toward rapid turn-taking in American Jewish communities while others (Agliata and Anolli 2005; Sugawara 1996; Wieland 1991) report frequent overlapping. It is worthy of mention that anecdotally, the Nigerians in the Dun Cluain Reception Centre, were also considered to have a totally different turn-taking system than that of the staff and the other residents, and this was an opinion held by both the staff and the other residents. Anecdotally, they were ‘accused’ of overlapping and interrupting continually (see Chapter 5).

In refutation of these reports of the wide-ranging diversity of turn-taking systems, but in support of a universal system of turn-taking - the minimal gap - minimal overlap system as in English – (Schegloff 2006:72), and in support of a human ethological basis for universal sequences of communication (as reported in work on early ‘proto-conversation’ between new born children and mothers by Meltzoff and Moore (1977), Murray and Trevarthen (1986), Levinson (2006), and Striano *et al* (2006)), researchers at the Max Planck Institute for Psycholinguistics - Stivers, Enfield, Brown, Englert, Hayashi, Heinemann, Hoymann, Rossano, de Ruiter, Yoon, and Levinson (2009), found evidence of ‘robust universals’ (ibid: 5) in informal conversation.

In a study of ten languages from five continents, including major world languages and languages of indigenous communities, evidence was found to support the view that turn-taking in conversation is guided by two main rules:. These are to:

1. Avoid speaking at the same time and
2. Avoid silence between turns.

Opposing hypotheses were tested:

1. The universal system hypotheses (turn-taking is a universal system with minimal cultural variability).
2. The cultural variability hypotheses (turn-taking is language and culture dependent).

The study gauged the distribution of turn transitions and the commonality of overlap and gaps. The universal system hypothesis predicts a unimodal distribution, and the cultural variability hypothesis predicts more common overlap in some languages and more common gaps in others.

Stivers *et al* (ibid: 4) state that the results ‘provide substantial support for the universal system hypothesis,’ given that in the ten languages there was little gap and overlap. It was also discovered that silence seemed to signify the same across the languages, that is, people delay when failing to give a definite answer or when they are disconfirming which constitutes (ibid: 6) ‘a universal semiotics of delayed response.’

The study suggests then that turn-taking may form a part of a collection of rules that guide behaviour – in other words it is not universals of social interaction, but universal of social interaction that hold us together. With this important insight on the universals of turn-taking, I now turn to describe some of the component parts of the framework of a conversational analytical approach.

3.6.1.4 Adjacency pairs

Sacks (1992: 521-70) paid special attention to what he called ‘tying rules’. These operated in conversation to link utterances and speakers. What he eventually called ‘adjacency pairs’ consisted of two sequentially ordered utterances performed by two speakers. The first part of the pair elicits a specific range of relevant second parts, as in the following traditionally performed and preferred greeting:

How are you?

I'm fine, thank you

Schegloff and Sacks (1973:295) formulated a basic rule for adjacency pairs:

Given the recognizable production of a first pair part from the pair part, on its first possible completion its speaker should stop and a next speaker should start and produce a second pair part from the pair type the first is recognizably a member.

The word *adjacency* is used because the pairs ideally occur adjacent to each other, although second parts may be produced further on in the conversation, depending on the context and the orientations which occasion insertions (see Merritt 1976, Goffman 1981, and Hutchby and Woofit 2001).

The importance of the concept of the adjacency pair is not simply that utterances come in pairs, but rather that the orientation to relevance constitutes a vital component of the role that turn-taking plays in mutual understanding and meaning making: the second speaker can demonstrate that he or she has understood the meaning and intention of the first speaker, who in turn can verify if he or she was understood and if the intention was accepted or not (see Sacks and Schegloff, 1973:296). As such the concept of the adjacency pair is not only relevant in Chapter Eight in the analysis of the conversation around the integration day; it is also important when looking at the speech act of requesting in Chapter Seven. Here initially requesting was analyzed using the CCSARP framework, taking the individual speech act as the unit of analysis. For certain requests, however, looking at the adjacency pair better facilitated the analysis of what the speech act did; in fact, it will be seen that such a typical adjacency pair as that of greeting, over time and through routine practice transformed into a request and a response.

3.6.1.5 Overlapping and interruption

Much research has focused on examining where overlaps start, how they are resolved and what happens after the overlaps have been resolved (see e.g. Jefferson 1983, 1986, 2004; French and Local 1983 and Schegloff 2000). French and Local (1983) first referred to the concept of competitive and non-competitive overlap, and Schegloff later (2000:4) classified overlaps similarly into problematic or competitive and unproblematic or non-competitive, the former challenging for the turn of the present speaker and necessitating resolution, the latter, not challenging for the turn. French and Local (1983: 21-28) were more detailed in their classification, however, claiming that what makes incoming speech competitive or noncompetitive is a combination of high pitch and increased loudness, forcing the first speaker to adjust prosodically.

Jefferson (1983, 1986) has shown that overlap usually occurs at *possible* transition relevance places, and her analysis of a multitude of conversations has shown that both the beginning and termination of the overlap are orderly. Here I will follow Jefferson's (1983) classification of three major types of overlap onset. These were the 'transitional onset' when the next speaker orients to a possible transition relevance place; 'recognitional onset' whereby the next speaker understands what the present speaker is saying and can therefore predict the completion of the TCU and 'orients not so much to completeness but to adequacy' (ibid:12); and 'progressional onset', where the next speaker completes for the first speaker if there is an instance of disfluency.'

Jefferson (1983: 12) points out - with regard to transitional onset - that 'an enormous amount' of overlap is a consequence of the recipient speaker starting to talk at a possible TRP and the present speaker continuing. Although it may seem that the second speaker is interrupting, Jefferson's data shows that usually the second speaker has started up at 'a perfectly good turn ending' (ibid: 13). One of the examples that Jefferson presents, shows the second speaker starting up at the final phonemes of the last word of a completed TCU:

Frank: oʝ's went fɹ a cuupla pin[ts

Ken: [He owes me eleven quiddih

The principal distinction between transitional onset and recognitional onset is clearly seen in the following example (ibid:24):

Jessie: Oh:::. Hahv they'av yih visitiz go[ne then

Vera: [Theh'v↓go :ne. Yes,

Here, rather than starting up on the last phoneme of the last word of a TCU, the second speaker recognizes what the word is and bases and places the next turn on such recognition. Thus the focus of the second speaker is on an item or word, or as Jefferson says later (ibid: 28) on the 'general trust, sense, etc., of the talk in progress.'

Progressional onset is a by-product of the second speaker focusing on dysfluencies and hitches in the previous turn. One of the examples provided (ibid: 36) shows the next speaker entering as the first speaker stutters mid-utterance:

Bryant: thet it's it's a [ait's a different (trimming)

Sokol: [No :. It's nɔht vɔln'rabwl eh tɔhl

In the examples above the first speakers finishes the TCU. Jefferson (1983: 16) distinguishes between these overlapping types and interruption, which she considers as '...roughly starting up in the midst of another's turn at talk, not letting the other finish.'

Interruptions were generally taken as hostile acts which disrupt the present speaker's turn and disrupt the topic of the present speaker, constituting a violation of turn-taking rules (West & Zimmerman, 1975). Technically, a second speaker begins speaking at a place which could not be considered an appropriate transition relevance place. Schegloff (1973, L1 lecture cited in Bennett 1981: 172-173), differentiating between overlaps and interruptions, commented that the former are projected to begin at a *possible* completion point of the first speaker's TCU, while 'If it's projected to begin in the middle of a point that is in no way a possible completion point for the turn, then we speak of it as an interruption.' This equates overlap to unintentional error and interruption as intentional. Many researchers, such as Octigan and Niederman (1975) consider interruption a sign of conversational dominance and power. There are researchers, however, who take a more positive stance and look upon interruptions as facilitative. James and Clarke (1993), for example, consider that interruptions have the capacity to promote

solidarity and facilitate the production of shared meaning, and constitute ways of signalling enthusiasm for the interaction. Hung, Brooke and Dunne, (1995) also consider that in many instances interruption is healthy and functional. West and Zimmerman (1983) further categorize interruption as either simultaneous non-interruptive or interruptive talk, the latter constituting a significant disruption of the first speaker's turn construction unit, the former being similar to the overlap in that it is completed while the first speaker is still speaking. Looking at this in a different way, non-interruptive interruptions may be facilitative, while interruptive interruptions disrupt the course of interactions. Sidnell (2010: 54) considers that for an overlap to be considered an interruption 'competing trajectories of action and perhaps also evidence of disaffiliation' are involved.

3.6.1.6 Repair

The term *repair* is used in conversation analysis to describe a wide range of phenomena, from the procedural rectification of non-orientation, to the rules of turn-taking, to the correction of faulty content. Jefferson (1972 and 1987), Schegloff (1979, 1987, 1992) and Sacks, Schegloff and Jefferson (1977) have shown that repair is just another manifestation of orientation to turn-taking rules. In the case of procedural repair, for example, overlapping, which is a violation of the rule that one speaker speaks at a time, can be repaired by one of the speakers stopping, in order to let the other continue to the completion of the TCU. Sacks, Schegloff and Jefferson (1977) also refer to wider issues of correction in conversation, such as faulty word selection, slips of the tongue and misinterpretation, but they also point out that such repair may take place when there is in fact no error, and that is why the term *repair* was used by these three researchers in preference to *correction*. For example, another speaker may suggest another substitute term for one that has been used or is projected to be used, without that latter term being incorrect.

Sacks, Schegloff and Jefferson (1977) described four types of repair. Self-initiated self repair occurs when the speaker initiates and undertakes the adjustment. Other initiated self repair occurs when the second speaker initiates or signals the problem and the first speaker makes the adjustment. Self-initiated other repair occurs when the first speaker looks to the second speaker to come to his or her aid. Other-initiated other repair occurs when the speaker of the next turn signals the trouble source and undertakes the repair.

Repair can occur at various stages of the TCU (ibid and also see Hutchby and Woofit 2001 for summary). First position repair occurs within or immediately after the TCU that contains the problem. Second position repair occurs either at the next TRP or at the turn following the turn with the TRP. Third position repair occurs at the speaker's next turn after the recipients response and there is also a possibility of a fourth position. Most of the positions in which repair occurs are in close proximity to the source of trouble, for logical reasons – it would be difficult and hence disruptive to refer too far back in the conversation.

The analysis of the turn-taking system itself shows that its very structural features support self-repair. As Hutchby and Woofit (2001:67) point out, the first two positions for the execution of repair occur in the turn of the speaker of the trouble source. The same authors also point out that other repair can be potentially face threatening and consequently disruptive for the turn-taking system. When other repair is carried out, then, it tends to be done so with mitigation (laughter, changes in intonation, jokes, the use of *I think* etc).

3.6.1.7 Topic management

McCarthy (1998: 132) described the full range of definitions of topic in relation to technical boundaries, semantic-content, interaction, pragmatic approaches and discourse cohesion. The technical level could be thought of as 'stretches of talk ... bounded by transactional markers, such as lexical ones (*by the way, to change the subject*), or phonological ones (changes in pitch).' The semantic definition has to do with content subjects like 'holidays' or 'shopping', whereas topics in the interactional sense have to do with utterances that speakers make in connection to a specific concept and which 'unfold interactively, rather than 'existing' as static entities' (ibid: 70). A pragmatic approach takes the simple view (McCarthy 1998: 32) that 'topics are strings of utterances perceived as relevant to one another by participants in talk.' The discourse-cohesion view involves topics ending 'where chains of lexical cohesion peter out.'

Most initial studies on topic focused on the semantic level. Watson and Potter (1962:251), for example, spoke of topic as being what a conversation is about – the focus of attention. Brown and Yule (1983:70) following a similar line, refer to one stretch of discourse being 'about' something. As McCarthy (1998:132) says, 'Topics can be the reason for talk or they can arise because people are already talking,' (see also Brown and Yule 1983:89).

Sacks, who was ‘a bit leery’ (1995 Volume 1:752) about working on topics at first, eventually related their generation and organization to ‘tying structures’. Topicality began to be looked at in terms of speakers adapting their utterances to those of the prior speaker (Schegloff and Sacks 1973; Maynard 1980; Jefferson 1984) and in terms of transition (Schiffrin 1994). Sacks (1972:15-16 and 1995 Volume 2:300) also looked at the phenomenon of ‘stepwise transition’, a subtle way of ‘getting off’ (Lectures, 1976:9) not only embarrassing or controversial topics but also ‘getting off’ ancillary tangents by finding something that is connected - a ‘topical pivot’ to disengage from the prior topic gradually without the typical disjunctive closings (see also Jefferson 1984:198: 201 for examples).

In the analysis in Chapter Six, while the issue of funding cannot exactly be spoken of as a semantic topic per se, most of the talk revolves around this issue. Speakers will be seen to adapt to the topic and utterances of the prior speaker and in certain cases resort to stepwise-transition in order to switch the topic. Chapter Seven looks more closely at the issue of topic management. The participants in the interaction to be analyzed, had been asked by the management to discuss a forthcoming integration day. The management of the main topic and transition to other related sub-topics and non-related topics is explored. The analysis, then, rather than looking at topics in the semantic sense, considers the pragmatic and interactional achievement in the management or manipulation of topics.

3.7 Discourse intonation

As mentioned by Coulthard (1985: 96) it was ‘surprising if not startling’ that in none of the new models for analysing discourse that had emerged in the 1960s and 1970s (speech act analysis, the Ethnography of Speaking and even conversation analysis) ‘...there had been virtually no attempt to account for the significance of variations...’ (ibid) of suprasegmental features, despite mentions of the importance of intonation, intensity and duration and their inclusion in detailed transcriptions (in those of conversation analysis, for example). The reluctance to delve deeper into the use of intonation in discourse may be due to the fact that native speakers of a language ‘find it very difficult to introspect about the significance of the choices they make’ (Coulthard, ibid: 97). Other factors that may dissuade discourse analysts from attempting to classify meanings or functions is that there seems to be no definite one to

one correspondence between suprasegmental elements and meaning (see Bolinger 1964) and ‘no *constant* relationship between particular acoustic phenomena and particular analytic categories’ (Coulthard, 1985:97). It seems clear, however, given the changes in intonation and intensity that appear in an individual’s interaction, that speakers attempt (consciously or subconsciously) to communicate something extra, something that perhaps is not possible in the mere lexicogrammatical constructions, and there seems to be agreement around basic functional features, such as the use of intonation in interrogatives.

The difficulty comes when attempting to attribute deeper meaning or attitude. Crystal (1969) for example, reported that native speakers involved in an experiment on intonation found it impossible to agree when attributing attitudes to varying intonation contours. He also provided the warning that although intonation exists in all languages and such contours as those which distinguish between statements and questions, for example, are similar, it cannot be assumed that the speakers of other languages will follow those patterns when they interact in English. In a later work, Crystal (1975) concluded that most tones within interaction carry no meaning.

Halliday (1967 and 1970), on the other hand, suggested that intonation carries two types of information – the signalling of priority and grammatical mood – and outlined five available intonational choices, all whose contrasts are grammatical. O’Connor and Arnold (1973:2) concluded that the principal function of intonation is the situational or contextual ‘expression’ of attitude, and they provided many examples of attitude attribution, some of which Coulthard and Brazil (1981) considered contradictory. Surely, however, the very fact that speakers apply different intonational contours in different situations for different attitudes is what is paramount. Such situational variation is a powerful tool of communication (although it may seem to be a limitation for the taxonomical linguist). Whatever the interpretation of the intonation by the interlocutor, the variation signals that the lexicogrammatical repertoire is not sufficient to express the attitude or the meaning – therefore the hearer pays more attention.

Coulthard and Brazil (1981:97) concede that intonational divisions are motivated by ‘a need to add moment by moment situationally specific, intonationally conveyed meanings to particular words or group of words.’ They proceed to explain work done by Brazil at the English Language Research unit in Birmingham University (1973, 1975, 1978, and 1985) on intonation in interaction. The significance of intonation, according to Brazil (1984:46) was related to existential function and communication between speaker and hearer within discourse. ‘By making a choice in any of the intonation systems ... a speaker makes some kind of assumption

about what he/she takes, for present purposes, to be the state of understanding between him/her and a hearer,' (1985:32). The understandings relate to shared schematic knowledge (see this 4.6.5 below), and the context and the purpose of the talk at hand. He isolated four units or systems of speaker choice: *prominence*, *tone*, *key*, and *termination* within the *tone unit*, into which, he contended, the majority of speech in interaction is divided (or prepared in the mind). The description accounts for paradigmatic options, and *prominence* is defined as 'a linguistic choice available to the speaker independent of the grammatical structure' (ibid). For example, in the answer to the question 'What card did you play?'

1 2 3 4
 The queen of hearts

'of' is the only word that can occupy the space between 'queen' and 'hearts'. The 'existential' paradigmatic options available in this situation for words two and four are greater, however – the space occupied by 'queen' has thirteen options (ace, 1, 2, etc.) and the space occupied by 'hearts' has four options. The speaker thus intonationally marks as prominent an item that he or she '... is selecting from a range of oppositions in the existential paradigm' (ibid). In the same example - marked for prominence by capital letters and underlining - the speaker is giving prominence to 'queen' (as an answer to the question *Which one again?*):

The QUEEN of hearts

Brazil also elaborated on and modified Halliday's intonation choices. These are of particular interest in this study for the analysis of one word responses (one word intonation units) by residents during interaction which carry many varied intonation contours. Brazil described five basic intonational patterns: rise, fall, fall rise, rise fall and level tone. These are described below, adapting from Roach's (2009) common and agreed 'attitudinal':

1. Fall (\\) is a neutral tone, used for example to give a definitive answer to a polar question.

A: *Have you finished?*

B: \\Yes.

2. Rise (/) conveys the impression that more will follow, as in the answer when a speaker tries to get someone's attention.

A: *Excuse me.*

B: */Yes*

3. Fall rise (∨) is frequently used when a speaker wishes to express incomplete agreement or doubt

A: *I've heard that is a good school*

B: *∨ Yes*

4. Rise Fall (∧) is frequently used to convey strong emotion or opinion, as in the example:

A: You wouldn't do such an awful thing, would you?

B: *∧ No*

5. Level tone (—) is frequently used for routine or uninteresting utterances, as in students responding “_ Yes” to a classroom roll-call.

(Adapted from and Roach 2009)

In the analyses in Chapter Eight and Chapter Nine, I will use a slightly different annotation scheme (see 4.2.3 below) in order not over-complicate the transcriptions. The symbols ↑↓ will be used for rising and falling tone respectively, while ↔ will be used for a level tone. Underlining will be used for prominence and capital letters for increased intensity (loudness).

3.8. The blend of methodological frameworks

Three major types of methodological framework blend in this thesis. These are ethnography, corpus linguistics and conversation analysis. It seems an unlikely blend given the mutual distrust of proponents of ethnography and conversation analysts (Duranti 2003), and the highly quantitative, non-contextual, software search for linguistic features in corpus linguistics. This study is clearly ethnographic in that I do not begin with a hypothesis, rather I allow the ethnography (supported by the corpus linguistics) to ‘suggest directions of where to look’

(Blumer 1969: 148). The thesis is also ethnographic in the sense that this researcher was a quasi-participant observer. The research is ethnographic in the sense that it is interpretive – the residents take part in ethnographic interviews and give their point of view. Finally, the research is ethnographic in the sense that it is not aiming to be fully representative (although I do make reference to universals in turn taking): it focuses on one place at one time on a transient community and on a transient lingua franca.

Ethnography is an emic approach which prioritizes the insider's perspective (Duranti 2003: 85), as opposed to an etic approach which emerges from the outsider *scientist*-oriented structured perspective (see Pike 1967 for an explanation of the origins of these two terms from *phonemic* and *phonetic*). Both corpus linguistics and conversation analysis could also be considered emic in that the first characterizes the naturally occurring language *of the people*, and the second provides a bottom-up perspective of *the participant's* talk in interaction. However, here at least, the characterized lingua franca is compared with native speaker English from the perspective of an analyst's (McCarthy 1999) construct. While conversation analysis does proceed bottom-upwards, in its purist form it does not consider the social or psychological context of the participants, although it will make the claim that such relevance emerges in the talk-in interaction. Even when it is *applied* in its non-purist form, availing of its tools and technique, as in this thesis, it can still be seen as etic. In Chapter Seven I look at how the residents interact with one another, but through the invocation of a matrical framework designed for monolingual and monocultural societies. Moreover, the relevant psychological and sociological factors would not emerge in the talk-in-interaction because the residents were too guarded about speaking about their contexts in the presence of other residents.

Although the ethnographic approach here is emic and the corpus linguistics and conversation analysis may be etic, this does not preclude their combination. In fact such a blend of different perspectives, insider and outsider, gives the research its powerful force. The individual limitations of each methodology are mitigated by triangular reference. It resolves issues of validity, for example. An instance of this is the picture of the Nigerians emerging from the ethnography as being disruptive in English class and at meetings; the analysis of talk in-interaction proves that this was not the case (see Chapter Four).

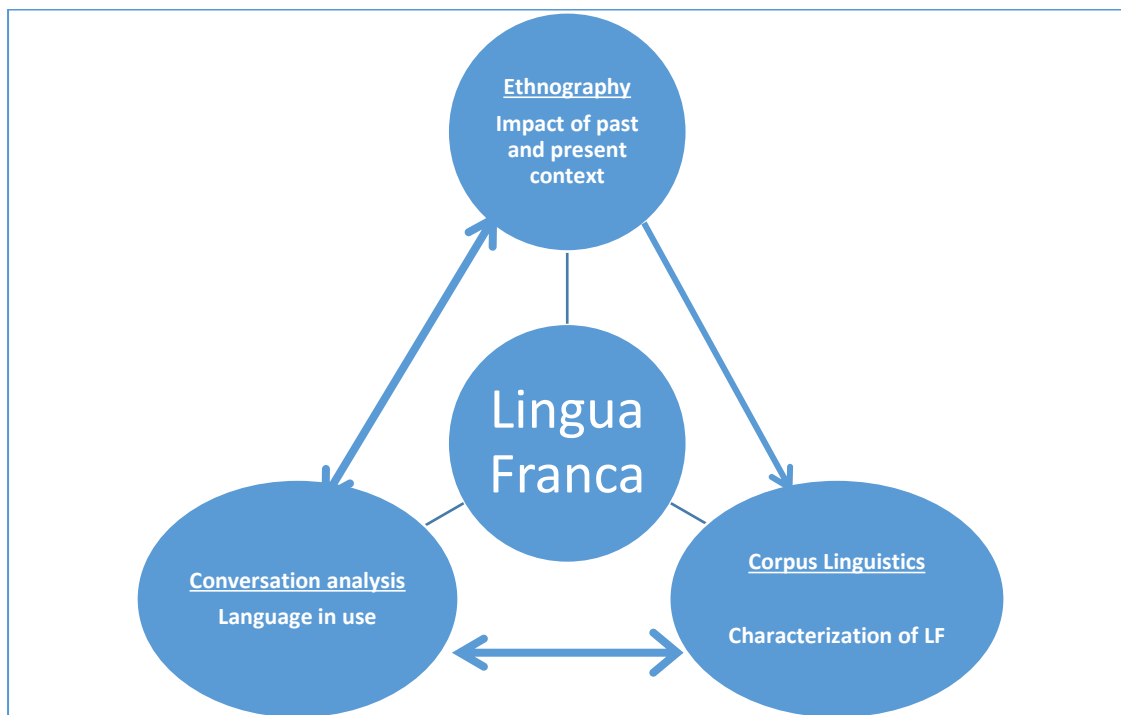
Taken as a simple linear investigative progression, the move from ethnography, which provides the context, to corpus linguistics, which provides the characterization of the language, to

conversation analysis, which facilitates detailed examination of language in use, is as natural as language development itself. However, the blend is also both generally and specifically synergistic. The optimal and specific synergy pertains in Chapter Six, *Negotiations*, where corpus linguistics is harnessed to gather quantitative information on individual speakers and also to calibrate observations coming from the turn by turn analysis of the use of minimal responses, while the ethnographic background information is used to elucidate decisions and motivations of the speakers. In Chapter Seven, *Interactions*, where the typical etic components of conversation analysis are used to gauge the residents' maintenance of sequential order, the emic perspective of the ethnography, elucidates the process by providing background information which would not otherwise emerge from this particular talk-in-interaction

An important point on this blend of methodologies is that two seemingly opposing frameworks such as corpus linguistics and conversation analysis can be perfectly compatible with minimum contextual background (see O'Keeffe and Walsh 2012 and Walsh, Morton and O'Keeffe 2011, for example), because assumptions can be made with regard to the homogenous language and culture and people's ways of acting. No such assumptions can be made here, so the ethnography of the unifying schematic knowledge of the residents - the flight from alleged persecution and the confinement in the reception centre – contextualizes the study; it explains general and specific linguistic behaviour. Moreover, while a monolingual corpus linguistics study may also make assumptions with regard to competency, homogeneity and genre, and search for relevant patterns, this study chiefly uses corpus linguistic methods to characterize an unknown and transient, linguistic entity, by calibrating word coverage and the presence of the common (from a native English point of view) conversational components.

In all, thus, the linear and synergistic relationship of ethnography, corpus linguistics and conversation analysis creates a powerful research module, as Fig 3.1 represents.

Fig. 3.1 Methodological framework



3.9 Data

The complete research corpus (referred to as Research Corpus A) comprises a total of 94,333 words transcribed from recordings made at the Reception Desk, in the classrooms, in the Education Office and in the canteen between 2003 and 2005 (see Table 4.1 below and Appendix 1). Research Corpus A contains the words of the native speakers of English as well as those of the residents, and is used principally for the extraction of ethnographic data for analyses in Chapter Four, *Contexts*, and for the extraction of interactional exchanges for analyses in Chapter Six, *Negotiations*, and Chapter Seven *Interactions*. Research Corpus B ((henceforth RCB) contains 51,000 words which pertain exclusively to the residents and which were isolated from the main corpus to compile a sub-corpus for analysis of the lingua franca in Chapter Five, *Words*.

The data ranges from recordings of interactions at the reception desk, classrooms, offices, to field notes taken in the canteen and corridor and sports facilities, and even on excursions

outside the centre with this researcher, to ethnographic interviews, and quasi-participant observations. All provide a rich source of data.

As mentioned previously, I waited one year after my arrival in the Centre to begin using the recording equipment. This period of adjustment gave the residents time to grow accustomed to the recording equipment and to get used to my presence; but it also gave me the opportunity to assuage any suspicions that the residents may have had about me. Thus, this strategy of delay mitigated the effects of ‘observer paradox’ (Labov 1972: 209).

As mentioned previously, some of the recordings were not used because either their content was too delicate (recordings undertaken in the living quarters and with the Community Welfare Officer) or were not clear enough (there was too much static noise on the tape and too many people speaking simultaneously in the recordings in the foyer).

I took field notes of interactions in the canteen and in the corridors as quickly as possible, and sometimes even on napkins in order not to arouse the suspicions of the residents by going into the canteen with a notebook. Evidently, they are *post factum* representations, and while I reproduce some of these in the ethnography (Chapter Four) for elucidation of particular contextual issues, they are not part of the corpus used for the characterization of the lingua franca, the data of which are categorized in table 3.1 below.

In the two chapters in which I adopt and adapt conversation analysis (Chapter Six and Chapter Seven), I use a transcription style close to that originally developed by Gail Jefferson (see Sacks, 1984). However, as I consider that the over-annotation of conversation analysis complicates rather than elucidates, I have simplified the transcriptions accordingly. Overlaps and interruptions are simply printed directly beneath the overlapped or interrupted utterances and will carry the symbol { only when referred to. The symbol → is used to draw attention to the lines which are referred to in the analysis.

Rather than using the term ‘exchange’ which brings with it theoretical connotations, I use the neutral ‘Fragment’ for ‘pieces’ of discourse that I have extracted from the corpus for special attention. I have preferred, for the sake of clarity and the presentation of a more readable text, to refer to duration of time within angle brackets, as in <2s> (= two seconds) and will only use separate lines (as in Jefferson’s system) when the pause is over five seconds. Given that

unintelligible words expend time, I have tried to reflect such syllabically, as in <syllables> , which means the speaker uttered three syllables.

Table 3.1 Recordings and transcriptions

Tape Number, People, Topic	Corpus A	Corpus B	Nationalities
Tape A 1 Funding Requests C	4808	1767	Multiple
Tape A 1 Visit from Tami A	76	74	Nigerian
Tape A 1 Visit from Boris K	1447	1307	Georgian
,Tape B 2 Rihana and Mubaarak	7724	3739	Georgian
Tape C 3 Conversation circles	10499	5463	Multiple
Tape D 4 Interviews for crèche	6972	2722	Multiple
Tape E 5 Reception	2539	1058	Multiple
Tape F 6 Boris Krasnov	6934	5779	Georgian
Tape G 7 A Reine when she arrived	126	126	New Guinean
Tape G 7 Meredith and Reine	690	690	Nigerian and New Guinean
Tape H 8 Interview with Moti	5294	4013	Nigerian
Tape I 9 Organization of Integration Day	7672	6544	Multiple
Tape J 10 Class Katya ¹⁴	N/A	N/A	
Tape K 11 Beginners Class	5500	2764	Multiple
Tape L 12 Mubaarak	1000	447	Somalian
Tape M 13 A Chistol	5500	1188	Ukrainian
Tape N 14 Said		1690	Moroccan
Tape N 14 Visit from Meredith		440	Nigerian
Tape N 14 Miro	5499	1742	Serbian
Tape O 15 Guidance	3290	1233	Multiple
Tape P 16 Tshvuila	1534	0	Congolese
Tape P 16 Miro	2793	0	Serbian
Tape P 16 Karim and Zine	3549	3829	Moroccan and Algerian
Tape Q 17 Registering	2552	494	Multiple
Tape R 18 Sociologist with Somali girls	8335	3898	Somalian
TOTAL	94333	51007	

In Table 3.2 below the full range of symbols is listed. In Chapter Four, *Contexts*, a very broad, uncluttered transcription system is used, as I concentrate more on the content of what was said by the residents about their past and present lives. Whilst names were angle-bracketed (as for

¹⁴ This recording was withdrawn for ethical reasons

example <Kieran>) for corpus analysis, such brackets were removed in the analytical write-up, again for the sake of clarity.

Table 3.2 Transcription symbols.

↑	Rising intonational contour
↓	Falling intonational contour
^	Rise-fall
∨	Fall-rise
◦	Soft intensity
Capitalization	= Loud intensity
Underline	= Prominence
<Syll >	= one syllable uttered (and continuation of the word syllable to show duration)
<Sylla>	= two syllables uttered
<Syllables>	three syllables uttered
<Four syllables>	four syllables uttered
<Unintelligible string>	= more than four syllables uttered
{	= interruption
.	= micropause
...	= pause of circa one second
<2S>	= two second pause, and so on.
hh	= breath intake
haha	= laughter (and repeated syllables to show the duration)
<happy>	= the transcriber guesses the word uttered
∩	= latching
↵	= utterances connecting meaning over various lines

3.10 Ethics

Ethical clearance was sought from and granted by the Reception and Integration Agency of the Department of Justice in June 2002. Permission to carry out the study was also sought from and granted by the local Vocational Education Committee in June 2002. The Representative of the Reception and Integration Agency stipulated that all participants should be informed that

recording equipment was being used 1) by means of signs placed on notice boards (permanently) and 2) clear indications that specific recordings were taking place and 3) that any participant should have the right to request either that a particular recording be withdrawn from the study or a particular excerpt of a recording be deleted.¹⁵

This study is about how real people with exceptional backgrounds communicate in exceptional circumstances. I contend that familiarity with the speakers facilitates understanding of the interaction in the linguistic analysis section. Although, I have anonymized all the participants' names, the reader will be able to follow their particular stories from when they are introduced in the ethnography section to when they reappear in the linguistic analysis. Not all of the speakers whose communicative data is analyzed in the linguistic analysis sections appear in the ethnography chapter; however, the similarity of the cultural backgrounds still elucidates their communicative practices.

The names of the catering staff, the Department of Justice staff, the medical personnel, the social welfare personnel, the security personnel, the educational personnel and other researchers have also been anonymized, as has the name of the Centre and the locality in which it is situated.

All recorded data (recordings and transcriptions) is in the possession of the researcher and will not be released to a third-party.

In Chapter Four, *Contexts*, there is reference to killing and torture and other aspects of the residents' past lives that may shock the Western European reader. In an ethnography it is important to present an honest account of the culture of the participants, because it is from this culture that schematic knowledge of form and content emanates. The schematic knowledge of the residents includes the experiences that made them flee their countries. This thesis is about linguistics, but linguistics is about people, and the linguistics that is studied in this thesis is the linguistic of the people who populate the total institution, who, to use a popular term, have *baggage* that may be upsetting to the Eurocentric ear. Torture, killings and other aberrations were part of the daily discourse in the Dun Cluain Centre. While most of such references have been omitted, it is essential to provide some examples of what these people had suffered,

¹⁵ The data-gathering predated existing MIC ethical clearance procedures.

because it remained part of their schematic knowledge and, crucially, it impacted on their interactions in the Centre. For example, an Albanian man named Ervin refused to say *please*. One day, on an excursion outside the centre he put this in the context of killing nine men with ‘these’ hands. He had been asked to say *please* in class several times but refused to do so. The point is that a man with his experience, the leader of the Albanian community in the Dun Cluain Centre, could not lose face in this way in the presence of his compatriots and in the presence of other residents from the Balkan countries attending the classes.

3.11 Summary

In this chapter, I have presented the principal methodological frameworks, ethnography, corpus linguistics and conversation analysis, that I will use in this study. I have also explained how they will be used and how they provide a powerful synergistic framework to tackle the difficulty of researching interaction through the medium of a lingua franca involving multicultural asylum seekers. I begin then by filling in the ‘socio-communicative’ background, influenced in my representation by the humanized picture of the dehumanized in total institutions in Goffman’s *Asylums*. Unlike Goffman (1961), who based his work exclusively on observation, and did not triangulate with rigorous empirical data and studies, I proceed to describe the communicative situations and events using an adaptation of Hymes’ Ethnography of Communication, and from there I move to the quantitative characterization of language, mimicking to a large extent McCarthy’s (1999) quest to represent the basic core of English vocabulary. The general ethnography, the ethnography of communication, and the characterization of the language, prepare the ground for the turn by turn analysis of the use of minimal responses in the context of the residents negotiating funding (Chapter Six), and the analysis of the multi-party interaction of the residents with one another (Chapter Seven). The analysis of the language in use in these two chapters, moreover, benefits from constant cross-reference to the ethnography and the corpus analysis. In this chapter I have also reviewed exchange structure and discourse intonation, both of which will reinforce the main research methodologies.

I have presented the data and discussed how these were collected, especially with reference to the difficulties of research in a total institution where multilingual and multicultural residents, most of who had allegedly fled persecution in their home countries, prepared their asylum applications. I have also considered the important issue of ethics.

I now begin the analysis. In the next chapter I will proceed with the ethnographic account of context of this study, which includes consideration of the residents' past and present difficult experiences, especially those which impact their communication in the Centre.

Chapter Four

Contexts

Mr Kieran you know I kill nine men with my hands.

Ervin

Chapter Four: Contexts

Prelude

I arrived at the Centre for the first time on the 7th of May 2002. The security guard signalled to halt at the red and white barrier. He was wearing a blue uniform and a blue combat sweater. I pulled up closer and I buzzed the window down. He stood there with a pen and a 'Visitor Entry Sheet' in his hand. He said nothing. I was expecting him to say 'Hello' or 'Welcome to Dun Cluain', but the silence went on longer than expected so I said: 'Hello, I'm Kieran Harrington from the VEC'¹⁶. He still said nothing. He pushed the Visitor Entry Sheet towards my chest and I took it from him. I signed the three cells: Name, Organization, and Business. He signalled to someone in the shelter to raise the barrier. I drove up to the main building and parked. I looked around: there was a perfect panoramic view of the city from the door: the medieval castle in the foreground and in the background, the new high-rises being built by the Celtic Tiger, as the economic boom in Ireland at the time was called. I went into a cold reception area. I knocked on the window hatch and the assistant manager opened. She told me to go into the 'Classroom' where the regional representative of the Reception and Integration Agency (RIA) of the Department of Justice was waiting. I was about to ask another question but the reception hatch was already moving toward my face. I saw a lot of young foreign men playing pool in the large games room to the left as I walked down the corridor. Although it was a split second, I saw the different physiques and colours of Africans and Eastern Europeans and I noted the verbal silence that one does not associate with a pool room full of young men.

The regional representative of the RIA, a man of about 55 years old, welcomed me to Dun Cluain. His manner was less imposing than the executive blue suit and white hair suggested. He had been the governor of a prison, having worked his way up through the system, entering the civil service as a prison guard from school. It was his idea to have an education facility (to be branched out into other spheres such as sports and music) within the Centre, believing that such activity would prevent depression and conflict. It did: the level of conflictive behaviour decreased after the introduction of the different types of courses and the opening of a crèche. He agreed to give me permission to use microphones around the Centre as long as the residents were informed, and as long as they agreed to let their words be used in any forthcoming study. They did.

¹⁶ VEC = Vocational Education Committee, local education authorities in Ireland.

4.1 Introduction

There are two main sections in this chapter. The first, Section 4.3, is a general ethnography of the past and present contexts of the residents of the Dun Cluain Centre, describing, mostly in their own words, experiences of life in their home countries, their flight from alleged persecution, and their present lives within the context of living in the confinement of a total institution. The second (Section 4.4) focusses on communicative situations in the Centre. Data for this chapter comes from field-note observations of interactions in the Centre canteen, classrooms, corridors, play area, and offices, and also from day excursions outside the centre organized by this researcher. Recordings of speech situations were made at the reception desk, in the classrooms and in the offices. The recording of ethnographic interviews also provides a rich source of data.

The ethnography is organized geographically, that is, I present the ‘stories’ of the residents under the higher level headings of ‘Eastern European Residents’ (4.3.1), ‘North African Residents’ (4.3.2), ‘West African Residents’ (4.3.3) and ‘Eastern and Central African Residents’ (4.3.4). These are the regions that are most representative of the residents of the Dun Cluain Centre with regard to their provenance; however, there was a small number of residents from other regions such as the Caribbean, Melanesia, the Middle East and Central Asia which have been omitted for reasons of space. Not all of the ethnographic accounts have been included here, also due to space limitations, as they constitute a vast amount of data.

This is not a typical ethnography in that there is no one typical specific situation, culture and language. And the task is not exactly to discover what it takes to be a competent member of the culture, but rather to elucidate the history of these people and the present context in which they are living, in order to better understand and elucidate the English that they speak and the way that they speak it. Normally an ethnographic study would begin with an historic review of a particular culture (see Heath 1983 and Barton and Hamilton 1998). People are products of a region’s history, which determines the times and places and ways they can interact. However, there is no such homogenous culture in Dun Cluain and thus no homogenous tradition or history. When the residents speak English, they cannot fully invoke their collective memories or what Duranti (2003:293) calls the ‘timeless voice’ and Bakhtin (1981:13) ‘The world of epic ... the national heroic past ... a world of “beginnings” and “peak times” in the natural history, a world of fathers and founders of families, a world of “firsts” and “bests” ...’ In Dun Cluain,

the region's history did not determine anything: the people came from many different countries. However, their recent histories impacted greatly not only their daily lives in general in Dun Cluain, but also their communication styles.

It is useful to point here, that the residents had fled their countries for various reasons and requested asylum under the general claim of flight from persecution. They fled from civil war, from political and religious persecution, from genocide, from racism and the infringement of civil and human rights, from post-war vendettas, and from primitive practices such as female genital mutilation and wizardry spells. But many also fled for purely economic reasons; they fled in search of a better life and because of this had to make false claims of persecution, and some of them went to the extreme of pretending they were from a country whose fleeing emigrants were looked upon under a more favorable light by the Irish government and granted status easily (such as asylum seekers from Zimbabwe). A Nigerian woman, for example, tattooed her face with Zimbabwean tribal symbols.

In Section 4.3 an adaptation of Hymes' ethnography of communication, principally its focus on setting, situation and act, will be used to describe the daily communicative activities of the residents in the canteen, the reception desk, the classroom and the education office. The data source for this section also includes observations, field notes and recordings of the interaction, ethnographic interviews with the residents and also interviews with some of the staff in the Centre.

Before embarking on the ethnographic account, I will describe the Dun Cluain Centre (4.2), in so far as its architectural structure is concerned, so that the reader can visualize the setting of the communicative interactions.

4.2 The Dun Cluain Reception Centre

From the main country road there is a 500 metre drive leading to the main building. All visitors and residents have to pass a military style barrier which is manned 24 hours of the day by security guards who dress in blue uniforms. The complex consists of three areas (see Fig 4.1 below) - the administration building and two residential areas (further divided into three blocks). The foyer and reception office are in the middle of two long rectangular buildings.

The classrooms and playrooms are to the right of the foyer, to the left, the dining room, Education Office, crèche, health service offices and laundry.

Residential Area A is directly behind the administration building, and when I arrived at the Centre in 2002 it was divided into three sections, for single males, single females and for families (with two bedrooms). Most of the rooms in the singles blocks contain three beds and a television. The toilets are at the end of each corridor. Residential area B is sectioned off in the same way, but it is 100 metres behind and to the left of the main administration building. There is a green area between the administration building and the residential blocks, with play areas for children. In the summer people gather in this area after lunch. In the evenings, most people gather near those of the same nationality or language.

The management did their best to place people of the same language and nationality together in the single rooms. When this was not always possible, there were tense situations, like the one I described between George the Sierra Leonean and the two Nigerian boys. However, there was also tension in the rooms where everybody shared a language, which is to be expected when three people share such confined spaces.

In front of the main building there is a soccer pitch and a large green area, next to which the waste treatment system is placed, probably too near, as the bad smell is very noticeable during hot weather. In these green spaces, over the three years that I stayed in the Centre, various soccer matches were held. There was also an annual barbecue to which services providers were also invited and the residents were given an opportunity to mingle more casually with Irish people. Chapter Seven analyzes a recording of a meeting of the residents to plan one of these Integration Days.

Fig. 4.1 Dun Cluain Reception Centre



The foyer is 15 feet by 10 feet. There is a public telephone just inside the entry door. The telephone was occupied for large parts of the day, mostly by residents who speak English, such as Nigerians. Most people, of course, used mobile telephones. While it was not my intention to intrude on private conversations, the lack of inhibition of the users of the public telephone and the loud voices allowed me to hear that the calls related to requests for taxis, appointments with lawyers or legal aid, or discussions with prospective employers (despite the fact that by law asylum seekers are not allowed to work in Ireland).

The Reception Desk is a hatch-window behind which there are two offices. If the window-hatch is closed, there is an electronic bell on the counter which the residents can ring for attention. The window is usually open in the mornings during sign-in time and for the first bus run into the city. The outermost office is used by receptionists and security guards and it is where the residents sign-in in the morning or where they come to get information or make requests (see Chapter Seven for analysis of a recording made at the hatch).

The outermost office is entered by a side door and from here entry is gained to the inner office. This office also has a side door which is normally kept locked with a key. This is the office of the manager and the assistant managers. The managerial hierarchy is much the same as is observed in hotels.

4.3 Ethnographies

Table 4.1 shows the countries, nationalities and languages of the people who lived in Dun Cluain. The ‘histories’ of many of these people are told below, in as much as possible in their own words. For reasons of space, I focus on people who appear in the later linguistic analysis and on situations that elucidate the impact on communication in the Centre.

Table 4.1 Nationalities and languages of the Dun Cluain residents

Nationality	Language	Nationality	Language
Algeria	Arabic, French, Berber	Kenya	Swahili, ESL
Angola	Portuguese, Kikongo, Lingala	Kuwait	Arabic
Benin	Edo, English	Latvia	Latvian
Bulgaria	Bulgarian	Liberia	Kreyol, ESL, Kreyol, Vai, Kru
Burundi	Rundi, French	Morocco	Arabic, French, Spanish, Berber
Cameroon	French, Bulu, Pidgin	Nigeria	Yoruba, Igbo, Hausa, Edo, EL
Croatia	Serbo-Croatian	Pakistan	Urdu
DR Congo	French, Lingala, Kikongo, Tshiluba	Poland	Polish
Egypt	Arabic, Coptic	Rwanda	Ruanda
Ethiopia	Amharic	Rumania	Rumanian
Eritrea	Amharic	Russia	Russian
Fiji	Fijian, ESL ¹⁷	Sierra Leone	Sierra Leone, Krio, ESL
Ghana	Twi, Ewe, ESL	Somalia	Somali, Arabic, Italian
Jamaica	Jamaican English	South Africa	Zulu, Afrikaans, ESL
India	Urdu	Sudan	Arabic
Iran	Farsi	Togo	Ewe, French
Iraq	Arabic, Kurdish	Ukraine	Ukrainian, Russian
Kazakhstan	Russian	Zimbabwe	English, Ndebele, Shona

¹⁷ ESL = English as a Second Language. Only one speaker (A Jamaican female) spoke English as a first language. All the other residents, mainly Africans, who spoke English, had a tribal language as their mother tongue. Similarly, those spoke French or Portuguese, spoke a tribal or indigenous language as their mother tongue.

4.3.1 Eastern European Residents

Albania

Two single Albanian men, Arjan and Ervin, and an Albanian family of three, two brothers, Rezar and Jak, and Maria Januzaj were the most engaging Albanian residents in the Centre. Ten other Albanians lived there during my stay, but these did not interact with other residents and made only perfunctory, essential contact with the staff. The Albanians were friendly with other Eastern Europeans, but regularly quarrelled and fought with Africans, especially with the Nigerians. After one fight, both Arjan and Ervin were taken to hospital and the latter received 50 stitches to the lip, claiming that a Nigerian had bitten him. The Januzaj family did not attend class, but Arjan and Ervin, the leaders of the Albanian community, attended regularly despite a certain cynicism on their part in the beginning. The first time they came to class, the following exchange ensued:

Fragment 4.1 (Attested field-note)

Ervin: Give me a pen.

Teacher: (handing him a pen) In English we say ‘Can I borrow a pen, please?’ or ‘Could I?’

Ervin: Give me a pen. It’s good, no?

Teacher: Well it doesn’t sound polite.

Ervin: Thank you. That’s good too

This exchange not only demonstrates that Ervin is capable of manipulating English despite lexicogrammatical shortcomings, but also his determination to validate his power in the Centre and his unwillingness to relinquish Albanian ways of speaking. My relationship with the Albanians improved over time, especially with Ervin, but he never relinquished his position as leader as can be seen in the following example. During the summer of 2002 I took some of the residents on an excursion to a nearby tourist attraction, a medieval castle. We had a drink at the bar in the old village.

Fragment 4.2 (Attested field-note)

Ervin: Mr Kieran you know I kill nine men with my hands.

Kieran: How where?

Ervin: With these <pointing to his hands> in the Kosovo war.

Bulgaria

Contact was established with only one Bulgarian during my time in the Centre. Although I was not able to gather much ethnographic information about this resident's previous life, her situation in the Centre is worth telling because of its linguistic significance. Lilyana was 55 years old and only knew a few words of English. She spoke with single words as in 'class...go...you, Aoife.' The single words and recourse to pointing were sufficient as far as survival is concerned, but she needed a translator for more complicated communication. There were no other Bulgarians in the Centre so she turned mainly to Russians for assistance (Bulgarian is a Slavic language which is substantially different from the other languages of the family, but the contribution of Russian to its lexis facilitates limited mutual intelligibility).

Lilyana had entered Ireland illegally a few years before, and had been working for a company as a cleaning lady, before declaring herself an asylum seeker when the company let her go. Whenever Lilyana had meetings with doctors, nurses or solicitors an expert interpreter had to be called. She was also illiterate in her own language. Even towards the end of her stay, after two and a half years of classes, there was very little she could do with English. One day in the restaurant she came over to my table and the following exchange occurred:

Fragment 4.3 (Attested field note)

Lilyana: Mister class no sick me

Kieran: Okay don't worry you can come on Thursday I'll tell Aoife.

Lilyana: Tomorrow I come sick me

Kieran: Okay don't worry.

For the next few days she came back to my table at the restaurant and slight variations of the above exchange took place. Finally, she followed me outside to the corridor one day and called after me:

Fragment 4.4 (Attested field note)

Lilyana: Mister mister

Kieran: Hello are you better?

Lilyana: No now I sick me yesterday tomorrow now

Kieran: I'll get someone from Reception

Lilyana: No now sick me please mister

Kieran: Okay

Lilyana began to throw her arms in the air and turn red. She slapped the door leading into the computer room. Boris Krasnov, the Georgian, was coming out of the restaurant having finished his lunch. Lilyana saw him and called him over. They exchanged a few words and Boris then addressed me:

Fragment 4.5 (Attested field note)

Boris: She wants reference you know for Monster of Justice

Kieran: Oh she said she was sick I thought she was sick.

Boris: Sick ah ah I smile sorry but she is big woman sick no

Kieran: Okay sorry tell her tomorrow at ten am in my office. Lilyana tomorrow tomorrow at ten in my office.do you understand?

Boris and Lilyana interchanged words again:

Fragment 4.6 (Attested field note)

Boris: She understand no she understood Ah ah verbs past simple.

Kieran: Okay Lilyana sorry. I thought you were saying you were sick.

Lilyana: Sick tomorrow ten good me.

Boris said they had spoken in a mixture of Russian and Bulgarian: 'Not the same language, you know, but we understand.' I asked him how she said *reference*, what the word she used was, but he said that she didn't say *reference*. He had only understood a few words of what she said about legal papers and me so he guessed she was talking about a reference.

Lilyana's communicative situation was similar to that of Said (a Moroccan, who was in his fifties, and Liin, a Somali who was in her sixties). Despite attending class, there was little advance in English and they communicated with the English staff by pointing and by using single unconnected words. They communicated with other residents of the same language or

language families (Lilyana with residents who spoke Slavic languages; Said with speakers of Arabic, Spanish and Portuguese; and Liin with speakers of Somali). Misinterpretations were frequent, but as in the situation described above (Fragments 4.3 - 4.6), someone invariably translated or scribed for them in the everyday situations. Furthermore, the few words that they had and the gradual accommodation of the staff to their language difficulties, assured that their basic survival needs were met.

Georgia-Abkhazia

Boris Krasnov was the only Georgian national resident in Dun Cluain. He considered that his country was Abkhazia, which is a disputed state within the country of Georgia. Boris said he spoke Abkhaz, which only has 100,000 speakers. He also spoke Georgian and Russian and, although he spoke English well and he was at B1 CEFR by the end of his stay, his accent bore the typical traces of phonological and lexicogrammatical interferences of the latter language, such as the use of /s/ for /θ/ and difficulty with word order. Nevertheless, his English was quite creative, an example of which is his calling the Minister for Justice the 'Monster of Justice'.

Boris had escaped from a Russian boat that had docked in the West of Ireland, alleging that the masters were going to kill him because of union issues. He had previously claimed asylum in the USA and had spent some time in jail there. His life in Dun Cluain was traumatic at times, appearing several times with serious bruises, the results of fights with other Eastern Europeans.

Boris attended most of the classes in the Centre and he became one of my main informants, agreeing to multiple interviews, in which he spoke about life in Dun Cluain, the difficulties of living with other nationalities and his own history. He was overtly racist towards African women and insisted that all the other Eastern Europeans felt the same, but in secret, because they believed that manifestations of racism could jeopardize their appeal for asylum. Boris once refused to do pair-work with an African woman in class and whispered to me that he would not work with either monkeys or women. The matter was resolved, but we later spoke about racism in an interview and his attitude is clear, although he excuses himself by saying people in all countries who have not got a good upbringing behave badly.

Fragment 4.7 (audio recording)

Kieran: Tell me what about here in in in Dun Cluain. Is there any racism towards you from other countries like the Africans?

Boris: I eh

Kieran: Do they treat you

Boris: Mm

Kieran: as normal

Boris: I . they. er er . no problem with this men black woman or man it's...<laughs>. men must still talk with them . communicate. .no problem . sometimes . more easy er than with Russian people <laughs>

Kieran: Yeah and the women no

Boris: Oh.

Kieran: Why?

Boris: Because er it's their as he she sorry small part she has knowledge. she can lead oneself normally and er most part of black women . oneself like monkey it's er pleasure . not colour

Kieran: In what way?

Boris: In teach she try er talk everybody received some food okay turn why you do se try to mmm-mmm <imitates animal sounds> like animals

Kieran: Break the queue is it?

Boris: Yeah it's only black women do it

Kieran: Because in Nigeria they have no

Boris: oh yes <laughs>

Kieran: queues. no queues in Nigeria it's something they have to get used to here in . and anything else?

Boris: Yeah <laughs> <coughs> and er in er bus they er try to er come in bus like this one on another it's unpleasant but it's not er depends from colour I've er met like this people In Ukraine In Russia it is not er colour idea

Kieran: Condition

Boris: Yep it's condition of mind er воспитание in Russian in English what knowledge you receive from childhood, er

Kieran: Education socialization

Boris: Yeah, this. In Russian one word only воспитание

Kieran: Will you write that down for me try to make it look English

Boris: <laughs> er in Russian

Kieran: But you know how you write in English as if it were Russian

Boris: Uh huh okay ... it means all knowledge. from childhood

Russia

There were not many Russians in Dun Cluain. The people who came from the old Soviet Union were mainly citizens of the smaller former Soviet states, such as the Ukraine, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Mongolia, Moldova and Belarus. Two Russians attended classes at the beginning, one of them, Nikolai, until he was finally removed from the Centre by police one year after my arrival. His case exemplifies the difficult nature of communication in the Centre. One day, soon after my arrival, I was giving a class in which Nikolai was present. We were practising family vocabulary. When it was Dimitri's turn, the following exchange occurred:

Fragment 4.8 (Attested field note)

Kieran: Dmitri. Have you got brothers and sisters?

Nikolai: No. No brothers. No sisters. No family.

Kieran: Are you married?

Nikolai: No family. No. No. This is not good class. No talk family.

With this, Nikolai left the classroom and attended very few classes afterwards. He asked me for help writing and reading various documents but cordiality was lost. A staff member told me that Nikolai's parents, brother and wife had been shot in Russia. There were many stories of such shootings in the histories of the residents, some authentic, some apocryphal, but always constituting an obstacle to communication. Another Russian resident told me that Nikolai had had a less dramatic problem: his wife had left him. From that day forward in the Education Centre, we were very careful of the topic of family in classes. And I became more guarded when I interviewed the residents when the topic turned to family. Nikolai was in his thirties. He was a very serious, peaceful and morose man. Thus we were shocked when he was arrested for shoplifting a few months later.

Croatia

The Serbians that resided in Dun Cluain had lived in Croatia. They claimed that after the Balkan war in the early 1990s, they were treated unfairly and suffered social and political harassment. They came across as a very quiet people, never, as far as I could see, getting into any trouble, and never raising their voices. There were married couples with children ranging from babies

to teenagers, and single males, one of whom, Miro, came to class regularly and was interviewed on several occasions. The other, Novak, took part in the multi-party meeting on an integration day that the Centre was planning (Chapter Seven). He only came to class once or twice when I arrived and I thought his English was of a very low level. The following is a recording of Novak talking about education in Croatia. Although the English is not grammatically perfect, it is evident that it is much better than was thought initially, as he is very capable of getting his meaning across.

Fragment 4.9 (audio recording)

Novak: After that you are when you finished that courses you are between your age < ... > fifteen fourteen and fifteen yes you are fifteen fourteen fifteen years you're old when you finish that school primary school after that secondary school and that school is free as well and you going there if you want to go this is like you choose what you want to do in your life you choose with your occupation it's a little bit different in Ireland it's not like here so when you finish that school is between three or four years and when you finish that you are seventeen or eighteen nineteen it depends so after that you going for work or you going to university you don't have college like here there is different

The Serbians networked with residents from other countries of Eastern Europe - Ukrainians, Bulgarians, Russians, but also Albanians (whose language pertains to the Hellenic family).

I also had a good relationship with some of the Serbian families. One family of four had already been a year at the Centre when I arrived in 2002. They moved later to a flat in the centre of XXXXXX where the mother told me they had many Serbian friends. The mother, Adrijana, and father were in their early thirties and the children were teenagers. The mother came to class regularly. Her English was at a B1 level, but it did not improve over the time she was in the Centre. She was the first person to accept recording conversations with the social welfare and medical staff, but this did not work out because she used a mini-recorder (that I had given her to practise with) to record the Community Welfare Officer without warning her. The social welfare and medical staff were uneasy about the recordings after this incident and suggested limiting topics and certain sequences of recorded language. In accordance with ethical 'opt-out' procedures, and in the interest of only including naturally occurring data, no further recordings were made in these offices.

There were two other Serbian families with whom I entered into contact. In September 2002 the first of these families arrived. They stayed for a very short time, having moved again by December 2002. The father, whose English was very good, told me that he had been a journalist in Croatia and that various attempts had been made on his life. His wife did not speak English and she did not come to class. Her husband told me he preferred that she did not attend. He was suspicious of everyone. As he was a journalist I asked him to help start up a Centre magazine with another journalist, Itari, from Zimbabwe. At our first meeting, the Serbian journalist was reluctant to say very much and we reconvened for the following week. He did not attend the second meeting. He came to use the computers regularly between 9am and 10am in the morning, before the other residents arrived for classes. He printed off what he had written straightaway and he would delete the file.

The other family arrived in December 2003 and stayed a year and a half. They had two young children. The mother came to every class she could and made a significant effort to improve her English – ‘for my children’ she said, as they were attending the local school. Her English developed slowly. The husband was reserved, he never said much and depended on his wife to translate (although their level of English was similar) when he needed to ask for something – which he did regularly, usually references for different organizations. Two colleagues of mine in head office were writing an article for a national magazine and asked to do a piece on one of the families in Dun Cluain. I asked this family and they agreed. However, they asked for pseudonyms to be used and would only allow a photograph to be taken from the back. A very poignant photograph of the family, from the back, as they entered the Centre, appeared in the magazine.

Miro, a 24-year old single male arrived in the Centre six months after my own arrival. He had lived in Croatia but as a Serbian was forced to leave and seek asylum in Ireland. He had attended what he called himself a ‘Technological University’. His level of English was good when he arrived, but he attended classes assiduously – English classes, certified computer courses, cultural studies and any other courses that were offered. Within a year he was competent in English and agreed to be interviewed. His views were very balanced in the sense that he did not seem to exaggerate any points and he was reluctant to be critical of people of other nationalities (as I found was not the case in many of the other interviews that I conducted) although he did express (see Fragment 5.28) his inability to understand the behaviour of the Nigerians (although they were not named specifically). My statement/question ‘You don’t like

some of the things they do?’ could be interpreted as leading, but the objective at the time was to get Miro to talk more for the purposes of compiling a corpus. However, the tension that existed in the Centre and in the restaurant especially is demonstrated by this remark:

Yeah in the restaurant and queuing you know they’re very (laughing) we can wait but they cannot wait.

The *we* is significant and seems to mean everybody else in the Centre except the Nigerians.

Fragment 4.10 (audio recording)

Miro: <laughing> I’m not racist at all <laughing>

Kieran: You don’t like some of the things they do

Miro: Eh I don’t like not the way they behave <laughing>

Kieran: And what way do they behave?

Miro: They don’t <mumbled syllables> patient <laughing> they should be

Kieran: Ya they are not patient ya, ya I was thinking of

Miro: sometimes I wonder
about it but I don’t know

Kieran: You mean in the restaurant?

Miro: Yeah in the restaurant and queuing you know they’re very <laughing> we can wait but they cannot wait

Kieran: Yeah

Miro: Big problem

The Ukraine

Although there were up to 15 Ukrainians present in the Centre at one stage, their numbers eventually fell away toward the end of my stay in the Centre.

Katya, a twenty-four year old mother of one boy, and one of my main Ukrainian informants, never explained why exactly she was claiming asylum. Whenever I asked she would say ‘you

know, politics’, but did not elaborate. She acted as a translator for other Ukrainian residents regularly and mixed with all nationalities, which was unusual for an Eastern European.

She had studied English in school but considered it was not the same English as was spoken in Ireland. ‘Even the English I have learned in FETAC,¹⁸’ she said, ‘is not obeyed by Irish people’ – she referred particularly to the Irish pronunciation of the dental fricatives /θ/ and /ð/. Katya could carry on fluid conversations with the staff after about a year in the Centre, her English interspersed with pragmatic conversational markers and repetitions that gave it an authentic touch, despite typical fossilized ‘mistakes’ such as the dropping of the third person –s morpheme and a limited lexicon. This is demonstrated in Fragment 4.11 below, taken from an interaction between her and a receptionist at the signing-in hatch. She uses ‘like’ (as a discourse marker in a typical Irish-English fashion (see Schweinberger, 2015) twelve times, ‘yeah’ 11 times, ‘you know’/ ‘I don’t know’ 7 times, ‘uh huh’ and ‘really’, ‘kinda’ and duplicate ‘same same’ once, all comprising 25% of her total input.

Fragment 4.11 (audio recording)

Katya: Can you sign me please?

Receptionist: I have you signed since this morning

Katya: <unintelligible> you very much lose weight I don't know how you do it but

Receptionist: walking and dieting

➔ **Katya:** Really

Receptionist: Yeah ... and I go to my friend and she weighs me every Tuesday night and if I don't lose anything she kills me <laughter>

Katya: So it's good

Receptionist: Valentina is looking great

➔ **Katya:** Yeah she lose too much weight she didn't eat few weeks ago nothing

Receptionist: Oh no she has to eat

➔ **Katya:** She didn't eat **like** two weeks **like** at all food but she drinks juices

Receptionist: no no no no

➔ **Katya:** and after that er some fruits maybe but she didn't eat **like** bread

Receptionist: And is she following is she following a programme?

➔ **Katya:** Yeah yeah she goes to somewhere I don't know where is

Receptionist: Yeah

¹⁸ FETAC = Further Education and Training Awards Council (an official awarding body in Ireland)

- **Katya:** Some woman and she was looking up for **like** two weeks after that now she eat **like**
- some vegetables you know like maybe some fruits nothing **like you know that kind like**
- Receptionist:** Oh no I still eat my breakfast at seven o'clock at home and something that <unintelligible speech> here at ten o'clock I have a salad that I make at home and bring with me I'll have that and I'll have my dinner. you still have to eat
- Katya:** But you lose
- Receptionist:** No I have books at home I'll actually bring in on Tuesday she can have a look through them and see because she'll end up sick
- **Katya: Yeah** but she's okay she eat **like** sometimes **like** <unintelligible speech> eggs and that kinda stuff
- Receptionist:** There's no need to give up I gave up chocolate I don't drink Coke it's all water
- **Katya: Yeah** she same
- Receptionist:** Yeah and you know what I mean is just cut out all the junk and start eating properly
- **Katya: Yeah yeah yeah**
- Receptionist:** You know
- **Katya:** Maybe white bread **you know** she doesn't eat
- Receptionist:** I don't eat white bread anymore
- **Katya: Same same** she eat some but first two weeks she had some problem she drink some pills I don't know
- Receptionist:** That's not good because you need to eat to build up your metabolism so that your breakfast you've eaten your breakfast that'll work down your lunch your lunch then will work off your dinner
- **Katya: Yeah yeah**
- Receptionist:** And then you walk
- **Katya: Yeah** and she walk every morning
- Receptionist:** Every morning I meet her walking I go home now and I'll walk when I go home at eight o'clock tonight
- Katya:** You will lose for Christmas time
- Receptionist:** No my brother's wedding
- **Katya: Uh huh**
- Receptionist:** My brother's getting married next July
- **Katya:** So you need **like** nice dress
- Receptionist:** <Laughter 10> You see we can't all be skinny like you you know
- Katya:** I know you need baby like mine
- Receptionist:** No I don't mind the baby I don't need a baby <laughter>

Oleg Chevchenko, a 50-old doctor, arrived in the Centre in 2003. He was an anaesthetist and told the story of having to leave his wife and two children overnight due to a death threat for religious and political reasons. It had not been his intention to come to Ireland. He had been informed by the man who organised his passage that he would be going to England. Oleg said he hoped to move to Canada eventually, get a job as a doctor and bring his wife and two children there. In the beginning he was too embarrassed to attend classes because of his rudimentary English. He spoke using isolated common nouns, pronouns and verbs, such as ‘Boris-me-go-class-now,’ which was his way of asking for permission to use the classroom when there was no class in progress. By the time he left Dun Cluain a year later (he was moved to another Centre in the city) his English had improved considerably, although, as is to be expected, it still bore strong traces of interference from Russian and Ukrainian, such as the absence of the copula, as evidenced (line 1) in Fragment 4.12 from a recording made in my office on the occasion of a visit he paid to me a few months after leaving. Various pragmatic strategies that he developed are also in evidence here:

1. The elliptical silence (line 5), either not knowing which verb or which tense to use.
2. The use of the marker ‘in fact’ (line 11).
3. The use of the marker ‘you know’ (line 15).
4. The use of loud and short ‘yes’ to give a strong, clear signal in contrast to the ‘ye::s’ or ‘yeah’ he used when he was in the Centre first (lines 8, 11,17).
5. The use of ‘yes’ and ‘no no’ as turn initiating discourse markers (lines 8, 10 and 13).
6. The use of ‘yes’ (line 13) for turn-ending confirmation.

Other significant features of Fragment 4.12 include 1) the very fact that he accepts turns, 2) that he responds to an adjacency pair with a third part (line 8 – ‘and how are you?’), which was very rare in the discourse of the residents (it only occurs with any frequency in conversation with people who have left the Centre and come back for a visit), and 3) his use of humour (line 13).

Fragment 4.12 (audio recording)

1. ➔ **Oleg Chevchenko:** Yes yes I here.
2. **Kieran:** Okay come in I’ll do the document first how are you
<10 second gap>
3. **Oleg Chevchenko:** I’m fine.

4. **Kieran:** You look better you look better physically.
5. → **Oleg Chevchenko:** Physically hmm thank you I now ... for operation two three months and
6. I have operation.
7. **Kieran:** On your hip is it?
8. → **Oleg Chevchenko:** Yes <sounded loud and short> and how are you?
9. **Kieran:** I'm fine busy what are you doing with yourself all day do you work or do you
<5 second gap>
10. → **Oleg Chevchenko:** No no I study English er little going for work no no so three hour in
11. fact <'Three' pronounced /tri:/. 'Hour' pronounced with /h/>
12. **Kieran:** Alright where the Serbo-Croatians go
13. → **Oleg Chevchenko:** Yes for recreation yes. <Laughing>
14. **Kieran:** But where do where do you learn English
<3 second gap>
15. **Oleg Chevchenko:** I learn English in er city in you know big house red house and here
16. **Kieran:** The XXXXXXXXS
17. **Oleg Chevchenko:** Yes. <pronounced loudly and with quick, short /e/>

Oleg and I proceed to speak about visas. Then just as he is about to leave, his mobile phone sounds and a telephone conversation ensues. As will be seen in the transcription (Fragment 4.13) below, despite his lexicogrammatical shortcomings (the absence of 'will' on line 12; 'what time now?' on line 3, and 'here no bus' on line 6), Oleg dealt with the call effectively. He accepts work that is being offered to him, agrees to arrange for others in his new centre to go with him (line 12-13), and arranges when to be picked up. His words on line 6 might appear confused or confusing, but the pauses show that he is responding appropriately and normally to what the caller says:

'What at. Brendan you know I am Dun Cluain here what.I do now. here no bus'
(from Fragment 4.13 below)

He pauses after 'at' – Brendan, his interlocutor, has mentioned a place where he would pick him up and Oleg realises immediately this is not suitable because he is three miles away from the place where Brendan thought he was (in another centre for asylum seekers in the city). He then, ably, uses 'You know' to politely inform Brendan he is in Dun Cluain. 'What' seems to be a response to a suggestion made by Brendan (possibly about the Centre bus). Oleg then

pauses twice to listen again and then informs Brendan that he has no possibility of getting the bus.

Fragment 4.13 then is another example of how the residents ‘manage’ interactions (despite their minimal English) by exploiting both the ‘turn-taking’ system itself - using pauses (lines 1, 5, 6 and 8), pause fillers (lines 1 and 21), wh-questions (lines 1, 3, 5) and typical closings – ‘okay thank you very much bye bye’ (lines 13-14); and by the use of familiar markers and vocalizations such as ‘you know’ (lines 5 and 9), ‘uh huh’ (twice line 1), ‘yes-yes’ (line 11), ‘maybe’ (line 11) and ‘yes’ (line 13).

Fragment 4.13 (audio recording) (Oleg is speaking on the phone in my office in my presence)

<Oleg listens for twenty seconds>

1. **Oleg Chevchenko:** What . yes ... uh huh tomorrow afternoon uh huh this afternoon . er what
2. time? <10S>
3. Three O’ stop stopstopstop three o’clock. what time now <directed at Kieran>
<15 second silence>
4. **Kieran:** It’s twenty five past two.
5. ➔ **Oleg Chevchenko:** What at. Brendan you know I am Dun Cluain here what.I do now.
6. here no bus.
7. **Kieran:** The bus is here at a quarter to three.
8. **Oleg Chevchenko:** No bus yes if you want please . what . yes, yes. I go but I in
9. Dun Cluain now you know. Dun Cluain in <5 seconds silence>
10. **Kieran:** In Mxxxxx
11. **Oleg Chevchenko:** In Meelick in Meelick, yes yes <10 S> maybe you come here other boys
12. ➔ in er ca <ka:/> Shannon hostel I ring them . I’ll ring them now at three. O’clock in
13. ➔ Dun Cluain. yes. three people boys near col... near college okay thank you very much. bye
14. bye <10 second silence>
15. **Kieran:** What’s wrong?
16. **Oleg Chevchenko:** Yes I don’t know be . little work two hours and er in morning two hours
17. and now <fronts ‘hour’ with /h/ >
18. **Kieran:** Two hours
19. **Oleg Chevchenko:** Two hours . now↑ <Rising tone as if to say something else>
20. **Kieran:** Is he going to pick you up?
21. **Oleg Chevchenko:** Yes er . here. <Prepares before /h/> in Dun Cluain

Immediately after this phone call, Oleg phones Said, the Moroccan fisherman. The call lasts for twenty seconds. Given Said's difficulty with English and with language in general, after the call I ask about communication with him. Oleg's words need no further commentary here.

Fragment 4.14 (audio recording) (after Oleg has spoken with his 'boss' Brendan)

Kieran: So. Said he understands you when you talk to him on the phone in English.

Oleg Chevchenko: Yes a little understand you know simple speech I understand but better I understand if you

Kieran: You okay you understand your English is quite good but Said his English is very bad, no. he understands you when you phone him

Oleg Chevchenko: No er, 'work' 'three o'clock' this is eh simple <Laughing>

4.3.2 North African residents

Algeria

My main contact with Algerians was with four males. There were single females, and mothers, but they were rarely seen and did not attend the Education Centre. They had fled their countries (according to them) due to corruption in places of power and business and persecution in the workplace. Nadir was in his early thirties. He acted as spokesman, translator and scribe for the other Algerians (and for other North Africans until the arrival of Karim, a Moroccan psychoanalyst). The right-hand side of his face was drooped as if he had had a stroke, but the scarring evidenced his being tortured with a blow torch in his place of work, after having been identified by the owners as the animator of a strike.

Nadir began attending beginners' English classes with the other three male Algerians in September 2002, four months after my arrival. The female teacher told me that the other three barely responded in class. One afternoon in early October the four Algerians came to see me. The conversation was short:

Fragment 4.15 (Attested field-note)

Nadir: Mister I want to speak with you about class

Kieran: Okay is there something wrong

Nadir: Ramadan period you understand

Kieran: Yes this month.

Nadir: My friends and I class with woman Aoife not possible we talk we said ‘change man teachers.’

Kieran: Why

Nadir: Ramadan no she is good teacher but not for this month we must not see woman during day.

Kieran: Oh I see. Well that’s not normal, that wouldn’t be normal to change her I mean.

Nadir: Yes we ask you to think we don’t problem. we like teacher but we don’t come to class this month.

Kieran: Okay I will think it over and let you know.

As part of the syllabus in the beginners’ English class, Nadir was learning how to give personal details, use the present simple tense and the verb *be*. The use of English in the above exchange demonstrates the chasm between the learning in the classroom environment where Nadir was classified as a normal language student by the teacher, and the pragmatic use of English in the absence of grammatical competence. Nadir and I had spoken about classes a few weeks previously but had not understood one another. But this message about the teacher was clear.

The other younger men smiled at me subserviently and they opened their hands towards me when Nadir said, ‘My friends and I class with woman Aoife, not possible. We talk, we say “change man teachers”.’ Again, like in Ervin’s case, an Arabic way of speaking (direct speech is far more common in Arabic than English, Swan and Smith, 2001:202) is transferred to the English. What I perceived as the aggressive tone of the request surprised me initially, but I grew accustomed to this tone in further exchanges with Nadir, and even when we became more friendly, the tone (aggressive in my perception) never changed. I was sure of what I was going to say but unsure of how to say it. The female teacher would continue with the group.

On seeing the four men together at breakfast a few days later I approached them and asked if I could sit down. They were very polite and offered me their seats, and when I refused, the youngest in the group went to another table and brought me a chair. The table was very clean.

Only Nadir responded to my salutations. I said ‘hello’ and ‘good morning’ and Nadir responded ‘hello, sir, good morning, sir’ and he said some other words in Arabic. I informed them of my decision. They looked at each other shiftily. They all seemed to have understood without the necessity of Nadir translating. They conferred with one another. Then Nadir spoke.

Fragment 4.16 (field-note)

Nadir: Okay, sorry sir it is difficult English not good classes important

Kieran: I know I understand I tried my best

Nadir: We come to class you

Kieran: I’m sorry it’s full and it’s advanced English we have conversations

Nadir: Yes but we listen no talk we all listen learn we learn

Kieran: Well, okay but you mightn’t understand anything and you would get bored

Nadir: No bored no sir we have television we listen we learn

Kieran: Well okay tomorrow afternoon then at two o’clock

Nadir: Good we are there

The four Algerians did not come to my conversation circle. They attended only a few classes with the female teacher during Ramadan and then attended assiduously after that. All four obtained a Level 3 Certificate (awarded by the Further Education and Awards Council of Ireland) in English. Nadir, as mentioned, became friendly with me, visited the office to ask me for favours for other North Africans, and often sat down with me in the restaurant for a few minutes. His English improved considerably and he began to use colloquial phrases that he said he picked up in the city. The four Algerians never attended class again after receiving their certificates. When I asked Nadir why, he responded that they now had enough English and that the Nigerians that came to my conversation classes made too much noise.

Two years later, in the autumn of 2004, coming close to Ramadan again, Nadir sat down next to me one day while I was having lunch. He pointed to a few young Algerians who had recently arrived:

Fragment 4.17 (Attested field-note)

Nadir: How are you sir?

Kieran: Nadir I told you there is no need to say ‘sir’

Nadir: Okay Mr Kieran I need talk for one minute

Kieran: Okay

Nadir: I know Aoife can't change her I understand this but Ramadan sir Mr Kieran

Kieran: Yes it's next month no?

Nadir: Yes next month

Kieran: Okay but I can't change her we have no male teacher

Nadir: I know but her clothes what do you say (he pulled his jeans tightly together) these young men Ramadan you know (he shook his head and made a pleading movement with his mouth)

Kieran: Tight?

Nadir: Yes sorry sir Mr Kieran

Kieran: Kieran

Nadir: You understand Siobhan is good teacher but tight in Ramadan

Kieran: Okay I'll see what I can do but I can't promise anything

Nadir: Okay is important Ramadan

On the one hand, these conversations with Nadir demonstrate the different cultural concerns that residents had while living in the Centre, but they also show how residents with limited linguistic competency could make a complicated request. The conversation in Fragments 4.14, 4.16 and 4.17 is laboured, but Nadir negotiates his way through without offending, although his tone may have offended an Irish person not used to interacting with him.

Six months later, Nadir and I, and Karim, the Moroccan, had a conversation in my office. Nadir's English had continued to improve as can be seen by the use of the metaphor 'I lost my life', and the sports metaphor 'I don't want to be a sub; I want to be a sportsman'. He had, by this stage also, adjusted his language to remove the subservient vocatives ('Mr' and 'sir') and was not afraid now to answer me with almost ironic anger, 'What do you think I'm blind.'

Fragment 4.18 (audio recording)

Kieran: Why did you come over here?

Nadir: Because I lost my life

Kieran: You lost your life?

Nadir: I lost my life

Kieran: You are still alive

Nadir: Yeah I still got < sylla> I got many problem

Kieran: Yeah

Nadir: I like <syll>I don't want to be a sub I want to be a sportsman no I am like

Kieran: Yeah

Nadir: What do you think I'm blind <pointing to his damaged eye>

Kieran: So you

Nadir: I can't see like this er I can't dress <pointing to his leg, also burn-scarred>

Kieran: Yeah

Nadir: If you go to dress I have this I have my leg I have my <G1>

Nadir became angry when I suggested that Algeria was a safe country. But he jostled with me perfectly in English, showing his anger with the question 'Who told you that?' When I said that I thought Algeria was safe, his tone became even angrier when he said, 'No, it doesn't matter for man or woman.' Not satisfied, he then asked, 'What do you think for men, what do you mean by men?' He didn't raise his voice but his face was red with anger.

Fragment 4.19 (audio recording)

Kieran: So you were tortured

Nadir: Yes

Kieran: By the government?

Nadir: Yes

Kieran: What did you do did you do something wrong nothing

Kieran: Nothing wrong

Kieran: But is that general in Algeria I thought Algeria was okay

Nadir: Ah Algeria Algeria <3 second pause> is not okay who told you that?

Kieran: Well I know the problems in Algeria but I thought for men it was okay

Nadir: Weh?

Kieran: I thought for men it was okay

Nadir: No it doesn't matter for man or woman

Kieran: Yeah

Nadir: What do you think for men what do you mean by men?

Egypt

The one resident from Egypt, Nooa, a twenty three year old single man who spoke Arabic, came to our conversation circles regularly, and his English improved considerably in the space

of a few months. He came to my office regularly, always with the same preoccupation - that the Department of Justice would discover something – which he never actually explained to me fully. Initially he came across as someone who was trying to give himself more importance by dint of this mystery with the Department of Justice. He got thinner and thinner as the months went by and said this was due to the preoccupation. He disappeared overnight, not wanting, I presumed then, the Department of Justice to remove him handcuffed from the Centre. He spoke in a whispered, mysterious tone and I strained to understand him, but not because he spoke poor English. Like other residents he had favourite words and phrases in English. When he met me in the corridors or classroom he would say ‘You know, wait. I will talk,’ and then look around him to see if anyone was watching. Then he would launch into a monologue on his fears and preoccupations. ‘You know I am truly afraid, I am truly afraid,’ he would say. He very rarely answered any of my questions directly. I would ask him about languages in Egypt, and mention Coptic and he would say, ‘Yes, I speak Coptic,’ but he would never elaborate. I asked him a few times about his relationship and communication with other residents in the Centre and he always answered the same: ‘You know, I am myself. I can’t tell them.’

After a few months in the Centre Nooa got a job in a local fast food facility and this added to his mystery. ‘You know,’ he said to me one day, ‘You know only. I can’t tell them. Please don’t tell Justice.’ A few weeks later he came and said that the fast food service wanted him to be manager, but the ‘others’ were against him. I asked him who the others were and he answered ‘You know, but I can’t explain all because my English, you know, my English is good but you don’t understand all.’

Morocco

There were two Moroccans in the Centre from 2004 on. One was Said, a fifty-four year old fisherman, and the other, Karim, a forty-year old former police psychiatrist. Karim fled a few months before I left in 2005, whilst I still see Said in the streets of Xxxx (the nearby city). I had a very good relationship with both. Karim claimed he had left Morocco due to political persecution, although he did admit one day that Interpol was looking for him. He fled the Centre under a cloud of suspicion, not waiting for his asylum case to come up. Rumour had it that he had become aware that Interpol was on the point of picking him up.

Karim spoke Arabic, Berber, French, Spanish and English. His English at the time was close to C1 (CEFR), but when he could not express something in English he said it in Spanish. He also used Spanish, as can be seen in the excerpt below, where there was no *need*, as a means, I supposed, of bonding with me. Karim was extremely polite in his language use and had exquisite manners. He was very caring toward Said and before he left asked me to take care of him. He was one of the leaders of the North African-Sudanese community. His voice was always the one heard at the table in the restaurant. He told me that he bonded with the Algerians because of the shared language, but he mentioned that he also bonded with the Congolese because the latter were ‘... very kind people.’

In the following excerpt from a conversation that took place in my office (an Algerian man, Nadir, is also present), I ask about language use.

Fragment 4.20 (audio recording)

Kieran: What I’m doing is that I’m just er doing a research in all of the languages in all of the languages that different people speak in in and I was wondering why you all go into different groups

Karim: Um

Kieran: Was it because you were all North-African or is it because you were Muslim, because you all speak the same language or something like that, what do you think?

Karim: It’s we all speak the same language

Nadir: Several languages it’s not the

Karim: *Es lo mismo que estar latinos aquí que* + [it’s the same as if Spanish speakers were here]

The excerpt above is taken from a conversation that lasted thirty minutes and it is an example of the residents’ co-construction of meaning. Here, the co-construction is for the benefit of the understanding of the native speaker of English; in Chapter Seven, on the other hand, I show how the residents jointly construct conversation communicating with one another. Here, although Karim’s English was much better than Nadir’s, the latter did most of the talking. Karim sometimes confirms and sometimes helps Nadir deliver a final piece of information (Fragment 4.21) or he simply utters a word that he knows is about to be said (Fragment 4.22),

or says the same as Nadir, but a microsecond later, perhaps reluctant to give the information himself (Fragment 4.23 and Fragment 4.24).

Fragment 4.21 (audio recording)

Kieran: Well I thought that men for example were considered superior to women in Algeria

Nadir: I have have eh four sisters sisters

Karim: In Spain

Fragment 4.22 (audio recording)

Kieran: He speaks Arabic doesn't he?

Karim: Ah ya

Kieran: He speaks Coptic as well no

Karim: Ah

Nadir: But we don't talk to him in Coptic

Fragment 4.23 (audio recording)

Kieran: But it's normally why we when you think of North Africa we get the impression

Nadir: Yeah they say Algeria very extremist

Kieran: Yes yes yes, and even in Morocco when I was in Morocco er most of the woman were covered you know

Karim: Tradition

Fragment 4.24 (audio recording)

Karim: Because in the south of Spain they have much more machismo machismo

Kieran: Yeah yeah

Karim: Than any country in the world <P3> south of Spain

Kieran: You mean you don't control the women in Morocco?

Karim: Yeah they can't <P3>

Nadir: After the study they don't want to get out like here were they go to study

The Spanish boat on which Said was working was intercepted and brought to shore by the Irish navy for illegal fishing. Said applied for asylum and was sent to Dun Cluain. He said he was 54 but looked to be nearer 70, his skin was so wrinkled by the sun and the sea (he had worked as fisherman since he was eight). He was what one might term *alingual*, in that he did not seem to master either his native Arabic (according to the other Arabic speakers) or his two adopted languages, Spanish and Galician. He had left Morocco for Spain at eight years old, sequestered, he said, by pirate fishermen. Said was illiterate in his native Arabic, and had only had a few English words when he arrived. By the time I left (Said had spent two years in the Centre by this time) he was using around 200 English lexical items (see Appendix 2), but only seven of these had a frequency of greater than 10 per 1000 (from analysis of recordings with Said).

Table 4.2 Said’s most frequent words (from recordings)

Rank	Item	N	Per 1000
1	No	75	61
2	Yeah	53	43
3	Er	35	28
4	Is	31	25
5	A	28	22
6	Good	21	17
7	One	21	17

As can be seen in Table 4.2 above, *yeah*, figures as the second most frequent word in the list. It is understandable that *no* figures high on the list as well, given that when he spoke to me, he mixed English, Spanish and Galician, and *no* is also used as a question tag in these two last languages in addition to its use as a negative particle. The 438 word-tokens that Said used with me in various recorded conversations can be seen in Appendix 2 and Appendix 3. Half of these are either Spanish or Galician. So it is safe to assume that Said could not use more than 200 English words, but only 3.5% of these with frequency.

An example of his difficulty in expressing himself and his typical communication style can be seen in Fragment 4.25 below which comes from an audio recording of a conversation I had with him in my office. Firstly, he mixes Spanish (in italics) with English. Secondly, he frequently places adjectives and nouns together with no linking conjunction or verb, as in ‘Now

much shop house big...’ Thirdly, he uses the odd formulaic phrase, such as ‘How do you say?’ below. Fourthly, he circumnavigates or paraphrases for the hearer to reach out for the meaning, as in ‘You speak Galician you know one book Inglés/Irish.’ Although a slow process, Said finally gets the meaning across, and this may explain why he was so quiet and didn’t really mix with anyone else in the Centre. The other Arabic speakers reported that his behaviour in that language was similarly difficult.

Fragment 4.25 (audio recording)

Said: Oh oh oh a you can speak kinda, *conociendo tiene*¹⁹ un deli..bok

Kieran: A book

Said: No no book tis

Kieran: Yeah a book

➔ **Said:** What is how do you say er

Kieran: A bookshop

Said: A bookshop

Kieran: A library.

Said: Yeah a

Kieran: You went to the library

➔ **Said:** *Es cerca de*²⁰, bonk of erland

Kieran: Near the Bank of Ireland

➔ **Said:** Now much shop house big

Kieran: A big house

Said: Yeah yeah they have bok

Kieran: Oh they have those books in Xxxx is it

Said: In Xxxx

Kieran: In Xxxx

➔ **Said:** You speak Galician you know one book- *Inglés* Irish

Kieran: Ah a dictionary

Said: A dictionary yes

Kieran: Okay

Said: Is is okay you <5 syllables> getting

¹⁹ Spanish = knowing it has a deli

²⁰ Spanish = it’s near

Said and I became friends as we had both had lived in the same street in A Coruña for a number of years in the 1990s. Most of the conversational exchanges I had with Said lasted only a few seconds. In the restaurant he would come over and say ‘*que aproveche*’ in Spanish. At two in the afternoon he would stand alone in Reception waiting for the bus and I would approach, mostly for altruistic reasons as I felt he was very alone. He would shake his head and say ‘*Qué locos!*’ again in Spanish, referring to the Nigerians and the noise they made in reception at that time of the day.

As I mentioned above, Said had not developed complete language skills in any language. His vocabulary in English was minimal. As far as the other languages are concerned, his Arabic-speaking colleagues reported that he spoke Arabic poorly, and I judged his Spanish and Galician to be at a low level as well. However, one incident cast doubt on such judgements. Said had to travel to Dublin to meet with the Dublin legal service that was preparing his case. The Department of Justice paid for his bus ticket and his lodgings while he was in Dublin. That afternoon one of the receptionists rushed into my office carrying the cordless telephone. She said it was Said ‘screaming’ and ‘shouting’. They could not understand what he was saying. I took the telephone, and after the conversation, I noted down as quickly as I could how the call had transpired.

Fragment 4.26 (audio recording)

Kieran: Hello Said

Said: Me cago en la puta merda, este sitio es una pocilga es una pocilga.

Kieran: Qué pasa Said dónde estás?

Said: Estou en este hostel da merda chea de pulgas e merda

Kieran. Pero, cálmate un momento. Dónde estás exactamente? Es dónde te buscó el Departamento? Igual estás en un sitio equivocado.

Said: Estou no sitio a dónde me mandaron isos hijos de puta y claro es que no soy importante porque a los mierda de los Nigerianos los mandan a hoteles buenos. Isto e una vergonza que non vale ni para cerdos. Vou matarme, vou destrozarse este sitio. Vou matar a alguien. Mira hay mil pulgas en la cama.

Kieran: Cálmate, cálmate Said. Voy a hablar ahora con Xxxxxa ver si podemos hacer algo y mandarte a otro sitio. Tienen tu móvil aquí?

Said: Sí

Kieran: Vale, a ver que podemos hacer.

Said: Vale. Gracias. Muy amable.²¹

Said mixed Spanish and Galician and used swear words and typical Galician phrases used for expressing anger. It replicates what a Galician might have done in a similar situation, before Galician supplanted Spanish as the ‘High’ language in the diglossic situation existing in that part of Spain (see Monteagudo, 1995) which demonstrated that Said was sociopragmatically aware – at least as far as these languages are concerned. Another example is his use of the verb *estar*: *estou* is the first person present simple of the verb in Galician. Its use by Said demonstrates his knowledge of the pragmatic value of the Galician equivalent of *estoy*, which he used normally. The same can be said of *Isto e una vergonza* [this is a disgrace] and *vou matarme* [I’m going to kill myself]. The former is common when people who would normally speak Castilian switch to Galician in situations of anger. The differences between one language and the other are minimal, but they are effective. Whilst Said only learned a small number of words in English in three years, leading the education staff to believe that he was incapable of learning a language, his use of Galician in the above sequence demonstrates his linguistic awareness. Remarkable, for example, is the (correct) omission of the particle *a* in the verbal phrase *vou matarme*, which in Castilian is rendered by *Voy a matarme*. Finally, when Said was no longer angry, he reverted to calmer language, the Castilian *gracias*, the Galician *graciñas*, which – judging by my own experience of the language - tends to be used very affectively.

I explained to the receptionist what the problem was and she said she would deal with it. I told her that he sounded very upset and capable of doing something violent. She answered:

Like all of them Kieran, sure they know well what to do to get their own way. Throw a few shapes, throw a few extinguishers and that’s it, no ‘please’ or ‘thanks’ boy. And watch now how Peter will sort him out. Great isn’t it. Sure we could all do that.

I revisited this issue with the same receptionist in question a few weeks later, when she was calmer. She said that Said ‘wasn’t the worst of them’, and that all of them had ‘ways and means’ of getting what they wanted. She said that when the residents arrived, there was not a ‘peak out of them.’ If they did not speak English then a translator was brought in, or reception would call one of the residents with the same language. But soon they would get the run of the place, because there was always someone to tell them what to do and how to get things done. Even if

²¹ See Appendix 4 for translation from Galician/Spanish to English

they did not speak English all they had to do, like in Said's case, was stand at reception and scream or throw a chair. She said they were like children. If they saw someone else scream or throw a chair and get what they wanted, then it was easy to copy that strategy. I told her that I was surprised that Said had spoken the way he did to me, irreverently, when he had always shown the utmost respect. She said it was always the same. Some of them behaved like 'mice, 'not a word out of them' most of the time, but if they don't get what they want they scream and shout.' Said, as I have mentioned, always treated me with the utmost respect. He used the polite third person Spanish *usted* when he addressed me. The telephone exchange was totally out of character, but it demonstrated significant linguistic and sociolinguistic awareness.

4.3.3 West African residents

Angola

There were over 20 Angolans present in my first year in Dun Cluain, but they maintained a low profile until the arrival of Adao, a 40 year-old former teacher, in 2004. He became their leader, their scribe, their translator. He lived in the family rooms with his wife and his two young children of 4 and 12. His first language, he claimed, was Portuguese (one of the official languages of Angola and spoken as a first language by 80% of the population). He also spoke Spanish (the language in which he mainly communicated with me), Kikongo, Lingala (one of the main languages of DR Congo) and French. He had lived in Luanda, the capital city, but fled towards the end of the civil war, as, he claimed, their lives were in danger for political reasons. In his behaviour with me, and with the Centre staff, he was extremely polite, and to me he always extolled the value of education (he took great interest in the education of his two children and visited the local school regularly to speak with the teachers), democracy, equality and respect for human rights. This laudable world view was contradicted by anecdotal reports of him beating his wife and children, and his wife did appear regularly with bruises on her face. He refused to be recorded, but I had many conversations with him, mixing Spanish and Portuguese in the beginning. He attended computer classes regularly but never came to English class and did not seem to be too worried about acquiring it, saying that he had a gift for languages and that it would come eventually. He occasionally sent his twelve-year-old daughter, Aliciana, who was attending a local school and learning English rapidly, to the

education office or the reception desk, either to translate for his wife or to request information (see 6.4.2).

In my final year in the Centre, the other Angolans and the Congolese occupied an area immediately opposite the doors and to the right of the first row of tables in the canteen. Adao held sway. His voice was always noticed high above the others. Whenever I approached, they would go silent or switch to Lingala, cognisant of the fact that I understood Portuguese and French.

I was quite surprised one day, not long after his arrival, to hear him communicating with the Centre manager in English. The following is the recorded field-note of the conversation:

Fragment 4.27 (Attested field note)

Kieran: Now I know why you don't come to class. You speak English fine

Adao: Bueno un poco, no como el español

Manager: What did he say?

Kieran: He said he speaks Spanish better.

Manager: He speaks English very well and he understands every word I say.

Adao: Yes, yes, I get se dice better

Kieran: Better. Mejor

Adao: Mellor

After this meeting Adao began to mix English more in conversations with me. This was not the first time that someone had lied about their language competencies. Adao's wife also began to attend classes for beginners and he accompanied her to the classroom every morning. On one occasion I substituted a teacher who was sick. During the class Adao's wife, Lída, hardly spoke and whenever I asked her a question she seemed not to understand. However, I was called out of the class after thirty minutes to deal with a management issue and the tape continued running. When I played the tape back afterwards, I heard Lída expressing that she understood Moira (another teacher) and me, but not her present teacher (Breda) that I was replacing.

Fragment 4.28 (audio recording)

Aiyana (Somali female): Teacher is very good

Bidemi (Nigerian female): Ha?

Aiyana: Good

Lídia (Angolan female): Teacher yes, I don't understand, you understand Moira I understand but Breda talk too quickly

The Cameroon

There were many residents from the Cameroon when I arrived in Dun Cluain, but gradually their numbers reduced. In temperament they were quiet, like the Angolans, Congolese and Somalis. Most of them spoke French as a lingua franca, but a small proportion spoke English as well, although they tended to conceal the fact in order not to awaken the suspicions of the authorities (many of the residents had already had their appeals turned down in the UK, and moved to Ireland to appeal again, which was illegal given that asylum is to be sought in the first country of arrival).

Luisa, a thirty year old Cameroonian female, who came to classes regularly when I first arrived, spoke French fluently and Kamtok, a variety of West African Pidgin English, spoken along the West African coast from Ghana to Cameroon. Luisa heard me asking two Algerian young boys one day where they had learned to speak English so well. She presumed that I was attempting to get information for the Department of Justice in order to block their asylum process. She told other residents that I was a Department of Justice informant and for a few months everyone was reluctant to speak to me. Luisa forgot her original animosity for me after a few months and attended classes. She visited me in the office regularly but always asked me to turn off the tape, which I did. I could only take notes when she left. After initially being reticent with me, she later began to open up and spent most of her time with me criticizing the Nigerians, the 'racist' eastern Europeans and the management. She eventually told me that she spoke Duala as a mother tongue.

D.R Congo

There were upwards of 60 Congolese residents in the Centre. They associated principally with the Cameroonians, sharing French as a lingua franca. Kicongo, Swahili and Lingala were the three languages that were mentioned most by the Congolese, although their eventual leader and scribe, Kenda said he spoke Tshiluba (the language of the Baluba people). Kenda claimed that the main reason they associated more with the Cameroonians and the Angolans was not the shared language, but the shared behaviour.

Kenda had been a teacher of English in the Congo. However, his English was difficult to understand at first. Reading back over transcriptions of conversations with him, I realized that his English was usually grammatically acceptable (except for a tendency to use the present continuous for the present simple). It was his low tone of voice and lack of projection that had caused the difficulty (see Chapter Nine for examples of Kenda's difficulty in multi-party interaction for similar reasons).

Kenda came to a few classes after he arrived, but he stopped coming after a few weeks. He told me that he preferred formal grammar classes (the teacher whose class he attended used a communicative approach and prepared the students for portfolio assessment). He eventually began to teach the Congolese himself in their rooms and in the dining room in the evening.

In the first excerpt from an interview with Kenda he reveals how the Congolese communicate amongst themselves and how they communicate with other nationalities who share languages with them. In the second excerpt he reveals how religion also plays a part in the languages they speak in the Centre.

Fragment 4.29 (audio recording)

Kieran: So you're a French speaker what other language do you speak?

Kenda: Ling Lingala

Kieran: Ling Lingala

Kenda: Tshiluba

Kieran: What's that called again?

Kenda: Tshiluba

Kieran: Chilua I've never heard of that. Did you see the languages I put on the board outside no?

Kenda: No no no no no

Kieran: It's just three then is it?

Kenda: Three language and three dialect

Kieran: Yeah yeah

Kenda: But I'm speaking a little Swahili but not that well I prefer the Lingala Tshiluba and French

Kieran: And Lingala is the language of your family?

Kenda: No Tshiluba is the language of my family

Kieran: Oh yeah is there anybody else in Dun Cluain that speaks that language?

Kenda: The Tshiluba

Kieran: Yeah

Kenda: Yeah yeah yeah

Kieran: How many?

Kenda: Er er mm Douglas

Kieran: Douglas ... Shande is it?

Kenda: Yes he is Shande and<P2> one lady she is speaking

Kieran: And when you speak to each other do you speak in that language?

Kenda: Yeah yeah

Kieran: Not in French

Kenda: If we are together we can speak in that language

Kieran: On your own but if you are with other people from the Congo

Kenda: In French or Lingala

Kieran: Why do you do that? Is it because of manners or

Kenda: You know you see Tshiluba is not known by <G4> but Lingala is very common

Fragment 4.30 (audio recording)

Kieran: Tell me and what about the other French speakers in Dun Cluain the people from Togo and <P5 >

Kenda: <One>

Kieran: Do you speak in French or

Kenda: In French only <One>

Kieran: Um

Kenda: As we are praying too in French

Kieran: Oh yeah you have the prayer

Kenda: Yeah yeah in French

Kieran: Okay

Kenda: We are praying with the Cameroon and the part of the Cameroon that are speaking French

Kieran: Yeah

Kenda: And some Congolese

Kenda was referring to the prayer meetings and other religious services that were held in the Centre.

Liberia

Over 20 Liberians (not including children) lived in the Centre from 2002 to 2005, all female and between the ages of 18 and 35. Most of these women were pregnant on arrival and had more children during the time spent in the Centre. Two of these women came to classes regularly and were recorded on various occasions. Trudy, a 30-old woman, who gave birth shortly after arrival and gave birth to a second child a year and a half later, spoke English, the official language of Liberia, and, Gola, which she was wont to admit. Her English was very similar to that of educated Nigerians. For example, she used phrasal verbs in a different way, saying, for example, ‘pick my baby’ for ‘*pick up my baby*’ and also wrote in a very bombastic fashion. However, she was easier to understand than most Nigerians and the other Liberians who maintained contact with me, principally due to the limited phonological interference. Trudy claimed that the reason for this was that she had a ‘high’ education. This was also a reason given by some Nigerians for the differences in the way they spoke and behaved (see Section 4.3.2.2 below). Mary, the other Liberian with whom I spoke regularly, was in her thirties as well, and had a six month old child when she came to the Centre. She did not speak the same variety of English as Trudy; hers was for the most part unintelligible and sounded similar to the pidgin spoken by Nigerians. She found written English challenging, and her work for a FETAC²² level 5 ESL Module had to be withdrawn because it did not meet the standard. Like Trudy she was reluctant to give information about which mother language she spoke. I

²² FETAC = Further Education and Training Awards Council (an official awarding body in Ireland)

established that Mary spoke Liberian Kreyol Pidgin English. She commonly used the postponed plural element 'den' ([d__]) common in vernacular Liberian English in phrases such as 'these books den'. When I mentioned this to her she said 'I speak Kreyol, but why it so important. I speak English?'

Nigeria

Over 100 Nigerians were present in the Centre. These were mostly 20-35 year-old women with young babies, although there were at most times also 20 to 30 single males present. The general and communicative behaviour of the Nigerian males and females was strikingly different. The males were much more reserved and kept to themselves. When I arrived at the Centre, a Nigerian male called Tony acted as the spokesman for all the Nigerians and was a frequent and welcome visitor to the manager's office. Tony also acted as a scribe for the other Nigerians, frequently reading and filling in forms for those who could not read or write and helping them with their declarations in their pursuit of refugee status. After Tony had left (six months after my arrival in the Centre), most of the young women 'represented' themselves in their dealings with management, and they all attended the general meetings between residents and staff which frequently had to be cancelled due to the disorder that they caused. Towards the end of my stay in the Centre the meetings were being attended mostly by Nigerians as the majority of the rest of the residents (they informed to me) did not see the point, of struggling to be heard. I attempted twice to record these meetings, but the noise levels made it very difficult for any intelligible discourse to be picked up by the microphones.

All Nigerians spoke English but along the continuum of levels described by Brosnahan (cited in Bamgbose 1992 - see Section 2.2.2.1). The first level was Nigerian Pidgin English, which was almost unintelligible to the Irish staff. Of the Nigerians I encountered at this level (all women), none of them had more than a basic primary school education and none of them could read and write. However, even Nigerians at levels 2, 3 and 4 presented comprehension problems, both as far as others understanding them (as reported by other residents themselves), and their understanding Irish native speakers of English.

In Fragment 4.31 below, Adela, a Nigerian female who spoke at a level comparable to level 4 on Brosnahan's scale, struggled to understand the receptionist's indirect complement and twice had to ask for clarification.

Fragment 4.31 (audio recording)

Receptionist: How did you get such a good looking baby?

Adela: Haw?

Receptionist: How did you get such a good looking baby?

Adela: How did I get

Receptionist: Such a good looking baby

Adela: Is God

The number of individual languages listed for Nigeria in the 16th edition of *Ethnologue, Languages of the World* (Lewis, 2009) is 527. In Dun Cluain I encountered speakers of Edo, Fulani, Hausa, Igbo, Urhobo, and Yoruba, the latter having the most speakers. Some of the residents spoke up to six indigenous languages as well as English in its varying levels. This might explain the unintelligibility of the conversations that took place in the canteen and in the reception area amongst Nigerians, the disruption at meetings and the bias shown by other nationalities towards their communicative style. As I report later, within more formal settings such as the classroom, no disruption existed; in fact, Nigerians conformed to traditional discourse IRF structure.

The Nigerians themselves were inhibited and embarrassed by what they conceived of as deficient English. When I explained to them, following Kachru and other proponents, that their particular nativized English was a valid variety and it was their language, they did not agree and wanted to speak like Irish and English people, claiming that the way they spoke would hold them back once they achieved asylum. They saw a significant difference between speaking English in Nigeria and speaking English in Ireland. This opinion was held by all Nigerians across the levels described. This conforms with Tregidgo (2001) who says that ‘Africans themselves have often resisted this notion ... and claim to want to learn standard British English.’ The Nigerians in the Centre were reluctant to speak about their tribal languages, and when asked what language they spoke, the answer was always English, denying any other native language, until they got to know me better and they realised I knew of the existence of these tribal languages. They frequently made references to wanting to ‘... speak like you’ and ‘educated English’. All of those whose level of English corresponded to Brosnahan’s higher level came to classes regularly; those who spoken Pidgin English and could

not read or write rarely came to class, although there were exceptions, such as Edith one of the Nigerians I will talk about below.

I came into communicative contact with many Nigerians during my time in Dun Cluain and many of these will figure in the linguistic analysis. The following is a brief reflection on the previous lives of some of these informants and their daily trials in Dun Cluain.

Edith, a 30-year old mother of a seven-year old daughter was at the Centre before I had arrived there in 2002. She was a Yoruba Nigerian and spoke English at between levels 1 and 2 (as per Brosnahan cited in Bamgbose 1992). Her English at times was difficult for me to understand, but she attended English classes assiduously in order to improve both her spoken English and her literacy skills. Edith took part in interviews and other recorded sessions and informed me of the communicative practices of Nigerians with one another and Nigerians with other members of the community. Like most other Nigerians in the Centre, Edith addressed me as ‘Sir’, and having many times insisted that she use my first name, she began to address me as ‘teacher’. This communicative behaviour may be explained by the tendency in Nigeria (see Adamo 2007) to avoid actual names, with ‘people in positions of authority, or people who are older than oneself.’

Meredith, a Yoruba Nigerian female, 29 years old when she arrived in the Centre in September 2003, was the only Nigerian in the Centre who called me by my first name. Through various interviews and other more casual contact, Meredith provided me with a different insight into the communication ‘problems’ of speakers of nativized English at the Centre. She was very active in the Centre, attending classes in advanced English, computers and a fully certified child-care course, which she made use of to work as a volunteer in the Centre crèche. She had fled Nigeria because of different problems she alleged her husband had involved her in and because of the threat of to her daughter of genital mutilation. She later qualified under the Irish Born Child (IBC)²³ scheme to stay in the country.

Holly was a 40 year old woman who came to class regularly and continually asked for new courses. Her English was difficult to understand (see Chapter Nine), although she said she had

²³ This allows the mothers of children born in Ireland to remain in the country.

been to university. Holly was the Nigerian woman with whom Boris Krasnov refused to do pair-work. She was generally considered rude by the other residents and referred to by them as an example of Nigerian rudeness. In fact, it will be seen in Chapter Nine that Holly was cooperative and collaborative in her communicative style, specifically with Boris.

Holly said she would never get pregnant in order to be allowed stay in the Ireland under the IBC scheme. Her Nigerian colleagues mocked her saying that she would not find a man. She was finally put on the deportation list. One morning she did not come to class and we discovered she had fled during the night. We never saw her again.

Another 40-year old Nigerian woman called Olaya was in the same situation (only she and Holly, a fifty year old woman, called Joanne and Leoma (see below) did not have children or were not pregnant). Olaya also said she would never become pregnant and urged the other women to follow her lead. For a time she was considered the leader of the Nigerian women. She attended all the meetings with management and the Department of Justice and came regularly to the Education Office to advocate for her colleagues. In my last year in Dun Cluain, she became pregnant and had a baby.

The case of Leoma, a 25-year old woman, evidences the strange beliefs that the Nigerian women had. Many of them came to a quilting session on Friday mornings that I had arranged. Various attempts to record the three hour session failed, as the women did not speak when the tape was turned on, so the teacher asked me to remove the machine. She told me that the Nigerian women did not want me to hear them talking about women's problems. Leoma attended these sessions. Leoma became pregnant and her female compatriots stopped talking to her. At the beginning of the summer she had a sore throat. When the teachers and I returned after a month on leave we discovered that Leoma had lost the baby and the sore throat had developed into rheumatic fever through lack of care. She had lost all her hair and almost half her weight. The father of the baby disowned her as well. The Nigerian women said that God had taken her baby, her hair and her beauty as a punishment for sleeping with Presence.

Sierra Leone

There were three Sierra Leoneans resident in Dun Cluain between 2002 and 2005. Only one of these, George, agreed to have any contact with me. He worked as a volunteer for a few months

teaching computers. He was from Freetown and he spoke Krio, the English Creole of 350,000 people of a total population of three million (Katzner, 1975, and Dalby, 2004), and English, which is the official language of the country and reportedly the preserve of the elite. Although university educated (he was a computer programmer), his English at times bore traces of interference from Krio. He avoided contact and communication with the other residents. He uttered the sound ‘phuh’ regularly when referring to someone or something in a slightly derogatory tone. He shared a room with two young Nigerians, with whom there was minimum communication in their shared room, according to him. I visited his room once to see a program he had written for his laptop and I witnessed that there was no communicative acknowledgement between the Nigerians and him. I later helped him to write his case for asylum and his written English bore similarities to texts written by Nigerians and Zimbabweans which I had seen. The language was of bombastic style and extremely flowery. He lost his case and the reason given to him in writing was that his story of fleeing from witchcraft was irreconcilable with the fact that he was so intelligent and so educated. In other words, the Department of Justice considered that he concocted the story. His response to me was that the Irish Catholic belief in Holy Communion constituted quasi-cannibalism and witchcraft, which was in turn irreconcilable with an educated population.

George’s communication with the Irish staff was minimal and abrupt, although I noted that he always said ‘please’ and ‘thanks’ to the canteen staff. Even after three months of constant contact with him, I still found his English difficult to understand, and the managerial and reception staff reported the same. This was mainly due to phonological interference. The subject pronoun *I* was heard as /ae/ and the past simple was expressed by the infinitive, as in ‘A programme’ for *I programmed*, or ‘A bring you’ for *I brought you*. George left the Centre a year after my arrival, reportedly destined for Canada. I noted various conversations over his time working with me and I reproduce here the talk between us as we walked to his room one day to view a program he had designed for the Education Centre, the talk in his room, and the talk on the walk back. He was limping as we crossed the play area.

Fragment 4.32 (Attested field note)

Kieran: Is your leg alright?

George: Phuh. It hurts more when the sun is shining.

Kieran: What happened it?

George: <Mumbling>. *Phuh*. you won't believe it man.

Kieran: I will. Why not?

George: The militia smashed it shhu not here

We walked up the stairs. His room was on the second floor.

Fragment 4.33 (Attested field note)

George: What a smell man. They don't clean enough for us and these ... phuu <pointing with his hand open at the two young Nigerians>

Kieran: Well you should complain to the management if they are not cleaning it.

George: Phuhh

He was embarrassed to show me his living quarters. The bedroom was three metres by four. The three beds were positioned perpendicular left of the entrance door. There was a small window overlooking the play area. In front of the beds there was a writing desk and above, on a wall support, a small television. The two young Nigerian boys were lying on the bed watching the television. The volume was normal. I said 'hello', and one of the boys acknowledged with a nod. I was uncomfortable knowing that this was his home too and I was imposing. There was no salutation between George and the boys.

Fragment 4.34 (Attested field note)

Kieran: I'm sorry. This'll be just a second. I just want to see a programme George designed.

Nigerian Boy: Okay man.

George flicked pretentiously at the laptop, moving it more to the left. He opened it with a flick and turned it on with a flick. We waited.

Fragment 4.35 (Attested field note)

George: This is so easy man. Easy programme. Nothing to me. Boring.

Kieran: Nice laptop

George: The best. expensive.

One of the young Nigerians shifted his position on the bed to get a better view of the TV screen. I said ‘sorry’ again.

Fragment 4.36 (Attested field note)

George: Don’t mind man. Phuh. TV all day, all night. I can’t understand the waste of time.

Kieran: It’s boring for everyone.

George: Phuh do something man.

George now began to show me the program he had designed for monitoring attendance in the Education Centre, the visits to the office, and the requests for funding. I had asked him to do this, not because it was necessary, but to find him something to do. However, the impression I got when he was explaining to me now the functioning of the program, quickly, flicking at the laptop and the keys, saying ‘phuh’ repeatedly, was that he was bored by the program and felt that it was beneath him. Between the rapidity of his explanations, his difficult accent and my discomfort in the room, and perhaps his reluctance to show friendliness to me in front of the Nigerian boy, all may have clouded my interpretation of his feelings. However, in other meetings with him, including when he started to give a course for us in computer programming, the same attitude was palpable.

George accompanied me back to the main building and while we were walking the following short conversation took place:

Fragment 4.37 (Attested field note)

Kieran: Thank you for that. When will you have it finished?

George: Phuh. Today. Tomorrow. That’s easy. It’s nothing but one liners. If x does this y does that. Simple.

Kieran: It’s not very comfortable working in that room.

George: Phuh. It’s the Nigerians man. The management think we are the same because we speak English. They know nothing. We are different. Everything. Look at me, listen to me. Look at them, listen.

We stopped at the back entrance into the main building.

Fragment 4.38 (Attested field note)

Kieran: But there's another Sierra Leoneans I saw on the list in your room.

George: Phuh. No. He's Nigerian. He pretends he's from Sierra Leone because he thinks it's easier to be a refugee.

Kieran: How do you know he's Nigerian.

George: Obvious man his language the way he talks English easy look at him he asked me to teach him some Krio.

Kieran: But don't they see that in Dublin.

George: No man the Nigerians fool everyone good liars some of the women say they are from Zimbabwe but phuh the marks on their face.

George never finished the program for me. Every time I asked him he would say 'Easy man, tomorrow.' In the autumn of that year he delivered a Visual Basic computer programming course for us. After an initial attendance of ten people, only I and one of the teachers attended the second week. This was mainly due to his arrogant style of teaching. The first week he constantly said 'phuh' or 'man' when the people in the class failed to understand him.

He had spoken of getting a false passport so that he could get to Canada. He disappeared without saying goodbye.

4.3.4 East and central African residents

Somalia

There were seven Somalian residents in the Centre during my three years there, five women and two young men in their early twenties. One of these women, Liin, was sixty five, and as in the cases of Lilyana, the Bulgarian and Said, the Moroccan, despite coming to class assiduously, she only learned isolated words and found it difficult to communicate. However, she learned the routine communicative practices in the restaurant and at the reception desk, where the residents either completed a greeting adjacency pair or just said one part as the

prerequisite for requesting food in the restaurant or attention at the reception desk. So, this was done with a few words. Liin adapted the word ‘fine’ for everything. When she came into the computer room, her request to be seated at a station was ‘fine’. When Liin needed to express something more complicated she turned to Rihana, a twenty year-old girl of exceptional maturity. Rihana spoke English very well (above B1 CEFR) and I thought I noticed from time to time the hint of a cockney accent – especially the utterance of the glottal stop in words like ‘bottle’. She took part in various interviews with me and with a sociologist who was studying in the centre as well. The following two fragments demonstrate (and demonstrated to those of us who worked in Dun Cluain on a daily basis) how different our worlds and cultures were, firstly in their experiences of war.

Fragment 4.39 (audio recording)

Miriam (sociologist): Okay but do you miss er Somalia?

Rihana: For me I miss family but not Somalia because

Miriam: okay

Rihana: <unintelligible> hard to live and it’s <unintelligible> our daily life so

Miriam: Okay

Rihana: Every day you can see somebody shot in action and somebody bleeding and dying

Miriam: Uh huh right

Rihana: That’s the situation so we can’t miss it still you can’t all you see is them shoot each other and kill each other

The experience of the daily occurrences of rape and violence also elucidated the gulf in the cultural schemata:

Fragment 4.40 (audio recording)

Rihana: But ah you know in the searches

Miriam: yeah

Rihana: they come to your house and they take all your <blood girls/blood tests> whoever they take fourteen and fifteen they gonna keep away from you

Miriam: Um

Rihana: They are whoever they want

Miriam: want yeah

Rihana: Yeah and they offer you some <one word> and they and then some of them they get pregnant and then come back home

Miriam: They get pregnant

Rihana: Yeah and then come back home

When there was no male present, Rihana was much more forthcoming. In an interview in which no other male was present (one which generated 2,987 Somali words), 90% of the words were Rihana's. Conversely, in an interview with me and a male Somalian (Mubaarak) which lasted 45 minutes, of the 2,950 spoken by both, only 18% corresponded to Rihana (despite the fact that Rihana's and Mubaarak's English was of equal level (B1 CEFR)). This also happened when they were in class together, Rihana usually remaining silent on political, religious or cultural matters, allowing Mubaarak to dominate. In the interview between the female sociologist and four Somalian women, Rihana did most of the talking. When the sociologist noted that the other girls were quiet, she directed a question at them. They did not answer directly. Rihana consulted with them, even though the other girls were heard to speak in English in whispers.

Fragment 4.41 (audio recording)

Miriam: Yeah .. if you get your status er have you got any plans in your own mind?

Rihana: Me about I wanna go to school or study

Miriam: Yeah okay ... and what about the rest of the girls?

Rihana: <?> I'll check with them

<The Somali girls confer and one of them is heard to say in English> <2s> it's nice <then Rihana speaks>

Rihana: They say <unintelligible>

Mubaarak a nineteen-year old boy when he arrived in 2003, like Rihana, was very mature for his age. We thought his English was poor when he arrived, but this was a false impression given by his quiet and aloof nature. When he got to know us better he conversed competently on subjects such as religion, racism, communication and his future. The main interview in which he participated was carried out with Rihana. However, he did come to my office on numerous occasions to discuss other matters, and if these smaller interviews were not recorded, extensive notes were taken after the meetings. Fragment 4.42 below again addresses the

problem in Ireland of people pretending to be from countries which enjoyed a high level of success in petitions for asylum.

Fragment 4.42 (audio recording)

Kieran: That's okay ... Tell me what you were saying about your language you were saying that ... there's only one

Mubaarak: Yeah <4s> we speak only one language and that language is called Somali

Kieran: Um

Mubaarak: And even in formal government all the registration is working in Somali language

Kieran: Um

Mubaarak: In the schools

Kieran: Um

Mubaarak: We learn we write we read and

Kieran: And there was no other language in the school

Mubaarak: Yes no other language

Kieran: What I was saying to you yesterday is what surprised me is that I always had read that people spoke Swahili in Somalia as well

Mubaarak: No

Kieran: And that's not true

Mubaarak: That's not true

Kieran: Okay

Mubaarak: Come if you ask more people who originally come from Somalia the only language they speak is Somali there's no other language but some people who came Ireland before they claim that they speak Swahili

Kieran: Um

Mubaarak: And that's

Rihana: but they normally come from <2s>

Kieran: Further south isn't it

Mubaarak: No

Mubaarak: < syllable> of Somali

Kieran: South isn't it

Rihana: Yeah

Kieran: It's south

Mubaarak: It's south. and even now there is more than Somali people who stay in Ireland they are not more than two hundred

Kieran: In Ireland?

Mubaarak: In Ireland

Kieran: Oh

Mubaarak: But you the <3s> you see above three thousand who are Somalis who stay in Ireland

Kieran: But so what so but those people lived in Somalia no

Rihana: No

Kieran: No

Mubaarak: No

Kieran: You mean they are telling lies

Mubaarak: Yeah they are telling lies

The general impression in the Centre of the Somalians was that they were quiet and reserved. They had this same perception of themselves as can be seen in Mubaarak's words in Fragment 4.43.

Fragment 4.43 (audio recording)

Mubaarak: <unintelligible stretch> we don't speak like other people we quiet

Rihana: Yeah

Kieran: Um

Mubaarak: We always shy <customers?>

Kieran: Yeah

Mubaarak: We always shy

Kieran: Yes

Mubaarak: Yeah

Kieran: Why?

Mubaarak: Because it's our culture

Rihana: It's our culture

Kieran: You're shy because it's your culture

Mubaarak: Yeah

Eritrea

Only one Eritrean lived in the Centre between 2002 and 2005. She spoke Amharic, which is a language of Northern Ethiopia, spoken by the Amhara, an ethnic group who live in the highlands. She was fourteen years old when she arrived, but this was disputed by the Department of Justice. In fact she was only sent to Dun Cluain because the Department of Justice believed she was over 18. She arrived in 2004 and was still present when I left in 2005. Communication with her was very difficult as nobody else spoke Amharic. She attended classes and began to progress quickly. She associated herself with the four Somalian females and ate with them in the dining room, but after a few months she began eating alone again, having had a dispute with the Somalian girls, according to them. They told me that they communicated with her in English as best they could.

Burundi

Only one resident from Burundi lived in Dun Cluain. He arrived shortly after I did, in the autumn of 2002. BJ came regularly to classes and his English improved at a spectacular pace. His spoken English bore traces of an RP accent, which he had not acquired from me or any other native speaker of English in the Centre. He contradicted himself constantly with regard to his provenance. I observed and heard him speaking to other Africans in French and Portuguese, Swahili (he said) and tribal languages (he said). He also spoke Spanish to me regularly. He claimed he was a native Portuguese speaker, which of course does not make much sense as the lingua francas of Burundi are French and Swahili and the main tribal language is Rundi. I asked him if his parents were Angolan (Portuguese speaking) but he did not confirm this. It would have been possible for him to pick up Portuguese travelling in Africa (he said he had been a truck driver) or perhaps in Refugee Camps, of which there were many in Burundi in the 1990s and early 2000s. Whenever I heard him speak Portuguese or whenever we interchanged words in Portuguese, he did not seem very fluent. BJ figured frequently in the classroom recordings as he was quite loquacious. He told the class that he had been tortured continuously and that he was now attending the doctor for a problem with his testicles, which had been tied to a door during a torture session (whenever somebody would open the door he would be dragged by his testicles off the chair). Although he came across as quite sophisticated in his communication with me and the rest of the staff, the following conversation, which took

place in the classroom, highlighted the gulf in cultural beliefs between some of the residents and the Irish staff:

Fragment 4.44 (Attested field note)

BJ: You rushed off yesterday, did you have a nice dinner.

Kieran: It wasn't ready when I got home after all my rushing.

BJ: And did you beat her man?

Kieran: Beat her? No, we don't do that in Ireland.

BJ: It's the only way man listen to me.

Kieran: You beat your wife?

BJ: Yes, of course. What's wrong? It's normal man. If not they do nothing.

4.3 Speech situations

As mentioned above, I will use the three Hymesian units of speech situation, speech event and speech act to describe ways of speaking in Dun Cluain. Table 4.3 below presents a summary snapshot of these four situations described - mealtimes in the canteen, attending class, visiting the education office, and signing in at the reception desk. Situations are classified as those places or times in which the speech events occurred. For example, the speech situation is the reception desk and the event is the signing-in. The specific 'utterances' of the residents are outlined in terms of broader 'acts', not in the sense of Austin's (1962) functional speech acts.

Table 4.3 Speech situations and events

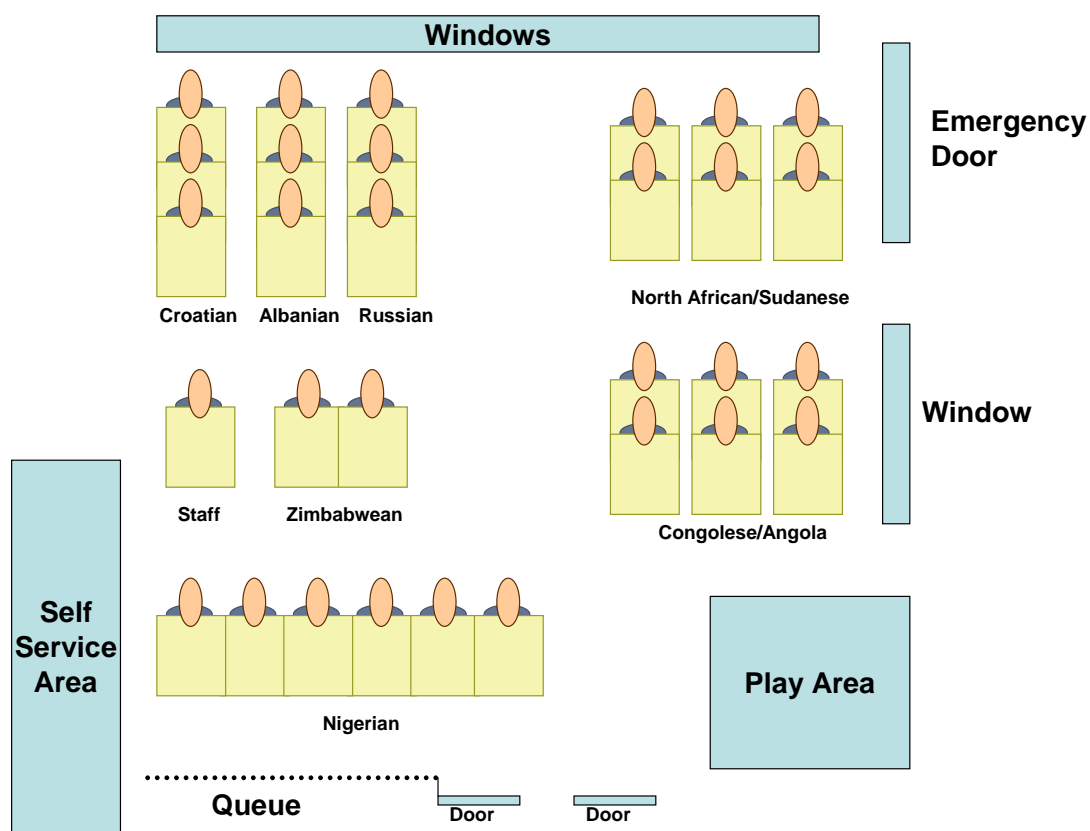
Speech situation one: mealtimes in the canteen		
	Event	Acts
1	Interacting in queue	Greetings
2	Approaching the counter	Greetings
		Requesting
		Thanking
3	Approaching the table	Requesting permission to join someone
2. Speech situation two: coming to classes		
	Event	Acts
1	Entering room	Greeting
2	Attending class	Asking for help
		Classroom interaction
3. Speech situation three: visiting the Education Office		
	Event	Acts
1	Registering	Greetings
		Closings
2	Requesting	Requesting a reference
		Requesting funding
3	Taking part in ethnographic interviews	Telling their story
		Talking about the community
4	Visiting	Chatting
4. Speech situation four: the Reception Desk		
	Event	Acts
1	Signing in	Greeting
		Requesting
		Thanking

4.3.1 Speech situation one: mealtimes in the canteen

The day begins at eight when the restaurant opens for breakfast. Only those who have (illegal) jobs in city shops, factories, and restaurants arrive this early. There is always a strong smell of boiled eggs, although porridge and cereals are also provided. There is usually a mess on the floors and on the tables to the front of the room near where people queue. Most people arrive for breakfast in the last half an hour and the wait is longer. Lunch is between twelve and two and the predominant smell is usually of mackerel, the most frequent meal due to its low cost. Dinner in the evening is between six and eight and then the canteen is more crowded, as the

workers have come home. People stay after close if they can, to avoid going back to their bedrooms. The dining room is large. It has a capacity for one hundred people seated. The counter is in the left hand corner of the room and people queue between here and the doors. The residents take a tray, cutlery, knives and napkins before getting to the food counter. Figure 4.2 is a seating map of the canteen. It shows how people grouped together. They did this on the basis of nationality, religion, the geographic closeness of their home countries, and on attitudes and prejudices.

Figure 4.2 The Canteen



The Nigerians, who were of mixed religions and languages, formed the main nation-based group, and always sat together, very rarely being joined by people of other nationalities. There were more Nigerians in the Centre than any other nationality, and this may explain the fact that more noise came from this group than any other. People from other countries, including neighbouring African countries, attributed it to what they claimed was their rudeness and bad manners.

The Zimbabwean residents also seemed to maintain an exclusive group, although they did make contact with other nationalities. The white people that congregated at the back together

were Ukrainians, Croatian Serbs and Albanians, and this, they explained, mainly had to do with the shared lingua franca, which was Russian and that they were all came from Eastern Europe. This region seemed to be taken more as a uniform entity than Africa, the nationalities of which did not really bond as members of the same continental community. The Congolese, for example, saw themselves as very different from the Nigerians, especially in behaviour. They mixed with the Cameroonians, with whom they share the same language, and with the Angolans, with whom they share languages and ethnicities. The North Africans, Moroccans, Algerians and Libyans bonded with the Sudanese, and this, according to Karim and Nadir was due to the shared language and not the shared religion, which I had put forward as a possible reason as Mubaarak, the Somalian, attributes his bonding with the Sudanese to religion. Mubaarak also said that physical similarity played a part.

Interaction in the queue in the canteen

The first spoken communicative event at mealtimes is the interaction amongst residents in the queue. People from different countries and different languages largely ignored one other. There were few words uttered by anyone, even by those of the same language or country who met in the queue. If there was acknowledgement or greeting, it was a nod or a flick of the head. When residents first arrived in the Centre, they would make some verbal effort at greeting other people in the queue, but the main practice was non-acknowledgement and this stemmed, not from any language deficiency, but - according to the residents themselves - from the routines of daily life in the Centre.

Approaching the counter in the canteen

There was very little communication between the residents and the canteen staff. The latter would try to be as amiable and as accommodating as possible and used greetings such 'How are you now, darling?' or 'How are you now, love?' to the female residents and 'How are ya now?' to the males. Response was minimal and it was rare to hear any resident enter into long exchanges. Even speakers of English as a second language limited their response to 'fine' or 'good'. The typical question from the staff would be 'Now, what can I get you love?' and the residents would answer monosyllabically or point, even those who spoke English as a second language. The longest exchanges came from those who were not speakers of English as a second language but who had managed to advance to higher levels of English. If any greeting

was delivered to the staff it was normally one that functioned as a requestive alert (see Chapter Seven).

When the waitresses tried to engage in small talk, and this was usually with the African women with questions about their babies, the answers continued to be monosyllabic - 'fine', 'good'. These words were frequently uttered in a tone of impatience - as interpreted by the waitresses and by me whenever I observed - and with their eyes pointing towards the food. When I asked the African residents about this they responded that they were either tired or anxious to get their food and did not look on the situation as being one for exchanging pleasantries. The waitresses considered the Nigerian women rude. One of them said that she insisted on asking the same questions every day with the objective of forcing them to be 'polite'.

The utterance of expressions of gratitude followed similar patterns: those who did not speak English when they arrived were effusive in their efforts and the *thank you* was typically delivered loudly (I had seen Said, the Moroccan, and Oleg Chevchenko, the Ukrainian, do this in their first few weeks). Gradually, routine reduced the loudness in the delivery of the terms and in most cases these residents just nodded as they walked away from the counter.

Approaching a table

Most non-Nigerian residents would seek out an empty table. Even those Eastern Europeans that spoke to one another from time to time preferred to eat alone. Nigerian men greeted one another at the table with rap-type north-American handshake gestures, using terms such as 'Heh man' (the commonest). I observed that Nigerian men tended to use English more than the Nigerian women, who regularly switched to their own tribal languages. Other nationalities, if they had to share a table, did so without interchanging a word.

The residents rarely acknowledged the restaurant staff or the other staff who also breakfasted, lunched and dined in the restaurant. Said, the Moroccan, was one of the exceptions. Although he had very little language at his disposition, he took advantage of the fact that I spoke Spanish and he always said, as previously mentioned, '*que aproveche*', as he passed. Some of the Congolese would say '*bon appétit*'. This could, of course, have to do with the fact that some languages have terms or phrases (such as French) to express such greetings, but others do not. It was curious to observe the silence amongst the non-Nigerians nationalities in the three years

I spent having breakfast and lunch in the canteen. Again, the residents explained that the lack of talk and greeting was a result of the monotony and routine of life in the Centre.

4.3.2 Speech situation two: coming to classes

The education facility was set up originally with the objective of providing English language classes. When I began work at the Centre one room served as a classroom, an IT classroom and my office. Within two years the facility comprised two small offices, one typical classroom, a large IT room and a crèche. The IT classroom had ten computers, none of which were connected to the Internet, given that the Department of Justice was worried about residents creating information networks with prospective asylum seekers in the home countries.

Classes were held every day from 10pm to 12pm and 2pm to 4pm. A basic taster course in computers was offered and if a resident progressed and attended regularly, he or she was offered certification. There were three different teachers of English, but volunteers also delivered classes. A1 and A2 (CEFR) levels of English were offered. Residents were also invited to come to a conversation circle once a week, with no limitation on level. People who attended these conversation circles ranged in proficiency from those who knew only a few words (even after a year in class), to speakers of English as a second language (Nigerians, Liberians, etc.).

Other innovative classes were held from time to time. These were termed ‘themed English’ and consisted of crafts such as flower arranging, quilting and sewing. Whilst learning or practising the craft the residents were encouraged to read and write (patterns and reports, for example) and to talk in English. The sewing classes, which ran from 10am to 1pm every Friday for three years, were very well attended, but only by Nigerian women (and one Nigerian man). The tutor reported that there was great rapport in the class, which was evidenced by the good attendance. However, whenever I walked into the room there was silence. I recorded one of the sessions, lasting three hours, but only the tutor’s voice is heard on the tape. The latter reported that the women spoke mainly of issues related to their gender (even when the male Nigerian was present), such as their first menstruation and the loss of their virginity, and did not want me to hear them talk about such issues. However, this interpretation (of why there was silence when I entered and why they did not speak during the recording) was not corroborated by my own

experience of Nigerian women in the conversation circle where they would talk (and write) about such issues openly.

Greetings

Only the Nigerians and Pakistanis uttered greetings on a regular basis. Both tended to say 'Hello sir' and the Nigerians 'Good morning, sir' or 'Good afternoon, sir' as well. Despite my plea to both nationalities to omit the 'sir', they continued to use it, even those with whom, over time, I formed a close, friendly relationship. The reason, they explained, was that they had to show respect.

As the class beginning times (10am and 2pm) coincided with the closing times for breakfast and lunch in the canteen, some participants arrived late, but especially the Nigerians who had the reputation in the Centre of having a casual attitude towards punctuality. They made no apologies when they arrived late.

Asking for help

Most of the Nigerian women requested help by clicking their fingers. This was perceived as rudeness by the teachers and by the other residents, but the Nigerian women explained to me that it was a common means of requesting attention in classrooms in Nigeria. What annoyed the teachers specifically was that the clicking would continue even though the teacher might be assisting someone else and already have acknowledged the summons. The teachers interpreted the clicking as a request for them to leave what they were doing and to attend immediately to the Nigerians. The Nigerian women insisted it did not mean this. They did not consider the gesture as rude. Their use of *excuse me* was similar. Again, *excuse me* was uttered repeatedly at intervals of about one minute until the teacher went to the assistance of the speaker and the Nigerian women insisted that in Nigeria, as such, was not considered rude.

Pakistani men tended to say 'Sir' or 'Madam' to request help, the peculiarity being that it was the men who sought aid for the women and for themselves; the women remained silent. The men in the Centre in general did not request help very often, especially when working with computers.

Interaction in the classroom

The Eastern-Europeans avoided black people, but especially Nigerians when taking their seats. As far as classroom interaction is concerned, some Eastern Europeans refused to work with Nigerian women. In general, few words were interchanged when they had to do pair work or role-plays.

As mentioned previously, classes were offered in English at A1 and A2 CEFR levels in the Education Centre and residents could also come to conversation circles. The part-time tutors of English in the Centre were specifically opposed to the attendance of Nigerians in language classes, basing this perspective on the *alleged* disruption of classrooms due to *alleged* increased noise level, different turn-taking strategies and lexicogrammatical and phonological deviations, and the lack of need for them to learn English if they already spoke it. Many residents shared this anti-Nigerian opinion, as far as communication was concerned.

I spoke (unrecorded) to the three teachers of English (Moira, Breda and Gabriel) about this issue and noted their responses. One of the tutors, Moira, commented that it was a wider society problem. She said, ‘everybody hates them.’ She quoted her friends who told her stories of Nigerians jumping queues and talking loudly in the city. She believed that not all Nigerians were the same - those who were loud and behaved badly were from a certain social level. She commented that Nigerians rarely said ‘please’ and ‘thanks’ and were impolite. Breda, another tutor, although wishing to complement the Nigerians in a somewhat contradictory way, commented that she had only had intercultural problems with one Nigerian, the rest ‘learn to behave the longer they are here.’

Moira claimed that attendance fell off if there were Nigerians in the class because of loudness and interruptions. Breda said that ‘they don’t give the rest a chance, their way of communicating is very aggressive, even amongst themselves - they are constantly interrupting.’ She said that Eastern European students had told her that they did not want to share a class with Nigerians, which was corroborated by the Eastern Europeans in conversations with me. Another tutor, Gabriel, said he noticed what appeared to be frustration of the Eastern Europeans at the Nigerians’ loud behaviour and dominance during discussions. He quotes one non-Nigerian student as saying he had understood nothing of what Nigerians had said in English in the classroom, that he did not know if they were speaking English or French. The Nigerians,

according to Gabriel, on that particular occasion in the classroom had been talking all at once, each one trying to get their own point across over the other one.

Breda, one of the teachers, referring to the Nigerians, said that it was important to ‘change *their* English for the future,’ but that she did not have enough time in class to address this as ‘their command of English isn’t up to level.’ She classified their use of certain phrases as incorrect and gave the example of the word *suffer*, which she said can mean ‘almost anything’. Gabriel, also commented on the different use of words, ‘Nigerians tend to speak pidgin when they speak among themselves, don’t appear to be able to pronounce the letter ‘h’ at the start of a word, and use unusual phrases such as ‘I go city’ instead of *I am going to the city*.’

I spoke to non-Nigerian residents about these claims both during the ethnographic interviews and during casual conversations. I have already mentioned Boris’ racist and gender-biased attitude. He said (in a recorded interview) that he had no problem with black men, but the women ‘they try talk everybody at the same time, break, turn, okay, turn, why you like an animal?’ He exempted from blame one of the Nigerian women (Edith) who attended class with him and said ‘she has knowledge ... she can lead herself normally.’ He remarked that he had met people ‘like this’ before in his life, in the Ukraine and that the problem is not race or colour; it is ‘condition of mind’ or воспитание.

Divna, a 25-year old female Romanian, attended a certified course and dropped out after two classes. In an unrecorded conversation, she said that the Nigerians and Liberians did most of the talking in the classroom and that their loudness was too much to tolerate. One day standing at the door of the classroom, she asked me: ‘Can’t you hear them shouting now?’ referring to the noise coming from a gathering of people queuing at the door of the Community Welfare Officer’s clinic.

Katya, a 22-year old Ukrainian who also had attended a certified Level 1 ESOL course in 2003, left the Centre in 2005 without having joined the Level 2 group. She told me (in an unrecorded interview) that she had not pursued the course because of the dominance of the Nigerians in the group, and considered she would not get enough attention as the ‘others would talk their type of English continually and make a lot of noise.’ I asked her if she felt the same about all Nigerians. She said that two Nigerians and one Liberian who had attended the Level 1 class that she herself attended were ‘different’.

Miro the 24-year old Serb, who was the most respectful resident in the Centre, in that he was careful not to be critical of anyone, said (in a recorded interview) he understood black people when they spoke, although he admitted that ‘sometimes I cannot understand something but is a bit difficult.’ When I pressed this topic with Miro he said, ‘Yeah it is a bit difficult you know just the way they speak between themselves you know.’ An interesting point, however, is that Miro, who worked illegally on building sites commented that his Irish workmates

... are impossible to understand [...] like <laughing> I don’t know what they are talking about but it is interesting you know I don’t know what they’re talking about but sometimes they are okay a few days ago [...] I didn’t know what they were talking about

(audio recording)

Miro did refer to Nigerian men being nicer than the women because the women created problems in the queue in the restaurant. He said, ‘We can wait, but they cannot wait.’

I interviewed (unrecorded) some the Nigerians about the issue also. Jude a 30-year old Nigerian university graduate (who spoke Urhobo) said she was aware that other people complained of the loudness, the interruptions and lack of politeness. As far as loudness is concerned, she put forward the frustration at living in an asylum seeker centre as a possible reason for outbursts of shouting. But she also considered that these problems were mainly due to a lack of good upbringing. She believed politeness had more to do with respect and that the use of words like *please* and *thanks* are not essential. Meredith, a 29-year old Nigerian (Yoruba) female, said she was embarrassed by the loudness, interruptions and lack of politeness of her compatriots. She believed it was a matter of upbringing and rudeness and disagreed with people who tried to find cultural reasons for the behaviour. She said that well-brought-up Nigerians are extremely polite and that in her own country, at her present age, people would have to call her ‘auntie’, ‘prostrate before her and wait for a sign from her before speaking.’ On the other hand, Tami, a thirty-year old Nigerian (Yoruba) female, who had had no education above primary school and spoke pidgin English, made an interesting point as regards the allegation of loudness; she said ‘if so many Irish people are together they would make as much noise.’

One of the benefits of ethnographic interviewing is that it allows everyone to have a voice; however, that can also constitute a limitation if the ethnographer has not triangulated the

investigation in some way. On the basis of the above interviews, it would be difficult to make definite conclusions, although there are contradictions which signal that perhaps incipient racism in the form of stereotyping was at play here. Miro's caveat about communication with the Nigerians - that he understood but it was 'a bit difficult you know just the way they speak between themselves you know,' is significant. From observation outside the classroom, I could see that that when Nigerians congregated (note that there were more Nigerians in the Centre than any other nationality) they did make a lot of noise. I recorded congregations of Nigerians in the reception area without being able to extract any intelligible English. The point is, however, they were not always speaking English. Nigerian groups in the canteen and in the foyer could be made up of many different ethnicities who spoke their own languages and the crisscrossing of languages created an unintelligible noisy hum. The day Divna (the Romanian resident) said, 'Can't you hear them shouting now?' referring to the noise coming from a gathering of people queuing in the corridors at the social welfare clinic, I went to investigate. A group of seven Nigerian women and their babies, queuing in the corridor, were discussing a new rule being enforced by the Department of Justice. There was no unruly behaviour, but the women's voices and the cries of the children reverberated due to the acoustics of the tiled hallway.

The anti-Nigerian opinions of the tutors and the other residents and employees are cast in doubt by an analysis of the classroom discourse (see below). Over 18 hours of classroom interaction were recorded between 2002 and 2005. Although I did notice the use of 'deviant' lexicogrammatical and phonological items, such as the very common *pick* for *pick up*, *he* used for both *he* and *she* and the pronunciation of the /θ/ and /ð/ phonemes as /d/, I failed to find any evidence of the negative claims made by tutors and other learners, with respect to loudness or rudeness, interruptions or dominance of talk. On closer analysis, using Sinclair and Coulthard's (1975) exchange framework, I found, in fact, that the Nigerians strictly conformed to typical formal classroom exchange structure. The following fragments are examples of a pattern of conformation by Nigerians to a formal Initiation-Response-Feedback (IRF) structure in different classroom settings and levels.

Fragments 4.45 and 4.46 which correspond to a class in which there were five participants, a male Serbian, Miro, a male Georgian, Boris, a female Byelorussian and two Nigerian women. The class began with a conversation which lasted for over five minutes on the song 'Don't worry, be happy'. The two Nigerians (Starry and Edith) remained silent during this stage,

explaining to me later that they did not know what the class was talking about (the song). The interesting point is that they did not interrupt or engage in any overlapping talk. Starry, one of the Nigerian residents, does not take part until lines 84-87:

Fragment 4.45 (audio recording)

83	Teacher: Maybe two bedroomed three bedroomed ... er you	
84	know flat also means↑	I
85	Starry: Flat thick	R
86	Teacher: Like this and it also means flat ... t:yre	F/I
87	Starry: Tyre	R

The initiation by the teacher is a typical one of eliciting information. The elicitation (line 86) is what Mercer (2000: 250) calls a ‘cued elicitation’. The holding of the /t/ phoneme that begins the word ‘tyre’ draws the correct response from the learner.

In the next fragment, Starry, knows that the teacher is talking about music but does not intervene until she is directly cued:

Fragment 4.46 (audio recording)

109	T: Okay music flat	
110	Starry: Yes flat	
111	T: In music you have flat ... and sharp <pointing at Starry>	
112	Starry: [sharp	
113	Boris: Uh flat and sharp	

Fragments 4.49 and 4.50 below correspond to a class of six students - four Nigerian females (Starry, Edith, Moti and Bola), one Croatian male (Miro) and one Byelorussian female (Katya). The teacher goes through a list of phrasal verbs and asks the students to provide the Latinate equivalent. Moti a university graduate, who speaks English at a level close to that of the standard of Brosnahan’s classification (see Section 4.6.2), comes in at just the right time, when a response is being elicited:

Fragment 4.47 (audio recording)

1. **Teacher** : To cut down is? One word for it::: **I**
2. **Moti**: To confine **R**
3. **Teacher** : No **F**

Starry and Heather also respond when they are directly cued and Bola only when the correct response is not forthcoming from the others:

Fragment 4.48 (audio recording)

1. **Teacher** : Now face up to:: **I**
2. **Moti**: Challenge **R1**
3. **Edith**: <unintelligible> **R2**
4. **Miro**: <unintelligible> **R3**
5. **Teacher**: Yes **F1**
6. **→Bola**: Accept your responsibility **R4**

Fragment 4.49 comes from an A1 class of nine students, two from Nigeria (Bea and Lisa), and one each from Somalia (Diasa), Kosovo (Qendrese), Pakistan (Azra), the Congo and Angola (Cristiana). The English of the two Nigerian women who participate is closer to Pidgin Nigerian English as described by Brosnahan (see Chapter Three, Section 2.2.1.1). They also conformed to the typical IRF discourse pattern during the class which I myself gave in substitution of an absent teacher. Below is the transcription of the conversation at the point when I returned to the class after a brief absence. Again, one of the Nigerian women (Bosi) intervened only when the question was directed at her. Although not in formal IRF structure, it exemplifies another pattern that I noticed among the Nigerians, that of talking in the classroom only when asked a direct question.

Fragment 4.49 (audio recording)

1. **Diasa**: Teacher is very good
2. **Bea**: Ha?
3. **Diasa**: Good
4. **Teacher**: What's wrong? What were you doing?
5. **Diasa**: Talk ... hmm (quickly)

6. **Teacher:** Who? me? No. Will I tell Breda the other teacher?
7. **Cristiana:** Teacher, yes
8. **Teacher:** Okay
9. **Sadi:** I don't understand. You understand, Moira understand, but Breda talk too quickly
10. **Teacher:** Do you think the same? You understand Breda
11. → **Bea:** Yes, I do

4.3.3 Speech situation three: the education office

The residents came to the Education Office to sign on for classes, to request character references, to request funding to join sports clubs and buy sports equipment, and to pay a social visit. Many of the residents also agreed to attend for interviews for the purposes of this study. Most of these interviews provided background data on living conditions in the Centre, on attitudes held about other resident groups, about the management company in the Centre, about the Department of Justice, and about their flight from their home countries.

Registering

New residents who did not speak English were usually accompanied by a compatriot who translated for them. Greetings were sparse and few words were spoken. When the residents left the office after registering, there was rarely any typical valedictory word such as *goodbye*. The most frequent (valedictory) word uttered was *okay*, and this was probably due to the fact that the staff members typically ended registrations (see Section 5.7.1, Chapter Six and Chapter Seven for elaboration on the use of *okay*) with this word (apart from work done on *okay* used for closings in telephone conversations by Schegloff and Sacks (1973), research also confirms its use in non-telephone environments (Condon 1986; Merritt 1984).

Requesting a reference

When a resident's case for asylum was rejected, he or she applied for humanitarian leave to remain. For this, five character references were needed, and the Education Office provided one if the resident had attended 85% of programmed classes. This we found was one of the main reasons that the residents attended class and many did not return to class after acquiring the reference. The actual request for the reference followed a slightly different communication pattern than those observed in the canteen and at the reception desk. The residents did not utter

a greeting or make a fully expressed conventional request. They simply used the words ‘reference’ or ‘humanitarian’ (even those who spoke English as a second language). On these occasions they all acted quite submissively, mumbling the words, looking downwards, their way, perhaps, of showing politeness and saving face.

Requesting funding

Here, as a precursor to Chapter Seven which deals specifically with the requesting of funding by the residents in the Education Office, I explain the funding procedure in the Centre. Every year the Education Office offered the residents the possibility of requesting funding for sporting events activities such as swimming. A sum on average of €2,000 was acquired each year through an application to the Xxxxx Sports Council. The money would be divided in small quantities (€50-€100) among those residents who applied and were successful. Signs were posted in all the languages of the residents on the notice boards advising of the funding, and of the need to come by the office to pick up the application form, and then return with the form filled and have a brief chat with the Coordinator. All of these application interviews were recorded.

Those who stayed longer in the office after picking up the forms participated in what was tantamount to requestive negotiation – they asked for information on what was allowable and mentioned in the process the plans that they or their children had as far as the funding was concerned. Their lexicogrammatical shortcomings were evident, but as will be seen in Chapter Eight, the residents exploited minimal responses and prosodic features to the maximum in order to negotiate their way through the interaction.

Ethnographic interviews

In the second year of my stay in the Centre, I began to record ethnographic interviews with residents who were willing to provide information on the context of the residents fleeing their original countries and on the context of daily existence in a total institution as asylum seekers. These interviews afforded the residents a space to be more relaxed and express their frustrations. They raised their voices, they laughed, they cried, and at times, and in some cases (such as with Said), they became frustrated with their linguistic limitations. Most of these

interviews were undertaken with higher level speakers of English, such as Meredith, the Nigerian, and Boris, the Georgian. These were the interviews that yielded most information on histories and the relational dynamics in the Centre. However, speakers with lower levels were also interviewed, such as Said, the Moroccan. And while these interviews also provided important ethnographic information, their main value was linguistic, in that they provided useful quantitative data on these residents' use of English.

Visits to the education office

Residents who lived in the Centre and those who had moved to another centre or to independent living, visited the office socially. The purpose of the former was to have a chat and relieve the boredom of routine, but even though the meeting was not formal, they would still observe a submissive attitude, waiting to be spoken to. Those who came back to the Centre to visit friends and would come by the office, used a new, freer interactional style. These ex-residents seemed to celebrate their freedom from a centre they considered a prison with an effusiveness in greeting. I have already presented an example of one of these visits above in 4.2.19.

4.3.4 Speech situation four: the reception desk

The residents had to sign in every day at the reception desk. If they failed to do so on three consecutive occasions they were removed from the Centre. The office and security staff managed the signing-in process. The hatch at the main desk was opened every morning for this purpose. Many of the male residents worked illegally in nearby factories and building sites and left very early in the morning, so I had to depend on the accounts of the receptionists of the interaction with these residents. The others signed in between 10am (after the canteen closed) and 1am. It was rare to see more than one person there at a time signing-in, although there were long queues on Thursdays when the residents came to collect their weekly allowance of €19.40.

Signing-in

As Goffman (1961:45) says, in the context of his ethnographic work on total institutions, 'one of the most telling ways in which one's economy of action can be disrupted is the obligation to request permission or supplies for minor activities that one can execute on one's own on the

outside.’ Such an obligation, he says, ‘puts the individual in a submissive or suppliant role.’ Observation and recording of interaction at the Reception Desk in Dun Cluain afforded me the opportunity to study such an ‘unnatural role’ and such submissiveness. I observed and recorded how the residents greeted the receptionist when they approached, how they requested the signing-in sheet, how they requested a pen, how they requested information, how they requested objects such as toiletries, how they requested that something be fixed in their rooms, how they requested their post and how they made other diverse requests.

Greetings at the reception desk

As in the canteen, the receptionists did their best to interchange greetings with the residents. They related that the men who left early for work went to the hatch, reached in, took the sheet and signed, without exchanging any greeting. That became the routine. The others came gradually between 10am and 1pm, another routine, the anaesthetizing impact of which became very clear when I observed the interaction and listened back to the tape recording later. It was the same pattern as that which was observed in the canteen. The newly arrived residents made a bigger effort to talk, but the routine of everyday life gradually impacted the communicative effort they made. The voices and gestures of the residents I observed that morning as they made their way to and from the desk were full of routine-inflicted tiredness and tedium. They acknowledged the presence of the receptionists with various minimal forms the greetings. They mostly gestured or uttered unintelligible words which the receptionists said they understood through routine.

Requesting at the reception desk

The residents also used language economically when they performed requests at the reception desk. The requests could be constituted by a gesture, an utterance that might seem unintelligible to an uninitiated observer, the second part of an adjacency pair, an address term or a minimal reference to the object required. Daily practice (from both the receptionists’ and the residents’ perspective) facilitated the development of such understanding. The following are examples of these four phenomena.

1. Gestures and unintelligible words

In Fragment 4.50, Jude, a female Nigerian, approaches the desk and makes a gesture with her head towards the right hand side of the office where the letters are organized in pigeon holes:

Fragment 4.50 (audio recording and observation)

Jude (Nigerian female resident): <gesture>

Receptionist: No nothing <meaning *no post*>

In Fragment 4.51, Jane, a Nigerian female approaches the desk and utters a string of words which were unintelligible at the moment in time and also on playback. The receptionist on duty said she understood from the intonation what the resident was requesting, but clearly, the daily routinized practice facilitates the understanding.

Fragment 4.51 (audio recording and observation)

Jane (Nigerian female resident): <Unintelligible>

Receptionist: Are you in a rush? <*for the post*>

2. Adjacency pairs

Words that the residents uttered as the second part of the adjacency greeting pair ('fine', for example) eventually came to form part of their requestive behaviour. This occurred even when the receptionist had not spoken first, that is the resident initiated the exchange with the second part of the adjacency pair.

Fragment 4.52 (audio recording and observation)

Debbie (Nigerian female): Fine

Receptionist: Now honey <the receptionist hands her the sign-in sheet>

In 4.53, the words 'I'm fine' followed by a string of unintelligible words, uttered very quickly, gives the impression that perhaps the residents wanted to get to the point as soon as possible, thereby dispensing with the complete formality.

Fragment 4.53

Dympna (Nigerian female) I'm fine <unintelligible> is Laoise here?

3. Forms of address

Forms of address were also used to initiate the request, as evidenced in the following example.

Fragment 4.54 (audio recording and observation)

Marian (Somali female): Jessica

Receptionist: I have there now are yours <handing her a letter>

4. Minimal reference

At times only the use of the name of the object required was uttered:

Desira: The iron

Receptionist: No problem <P9> now then

In Fragment 4.55, a Somali female, who had a limited vocabulary makes a greater effort:

Fragment 4.55 (audio recording and observation)

Somali female: I need pen

In Fragment 4.56, an Angolan female is referring to the use of the laundry:

Fragment 4.56 (audio recording and observation)

Angolan female: No wash

Although such routinized and minimal requesting was general, this was most noticeable in the discourse of the speakers of English as a second or nativized language – principally Nigerians. Other speakers tended toward a greater degree of indirectness and lingered longer at the desk.

This was especially noticeable in speakers who had recently arrived, which excludes both the possibility that they acquired the tendency for indirectness in Irish English (see Barron 2008 and Vaughan and Clancy 2011), and, given that their English was not very developed, that it was not the result either of ‘waffle-phenomenon’, the tendency of advanced speakers to produce longer requests and deviate into verbosity (see Blum-Kulka and Olshtain (1986), House and Kasper (1987), Færch and Kasper (1989), Rintell and Mitchell (1989) and Edmondson and House (1991)). My own interpretation of this phenomenon, based on observation overtime (the new residents gradually reduced the level of their communicative efforts), and consultation with the residents and the receptionists, was, as I have mentioned previously, that the residents fell into a communicative apathy as a result of the tedium and routine of everyday life in the Centre.

Thanking at the reception desk

In the three hours of observation at the reception desk the word *thanks* was uttered three times, *thank you* seven times and *thank you* accompanied by a vocative, once. Such crude presentation of the number of *thank yous* may give the impression that the residents were generally impolite, but the receptionists that were on duty that morning did not perceive any threat to face, remarking on the routine, the pattern, the problems with language and the general depressive situation that would ‘stop anyone from talking’, as one receptionist said. The problem, of course, is that such interactional style would be considered impolite outside the Centre. However, the objective here is to study communication within the Centre, and the residents’ strategies as such were successful. Furthermore, while there was evidently a paucity of typical lexical manifestations of politeness and interactional strategies, the residents did avail of other means to mitigate the force of their locutions. These will be analyzed in greater detail in Chapter Seven.

4.4 Conclusion

This chapter has provided a contextual canvas upon which the linguistic discourse analysis which follows is painted. Even when people share a language, share a culture and share schematic knowledge, a description of the context needs to preface linguistic analyses. When there is no fully developed shared language, when there is no one unifying shared culture, and no common schematic knowledge, then the need for a comprehensive contextual, ethnographic

description is even greater. The stories of the former lives of the residents and their flights from alleged persecution have been told as much as possible through their own words. Their daily trials and tribulations in their new *home* have been presented through data emerging from the ethnographic interviews that I undertook, but mostly as a result of day-to-day observation.

In studies of people speaking other languages there is a great deal of consideration paid to interferences from mother languages and cultures, and undoubtedly such interferences exist in the English of the residents of Dun Cluain. But perhaps more important is the impact their unusual pasts and present have on their communication style. To finalize, I present a summary of the main findings in this chapter in relation to participation in communicative situations and events:

1. Bonding or networking tendencies were patterned on nationality, geography, language and religion and perhaps physical similarity to a lesser extent.
2. There is evidence of incipient racism which impacts on communicative situations.
3. The contexts of the residents' past and present situations impacted on their ways of speaking (reticence, for example).
4. Other residents and tutors of the Education Centre were opposed to the attendance of Nigerians in language classes, basing this perspective on the alleged disruption of classrooms due to alleged increased noise level, different turn-taking strategies and lexicogrammatical and phonological deviations.
5. Linguistic classroom analysis cast in doubt claims of disruption levelled at the Nigerians.
6. People from different countries and different languages rarely communicated in the restaurant.
7. The residents rarely engaged in conversation with the staff.
8. Newly arrived residents made a bigger effort to talk, but the routine of everyday life gradually impacted and reduced the communicative effort they made.
9. Residents explained that the lack of talk and greeting was a result of the monotony of life and practices in the Centre.
10. Residents acted quite submissively when they visited the Education Office.
11. Residents who came back to the Centre to visit used a new, freer interactional style.
12. There is evidence of residents exploiting simple words and vocalizations to the maximum in order to communicate.

13. There is evidence of residents managing interactions (despite their minimal English) by exploiting the 'turn-taking' system itself in order to communicate.
14. Residents used language economically when they performed requests. Mumbling, gesturing and greetings and single words were all used to request at the reception desk and were understood by the receptionists through daily practice.
15. There is evidence of particular communicative styles developing as a result of daily social practice.

Chapter Five

Words

I go with my leg and I talk Eugene go back
Oleg Chevchenko

5. Words

5.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter I introduced the participants of this study, focusing on representative members and representative nationalities of the residential Centre to highlight not only the multiculturalism and multilingualism, but also the histories and recent flights for refuge, all which help to explain the heterogeneity of the speech community. A brief overview of the communicative situations and events in which the residents interacted on a daily basis was then provided.

In this chapter I present a quantitative view of the English the residents used for communication by analysing the 51,000 words exclusively pertaining to them (RCB).²⁴ Firstly (in Sections 6.2 and 5.3), I follow the parameters and the methodology employed by McCarthy (1999) when he considered the question of what constitutes a basic vocabulary for spoken communication. He based his study on a 3-million-word sample of the 5-million-word Cambridge and Nottingham Corpus of Discourse in English (CANCODE) spoken corpus transcribed from conversations of native speakers in settings such as shops, offices and private homes and looked at vocabulary size and coverage and what he considered the ‘nine broad categories of a basic spoken vocabulary’ (1999: 240). This allows for a comparison of the data in the corpus of the English spoken by the asylum seekers with ‘normal’ native-level English. I then switch the focus to points of morphology, considering (Section 5.4) the expression of past time by the residents, specifically their use of regular and irregular verbs and (Section 5.5) their use of the third person singular present tense morpheme. Clusters can be more frequent in spoken native conversation than individual words (Erman and Warren (2000). Thus it will also be beneficial to examine (in Section 5.6) the residents’ use of two, three, four and five words clusters. As the picture that will gradually emerge is that of a significantly reduced language system, the focus will then shift to the word frequency lists of the RCB (Section 5.7) and three sub-corpora (Section 5.8) of speech situations (negotiation, transaction and casual interaction) in search of further elucidation of the communication of the residents of the Centre.

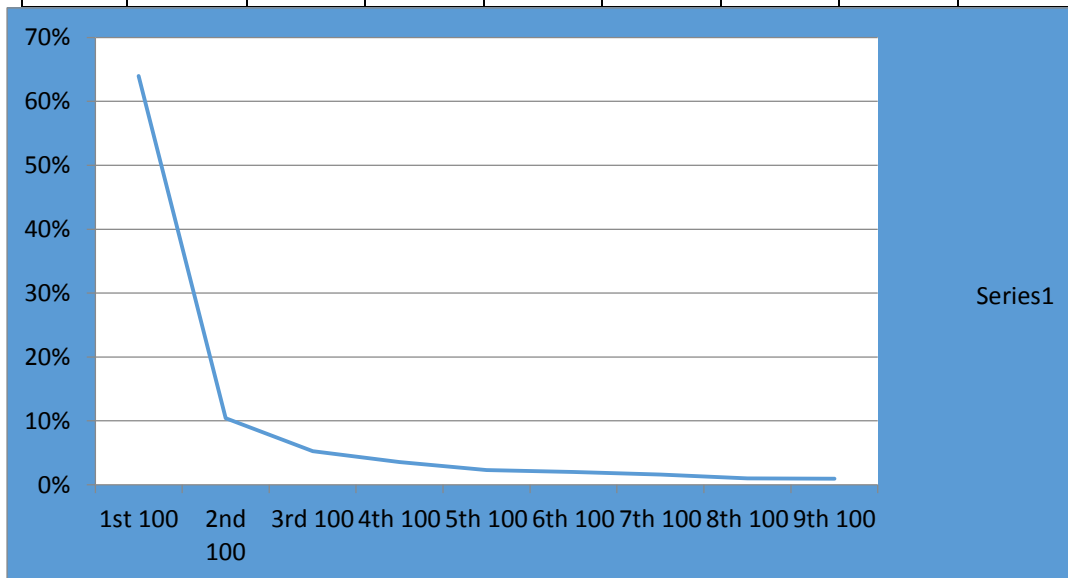
²⁴ See Section 3.5.1 for a description of Research Corpus B (RCB)

5.2 Vocabulary size and coverage

McCarthy (1999: 236) points out that vocabulary coverage can be gauged in computer-based frequency counts where ‘there is usually a point where frequency drops off rather sharply, from hard-working words which are of extremely high frequency to words that occur relatively infrequently ... The point at where such a drop is discernible could be seen as a boundary between the core and the rest.’ In his analysis of a three-million word sample of the five-million word CANCODE, he identified this cut-off after the first 2000 words, which accounted for 80% of all the words. I have carried out a similar analysis of the RCB and have found that (see Table 5.1 and accompanying graph below) the first 100 items account for 64% of the total corpus - and this is where a sudden drop appears. This, in the RCB, is where ‘the boundary between the core and the rest’, to use McCarthy’s words (1999: 236), appears and leads to the conclusion that the residents in Dun Cluain interact chiefly with one hundred lexical and non-lexical words (although it must be taken into consideration that the second hundred also accounts for 10.4% which points to these items also being important). As such, this constitutes the primary indication of the limitations of the language system.

Table 5.1 Word coverage and frequency bands for every hundred words in Research Corpus B

100	200	300	400	500	600	700	800	900
64%	10.4%	5.25%	3.56%	2.30%	2%	1.60%	1%	0.94%



5.3 Nine broad categories of basic spoken vocabulary

McCarthy (1999:240) identified in the first 2,000 words of the 3-million-word CANCODE corpus ‘fairly clear categories’ of language use which constituted ‘important components of basic communication.’ Here I will gauge the research corpus for the frequency of the components of these ‘nine broad categories of basic spoken vocabulary.’ They are as follows:

- **Modals** (*can, could, may; look, seem, sound; possible, certain; possibly definitely*)
- **Delexical verbs** (*do, make, take, get*)
- **Interactive words** (*just, basically, whatever, a bit, quite, literally*)
- **Discourse markers** (*I mean, right, well, so, you know*)
- **Basic nouns** (*person, people, problem, life, school, work, car, kids*)
- **General deictics** (*this, that, here, there*)
- **Basic adjectives** (*lovely, nice, terrible, horrible, good, bad*)
- **Basic adverbs** (*today, yesterday, tomorrow, usually, basically, literally, in the end*)
- **Basic verbs for actions and events** (*sit, give, say, leave, stop, help, feel, put, like*)

5.3.1 Modals

Modal items refer to degree of certainty (epistemic modality) or necessity (deontic modality) and include (in McCarthy’s categorization of ‘high frequency items’), the non-lexical modal verbs *can, could, may, might, must, should*, the lexical verbs, *look, seem* and *sound*, the adjectives *possible* and *certain* and the adverbs, *possibly, certainly* and *apparently*. Table 5.2 below shows the representation of these items in the corpus. *Can* is the only one used with any degree of frequency. It figures in the first 100 most frequent words in the corpus (38th) which represents 5,298 uses when normalized to one million, and is used in 23 of the 31 corpus texts. The reduced frequency of the other modal items may suggest that *can* substitutes for other items of specific epistemic modality, such as *could*, but this in fact is not the case, as demonstrated by examination of concordance lines. It is simply exploited to the maximum.

Table 5.2 Frequency count of modal items in RCB

RANK	Modal	Freq.	Per M	Range
38	Can	206	5298	23
222	Could	23	592	7
224	Must	23	592	8
247	Possible	20	515	8
295	Should	17	437	10
397	Probably	12	308	6
422	Might	11	300	4
479	May	9	231	5
932	Seem	4	103	3
1827	Certain	1	25	1
0	Look	0	0	0
0	Sound	0	0	0
0	Possibly	0	0	0
0	Certainly	0	0	0
0	Apparently	0	0	0

5.3.2 Delexical verbs

This category includes verbs such as *do*, *make*, *take* and *get* when they are not used in their lexical sense, but rather when used collocating with nouns, prepositional phrases and particles to make meaning. As Table 6.3 below shows, these delexical verbs are not frequent in the research corpus, indeed none of them are in the first one hundred words.

Table 5.3 Frequency count of delexical verbs in RCB

Rank	Verb	Freq.	Per M
150	Get	39	1005
220	Make	23	593
235	Take	21	540
379	Do	12	309

5.3.3 Interactive words

Interactive words, also known as ‘stance’ words (see O’Keeffe, McCarthy and Carter, 2007), express the speaker’s attitude in the communicative situation and are useful in softening face-

threatening utterances. Given the relative paucity of these items in the research corpus (see Table 5.4 below), the following assessment by McCarthy (1999:242) of the consequences of their absence becomes even more significant:

These are absolutely central to communicative well-being, to creating and maintaining appropriate social relations. They are therefore not a luxury, and it is hard to conceive of anything but the most sterile and banal survival-level communication occurring without their frequent use. The speaker who cannot use them is an impoverished speaker, from an interpersonal viewpoint.

Table 5.4 Frequency count of interactive words in RCB

Rank	Item	Freq.	Per M	Range
55	Just	121	3112	20
116	Really	52	1337	12
163	Thing (s)	35	900	10
706	Whatever	6	154	4
984	Anyway	3	77	3
0	Basically	0	0	0
0	A bit	0	0	0
0	Quite	0	0	0
0	Literally	0	0	0

5.3.4 Discourse markers

Carter and McCarthy (2006) refer to discourse markers under the broader term of ‘pragmatic markers’ (see Chapter Six for elaboration). McCarthy (1999:243) points out that discourse markers ‘organize the talk and monitor its progress’ and that the most frequent are *you know, I mean, right, well, good* and *anyway*. Their absence, he concludes, leaves conversational participants ‘disempowered and at the risk of becoming a second class participant.’

Table 5.5 Frequency count of discourse markers in RCB

RANK	Noun	Freq.	Per M.	Range
34	You know	235	6044	22
54	So	125	3215	21
280	I mean	11	282	7
439	Right	10	257	7
457	Well	9	231	6
409	I mean	11	282	7
984	Anyway	3	77	1

Only *you know* and *so* figure with any noteworthy frequency in the research corpus. *So* was used 239 times (6147 per million), 125 (rank 54) of these employed as a discourse marker. The marker *you know* was used 235 times (rank 34). However, on closer manual analysis it was established that its usage was limited mainly to one-to-one ethnographic interviews and to higher-level speakers of English.

Table 5.6 Idiosyncratic uses of *you know* in RCB

You know	
Miro (Croatian)	33%
Rihana (Somali)	13%
Moti (Nigerian)	10%
Meredith (Nigerian)	7%
Total	63%

Table 5.6 shows that 63% of the uses of *you know* correspond to five such speakers during these ethnographic interviews (Moti and Meredith both spoke Nigerian nativized English of the highest level). Miro, a Serb, had studied English at a university in Croatia with native-speaking English and American teachers, so it is likely that he picked up the use of *you know* as a discourse marker of shared knowledge (Schiffrin 1987 and O’Keeffe, McCarthy and Carter 2007) in that context. As can be seen below in representative concordance lines in Miro’s discourse, *you know* is used in this canonical sense - to mark shared knowledge - rather than as a hedging device as found in Irish English by Farr, Murphy and O’Keeffe (2004), Murphy 2010) and Clancy (2011), who found that *you know* (and *like*, *I think*, *just* and *actually*) was used more frequently as a hedge in Irish middle-class discourse than in the discourse of Travellers. That notwithstanding, Kallen’s (2005: 63) hypothesis for the use of *you know* in Irish English as the downgrading ‘silent partner’ of *I mean* may be of some relevance, despite the absence of *I mean* in the corpus (see 5.6.1); in lines 2 below there is a perceptible air of downtoning.

1. Albanians and Kosovans that’s practicably same language **you know** same language
2. I can communicate with all the Russians but a bit different I try **you know**
3. there is also no language like Albanian before it was Siberia **you know** like more independence
4. they had to fly they really was in war in Croatia and after they sent to Kosovo **you know**
5. Serbs from Croatia here **you know**
6. Albanians from Kosovo **you know** because people from Albania don’t mind but

Outside of its use in the one-to-one ethnographic interviews, *you know* only figures with any notable frequency in a multi-party discussion on the planning of a forthcoming integration day. Again, however, Novak, a Serbian male, accounts for 50% of its use in this interaction. The following concordance lines show that he also uses *you know* to mark shared knowledge.

- **You know** what I think what's more nice
- Now it would be nice Peter to have some list scores statistic **you know**
- I stayed here I I I <??> everybody **you know** we were friends
- there is no big difference between Croatian and Serbian **you know** some letter in the words
- everybody **you know** not except everybody it's the charge

As far as *so* is concerned, there are no traces of influence of its pragmatic use as a marker of politeness in Irish English. Even in the reception desk recordings and in the ethnographic notes from the canteen, there is no trace of what Binchy (2005) found looking at politeness markers in Irish service encounters - that *so* can be used to mitigate the force of a demand.

Here, it is used principally in its canonical structural role of orientation and result (Schiffrin 1987). The following are representative examples of this use in the corpus.

- here is a fight in the country **so** girls they don't really (Somali female)
- between Serbians and **so** they begin became refugees (Serbian male)
- yes **so** you extending your house (Serbian male)
- but I go **so** how many many times (Ukrainian male)
- I am a Muslim and fasting **so** we finish this week next (Somali male)
- and we understand we have the **so** but I understand see (Nigerian female)
- know how you do it but really **so** it's good Yeah she lose to (Ukrainian female)
- they get killed for not reason **so** they get fed because (Somali female)
- Oh **so** I can get a dog (Georgian male)
- come back to the hostel yeah **so** there is no time for (Nigerian female)

The limited use of the discourse markers *right* (30th most frequent item in CANCODE) and *well* (27th most frequent) is also remarkable. *Right* is used only 22 times in the corpus (234th in the word frequency list), and *well* 43 times (144th).

5.3.5 General deictics

Deictic items situate the speaker to the world in terms of time and space. Crystal (1997:107) comments that they ‘are terms that refer directly to the personal, temporal or locational characteristics of the situation within which an utterance takes place, whose meaning is thus relative to that situation’ (see also Clancy 2010 and O’Keeffe, Clancy and Adolphs 2011). Within McCarthy’s 2,000 core working words, the demonstratives, *this*, *that*, *those*, *these*, the locational adverbs *here*, *there*, and the temporal adverbs *now*, *then* and *ago* all appear frequently. He also refers to the ‘extremely frequent’ *back*, which occurs 3,722 times per million in CANCODE. Table 5.7 below shows that such items are frequent in the English of the residents, *this* and *that*, for example figure in the first fifty most frequent items, although they are not as highly ranked as the same items in CANCODE.

Table 5.7 Frequency count of deictics items in RCB

List	Deictic	Freq.	Per M	Range
32	This	242	6224	25
35	That	210	5401	25
62	Now	117	3009	22
64	Here	116	2984	20
106	Then	57	1466	17
131	There	47	1209	14
173	Ago	31	797	10
172	Back	32	797	10
254	Those	19	489	8
298	These	16	412	7

5.3.6 Basic nouns

McCarthy (1999) provides a long list of generic nouns which are frequent in basic core vocabulary. He gives *trip* as an example, as it can clearly substitute for more specific terms such as *spin*, *voyage*, *flight* and *drive*. Such generic vocabulary would obviously be of great service to the multilingual residents speaking English as a lingua franca. Table 5.8 below shows the entries for such basic nouns in the first one hundred words of the RCB. There are eight in total in the first one hundred entries. The high frequency of *language* and *country* and their position within the first one hundred words of the RCB may be explained by the topics of

conversation in the Centre, frequently revolving around issues of nationality, language and culture.

Table 5.8 Frequency count of basic nouns in RCB

List	Noun	Freq.	Per M.	Range
34	People	230	5967	21
59	Language	119	3065	17
73	Country	99	2550	19
75	Time	89	2289	23
76	Year(s)	88	2263	21
84	Problem	74	1906	17
96	School	65	1672	14
99	House	61	1571	11

Other basic nouns mentioned by McCarthy – *life*, *children*, *kids*, and *car* – could not be classified as frequent in the RCB. None appear in the first one hundred words, and only *life* appears in the second hundred (101-200), although its use is limited to only nine of the thirty one texts, and in fact the same speaker accounts for more than 50% of its usage.

Table 5.9 Frequency count of other basic nouns in RCB

List	Noun	Freq.	Per M.	Range
189	Life	28	720	9
302	Children	16	412	8
334	Car	14	360	6
661	Kids	6	154	4

5.3.7 Basic adjectives

McCarthy (1999) identifies the adjectives *lovely*, *nice*, *good*, *bad*, *horrible*, *terrible*, and *different*, which ‘communicate positive and negative evaluations of people, situations, events and things,’ as occurring in a frequent manner, within the first 2,000 core words of vocabulary. Table 5.10 shows that only *good* and *different* occur within the first one hundred words of the research corpus frequency list. The frequency of *good* is more than double that of the same

word in the BNC, which suggests that the residents exploit to the maximum the adjective with which they are most familiar.

Table 5.10 Frequency count of basic adjectives in RCB

List	Adjective	Freq.	Per M	Range
48	Good	144	3711	22
85	Different	73	2527	14
151	Bad	38	979	11
218	Nice	24	619	14
1,727	Awful	1	26	1
2,380	Lovely	1	26	1
0	Terrible	0	0	0

5.3.8 Basic adverbs

McCarthy (1999) lists as ‘extremely frequent’ adverbs, those relative to time - *today, yesterday, tomorrow, eventually, finally*, to frequency - *usually, normally, generally*, manner - *suddenly, fast, totally, especially*, to stance – *basically, hopefully, personally* and *literally*, and prepositional phrase adverbials – *in the end* and *at the moment*. The frequency of these adverbs, represented in Table 5.11 below, is extremely low. Even the most frequent adverb, *tomorrow*, is only used in ten of the thirty one texts.

Table 5.11 Frequency count of basic adverbs in RCB

RANK	Adverb	Freq.	Per M	Range
282	Tomorrow	18	464	10
282	Especially	18	464	8
403	Today	12	309	7
746	Fast	5	128	4
959	Yesterday	4	103	3
959	Usually	4	103	2
1113	Normally	3	0	2
N/A	Basically	0	0	0
N/A	Hopefully	0	0	0
N/A	Personally	0	0	0
N/A	Literally	0	0	0
N/A	at the moment	0	0	0
N/A	in the end	0	0	0
N/A	Eventually	0	0	0
N/A	Finally	0	0	0
N/A	Generally	0	0	0

5.3.9 Basic verbs for actions and events

McCarthy (1999) lists the verbs *sit, give, say, leave, stop, help, feel, put, listen, explain, love, eat, and enjoy* as forming part of the basic vocabulary for expressing everyday activity. Their lemmatized (in order to capture tense and aspect use) frequency is shown in Table 6.12 below. Only *say* and *like* figure in the first one hundred words. That notwithstanding, *say* is used only in 18 of the 31 texts and *like* in 19.

Table 5.12 Frequency count of everyday lexical verbs in RCB

RANK	Verb	Freq.	Per M	Range
63	Say	116	2983	18
87	Like	71	1826	19
178	Eat	30	771	9
216	Help	24	617	11
244	Listen	21	540	11
307	Feel	16	412	6
312	Put	16	412	8
375	Sit	13	334	7
436	Stop	11	282	4
445	Leave	10	257	5
670	Love	6	153	4

Two other sets of lexical verbs do figure frequently - verbs of communication (Table 5.13), and verbs of mental and emotional states (Table 5.15). Of the communication verbs *talk* (lemmatized) is 44th in the list of most frequent words, and far exceeds frequency rates in larger corpora (see Table 5.14). *Speak* follows a similar pattern. It is also noteworthy that the speaking/talking verbs are more frequent than the reporting verbs, *say* and *tell* - the reverse of the normal large-corpus pattern. It is reasonable to suspect that the residents exploit the verbs *talk* and *speak* for both the reference to an act of communication and as reporting verbs. However, a manual search of concordance lines did not uncover any example of *speak* being used as a reporting verb and only uncovered the following two examples of *talk* employed in this way.

‘I go with my leg and I **talk** Eugene go back.’ (Oleg Chevchenko, Ukrainian male)

Standard English: *I’ll walk and tell Eugene I am going back.*

‘I **talk** okay where are you?’ (Boris Krasnov, Georgian male)

Standard English: *I asked him where he was/I asked him: ‘Where are you?’*

These utterances also serve as examples of the maximum simplification of English. The staff understood such language and rarely were there problems of communication – except in cases where people had only a few words of English as in the case of Lilyana reported in Chapter Five.

Table 5.13 Verbs of communication and reporting in RCB

List	Verb	Freq.	Per M	Range
44	Talk	171	4398	18
49	Speak	133	3420	24
63	Say	116	2983	18
99	Tell	61	1568	16

Table 5.14 Verbs of communication and reporting in RCB compared

	RC Per M	BNC Per M
Talk	4398	865
Speak	3420	293
Say	2983	6360
Tell	1568	1222

As far as the verbs of mental and emotional states are concerned (Table 5.15), it must be pointed out that a large proportion of the usage of *know* and *think* is pragmatic or discursal. For example, of the 480 occurrences of *know*, 230 of these form part the discourse marker, *you know*, 73 as the discourse marker *I don’t know*, and 44 as the discourse marker *I know*. The three other lexical verbs, *see*, *understand* and *want*, also in the list of the first 100 most frequent words, are used primarily in transactional and negotiative interactions – the verb *want*, for example, is used for everyday requesting at the reception desk and as part of a more complicated requestive process in the staff offices.

Table 5.15 Verbs of mental states in RCB

Rank	Verb	Freq.	Range
11	Know	480	28
48	Think	144	25
49	Understand	133	22
66	Want	111	18
75	See	93	22

Having looked at the frequency of the verbs of ‘everyday activity’ listed by McCarthy (1999), the verbs of communication and reporting and the verbs of mental and emotional states, the paucity of the former in the RCB may be an indication that the residents simply did not refer to those more concrete activities in their daily communicative interaction, rather than being an indication that they did not know verbs as basic as *sit* and *stop*.

The difference in frequency in the three classes of verbs suggests a communicative economization. That is, the residents, for example, used *speak* and *talk* generically; they used *know*, *think* and *understand* strategically, and they used *want* for requesting daily supplies, finance and funding.

5.3.10 Summary of section on the nine broad categories of basic spoken conversation

The use of the components of the nine broad categories of basic spoken conversation is extremely limited in the research corpus. Only deictic items follow frequency patterns of larger corpora such as CANCODE: the demonstratives *this*, *that*, *here* and *now* figure in the first one hundred most frequent items.

Modal items in general are infrequent: there are no occurrences, for example, of the adverbs *possibly*, *certainly* and *apparently*, and the verbs *look*, *seem* and *sound* used for modality, are also absent. However, the form *can* is very frequent (38th) and much more so than in other larger corpora. This suggests that the residents may use *can* as a hyper-exploited generic expression of modality. Similarly, whilst the adjectives listed by McCarthy (1999) are generally infrequent in the research corpus, and the residents seem to avoid adjectives in general, one of them, *good*, almost doubles its per million value in larger corpora, suggesting, again, that it is hyper-exploited for generic use. No basic adverb figures in the first 250 most

frequent items, no delexical verb figures in the first 100 words, and only one interactive word, *just*, figures in the first 100. The frequency of discourse markers is also low, especially that of *right* and *well*, and although *you know* and *so* are frequent, the use of the former is largely idiosyncratic and limited to ethnographic interviews. Eight basic nouns do figure in the first 100 words, the most frequent of them, *people* and *language* used chiefly in discussions on language and culture which were common in the Centre. The words *person*, *life*, *noise*, *situation*, *sort*, *trouble*, *family*, *kids*, *room*, *car*, *school*, *door*, *water*, *TV*, and *ticket*, however, do not figure in the first one hundred. While the use of verbs of ‘everyday activity’ is limited, other verbs, of communication and reporting, and of mental and emotional states are very frequent and figure on the list of the hundred most frequent items, again suggesting the existence of strategies of substitution, economization and limitation of reference to contextual or community concerns.

5.4 The use of regular and irregular verb forms for past simple and participle

Here, rather than undertaking a grammar-oriented examination of reference to past time, which is beyond the scope of the present study, I will focus on the frequency of use of irregular and regular verbal forms used for the past simple and participle.

5.4.1 Irregular verbs

In Table 5.16 below, which shows the frequencies of irregular verbs in the past simple and past participle, it can be seen that only *was* figures in the first one hundred most frequent words, while *said* (no participle forms in the corpus) and *got* figure in the second hundred. However, only *was* is used across a wide range of texts (23 of the 31), demonstrating the limited use of all the other verbs listed. Furthermore, the usage of participle forms is extremely limited: *been* is the first in the list with only 16 occurrences.

Table 5.16 Irregular verbs in the past simple and past participle form

List	Verb	Frequency	Range	Per M
31	Was	256	23	6593
160	Did	36	17	925
187	Said	29	12	747
197	Got	27	10	695
203	Were	26	11	670
205	Came	25	11	644
222	Could	23	7	592
265	Told	19	9	489
299	Been	16	9	405
343	Had	14	9	361
420	Left	11	7	283
437	Thought	11	7	283
518	Broken	8	6	205
575	Chose	7	2	180
575	Went	7	2	180
638	Broke	6	2	155
639	Brought	6	2	155
689	Saw	6	5	155
753	Gone	5	4	128
890	Made	4	4	103
934	Sent	4	3	103
952	Took	4	3	103
1,051	Gave	3	2	77
1,051	Cut	3	3	77
1,051	Known	3	3	77
1,233	Done	2	1	52
1,233	Blew	2	1	52
1,357	Forgot	2	2	52
1,414	Knew	2	2	52
1,782	Bought	1	1	26
1,793	Built	1	1	26
1,793	Seen	1	1	26
1,793	Given	1	1	26
1,793	Taken	1	1	16
1,999	Drove	1	1	26
2,195	Held	1	1	26
2,541	Paid	1	1	26
2,665	Ran	1	1	26
2,984	Won	1	1	26

5.4.2 Regular verbs

There are only thirty one regular verbs used to express past time in the RCB. Frequencies for these are listed in Table 5.17 below. There is no occurrence of any verb in its –ed form in the first two hundred and fifty words of the corpus. This, together with the fact that none of these verbs figure in more than 33% of the 31 texts (communicative events recorded) demonstrates

that use of the –ed form is extremely limited and not part of the everyday discourse of the residents. Comparison with other –ed verbs of high frequency in the BNC further elucidates the limitation in the usage of the form. The form *wanted*, for example, is the most frequent –ed regular verb in the BNC corpus, figuring 314 times per million words. It is used six times (154 per million) in the RCB in only four of the texts. *Started* is next on the BNC list with 261 occurrences per million words. It is used four times (102 per million) and in only four texts in the RCB.

Table 5.17 –ed ending of regular verbs in RCB

List	Verb – ed	Frequency	Range	Per M
258	Happened	19	5	489
283	Tried	18	8	463
372	Received	13	1	335
540	Lived	8	7	206
632	Allowed	6	4	154
699	Studied	6	4	154
704	Wanted	6	4	154
765	Killed	5	4	129
828	Asked	4	4	103
837	Called	4	4	103
884	Learned	4	4	103
900	Moved	4	2	103
945	Started	4	4	103
1,000	Changed	3	2	77
1,005	Closed	3	2	77
1,014	Counted	3	1	77
1,158	Stayed	3	3	77
1,167	Talked	3	2	77
1,193	Worked	3	2	77
1,316	Destroyed	2	2	51
1,356	Forced	2	2	51
1,388	Helped	2	1	51
1,407	Joined	2	1	51
1,439	Managed	2	2	51
1,466	Obliged	2	2	51
1,500	Prepared	2	2	51
1,540	Saved	2	1	51
1,600	Tortured	2	1	51
1,754	Believed	1	1	26
1,766	Blackmailed	1	1	26

5.4.3 Non-standard forms

It has been established then that only *was* follows native-speaker patterns as far as irregular verbs are concerned, while the –ed morpheme is massively underused. Manual searches of concordance lines shows a high degree of simplification (the use of the base form). The standard past simple form of *say* (*said*) figures 29 times in the corpus (see Table 5.16 above), while the non-standard form (the base form *say*) is used 13 times (Table 5.18 below), which equates to a 31% non-standard usage. There are 19 uses of standard *told* (see Table 5.17 above) in the corpus and 7 uses of non-standard *tell* for *told* (Table 5.19 below), which equates to 27% non-standard usage. The standard form of *come* (*came*) is used 25 times and the non-standard form (the base form *come*) is used 20 times (44%). Given this non-standard use and the paucity of adverbs of temporality in the corpus, the possibility of miscommunication needed to be considered. Concordance lines containing non-standard forms of the irregular verbs, *say*, *tell*, *come* and the regular verb *talk* were examined, but no clear incidences of miscommunication were found.

Table 5.18 Non-standard *say* for *said*

1	Hello my father say I have to come here	Serbian, female
2	um... where do come from and I say Africa I thought it was o	Somali, female
3	or what family or whatever she say the weather the weather w	Somali, Male
4	y surname some people speak He say my language and my country	Nigeria, Female
5	you from Social good pay they say no they say Social for pa	New Guinea, female
6	cial good pay they say no they say social for pay for the month	New Guinea, female
7	oh neighbour no I sit down and say er er Yep don't say anything	Georgian, male
8	t down and say er er Yep don't say anything because it's er	Georgian, male
9	cations is all about is like I say with I often in I interested	Nigerian, female
10	As I say everything is okay because	Serbian, male
11	responsible er for this... he say er he er live oneself no	Georgian, male
12	Hold the key they say they have lost the key the	Serbian, male
13	they try Um oh so noisy as I say of course It's like too m	Ukrainian, make

Table 5.19 Non standard ‘tell’ for *told*.

1	now and go is university . and tell me er mum you ask teache	Serbian female
2	teen euro . and er my daughter tell me I ask you : Zero four	Serbian female
3	ica : I don't know my husband tell me ... Janko : same Radi	Serbian female
4	ng in the city she because she tell me it is not expensive a	Ukrainian female
5	if he ask me why you here who tell you to come here yeah ye	Somali female
6	them you are in the hostel. I tell them but they can't do n	Guinean female
7	oz me I was born a Muslim they tell me that I'm Muslim But I	Somali male

Larger stretches of discourse (containing these non-standard forms) were then examined in order to determine how miscommunication was averted and how past time was indicated. The following sample of the use of *say* for *said* and *tell* for *told* in the context of a larger stretch of discourse is taken from an hour-long conversation between a sociology student (Miriam) and four Somalian women. It provides a perfect example of how communication was not negatively impacted by the use of simplified forms. While the topic of the conversation revolves around how the Somalian women are treated by Irish people in the context of the present, Rihana provides examples of this treatment by referring to a past event. The transformation from present to past is made by using the form ‘was’ (line 2) and its continued use through lines 3, 5 and 9. The form ‘asked’ (line 4) then provides the introduction to the specifics of the poor treatment. Then the ‘deviant’ or sub-standard forms, ‘say’ for *said* (line 11) and ‘tell’ for *told* (line 12) are used. While it is interesting that only the reporting verbs are used ‘incorrectly’ (and perhaps worthy of further study), the principal point here is the absence of any negative impact caused by the substandard forms. Rihana contextualizes the ‘pastness’ by framing her discourse with other standard past forms (*was* particularly) and, of course, the context of the conversation itself contributes to the understanding.

Sample 5.4.1: ‘say’ for *said*

- 1 **Rihana:** Sometimes young people yeah ask me and sometimes when they are
2. → going to shopping I come from shop and there **was** an old man in the
3. → shop and I don’t know he **was** scribbling or something I don’t know
4. → and he **asked** me why you here and who are you and where you
5. → come from um and I **was** like well .. I don’t know what to say like
6. **Miriam:** Yeah yeah
7. **Rihana:** I’m here because I’m here

8. **Miriam:** You're here because you're here
9. **Rihana:** → <laughs> Yeah he **was** saying like
10. **Miriam:** You could ask him why was he here
11. **Rihana:** → <Laughs> Um... where do come from **and I say Africa I thought it**
12. → **was** okay question if he ask me why you here who **tell** you to come
13. here
14. **Miriam:** Was he Irish?
15. **Rihana:** Yeah

The 20 uses (44 %) of the base form *come* used in substitution for *came* figure in Table 5.20 below. Again there is no trace of miscommunication in the concordance lines.

Table 5.20 Non-standard *come* with past meaning

1	n they are going to shopping I come from shop and there was	Somalian F
2	ight and one night my soldiers come and take me if that I do	Somalian F
3	o Nobody did If they went they come here they just they didn	Somalian M
4	t that was like trouble people come to you and and they will	Somalian F
5	a now Euzkadi Euzkadi bueno yo come Irlando yo come on ship	Moroccan M
6	zkadi bueno yo come Irlando yo come on ship con ship ya fish	Moroccan M
7	eah this woman yeah this woman come here eh Fatima from Guinea	New Guinea F
8	ring take sorry one woman when come in that country er what	Georgian M
9	food and cover under my head I come to port to seaport two v	Georgian M
10	tional Transport Federation to come on our on board of our v	Georgian M
11	the first time when they just come like the only French	Nigerian F
12	dam Salam, I am from Morocco I come here about seven of us h	Moroccan M
13	nd the year seven hundred they come from Saudi Arabia and his	Moroccan M
14	going far Yes Me I was when I come Ireland I was happy in a	Somalian M
15	d ma marry a protestant Er she come to our country eighteen	Somalian M
16	ask more people who originally come from Somalia the only la	Somalian M
17	ago yeah The real Somalis they come first persons they come	Somalian M
18	one Two thousand two When they come and they go on the inter	Somalian M
19	s they come first persons they come two thousand Two thousand	Somalian M
20	learn something then when they come and stay two two three w	Somalian M

The following extract contains the use of 'come' for *came* in the context of a larger stretch of discourse. The native speaker here provides the contextualization by using the form 'wanted' (line 2) referring to Mubaarak's flight from his country. Mubaarak's answer is replete with

other verbs which refer to the past in non-standard format: ‘I go’ for *I went* (line 6); ‘give’ for *gave* (line 7); ‘have’ for *had* (line 8); ‘marry’ for *married* (line 10). There is also an example of the ellipsis of a verb (line 6 - ‘I more books’) possibly due to the speaker’s doubt as to the past form. Eventually, Mubaarak provides some contextual framing by using the form ‘was’ (line 8) and the attempted reference to the year (line 12), corrected to ‘ninety one’ (line 14). The point again is that there is no miscommunication: it is clear that Mubaarak is referring to the past.

Sample 5.4.2: ‘come’ for *came*

1. **Mubaarak:** Even I don’t have any ex-knowledge about Ireland
2. **Kieran:** → You **wanted** to go anywhere was it?
3. **Mubaarak:** Yeah yeah anywhere
4. **Kieran:** That the same for you <addressing Rihanna>
5. **Rihana:** Um er
6. **Mubaarak:** →And when you know I go even when I go later you know I more books even
7. I <syllables> the first country who give us help when we are
8. → even we are serious the time when drought have our country **was** Ireland
9. **Kieran:** um
10. **Mubaarak:** I think now that the President of Ireland ma **marry** a protestant
11. **Kieran:** Yes
12. **Mubaarak:** →Er she come to our country eighteen ninety I think
13. **Kieran:** Nineteen ninety
14. **Mubaarak:** Yeah **ninety one ninety one** I think

The regular verb *talk* (44th) figures with noteworthy frequency in the corpus as remarked on previously in Section 5.39. The standard past form *talked* is only used 3 times in the corpus, while the non-standard form (the infinitive *talk*) is used 4 times. Again simplification does not cause any communication problems.

Table 5.21 Non-standard *talk* with past meaning

1	oh I Just a few days ago I talk to my friend you know he	Serbian M
2	Homer you know Greek poetry he talk about Abkhazia and erc	Georgian M
3	trade union leader because I talk okay where are you but I	Georgian M
4	of English only this but I talk with security I talk wit	Georgian M

Sample 5.4.3 contains the use of non-standard ‘talk’ (line 4) for the standard *talked*. The sample comes from a meeting of the residents to discuss a coming event, an integration day. This interaction (see Chapter Eight for elaboration) is significant for the collaboration of the residents with each other, demonstrated here by the repeated use of the ‘um’ (lines 2 and 8) by Holly, a Nigerian female. The residents talk about their countries, their languages and their histories. The context of the past is therefore provided by the discussion itself. Boris (a Georgian male) also uses the word ‘history’ (line 1) and, as in previous samples, ‘was’ (line 3) provides further contextualization. He then uses the sub-standard forms ‘talk’ (line 4) and ‘write’ (line 5) without there being any sense of miscommunication.

Extract 5.4.3

1. **Boris:** → er not one thousand years’ ser **history** and er like <syll> England
2. **Holly:** → Um
3. **Boris:** or like <syllables> European country like Greek look Abkhazia **was** er
4. → Homer you know Greek poetry **he talk about Abkhazia** and er <syll> scheme
5. → he **write** a poem it’s about Abkhazia ers Greek **came** in Abkhazia long long
6. way and only in nineteen twenty er fifth er Stalin put Abkhazia in South
7. Georgia like <syllables> in public
8. **Holly:** → Um

It has been established then that there is a limited use of regular (with the morpheme–ed) and irregular verb in past forms in the corpus. There is a high percentage of simplification, that is the use of infinitive forms in substitution of standard forms, but no clear evidence of miscommunication was found, despite the compounding absence of adverbs of temporality. The representative samples show that reference to past time was made clear through the context

of the topic of the interaction, contextualization using other past forms, especially *was*, and by the framing of questions by native speakers.

5.5 The third person singular present tense morpheme -s

Analysis of the use of the third person singular present tense morpheme provides another opportunity to gauge the residents' application of morphological changes. In English, regular verbs only change once morphologically in the conjugation of the present tense— that is the addition the third person singular present tense morpheme. Such paucity of inflexion constitutes a significant contrast between English and other languages - such as Spanish which has 6 inflectional changes in the present simple. Only the third person singular then of the present simple in English receives morphological marking – *it/she/he looks/catches*. This, according to Seidlhofer (2001b: 149) is one of 'the most typically English' features. However, dropping the third person present tense –s or –es is not viewed by exponents of English as a *Lingua Franca*, such as Seidlhofer (2004: 220; 2005: 30) as an 'obstacle to communicative success.' Breiteneder (2005:5), for example, calls the feature 'communicatively redundant' and claims that 'it is not essential for mutual understanding.'

Before having analyzed the RCB for the use of the third person singular morpheme of the present tense, I had presumed it was a feature that was not omitted, because it simply had not attracted my attention. The fact, however, is that there are relatively few occurrences of regular verbs in the third person standard forms (with the -s morpheme attached). As can be seen in Table 5.22 below, there are none in the first five hundred words, and the first one on the list, 'means' (ranked the 543rd most frequent word in the corpus), is used in only five of the 31 texts.

Table 5.22 The third person singular present tense morpheme

Rank	Verbs+s	Frq.	Per M	Range
543	Means	8	206	5
585	Goes	7	180	4
611	Says	7	180	5
698	Speaks	6	154	3
881	Knows	4	103	3
963	Works	4	103	2
1,283	Comes	2	51	2
1,592	Tells	2	51	2
1,660	Affects	1	26	1
1,938	Decides	1	26	1
1,981	Divides	1	26	1
2,014	Educates	1	26	1
2,237	Impacts	1	26	1
2,239	Imparts	1	26	1
2,421	Meets	1	26	1
2,599	Plays	1	26	1
2,651	Puts	1	26	1

Table 5.23 below shows uses for *he* with non-standard present simple third person singular forms. There are 22 non-standard forms (the base form with the –s morpheme). As can be seen in the concordance lines, there is only one accompanying time adverb (‘sometimes’ – row 7). Table 5.24 shows uses for *she* with the non-standard form. There are 11 non-standard forms. There are and two adverbs in the concordance lines of *she* (‘sometimes’ in row 2, and *every morning* in row 11) which refer to routine activities – one of the functions of the expression of the present simple.

Table 5.23 Third person *he* + non-standard form

N	Line	Nationality
1	If he ask me why you here	Somali F
2	he say er he er live oneself	Georgian M
3	he er play on this er small what you call in English small	Georgian M
4	he fabricate	Georgian M
5	ers he forbid	Georgian M
6	I go there sometimes he give me books and I talk with him	Moroccan M
7	okay he have any background conditions inside	Russian M
8	he have possibility to open mouth	Russian M
9	No ... he have to divorce you	Somali F
10	he have er a main you know ob objective	Somali M
11	he have to work for her	Somali F
12	Yeah he look like me	Ukrainian F
13	He never become <clicks mouth> like that you know	Russian F
14	he sit down beside internet cafe	Georgian M
15	yeah yeah he speak for me small things	Moroccan M
16	And he speak more better than er Abdusalleem	Ukrainian M
17	he speak French	Nigerian F
18	he speak speaks English	Serbian F
19	he take ah the the document Ireland	Somali M
20	He talk he listen	Georgian M
21	he try	Georgian M
22	he try	Georgian M

Table 5.24 Third person *she* + non-standard form

N	Line	Nationality
1	because she tell me it is	Russian M
2	t you lose Yeah but she's okay she eat like sometimes like e	Ukrainian F
3	like two weeks after that now she eat like some vegetables	Ukrainian F
4	know she doesn't eat same same she eat some but first two we	Ukrainian F
5	't eat like bread Yeah yeah she goes to somewhere I don't	Russian F
6	Yeah if I if she integrate	Somalian M
7	If if she integrate it	Somalian M
8	if I something need she make me and I never did	Russian F
9	have to pay she's saying that she pays her school fees I do	Nigerian F
10	She say the weather the weather	Somalian F
11	Yeah yeah Yeah and she walk every morning	Russian F

Closer analysis of a longer stretch of discourse containing the use of non-standard forms shows that communication was not impacted negatively. Sample 5.5.1 below is taken from the

20. **Miriam:** Yeah yeah you said earlier if you are not married there is shame
21. **Rihana:** Yeah there is shame

It has been established then that that there are relatively few occurrences of verbs in the third person standard singular forms (with the morpheme *-s* or *-es* attached). Evidence has been found also of the use of non-standard base forms without the morpheme. No communicative problems were encountered in these cases and in the one stretch of longer representative discourse which I quoted, the speaker, having used the form with the *-s* morpheme, immediately reverted back to the sub-standard form on embarking on a longer utterance. These results, of course, have to be taken in the context of general reduced third-person reference in the corpus. For example, the subject pronoun *he* is ranked 44th in the frequency list with 4,250 uses per million (as opposed to rank 32nd and 6135 uses per million in CANCODE). *She* is ranked 82nd with 2,086 uses per million, compared to its ranking at 50th in the CANCODE with 4,123 uses. Such a reduction in the use of third person reference also constitutes simplification.

5.6 Chunks

The analysis of clusters or chunks of words strung together to create unitary meaning provides another opportunity to test the residents' adherence to the basic spoken English patterns of native speakers. Chunks, according to O'Keeffe, McCarthy and Carter (2007:46), are 'regularly occurring strings of two or more words which seem to possess unitary meanings or function,' and can be more frequent than individual words in the core vocabulary (see also Erman and Warren 2000). In their examination of chunks, O'Keeffe, McCarthy and Carter (op.cit) excluded repetitions such as *no, no, no* or non-lexical vocalizations such as *er er* because 'The lists were used ... firstly in terms of identifying integrated, meaningful units...' I have taken a different approach here, given the high frequency of items such as *yeah* in the discourse of the residents, and the importance of these to their meaning-making (as will be demonstrated in later chapters). Therefore, all such items have been included when they appear in chunks.

5.6.1 Two-word chunks

The two-word chunk *you know* is the most frequent in the corpus. It is also the most frequent two word chunk in CANCODE where it occurs 28,013 times in the five million word CANCODE spoken corpus. This equates to 5,600 occurrences per million, which means that it is around the 34th most frequent vocabulary item. In the RCB it is used 230 times across 22 texts, which places it 34th on the list of most frequent items in the RCB (mimicking its behaviour in the CANCODE corpus). However, similarity between the CANCODE corpus and the RCB, as far as two-word clusters are concerned, ends there, as can be seen in Table 5.25 below. Only six other items of the top twenty two-word chunks of the CANCODE corpus figure on the RCB – *I don't*, *don't know*, *I think*, *in the*, *if you* and *and I*. Notably, the second most frequent chunk in CANCODE, *I mean* and the frequent hedge *sort of*, do not appear in the list of the first twenty most frequent chunks in the RCB (In fact, *I mean* only occurs eleven times across seven texts, which equates to a per million value of 282, and *sort of* does not occur at all. All twenty two-word chunks of the RCB occur within the core one hundred-word frequency, signalling that their use, is if not vital, ubiquitous or functional for the residents - although as mentioned previously, some of the items (in particular *you know*) occur idiosyncratically.

5.6.2 Three-word chunks

The ten most frequent three word chunks appear in Table 5.26 below. Only one of the items from the CANCODE list appears in the RCB - *I don't know*, and this is also the only three word item whose frequency would place it within the top one hundred words of the frequency list (68th). Some of the other items in the RCB list are more frequent per million than they are on the CANCODE list; however, they are not used across a sufficient range of texts to be considered of any importance. It is noteworthy, nevertheless, that *yeah* (not considered by O'Keeffe, Carter and McCarthy 2007) occurs both as part of item *yeah yeah yeah* and *yeah I know*, signalling again the importance of this item in the discourse of the residents.

Table 5.25 Two-word chunks in the RCB

		Freq.	Range	List	Per M		CANCODE
1	you know	230	22	34	5928	1	You know
2	I don't	199	27	39	5129	2	I mean
3	er er	129	11	51	3325	3	I think
4	don't know	119	23	62	3067	4	In the
5	yeah yeah	117	18	63	3015	5	It was
6	no no	113	16	66	2912	6	I don't
7	they are	87	16	78	2242	7	Of the
8	I was	84	20	80	2165	8	And I
9	I think	83	21	81	2139	9	Sort of
10	in the	83	19	81	2139	10	Do you
11	if you	81	15	82	2088	11	I was
12	yeah I	80	21	83	2062	12	On the
13	have to	70	14	89	1804	13	And then
14	an er	66	10	93	1701	14	To be
15	I know	64	20	96	1649	15	If you
16	I have	63	20	97	1624	16	Don't know
17	There is	63	18	97	1624	17	To the
18	Want to	63	15	97	1624	18	At the
19	You have	63	16	97	1624	19	Have to
20	And I	62	19	98	1598	20	You can

Table 5.26 Three word chunks

	Freq.	Range	List	Per M.	CANCODE
I don't know	106	22	68	2726	I don't know
no no no	39	12	150	1003	A lot of
I want to	28	10	188	720	I mean I
You have to	27	7	195	694	I don't think
Yeah yeah yeah	22	9	229	565	Do you think
it is not	21	7	235	540	Do you want
Yeah I know	18	9	267	462	One of the
er s er	17	1	285	437	you have to
a little bit	16	10	298	411	It was a
there is no	16	9	298	411	You know I

5.6.3 Four-and five-word chunks

Four-word and five-word chunks in the RCB (see Tables 5.27 and 5.28 below) cannot be considered to be of great note. Although their frequency per million words is superior in general

to four and five word chunks on the CANCODE list, they are used across very few (the highest is six) of the 31 RCB texts, and none of them is within the first three hundred most frequent items used in the corpus.

Table 5.27 Four word chunks

	Frequency	Range	Per M	List	CANCODE
thank you very much	14	5	360	333 rd	You know what I
no no no no	13	6	334	357 th	Know what I mean
I would like to	10	6	257	439 th	I don't know what
At the present time	8	3	204	509 th	The end of the
I don't know what	8	6	204	509 th	At the end of
I used to live	8	2	204	509 th	Do you want to
know I don't know	8	5	204	509 th	A bit of a
I don't know I	7	5	180	569 th	Do you know what
I know I know	6	1	144	629 th	I don't know if
I want to be	6	4	144	629 th	I think it was

Table 5.28 Five word chunks

	Freq.	Range	Per M	List	CANCODE
don't know I don't know	5	3	128	708 th	You know what I mean
I don't know I don't	5	3	128	708 th	At the end of the
how old is the house	4	1	102	819 th	Do you know what I
and I talk with him	3	2	77	968 th	The end of the day
don't like it I want	3	1	77	968 th	Do you want me to

The analysis of the presence of chunks in the RCB accords with the analyses of the 'nine broad categories of spoken English', and with the analysis of reference to past and present time. The English that the residents of the Centre used is an extremely reduced language repertoire. The question that arises then is: how did the residents communicate with the English-speaking staff on a daily basis with such a reduced system at their disposal, especially in the more complicated communicative situations such as those of requesting finance and funding? We have seen that strategies of maximum exploitation of familiar words, simplification and economization play a part, but reference to the word frequency list of the complete RCB, the word frequency list of a specific negotiating interaction which took place in the staff offices, and the vocabulary usage of the 'negotiators' – residents who had to attend for meetings in staff offices to requesting finance and funding – will provide further clues.

5.7 RCB Word Frequency

Table 5.29 below shows the 50 most frequent items in the RCB. The list is difficult to assess *prima facie*, although certain items stand out immediately, such as the high frequency of *yeah* and *er*. There are many distinguishing features between this corpus and other larger corpora. This is seen clearly when the RCB and the CANCODE lists are placed side by side (Table 5.30), and keywords are discovered. Keywords are those whose frequency is unusually high when two corpora are compared – usually a small corpus like the RCB with a large corpus like CANCODE or the BNC. Keywords can be calculated using chi square tests or log-likelihood tests – the keyness here between different sub-corpora in the RCB has been established below through log-likelihood in the Wordsmith Tools software programme (Scott 2008).

Table 5.29 The 50 most frequent words in the RCB

Rk	Word	Freq.	Per M	Rg		Rk	Word	Freq.	Per M	Rg
1	I	1,494	38500	31		26	Are	308	7900	23
2	Yeah	1,205	31100	30		27	Because	278	7200	26
3	Er	1,188	30600	25		28	One	261	6700	24
4	You	1,093	28200	30		29	My	258	6600	26
5	And	866	22300	31		30	Okay	256	6600	25
6	To	845	21800	29		31	Was	254	6500	23
7	The	808	20800	29		32	This	241	6200	25
8	No	727	18700	29		33	So	240	6200	25
9	Is	651	16800	30		34	People	230	5900	21
10	In	636	16400	29		35	From	209	5400	23
11	They	481	12400	27		36	What	207	5300	26
12	Know	474	12200	28		37	Me	205	5300	24
13	Yes	408	10500	29		38	Can	203	5200	23
14	But	405	10400	27		39	Very	202	5200	26
15	A	384	9900	30		40	Mm	185	5100	23
16	We	382	9800	25		41	If	195	5000	24
17	Not	357	9200	26		42	About	178	4600	20
18	For	347	8900	26		43	There	176	4500	26
19	Don't	345	8900	27		44	Do	173	4500	27
20	Have	344	8900	28		45	He	165	4300	20
21	That	333	8600	25		46	Ah	161	4100	21
22	Like	331	8500	26		47	Go	160	4100	24
23	It's	323	8300	27		48	Good	155	4000	22
24	It	321	8300	28		49	With	145	3700	24
25	Of	318	8200	27		50	Understand	132	3400	22

In Table 5.30 I have bolded all words in the RCB corpus which are *unusually* more frequent than in CANCODE, and I have highlighted in red those words in the CANCODE that figure *unusually* less frequently than they do in the RCB. One of the most noticeable features is the frequency of *yeah* in the RCB, the second most frequent item, in comparison to its rank in eight place in CANCODE. Looking at other larger corpora brings the importance of *yeah* into even further relief. It is ranked 19th in the BNC and 10th in an Irish corpus, the Limerick Corpus of English (see Farr, Murphy and O’Keeffe 2004), sufficiently high to warrant O’Keeffe, Clancy and Adolphs (2011) pointing out that as a response token, *yeah* could be more prominent in Irish English than in British English (as opposed to the equal tendency to use *yes* as a response token in both varieties of English).

Table 5.30 RCB frequency list compared with CANCODE frequency list

R	Word	Per m	Cc	Per m	R	Word	Per m	Cc	Per m
1	I	38500	The	33867	26	Are	7900	Like	6787
2	Yeah	31100	I	30197	27	Because	7200	Well	6786
3	Er	30600	And	28242	28	One	6700	What	6641
4	You	28200	You	27504	29	My	6600	Do	6574
5	And	22300	It	21249	30	Okay	6600	Right	6310
6	To	21800	To	21170	31	Was	6500	Just	6237
7	The	20800	A	20704	32	This	6200	He	6135
8	No	18700	Yeah	18296	33	So	6200	For	5969
9	Is	16800	That	16986	34	People	5900	Erm	5688
10	In	16400	Of	15641	35	From	5400	This	5626
11	They	12400	In	12559	36	What	5300	Be	5617
12	Know	12200	Was	10080	37	Me	5300	All	5536
13	Yes	10500	It's	9567	38	Can	5200	There	5255
14	But	10400	Know	9329	39	Very	5200	Got	5226
15	A	9900	Is	9089	40	Mm	5100	That's	5138
16	We	9800	Mm	8820	41	If	5000	Not	5094
17	Not	9200	Er	8695	42	About	4600	Don't	5041
18	For	8900	But	8306	43	There	4500	If	4886
19	Don't	8900	So	8014	44	Do	4500	Think	4860
20	Have	8900	They	7772	45	He	4300	One	4778
21	That	8600	On	7140	46	Ah	4100	With	4575
22	Like	8500	Have	7123	47	Go	4100	At	4438
23	It's	8300	We	7117	48	Good	4000	Or	4283
24	It	8300	Oh	7045	49	With	3700	Then	4240
25	Of	8200	No	7017	50	Understand	3400	She	4123

I further narrowed the criteria of the keyness of words in the RCB in order to get a more balanced view. I exclude any word that is not used in at least 23 (75%) of the 31 texts for positive keyness (as high idiosyncratic use in specific texts may skew the view of keyness and therefore conceal non-wide usage), and include for consideration of negative keyness only those words that figure in under 20 texts (as higher or wider presence may counter numerical frequency) for negative keyness. This exercise results in the following list of key words which can be considered for further and closer analysis – which is in essence investigating why these words are key.

Table 5.31 Keywords

Rank	Positive Keyword	Number	Per M	R
2	Yeah	1,205	31100	30
3	Er	1,188	30600	25
8	No	727	18700	29
9	Is	651	16800	30
13	Yes	408	10500	29
27	Because	278	7200	26
29	My	258	6600	26
30	Okay	256	6600	25
39	Very	202	5200	26
	Negative Keyword			
144	Well	43		18
243	Right	22	565	10

5.7.1 High frequency key items

In this section I will analyze these keywords by looking more closely at their frequency and function in the various communicative contexts in which they figure, and also at words with which they collocate. As mentioned previously, I am particularly interested in this study in those communicative situations and interactions in which the residents of the Centre have to do the talking. The rationale behind this is that in such situations (for example, when they go to the Reception Desk or to the staff offices to request something) they are forced to speak and use their own strategies. Therefore a more *productive* English can be analyzed; on the other hand, in situations where native speakers are dominant (in ethnographic interviews, registrations, guidance interviews), the residents are *choreographed* to a certain extent - for

example, they can simply answer ‘yes’ or ‘no’ and can repeat words used by the native speakers – and therefore a more *receptive* use of English is presented.

Yeah

The significance of the item *yeah* is not only seen in its frequency – it is the second most frequent item in the RCB - but also in its range and collocation in clusters - the two word chunks ‘yeah yeah’ and ‘yeah I’ are the 63rd and 83rd most frequent items in the RCB. It is used in 30 of the 31 communicative events that were recorded, and the one that it does not appear in, is only one minute long. The six communicative situations in which its frequency is highest are presented in Table 5.33 below:

Table 5.32 The Frequency of *yeah* in communicative events

R	Speaker(s)	N	% of text	% of total yeah	Ccommunicative event
1	Reine (New Guinean)	26	20.9	2%	Educational guidance
2	Seras (Somalian)	21	6.1	1.7%	Registration
3	8 (Mixed-nationality)	93	5.6	7.7%	Funding requests
4	Jorub (Sudanese)	11	5.1	0.9%	Registration
5	Sara (Nigerian)	18	4.5	1.4%	Registration
6	Rihana and Mubaarak (Somalian)	179	4.9%	15%	Ethnography
7	8 (mixed nationality)	90	1.4%	7.8%	Integration
8	6 (mixed nationality)	80	4.2%	6.6%	Beginners class
9	4 Somalian females	161	4.3%	13%	Ethnography

The highest percentage usage pertains to a visit to the Education Office by Reine, a New Guinean female who had recently arrived. Reine only used 124 tokens in total and no other word was used more than four times. Reine used *yeah* principally to confirm information being read from a file by the staff member and to answer polar questions affirmatively. There is an example of both in the following extract:

Kieran: You’re from Guinea

Reine: Yeah

Kieran: And have you been going to classes?

Reine: Yeah

Apart from registration and guidance interviews, the second highest percentage usage of *yeah* pertains to the ‘Funding Corpus’ of 5,000 words (Table 5.33) gathered from a recording of visits by the residents to an office to request a form to apply for funding that was available for sporting activities, to request information on the process, to explain individual situations and to request finance for other related expenses.

Table 5.33 Word frequency list of Funding Corpus

Rank	Funding	F	%	Rank	Funding	F	%
1	Yeah	93	6.7	11	My	20	1.5
2	I	74	5.3	12	But	19	1.4
3	And	47	3.4	13	No	19	1.4
4	Okay	46	3.3	14	Yes	19	1.4
5	You	46	3.3	15	The	18	1.3
6	Er	32	2.1	16	Like	16	1.2
7	For	25	1.8	17	To	16	1.2
8	Know	25	1.8	18	Go	15	1.2
9	In	20	1.5	19	Me	13	1.1
10	Is	20	1.5	20	A	12	1

One of the ‘negotiators’ (the residents who came to negotiate funding and finance), a Serbian female, Dragana (see Table 5.34), uses the item *57* times, which equates to 12.98% of her total spoken output. The use of *yeah* then would seem to be important in the Funding interaction. This will be further investigated in Chapter Eight.

Table 5.34 Dragana (Serbian)

RANK	ITEM	F	%		RANK	ITEM	F	%
1	Yeah	57	12.98		11	GO	9	2.05
2	And	26	5.92		12	KNOW	9	2.05
3	Er	22	5.01		13	DAUGHTER	8	1.82
4	I	21	4.78		14	TIME	8	1.82
5	Okay	19	4.33		15	IS	6	1.37
6	My	15	3.42		16	FOUR	5	1.14
7	Yes	14	3.19		17	IT'S	5	1.14
8	For	13	2.96		18	NO	5	1.14
9	You	11	2.51		19	ONE	5	1.14
10	Every	9	2.05		20	Play	5	1.14

Er

The filler *er* appears 1,188 times in the RCB, making it the third most frequent item. However, on closer examination of the individual texts, I discovered that one speaker, Boris Krasnov, the Georgian, accounts for 609 uses, which equates to 51% - and these were mainly produced in ethnographic interviews. This reduces the significance of the overall usage of *er* with regard to its interactional use, although it is used quite frequently (comparatively) in the Funding Corpus and will thus be analyzed in more detail in Chapter Eight.

Boris alternated ‘er’ with another vocalization ‘ers’ to fill pauses and hesitations, collocating most frequently with the subject pronoun *I*, as it does generally in the corpus (404 times or in 34% of its uses).

No

No is distributed evenly among the different situations, although it does figure more frequently in the recordings of crèche registrations and in an interview of Said, the Moroccan.

Table 5.35 *No*

R	Speaker(s)	N	% of text	Text/communicative event
1	Said	75	4.6	Ethnography
2	Five multinational residents	19	4.6	Registration

Concordance lines show that it is principally used as an answer to polar questions that are asked by the crèche worker during the registration process. The same questions were asked of all the applicants (for places for their children in the facility) and the following are samples (with different residents) of this *yes/no* question sequence:

Sample 1

Crèche worker: Does your child have any disabilities of any kind?

Applicant 1: No

Sample 2

Crèche worker: Does your child have any allergies of any kind?

Applicant 2: No

Sample 3

Crèche worker: Does your child have any special dietary needs of any kind what so ever?

Applicant 3: No

Apart from the use of *no* to answer polar questions (Sample 4), the frequency of *no* in Said's discourse is principally due to the mixing of Galician and Spanish with English, and the multiplicity of functions of *no* in the latter two languages (see Sample 5).

Sample 4

Kieran: You are you you don't practice no by

Said: No I don't practice no

Sample 5

Kieran: With what language?

Said: Ya ya

Kieran: With what language

Said: Ya ah is good yo por ejemplo yo no paso el colegio

Kieran: Ya

Said: Yo no school

The collocating pattern of *no* is not significant, apart from its use with *yeah*. The duplicate *no no* figures as the 6th most frequent two-word chunk, again chiefly functioning as a polar answer, while *yeah* is the word that it most frequently collocates with – *yeah no* figuring 50 times and *no yeah* 27 times. The cluster *no I* figures 41 times.

Okay

Okay figures with greater frequency in the recordings of crèche registrations, the guidance interviews and the funding encounters. It is evenly distributed in the rest of the situations.

Table 5.36 *Okay*

	Registrations	Guidance	Funding
Okay	4.9.%	2.4. %	2.7%

Examples of its use in the registration and guidance meetings show that it functions principally to confirm, although, as has been mentioned in Chapter Four, it is also used as a closing or valediction (Sample 4).

Registrations

Sample 1

Crèche worker: Now I am going to ask you some questions.

Resident 1: Okay

Sample 2

Crèche worker : Your child's medical history you know am when you take your child to the G.P....G.P Doctor

Resident 4: Okay

Sample 3

Crèche worker: If your child has anything wrong with him that you might need to take him to the Doctor okay

Resident: Okay

Guidance

Sample 4

Kieran: Okay we'll be talking in the future so I'll get back to you when you are finished the

Tariq: that's nice

Kieran: Okay?

Tariq: Okay thank you

Sample 5

Kieran: Have a seat there <Pause> okay you need to fill that up there for me. You can fill in your name and I'll fill in the rest

Mubaarak Said: Okay

Sample 6

Kieran: No you need to sign these for me. Just put your name on them okay?

Liya: Okay. Here. My PPS

The use of *okay* is more varied in the funding communicative situation, which is reflective of the greater onus on the residents to lead the talk. This will be further investigated in Chapter Six. The collocation pattern does not appear noteworthy. None of its immediate collocations, left or right figure highly in the lists of two word, three word and four word clusters. *Yeah* is the word it most frequently collocates with, 23 times as *yeah okay* and 20 times as *okay yeah*.

The other keywords identified above - *is*, *yes*, *because*, *very* and *my* - are distributed very evenly in the 31 texts and do not display any strategic or substitutive patterns. They are used in the same way as by native speakers. For example, *yes* is used for answers and confirmations and thus figures slightly more frequently in situations which the residents are being interviewed and asked polar questions – as in the contexts of registration and guidance.

5.7.2 Low frequency items in the RCB

The items *well* and *right* figure with unusually low frequency in the RCB in comparison to their frequency in CANCODE. These two items are used frequently as discourse markers in everyday conversation (see Carter and McCarthy 2006 and Section 5.3.4 here). In the RCB *Right* is used in ten of the communicative situations, and as a discourse markers only four times. *Well* is used in eighteen situations, but only 20 times as a discourse marker. In Chapter Eight I will show how *yeah* substitutes for both these items (as discourse markers).

Table 5.37 negative keyness: *Well* and *right*

	Word	Number	Per M	Range
144	<i>Well</i>	43	1105	18
243	<i>Right</i>	22	565	10

5.8 Word frequency in transacting, negotiating and casual interactions

The following section examines word frequency in three small sub-corpora, representative of three different speech situations in the Centre in which the onus was on the residents of the Centre to lead the talk. In Table 5.38 (Appendix 5) the word frequency lists for these three sub-corpora are placed together and alongside the CANCODE Corpus for reference. The Reception

Corpus contains 2,500 words gathered from a three hour recording of the signing-in process at the reception desk on one Friday morning. The Funding Corpus, as previously noted, contains 4,800 words gathered from a recording of visits by the residents to the Education Office to request finance principally to take part in sporting activities. The Integration Corpus contains 6,800 words from the recording of a multi-party discussion on the planning of an integration day that the Centre held every year. Immediately noticeable is the high frequency of the item *yeah* in the Reception and Funding lists, but especially in the latter corpus where there are 93 uses - which equates to the very high percentage of 6.7%. Other salient features of the comparison of word frequencies in Table 5.38 above include the following:

- *Was*, the past form of the verb *be*, and the 12th most frequent item of the CANCODE list, does not appear in the first 40 most frequent items in the lists of these sub-corpora and there is no other past form in these lists of the 40 most frequent items, in accordance with the general paucity in the use of past forms in the complete RCB.
- In Funding there are only four verbs used with a past form. These are: *was* (51st, 6 occurrences/0.43%), *wanted* (88th, 3 /0.22%), *said* (114th, 2/0.14%), and *did* (171st, 1 /0.07%). In Reception there are only 3 occurrences in total of past forms – *was* (73rd, 2 /0.29%) and *said* (119th, 1 /0.14%).
- While it is understandable that past forms may not be frequent at the Reception Desk, where the residents come to sign in and request supplies, their paucity in the Funding Corpus is notable given that the residents had to engage in longer conversations, rationalising their petition of finance and funds, which necessitated reference to the past.
- In the Integration sub-corpus, there is a greater use of past forms than in the other two corpora, but it is still limited (see Table 5.39 below).

Table 5.39 Past forms in Integration

R	Word	N	%
42	Was	25	0.5
147	Were	6	0.12
198	Said	4	0.08
241	counted	3	0.06
241	Did	3	0.06
241	didn't	3	0.06
317	joined	2	0.04
317	selected	2	0.04
317	moved	2	0.04
317	reduced	2	0.04
448	refused	1	0.02
448	became	1	0.02
448	allowed	1	0.02
448	learned	1	0.02
448	managed	1	0.02
448	Tried	1	0.02
448	destroyed	1	0.02
448	integrated	1	0.02

- *That*, the 9th most frequent item in CANCODE, does not appear in the first 40 items in 'Funding'.
- *Right* and *just* which are the 30th and 31st most frequent items in CANCODE do not appear in the lists of these three corpora.
- *Well* which is the 27th most frequent item in CANCODE, does not appear in the lists of the three research corpora.
- *Of*, the 10th most frequent item in CANCODE, only appears in the Integration.
- *Okay*, which does not figure on the top 50 most frequent items in the CANCODE list, is frequent (4th) in Funding, in Reception (9th).

5.9 Keyword analysis of the Funding, Reception and Integration sub-corpora

Most keyword analyses compare a small corpus with a reference corpus such as the BNC. However, of interest here is to discover how the residents adjust (if in fact they do) when they are involved in transactional and interactional genre (see Carter and McCarthy 1997: 91-109 for native-speaker adjustment in these genres).

Table 5.40 shows the keyword analysis for the Funding Corpus using Integration as the reference corpus. The subject pronoun *we* shows negative keyness (colour-coded red), which is more than likely due the personal orientation (also suggested by the positive keyness of the subject pronoun *I*) of the talk in the funding discourse compared to the broader community-focused talk in Integration.

The keyness of *she* and *daughter* are explained by the fact that the two of the residents were asking for funding for their daughters. The keyness of *thank* is explained by the transactional nature of the Funding interaction (see Carter and McCarthy 1997: 95). The principal keywords are *okay* and *yeah*.

Table 5.40 Funding with Integration as reference corpus

	Word	Freq.	%	Ref.C	%	Keyness
1	Okay	46	3.33	16	0.32	79.44
2	Yeah	93	6.73	90	1.78	78.74
3	She	11	0.8	1	0.02	27.5
4	I	74	5.36	125	2.48	26.37
5	Daughter	8	0.58	0		24.65
6	Thank	8	0.58	0		24.65
7	We	3	0.22	89	1.76	-26.09

Okay and *yeah* are also keywords when the complete RCB is used as the reference, as can be seen in Table 5.41. Here the keyness of *yeah* is considerably lower due to the high overall frequency of *yeah* across the discourse of the residents.

Table 5.41 Funding with Dun Cluain Research Corpus

	Keyword	Freq.	%	Ref.C	%	Keyness
1	Okay	46	3.33	211	0.56	81.73
2	Yeah	93	6.73	1,112	2.97	47.94

Table 5.42 below shows the keyword analysis for the Reception Corpus with the Integration Corpus used as reference. The frequencies of the keywords are not noteworthy and the marked keyness for the three words is easily explained. All uses of *she* and *eat* are uttered by the same

speaker, Katya, a Ukrainian girl, referring to her daughter, and her daughter's eating habits, in an unusually long interaction (see Chapter Six) that took place at the reception desk. *Thank* was uttered as part of *thank you*.

Table 5.43 shows the keyword analysis for the Reception corpus using the RCB as reference. A similar explanation for the keyness applies here, *she*, *eat* and *lose* being idiosyncratic, whilst *Jessica* is the name of one of the receptionists on duty on the day of the recording. What the keyword analysis of Reception indicates is that there is no one item (such as *yeah*) essential to the residents for communication at the reception desk.

Table 5.42 Reception with Integration as Reference Corpus

R	Keyword	Freq.	%	Ref.	%	Keyness
1	She	15	2.17	1	0.02	56.57
2	Thank	8	1.16	0		33.96
3	Eat	7	1.01	0		29.7

Table 5.43 Reception with RCB as reference

R	Keyword	Freq.	%	Ref.	%	Keyness
1	She	15	2.17	67	0.18	45.5
2	Eat	7	1.01	18	0.05	27.46
3	Lose	4	0.58	2		24.68
4	Jessica	3	0.43	0		24.18

Table 5.44 below shows the results of keyword analysis for the Integration Corpus using the RCB data as reference. The keyness of the nouns *language*, *languages*, *Yoruba*, *Nigeria*, and *country* and the adjectives *traditional* and *different* can be explained with reference to the topic of conversation: the residents were talking about the preparation of an integration day. The adjective *quite* and the noun *charge* are idiosyncratic, every utterance of the first being expressed by Cheryl, a Cameroonian resident, and every utterance of the second being expressed by a Serbian male, Novak, with reference to charging the manager for coming up with a plan for the integration day. The keyness of *I*, *yeah* and *er* has already been referred to above. The keyness of *are*, *that*, *so* and *have* given the additional fact of their minimal use in the Reception and Funding corpora merit greater attention. Noteworthy is that:

- 30% of the uses of *are* in the whole RCB occur in Integration;
- 36% of the uses of *that* in the whole RCB occur in Integration;
- 36% of the uses of *so* in the RCB occur in Integration

Table 5.44 Integration with RCB as reference

R	Word	Freq.	%	Rc	%	Keyness
1	Language	58	1.15	61	0.18	89.1
2	Are	90	1.78	218	0.65	56.31
3	Traditional	12	0.24	0		48.97
4	That	89	1.76	244	0.72	44.89
5	Yoruba	15	0.3	4	0.01	42.78
6	Country	38	0.75	61	0.18	40.3
7	Different	30	0.59	43	0.13	35.58
8	National	10	0.2	1		34.38
9	Quite	11	0.22	3		31.17
10	Nigeria	16	0.32	12	0.04	30.4
11	We	89	1.76	293	0.87	30.31
12	So	63	1.25	177	0.52	30.23
13	Many	19	0.38	19	0.06	30.16
14	Charge	7	0.14	0		28.56
15	Have	81	1.6	263	0.78	28.5
16	Languages	12	0.24	6	0.02	27.73
17	I	125	2.48	1,369	4.06	-33.15
18	Yeah	90	1.78	1,115	3.3	-38.86
19	Er	58	1.15	1,130	3.35	-90.36

Tables 5.45 and 5.46 below show how *that* and *so* are used in Integration and in the RCB in general. The usage of *that* is similar in both, although the increased usage as a relative in Integration may be reflective of the interactional (rather than transactional) nature of Integration. The residents had a greater opportunity to talk at length and elaborate and the shift in vocabulary keyness and the use of grammatical words like *that*, *are* and *have* (used both grammatically and lexically) and *so* (although its major use is as a discourse marker) demonstrates that, although the residents did not normally interact with one another in casual conversation at length, they were, despite the limitations of their vocabularies and antipathy

towards one another (overt at times), capable of doing so. In Chapter Nine, I investigate the interactional strategies that were employed when they interacted with one another.

Table 5.45 *That* Compared

That	Integration	RC
Determiner	65%	72%
Relative	29%	22%
Other	5%	6

Table 5.46 *So* Compared

So	Integration	RCB
Discourse marker	62%	69%
Adjective (intensifying adverbs)	33%	18%
Subordinate clause conjunction	6%	3%
With mental process verb	0	10%

Tables 5.47 and 5.48 show a comparison of the usage of *are* and *have* between Integration and the RCB. The common notable feature for the usage of both verb forms is their greater collocation with the subject pronoun *we*. The higher frequency of *we* with the verb form *have* in Integration (47% as opposed to 7% in the RC) is further indication of the non-personal focus of this interaction and the reference to *we* as a community.

Table 5.47 Percentage uses of *are* compared

	Integration	RCB
You are	23%	10%
They are	19%	22%
We are	19%	10%

Table 5.48 Percentage use of *Have* compared

	Integration	Research
I have	10%	21%
You have	25%	19%
They have	6	9%
We have	47%	7%
To have	4%	3%

5.10 Conclusion

In this chapter I have endeavoured to characterize the English used by the residents of the Dun Cluain Reception Centre, principally by means of quantitative frequency analysis. Following McCarthy's (1999) methodology, I identified the working vocabulary of the residents and examined the corpus for what he calls the 'nine broad categories of basic spoken vocabulary'. Subsequently, I investigated the use of regular (with the -d and -ed morphemes) and irregular past simple and participle verb forms, the third-person morpheme of the present simple, and the presence of multi-word clusters. I then compared the word frequency list of RCB with CANCODE and highlighted significant differences. Finally, I analyzed the word frequency lists of three sub-corpora involving interactions where the onus was on the residents to lead the talk. The following points summarise the analysis in this chapter:

- The first 100 words account for 64% of the total words - and this being where a sudden drop appears (64% for the first one hundred and 10.4% for the second one hundred), constitutes 'the boundary between the core and the rest', to use McCarthy's words (1999).
- The frequency of the past form *was* (6,584 per million) is low in comparison to CANCODE 10,400 (per million) and the BNC (8, 097 per million).
- *Can* is the only one of the modal items (one of the nine broad categories of basic spoken English) that is used with any degree of frequency.
- Delexical verbs are not frequent in the research corpus, indeed none of them are in the first one hundred words which do most of the communicative work.
- There is a very low frequency of stance words in the corpus.
- The discourse markers *I mean, right, well, good, and anyway* appear very infrequently or not at all in the corpus. Only *you know* and *so* figure with any significant frequency. However, *you know* is used chiefly in an idiosyncratic way. *So* was used 239 times (6147 per million), but only 125 (rank 54) of these were employed as discourse markers.
- Eight basic nouns figure in the first one hundred words in the corpus, which is notable in comparison to the BNC and CANCODE, where only the basic noun *-people* - 83rd in the BNC and 95th in CANCODE and *time* -83rd in the BNC and 100th on CANCODE appear. The high frequency of *language* and *country* is notable and indicative of the topics of conversation that the residents engaged in. These uses were recorded

principally in the ethnographic interviews and in a meeting on an upcoming integration day. These words are not frequent in everyday speech events. Other basic nouns mentioned by McCarthy (1999) – *life*, *children*, *kids*, and *car* – are not frequent in the research corpus. None appear in the first one hundred words, and only *life* appears in the second hundred (101-200).

- Of the frequent adjectives mentioned by McCarthy (1999), only *good* and *different* occur within the first one hundred words of the RCB frequency list. But these two adjectives occur with double the frequency of their values in the BNC, suggestive therefore of the possibility that the residents exploit to the maximum the common adjectives they are familiar with.
- Of the frequent adverbs mentioned by McCarthy (1999), only *tomorrow*, *today*, *fast* and *especially* display frequencies close to BNC per million proportions, but even as such, their representation across the full text range is quite low. The adverb *very*, which is not mentioned by McCarthy, occurs with double the frequency of the same item in the BNC.
- None of the verbs in McCarthy's list of activity verbs figure in the top one hundred words of the RCB.
- As far as irregular past forms are concerned, only *was* lists in the first one hundred most frequent words, but its frequency is substantially lower than in CANCODE and BNC.
- There is no occurrence of any verb in its –ed form in the first two hundred and fifty words of the RCB, and none of these forms figure in more than 33% of the 31 texts.
- When the residents use the base in place of the –ed morpheme), there is no evidence of miscommunication. There is little use of time-referential adverbs, but reference to past time is contextualized by the topic and framed by the high frequency use of *was*.
- There are no verbs carrying the third person singular tense morpheme in the first five hundred words of the corpus.
- When the residents use the base form in place of the forms with the –s morpheme, there is no evidence of miscommunication. There is little use of time-referential adverbs, but person and time reference was realised through the use of *he* or *she*, topic contextualization, native speaker contextualization, and the use of another verb in the correct form to frame the communication.
- Chunks signalled by O'Keeffe, McCarthy and Carter (2007:46) as 'regularly occurring strings of two or more words which seem to possess unitary meanings or function,' are

not notably frequent. The most frequent chunks are those which contain repetitions of *no*, *yeah* and *I know*.

- The minimal response *yeah* figure much more frequently (second highest items) in the RCB than in CANCODE.
- Other high frequency items are *er*, *no*, and *okay*.
- Although extremely frequent *er* was found to be largely idiosyncratic.
- *Yeah*, *no* and *okay* are frequently used in educational guidance interviews and in registration for the crèche as polar answers to questions asked by native speakers.
- The discourse markers *right* and *well* are much more frequent in CANCODE than in the research corpus (where *right* figures at 237th and *well* as 144th)
- *Yeah* and *okay* are key in transactional interactions.
- Between 30 and 36% of the total usage of *that*, *so* and *are* occur in the Integration Corpus.
- The Integration Corpus depends less on markers such as *yeah* and *okay*.

These summary points present a picture of the English of the residents of Dun Cluain as a considerably reduced and simplified form of language, especially as far as vocabulary is concerned. In the remaining chapters of this study, I adopt qualitative methods (chiefly) to analyze in detail the residents' use of this reduced language they transact as and negotiate with the native speakers of English and interact on a more casual basis with their fellow residents. The next chapter examines the negotiation of funding by the residents in the education office.

Chapter Six

Negotiations

Er my daughter every very Saturday go taxi way city and go for bus one euro ... and go and sometimes one mother er . is friend and wait where is Tesco and .. bring you where is and every time I must ask please do you want take my daughter and er er ...bus for one euro it's er. too much late and knows er every Fri go and small time play

Dragana

Chapter Six: Negotiations

6.1 Introduction

In Section 2.5, I reported that generally, the staff and I overestimated the lexicogrammatical competence in English of the residents in the Dun Cluain Centre. After the interactions at the reception desk and in the education office that were recorded, both I and the other native English speakers involved came away from these situations with the belief that the residents had understood everything and had expressed what they had intended to express. Moreover, the communication in these interactions was pragmatically successful. Examining the discourse from the recorded interaction of meetings with residents in the education office on the subject of funding for sports activities, however, I found what Bloomfield (1927: 395) might have called ‘atrocious’ English, an example of which follows:

For one year and my er daughter before game in my <syllables> play basketball and want now and go is university . and tell me er mum you ask teacher er I need er . something who for me sometimes paying for dress need dress and er every time I must er buy taxi for city I I it’s my room I think so er er every time yeah note is here I forget <sylla> er. er niversity but too much er <three seconds> house for play and every time another and time and . se er start is seven eight nine o’clock

Therefore, with the objective of discovering how the residents negotiated their way through these funding meetings, creating as they did, the impression of having understood everything and expressed everything they had wanted to in a fluent manner, eventually succeeding in their request for funding, I will analyze this Funding Corpus of 4,808 words²⁵ through more detailed qualitative analysis. The quantitative data that was presented in the corpus analysis in Chapter Five characterizes the lexicogrammatical resources available to the residents, but it cannot paint a complete picture of how that resource is exploited, that is, how these resources are used interactionally. The picture has to be completed through more detailed micro-level analysis. Thus, conversation analysis will be employed here as I highlight the use of minimal responses, especially *yeah*, as facilitators of fluency at the micro-level in negotiational talk. As mentioned in Chapter Three, conversation analysis is used as an instrument rather than a theory and the

²⁵ See Table 3.1

turn by turn analysis is reinforced by reference to the ethnography and the corpus analysis. This optimal synergy is vital here for an understanding of the residents' exploitation of minimal responses. The ethnography provides insight into the particular contexts of each speaker, while the corpus analysis highlights the key items (see Table 6.1 for key items *yeah* and *okay*) that the speaker uses, and the comparison of the frequency lists of the Funding Corpus and Research Corpus B (Table 6.2) points to other items (such as *er*, *no*, *mm* and *yes*) that also reinforce the use of the two main response tokens, but especially *yeah*.

As the recording equipment was running continuously in the education office on this occasion, there are long periods of silences that have been omitted, as are any interruptions, such as the funder being called to the reception desk or to the classroom to deal with other matters. On some occasions, the funder was in an outer office when the residents arrived, thus introductory exchanges have been missed. The transcriptions include as much detail as is possible, including pauses, intonation, pitch and intensity of voice. One of the main limitations is the impossibility of video recording these exchanges, thus paralinguistic features have not been taken into account. The funder took notes after each encounter, but as some of these meetings went on for over 20 minutes, such notes offer validity only in the sense of reflection on the general situation or the level of English of the residents in question.

In the qualitative analysis that follows (Section 6.4), therefore, the analysis will focus particularly on the use of minimal response tokens, specifically *yeah*, and to a lesser extent on *okay*. Before proceeding, it is worthwhile at this stage to diverge slightly and review the use of discourse markers (6.2), minimal response tokens (6.3), with specific focus on *yeah* (6.3.4) and *okay* (6.3.5) in the literature.

Table 6.1: Keywords in Funding Corpus using the RCB as the reference corpus

	Keyword	Freq.	%	FR	%	Keyness
1	OKAY	46	3.33	211	0.56	81.73
2	YEAH	93	6.73	1,112	2.97	47.94

Table 6.2 Top 20 words of Funding Corpus and RCB

Funding				RCB		
R	Word	F	%	R	F	%
1	Yeah	93	6.73	I	1,420	3.79
2	I	74	5.36	ER	1,159	3.1
3	And	47	3.4	YEAH	1,112	2.97
4	Okay	46	3.33	YOU	1,047	2.8
5	You	46	3.33	TO	829	2.21
6	Er	29	2.1	AND	819	2.19
7	For	25	1.81	THE	790	2.11
8	Know	25	1.81	NO	708	1.89
9	In	20	1.45	IS	631	1.69
10	Is	20	1.45	IN	616	1.65
11	My	20	1.45	THEY	471	1.26
12	But	19	1.38	KNOW	449	1.2
13	No	19	1.38	YES	389	1.04
14	Yes	19	1.38	BUT	386	1.03
15	The	18	1.3	WE	379	1.01
16	Like	16	1.16	A	372	0.99
17	To	16	1.16	NOT	346	0.92
18	Go	15	1.09	DON'T	335	0.89
19	Me	13	0.94	HAVE	335	0.89
20	A	12	0.87	THAT	326	0.87

6.2 Discourse markers

Although Aijmer (2009) and Carter and McCarthy (2006) propose *pragmatic marker* as an umbrella term, researchers have used a variety of metalanguage to describe such items as *okay* and *yeah*. The word *pragmatic* within the field of pragmatics, of course, does refer to the general purposeful use of such items, and understanding and making oneself understood, whereas *discourse* perhaps refers to the specific use as controllers of stretches of language. In this way, pragmatic markers and discourse markers do not always have the same perspective, and there is little consensus in the literature as far as what to include as a discourse marker or pragmatic marker.

Other terms to refer to pragmatic markers that have been used include *adverbs* (Corum 1975), *sentence connectives* (Halliday and Hasan 1976), *discourse particles* (Goldberg 1980, Schourup 1985, Hansen 1998, Aijmer 2002, Fischer, 2000), *semantic conjuncts* (Quirk *et al.*, 1985), *utterance particles* (Luke 1987), *pragmatic expressions* (Erman 1987), *pragmatic formatives* (Fraser 1987), *discourse operators* (Redeker 1990), *linguistic markers* (Redeker 1991), *discourse connectives* (Blakemore 1987, 1992, 1995), *relational phrases* (Knott and Dale 1994), and *cue phrases* (Corston-Oliver, S. 1998, Reitter (2003a, 2003b; Reitter and Stede (2003). The diverse denomination is indicative of the diverse approaches and theoretical frameworks in discourse marker research. As Lenk (1998:37) says, research on discourse markers ‘is far from being homogeneous or unified.’

The diversity is also noticeable in the different items included under the term *discourse marker*. Levinson, Schiffrin and Fraser (see below for specific reference), for example, list significantly different items. Levinson (1983) includes *but, therefore, in conclusion, to the contrary, however, still, anyway, well, besides, actually, all in all, so, after all*, while Schiffrin (1987) limits her study to *well, now, so, but, oh, because, or, I mean, you know, and then*, but concedes that a case could be made for items such as perception verbs, deictics, interjections, and quantifying phrases (*ibid*: 328). Fraser (1996), on the other hand, not including vocalizations such as *oh* or *yeah*, arranged discourse markers with core meanings in classes - those which relate messages (with subclasses and minor subclasses), and those which relate topics (with subclasses) between the utterance the marker introduces and the prior utterance. The subclasses of the former (‘contrastive markers’) include *despite, however, in comparison, in contrast, nevertheless, instead of* and (‘distinguished by subtleties in meaning’), *on the contrary, conversely, and on the other hand*. Other subclasses of discourse markers which relate to messages are called ‘elaborative markers’, and include *furthermore, above all* and *similarly* and ‘inferential markers’ which include *thus, accordingly, and consequently* (see Fraser, 1996, 167-190, for more examples of subclasses and items).

In later corpus linguistic frameworks, Fung and Carter (2007: 413) include an indicative broader range of multi-grammatical range of discourse markers:

conjunctions (*and, but, or*), subordinate conjunctions subordinate conjunctions (e.g. *since, because, so*); prepositional phrases (e.g. *as a consequence, in particular, by the way, at the end of the day*); adverbs (e.g. *now, actually, anyway, obviously, really, certainly, absolutely*); minor

clauses (e.g. *you see, I mean, you know*); response words (e.g. *yeah, yes, no*); interjections (e.g. *oh, ah, well*); metaexpressions (e.g. *this is the point, what I mean is, that is to say, in other words*).

Carter and McCarthy (2006), drawing from the Cambridge International Corpus (CIC), which incorporates a wide range of spoken discourse and written texts from speakers of different national varieties of English, include *anyway, cos, fine, good, great, like, now, oh, okay, right, so* and *well*. Carter and McCarthy's framework is the broadest as far as identifying language items that function as discourse markers (*yeah* is in this longer classification) is concerned. Apart from the single word items listed above, they also include phrases (*at the end of the day, etc.*), clauses (*as I was saying*), and grammatical forms (adverbs, prepositional phrases, finite clauses, non-finite clauses, imperatives and interjections).

The main book-length research on discourse markers has been done by Schourup (1985), Schiffrin (1987), Lenk (1998), Jucker and Ziv (1998), Andersen and Fretheim (2000) and Aijmer (2002 and 2014). Numerous article-length studies have appeared also over the last three decades, principally by Zwicky (1985), Fraser (1987, 1988, 1990 and 1993 and 96), Redeker (1990), Blakemore (1987, 1992 and 1995), Brinton, (1996). For more recent work, see for example, Aijmer (2013) and Amador Moreno, McCafferty and Vaughan (2016).

6.2.1 Function of discourse markers

An early reference to discourse markers (to *well* specifically) by Labov and Fanshel (1977:156) described their function of referring back to 'some topic that is already shared knowledge among participants.' Levinson (1983), although not using the term *discourse marker*, also referred to 'words' and 'phrases' that 'indicated the relationship between an utterance and prior discourse.' Schiffrin (1987:31), examining 12 discourse markers, defines them as 'sequentially dependent elements which bracket units of talk.'

Various researchers provide categorization lists for discourse markers. Maschler (1994, 1998) categorized them under the functional headings of interpersonal usage (*you know, I see*) marking shared knowledge), referential usage (*because, so, etc.*) marking relationships on a textual level, structural usage (*okay, right, well*) marking openings and closings, *next* and *then*

indicating sequential relationships, *yeah* marking continuation of topic, and cognitive usage (*well, I think, I mean*), marking thinking processes and reformulations.

Carter and McCarthy (2006) also describe a broad range of functions of discourse markers and clearly signal the difference between a word or a phrase being used propositionally or procedurally (as a discourse marker). They list the functions under the broad headings of organization, monitoring, responding, marking stance, hedging, interjecting and swearing. Under the heading of ‘Organizing the Discourse’, the following sub-classification is given: the ‘marker’ *yeah* is listed under the heading of ‘Topics’ under the broader heading of ‘Organizing the Discourse’, and they refer to discourse markers which ‘help speakers to negotiate their way through talk, checking whether they share a common view of the topic and of the nature of the unfolding discourse with the listener’ (ibid:218).

Jucker and Ziv (1998) referring to various studies that have denominated discourse markers as discourse connectors, turn takers, confirmation seekers, intimacy signals, topic switchers, hesitation markers, boundary markers, fillers, prompters, repair markers, attitude markers and hedging devices, include *yeah* within a category of ‘reception markers’. In the next section I review the literature on these ‘reception markers’ or ‘response tokens’ which is now the term used more commonly.

6.3 Response tokens

Attention was first drawn to minimal response tokens in Fries’ analysis of the sentence in his 1952 book *The Structure of English*, referring to them as ‘signals of continued attention’. Kendon (1967), in a study on the function of gaze in social interaction, called them ‘accompaniment signals’, while Dittman and Llewellyn (1968), looking at the relationship between vocalizations and head nods, called them ‘verbal listener responses’. Yngve (1970) introduced the general term *backchannel*, now widely used in the literature, to describe messages that the speaker receives while he or she is speaking (see also Duncan and Fiske 1977; Roger and Nesshoever 1987; Tottie 1991; Drummond and Hopper 1993a, 1993b). Schegloff (1972), within conversation analysis studies, called them ‘assents terms’, although, as has been shown by other researchers, response token are not limited to giving assent. In later articles (see 1982, for example), Schegloff used the term ‘continuer’, which has also gained

acceptance, and then with Sacks and Jefferson (1974), describing the ‘simplest systematics’ of turn-taking, adopted the term ‘acknowledgement tokens’. Jucker and Ziv (1998) refer to ‘reception markers’ (and list *yeah* as one of them) which constitute a reaction to what is said by another speaker. Redeker (1991: 1139-72) includes ‘lexical equivalents’ of ‘gestural or intonational cues’ that ‘modulate the participants’ understanding [and] saliently signal relations between utterances or larger discourse units.’

Gardner, while initially using terms such as ‘newsmarkers’ (for development in denomination of the term see the same author 1997, 1998), eventually settled with ‘response tokens’ (1998). Although other terms such as ‘minimal responses’ (Zimmerman and West 1975; Fishman 1978, Coates 1986 and Coates and Cameron 1988), ‘receipt tokens’ (Heritage 1984b; Gardner, 1998), ‘bridges’ (Goodwin, 1986), ‘hearer signals’ (Bublitz 1988), ‘reactive tokens’ (Clancy *et al.*, 1996) and ‘supportive verbal feedback’ (Stubbe 1998) have been used, the term ‘response tokens’ is now widely accepted, especially in contemporary research in corpus linguistics (Carter and McCarthy 2006; O’Keeffe, McCarthy and Carter 2007; O’Keeffe and Adolphs 2008).

6.3.1 Identification of response tokens

Researchers then seem to make a clear division between minimal responses (utterances such as *yeah* and non-word vocalizations such as *uh-huh*), and non-minimal responses (*absolutely, by all means*), although Kendon (1967), Dittman and Llewellyn (1968) and Redeker (2009) also classify non-verbal substitutes such as head nods and specific body postures within the response token category. Fries (1952:49), from recordings carried out for his book on sentence structure, identifies *yes, unh hunh, yeah, oh, oh oh, and so* as ‘signals of continued attention’ to a series of utterances by another. Yngve’s (1970) seminal article on backchannels mentions short utterances such as *okay* and *uh-huh*, but includes all vocalizations that display reciprocity or attention, which includes clause-length utterances as well. Yngve (1970: 568) posited that there are two channels of communication open in interactions, a predominant one (the front channel) operated by the primary speaker during an extended turn, and a secondary one, the back channel, operated by the listener.

When two people are engaged in conversation, they generally take turns ... In fact, both the person who has the turn and his partner are simultaneously engaged in both speaking and listening. This is because of the existence of what I call the back channel, over which the person who has the turn receives short messages such as *yes*, and *uh-huh*, without relinquishing the turn.

Duncan (1972) mentions *mm*, *hm* and *yeah* along with head-nods as examples of backchannel responses, and expands (1974) the list to include items such as *I see*, sentence completions, clarification requests and restatements. These items, and others which also figure prominently in Schegloff (1982), Jefferson (1978, 1983 and 1993), Heritage (1984), Goodwin (1986) and Beach (1991), display varying degrees of passivity or orientation towards taking the next turn, according to Drummond and Hopper (1993).

Öreström (1983) expands the list of response tokens beyond the vocalizations mentioned above to items such as *quite* and *good*, while Fellego (1995) identifies *mm*, *hmm*, *yeah*, *uh-huh*, and *right* within gender and language studies. Stubbe (1998) distinguished between ‘neutral’ (*mm* and *uh huh*) and supportive response tokens (*oh*, *gosh*, etc). Gardner, originally (1998) looked at *mm*, *hm*, *but*, and *then*, later (2002) adding items such as *really*, *right*, and *great*. In his monographical work on response tokens (2002), he concentrates on *yeah* and *uh huh*. Tottie (1991) looks at the marginal (cf. Du Bois *et al.* 2000) vocalizations *mm*, *mhm* and *uh-(h)uh*, as well as the lexical *yeah*, *I know*, *right*, *that’s great*, etc. McCarthy (2003), reluctant to duplicate work on *yes/yeah*, *no*, *oh*, and *okay* and non-word vocalizations, considers items such as *quite*, *wow*, *cool* and *gosh* (based on the 2,000 most frequent tokens in two corpora of spoken English), while O’Keeffe, McCarthy and Carter (2007) and O’Keeffe and Adolphs (2008) divide response tokens into ‘minimal’ (cf. McCarthy 2003), in which they include *yeah*, *uh huh* and *mm*, and ‘non-minimal’ items, in which they include adverbs and adjectives, short phrases and minimal clauses such as *really*, *absolutely*, *you’re not serious* and *Is that so?*

6.3.2 Function of response tokens

While response tokens are frequently grouped together as part of a homogenous classification in which it is difficult to isolate all functions (see Sinclair and Coulthard 1975, for example), more specific research (Beach 1993, Drummond and Hopper 1993a, 1993b, 1993c, Fellego,

1995, Gardner 1995, 1997, Goodwin 1986, Goodwin and Goodwin 1987, Heritage 1984b, Jefferson 1984a, 1984b, 1993, Tottie, 1991, Sacks 1992) draws attention to a wide range of uses. Gardner (2001: 1), in his book length study, *When Listeners Talk*, says that ‘such unobtrusive tokens as *yeah, hm, okay and mm*, turn out to be exquisitely complex...’ He goes on to emphasize their multifunctionality:

Response tokens are one class of conversation objects whose primary functions are not to make reference to the world, but to provide some information on the course the talking is taking...They accomplish functions such as linking utterances, adjacent or disjunct, in various ways (discourse markers), projecting a certain course for the ensuing talk, for example signalling an upcoming disagreement (dispreference markers), or contributing to the management of the turn-taking system (hesitation markers), expressing positive or negative effect, judgement or attitude (assessment token), as well as simply acknowledging a prior utterance (acknowledgement tokens), indicating non-uptake of an opportunity to talk (continuers) or marking a heard utterance as news (newsmarkers). Such response tokens are usually brief, mono- or bisyllabic utterances. (Gardner 2001: 14)

Reference to these varied functions abounds in the literature. Maynard, for example, looking at conversations between Japanese students and Americans (1989), listed five functions of the minimal responses that were used: understanding, support, strong emotional response, minor addition, and correction or request for information. Earlier, Schegloff (1972), working in the area of social psychology, talked of these items as signalling active listening, an opinion echoed in most psychotherapy courses which encourage their use to demonstrate interest in the client’s story (see also, for example, Gerhardt and Beyerle 1997 for a discussion on tokens used in the context of psychotherapy). Stubbs (1983), not granting response marker much importance, says that they indicate nothing more than that an utterance has been heard and suggested as a function gloss the phrase, *I’m still listening*. Of a similar view point are Roger and Nesshoever (1987), who consider that backchannel responses are used principally to indicate to the speaker that the listener is attending, and Francis and Hunston (1992: 133) who consider that their function is to ‘to provide minimal feedback while not interrupting the flow of the other participants’ utterance.’

Stubbe (1998: 258) considers that response tokens provide a sophisticated means of expressing the listener’s attitude to the speaker and the ongoing talk and ‘can convey a wide range of

meanings from relative indifference or doubt, through simple affirmation to enthusiastic interest and enthusiasm.’ She presents a ‘feedback continuum’ which reflects the degree of engagement with the speaker’s talk. At one end of the cline are items which provide the least support and are largely neutral in effect, such as those which signal attention and understanding; at the other end, the feedback becomes increasingly supportive, signalling affectively positive meanings such as sympathy, interest, surprise and agreement and in general greater attention by the listener. Stubbe warns that the interpretation of these different levels of feedback depend on the context, the participants and sociocultural norms. With reference to gender, for example, Zimmerman and West (1975) and Henley and Kramarae (1991), rather than attributing a deliberate function to response tokens, point to them as evidence of inattention by male listeners. Many researchers concur that women use minimal responses to offer support to the speaker, while men use them to express agreement (see, for example Maltz and Borker 1982; Tannen 1990, and also Mott and Petrie 1995, for a discussion and the use of minimal response by women in the workplace). Bilous and Krauss (1988), and Fellegly (1995) insist that the use of response tokens is not such a cut and dry issue as far as gender is concerned. Bublitz (1988) also makes the point that a minimal response such as *mm* can be placed almost anywhere in the discourse, and thus serve to feign listening, and goes as far as saying (cf Schegloff, 1982) that minimal responses can be signs of the listener’s boredom with the ongoing conversation or with the present speaker’s turn and topic. O’Keeffe and Adolphs (2008) classified the function of these items into continuer tokens (maintaining the flow of discourse), convergence tokens (markers of agreement), engagement tokens and information receipt tokens.

6.3.3 Turn-taking and response tokens

Fries (1952:49) spoke of the reliance of the speaker on these signalling response tokens for guidance, and this essentially places these items within the realms of conversation management and turn-taking. Heritage (1984: 335) supports this view, saying that that these tokens ‘are used to achieve a systematically differentiated range of objectives which, in turn, are specifically consequential for the onward development of the sequences in which they are employed.’

Schegloff, Jefferson and Sacks (1974), describing the systematics of turn taking, point to exceptions where there is a longer turn by one of the speakers and the interlocutor acknowledges the input with these tokens. Jefferson later (1983 and 1993) distinguished

between the ‘continuers’ *uh huh*, *mmm* and *yeah*. The first two, she claims, demonstrate negligible speaker incipiency, and the latter increased speaker incipiency. Duncan and Niederehe (1974) talk of verbalized signals, sentence completions, requests for clarification, brief statements and head movements, all which signal an understanding that the turn has not yet been yielded. Fishman (1978) considers that listener responses signal support for, or attention to, the speaker’s turn (see also Mott and Petrie (1995) and Mulac *et al.* (1998:64), while, Zimmerman and West (1975) say that rather than supporting the ongoing turn, minimal responses can be used to opt out of the conversation, Goodwin (1988) says that speakers orient to continuers by continuing to speak, overlapping the feature.

Schegloff (1982), Maynard (1989) and Gardner (1997, 1998 and 2002) all consider that response tokens facilitate and encourage the flow of talk in that the speaker perceives that the listener is yielding the floor, or yielding the expected turn. Watzlawick et al (1967), O’Keeffe, McCarthy and Carter (2007) all distinguish between convergence and engagement tokens. The former occur where speakers and listeners agree and ‘converge on opinions or mundane topics’ (ibid: 150) and a change of topic is collaboratively negotiated (see also, for an early discussion on convergence in both normal and pathological human communication). Engagement tokens signal the listener’s interest in the ongoing turn and on the affective level demonstrate emotions such as empathy and sympathy – these tokens, however, are mostly non-minimal, the authors including adjectives such as *brilliant*, adverbs such as *absolutely* and phrases such as *you’re not serious*.

Bublitz (1988), points out that the minimal response *mm* is not placed haphazardly, but rather frequently at transition relevance places (see also Sacks, 1974 and Fellegly, 1995 on this issue), and as such functions to facilitate cooperative talk. Drummond and Hopper (1992) say that ‘acknowledgement tokens’ (*yeah* in their study) sometimes functions to assume the turn, and in a later revision (1993: 58), focus on how *yeah*, in particular, demonstrates a greater degree of speaker incipiency.’ Francis and Hunston (1992) also point to the involvement of response tokens in turn-taking by pointing out that they mainly provide minimal feedback without interrupting.

Gardner (1998) presents core ‘canonical’ and ‘non-canonical’ uses of three response tokens (*mm hm*, *yeah*), calling them ‘archetypical continuers’. *Mm hm*, and *uh huh* are classic continuers, according to Gardner (cf Schegloff 1982 and Jefferson 1984), given that they

encourage (according to Gardner) the speaker to continue speaking, whereas *yeah*, is a typical ‘receipt token’ of acknowledgement of what has been said. The non-canonical usage of *hm*, *yeah*, and *mm*, according to Gardner, takes place when the items take on different intonation contours. Gardner (1998: 216) considers that *mm* with falling intonation functions as ‘a more retrospective acknowledging token’, while *yeah* and *mm* with a fall-rising tone, rather than being simple continuers, request extra information. The insight of Mott and Petrie (1995), is also important for the use of response tokens and turn-taking – they consider them the antithesis of interruptions.

Apart from the references to involvement of response tokens in supporting turn-taking and encouraging the current speaker, also of special interest for this study are the points made by Fellego (1995:196), that ‘minimal response is a hinge between the linguistic and communicative competence of listeners,’ and by Brown and Levinson (1978) and later Svennevig (1999) who consider them exhibitions not only of engaged listenership, but also a device of politeness.

6.3.4 Yeah

Jucker and Ziv (1998) in a study of pairs of students conversing, found that *yeah* was the commonest discourse marker, accounting for 30% of total usage. The study showed (ibid: 174) that reception markers constituted ‘reactions to information provided by another speaker,’ and are more likely to be used by strangers than by friends. While they speak of the obvious functions of *yeah* as the ‘casual version’ of *yes* as a direct answer to a question or as an acknowledgement of an assertion, they proceed to specify at least seven uses of *yeah*. These are:

- 1) To acknowledge new information.
- 2) To acknowledge reactivated information.
- 3) To answer a polar questions.
- 4) To confirm an unexpected addition to information.
- 5) To acknowledge the preceding interactive unit rather than specific information.
- 6) To offer sequential confirmation in order to integrate new information.

The same authors consider that *yeah*, *oh* and *really* constitute a continuum of ways of receiving new information, *yeah* being the token that facilitates the integration of information that fits

more easily in the context of the foregoing interaction. Gardner (2001) points out that acknowledgement is particularly associated with *yeah*, and considers the primary functions of the latter as ‘*retrospective receipt, claiming understanding, agreement, or simply hearing* [italics in the original].’ Although he considers that *yeah* can be distinguished from continuers such as *uh huh* which immediately hand back the floor, he goes on to say that such distinction depends on context, and that *yeah* can function as a continuer as well as a device of acknowledgement. From the data used in his 2001 study, he concludes that *yeah* must be ‘the most common response token of any kind in ordinary conversation in English, sometimes occurring hundreds of times per hour.’ Concurring with Drummond and Hopper (1993), he points to the multifunctionality of *yeah*, constituting an answer to a polar question, as well as acknowledging, affirming, agreeing, showing appreciation, surprise and assessment.

Fung and Carter (2007) classify *yeah* as a discourse marker at the social and affective level, indicating responses such as agreement, confirmation and acknowledgement. At the interactional level (ibid: 415), *yeah* is included in a group which ‘marks continuation of the current topic.’ *Yeah*, in summary, for Fung and Carter (ibid: 431), is used ‘primarily in interpersonal and structural categories to acknowledge, agree, affirm, and mark continuation.’ O’Keeffe and Adolphs (2008) looking at pragmatic difference in the use of listener response items across different varieties of English, show how *yeah* is used to signal engagement with a speaker at the same time as reluctance to take the floor. O’Keeffe and Adolphs (2008) included *yeah* in two of the categories of the four functions that they identified for response token, that is as continuer, and as markers of convergence.

Within the field of conversation analysis, Jefferson (1983/84) pointed out that *yeah* and *yes* are largely associated with topical shift, and concluded, as mentioned previously, that *yeah* exhibits a tendency to move from reciprocity to speakership in comparison with *mm hm* which exhibits what she calls ‘passive reciprocity’. Schegloff (1982), looking at discourse as an interactional achievement, pointed to the importance of *yeah* and other tokens in interaction, rather than seeing them as interactional ‘debris’. In this article, *yeah* is specifically described for its functions as a continuer in the sense that it facilitates ‘extended tellings’ by the primary speaker. Jefferson later (1993) hypothesized that there might be a movement from *uh-huh* to *yeah* over extended talk and this progress could reflect a move in the listener towards preparedness for speakership.

McCarthy (2010) looking at turn-taking as a component of automaticity, one of the recurring themes with regard to fluency, presents a list of the 20 most frequent turn-opener ‘tokens’ from a CANCODE sub-corpus of one-million words pertaining to social conversation. The most frequent token is *yeah*. Tao (2003) had demonstrated previously that these items orient to what the previous speaker says and thus facilitate continuity and fluency by providing a smooth transition. McCarthy (ibid:7) also points to the shared responsibility of interlocutors ‘to fill silences and uncomfortably long pauses’ and the part played by these turn opener tokens (see also Evison 2012). Below, I will show how the residents used *yeah* and *okay* in similar fashion.

6.3.4.1 *Yeah* and intonation

Jefferson (1984), McLemore (1991), Schuetze-Coburn *et al.* (1994) and Gardner (1997, 1998) have all shown that intonation is important when determining the nature of a response with *mm*, *hm* and *yeah* by examining the discourse environment in which the items have been found. For example, fall-rises (see 4.8 for a description of the five tones that Brazil characterized as discourse options for a speaker) are frequently followed by a reversion to the prior speaker, whilst falling contours are more frequently followed by further talk by the speaker who has uttered the minimal response. Jefferson (1984) showed how *yeah* with falling intonation frequently displays speakership incipency, in contrast to the ‘passive’ recipiency of *uh huh* and *mm hm*.

As mentioned previously, Gardner (1998) considers that the canonical and non-canonical usage of *mm hm*, *yeah*, and *mm*, takes place when the items take on different intonation contours. *Yeah* with a fall-rising tone, rather than being a simple continuer, requests extra information or hands back the floor to the prior speaker.

6.3.5 *Okay*

Various theories on the evolution of the word *okay* in English have been put forward, ranging from the story of the presidential candidate, Martin van Buren, who came from Old Kinderhook and used OK as a slogan, to the speculations that see its origins in Indian languages or as an acronymic version of ‘all correct’ (see Read, 1963).

What is of interest here is how it is used by the residents in Dun Cluain and how that compares with its use by native speakers of English. Within the field of conversation analysis, early work by Schegloff and Sacks (1973) highlighted the use of *okay* in ‘preclosings’ in telephone calls (see also cited Button 1987, 1990; Levinson 1983; Schiffrin 1987, Beach 1990), while Schegloff (e.g., 1968, 1979, 1986 and Beach 1990) also highlighted its use for telephone openings and the movement towards the presentation of the initial topic or call business. Merritt (1980:144) shows how *okay* works as a ‘bridge, a linking device between two stages or phases of the [service] encounter.’ Beach (1990) also demonstrates how *okay* performs closings and initiations in settings other than phone-calls such as group facilitation. In a later work (1993) the same author shows how *okay* is relied on by both speakers and hearers at precise moments of transition, across a variety of casual and institutional speech exchange systems. He suggests that when it is found as a free-standing receipt token it can have dual functions (ibid: 329) – to acknowledge talk and to signal affiliation. McCarthy and Carter (2006) say its range of uses includes indicating that what is said is accepted or agreed with, indicating a change of topic, indicating the beginning of a new stretch of discourse, checking for understanding at the end of a stretch of discourse and closing a sequence of talk.

6.3.6 *Yeah* in the Funding corpus

The focus of the remainder of this chapter is to qualitatively investigate the function that *yeah* plays, given its elevated frequency (see Table 6.3) in the discourse of residents who are negotiating their way through a funding request process. It is used 93 times by residents, which equates to 67 words per thousand or 67,000 per million, compared to the BNC total of 7,890 and the CANCODE total of 18,296 per million. Also noteworthy is the presence of *okay* as the fourth most frequent token, given the fact that it does not appear in the first 50 words of either CANCODE or BNC spoken corpora. All the minimal responses of the first 20 words together (*yeah*, *okay*, *yes no*, and *mm*) account for 14% of the residents’ talk, which evidences the importance of these items in their discourse.

Table 6.3 Top 20 words of Funding

Funding			
R	Word	F	%
1	Yeah	93	6.73
2	I	74	5.36
3	And	47	3.4
4	Okay	46	3.33
5	You	46	3.33
6	Er	29	2.1
7	For	25	1.81
8	Know	25	1.81
9	In	20	1.45
10	Is	20	1.45
11	My	20	1.45
12	But	19	1.38
13	No	19	1.38
14	Yes	19	1.38
15	The	18	1.3
16	Like	16	1.16
17	To	16	1.16
18	Go	15	1.09
19	Me	13	0.94
20	A	12	0.87

6.4 Qualitative analysis of the Funding Corpus

Before embarking on the analysis, it needs to be mentioned, as Laver and Hutchinson (1972:11) point out, that ‘All the communication strands, speech, gesture, posture, body movements, orientation, proximity, eye contact and facial expressions, should be thought of as woven together to form the fabric of conversation.’ Here, I refer only to the recorded speech of the interactions and notes taken at the time of the recordings, and ethnographic observations. Videoed interactions are, of course, more reliable in analyzing the full ‘fabric’ of the interaction, but as mentioned in the introduction it was not appropriate to use cameras in the particular context of an asylum seeker centre. This then constitutes a limitation of the present study.

The interactions will be analyzed per encounter, that is, each person's negotiation with the funders will be examined whether that person has used *yeah* or not, but the principal focus will be on this item. This approach offers a case-study contextualization which examines qualitatively the quantitative results from the corpus analysis.

6.4.1 Edith, a thirty-year old Nigerian female, speaker of Nigerian Pidgin English

Edith had just arrived in the Centre when she came to the office to talk about the funding. She struggled to understand and to express herself. The rest of the staff and I originally expected all Nigerians to speak fluent and accurate English, but we soon realized this was not the case, especially for those like Edith who spoke the Nigerian pidgin variety of English. Later, Edith came to classes regularly to improve her English and to learn to read and write, as she was illiterate.

In Fragment 6.1 below there are no instances of *yeah* in her speech, but she uses 'okay', 'yes' and 'no' effectively:

- 1) to answer questions (15; 'no' line 17)
- 2) to confirm ('yes' line 13; 'okay' – lines 19 and 29)
- 3) as a discourse marker to mark speaker incipency ('yes' line 15; 'okay' line 31).

Evidence that she is struggling to understand can be seen on line 3 where she avoids taking up the turn when the funder pauses. She then interrupts him (line 7), saying 'very expensive', possibly conscious of the fact that she did not take up the turn previously and the need to show engagement. She then says (line 9) 'I don't understand this,' referring to the form. 'You write the thing' (line 11) is a question, rather than she telling the funder to write it for her (given that she is illiterate, or was at that stage). Additionally, she interrupts the funder again (line 34) when perhaps the completion 'so on' would have been forthcoming from a native or higher level speaker of English, or an acknowledgement of his explanation. Even what I have classified as a core request (in Chapter Six),

Okay please keep this space for me I am gonna come back to see (31)

6.4.2 Aliciana, 12-year-old Angolan female

Aliciana, a 12-year-old Angolan female, comes to the office to ask about getting funding for volleyball and aerobics. She is uncomfortable. It was common in Dun Cluain for parents to get their school-going English-speaking children to do such tasks on their own, especially when the issue had to do with the children themselves. They also came regularly with the parents to translate. Aliciana had only been in the Centre six months, but as she was attending school she was picking up English quickly.

Aliciana prefaces her discourse with the utterance, ‘Hello my father say I have to come here.’ This in itself could constitute an opening or an alerter for an indirect request, or be taken as a request for funding, even though a core request did not follow immediately.

The remainder of the encounter is reproduced in full below. Aliciana’s discomfort continued. She was on the edge of her seat and did not seem to want to talk. This is evident in her use of the continuers ‘um’ (line 4), ‘yeah’ (line 12), five uses of ‘okay’ (three in quick succession (lines 19-23), all uttered very evenly, and also the failure to take up the talk (line 5) when the funder pauses, waiting for acknowledgement from her. This seems to disrupt the funder - he takes up the turn again, repeating ‘volleyball’ three times, hesitates (‘er’), deviates into a mixture of Portuguese and Spanish, and asks if she has understood, which she confirms with ‘yeah’ (line 8).

The following two requests for information, although omitting the standard auxiliary interrogative, are indications that Aliciana would be able to take part in longer interactions.

Line 2: You have volleyball?

Line 17: I can do aerobic . and swimming?

However, she is uncomfortable and wants to leave the office as soon as possible. She uses the minimal responses ‘um’, ‘yeah’ and ‘okay’ (26% of her total linguistic output) to avoid talking the turn and engaging in conversation – whether this is due to her immaturity (she is twelve) or inhibitions about her ability to take part in a conversation in English, is unclear.

Fragment 6.2

- 1 **Funder:** Okay so what do you want to do
2 → **Aliciana:** You have volleyball
3 **Funder:** No I'll I'll explain to you what you have to do you
4 → **Aliciana:** Um
5 → **Funder:** You have to take this away okay yeah <P4> we have volleyball there is a volleyball
6 net down at the end there a volleyball net. red de volleyball er in the grass down there but it
7 is too wet to play volleyball non chove demasiado ²⁶ do you understand
8 → **Aliciana:** Yeah
9 **Funder:** You do it's too wet to play volleyball this is a em its better if I explain it to your
10 father because it is difficult to understand this is em eh to find a club in Xxxxxx which cost
11 money then you sign this you tell me about it and I say if you can or you can't
12 → **Aliciana:** Yeah
13 **Funder:** Okay so take that away with you get your father look for a club for you something
14 that you want to do there is no volleyball in Xxxxxx
15 → **Aliciana:** Okay
<interruption outside 7s>
16 **Funder:** < Okay
17 → **Aliciana:** I can do aerobic . and swimming?
18 **Funder:** Maybe maybe find it here
19 → **Aliciana:** Okay
20 **Funder:** Find a club in Xxxxx and then come back and tell me about it
21 → **Aliciana:** Okay
22 **Funder:** And sign the document
23 → **Aliciana:** Okay
24 **Funder:** Alright the faster the better
25 **Aliciana:** Thank you
26 **Funder:** How old are you?
27 **Aliciana:** Twelve
28 **Funder:** Okay get your father to come to talk to me and I'll explain it better to him
29 → **Aliciana:** Okay

6.4.3 Two Ukrainian females, Aneta and Katya (acting initially as translator for Aneta)

Katya, whose level of English I had judged to be B1 (CEFR), introduces the funder to Aneta and tells him that she has come to help her apply for funding for her son Anton. The three move into an inner office and the funder asks them to take a seat. The conversation lasts for 15 minutes, during which time Aneta says very little in English, but demonstrates by her questions to Katya in Russian, that she has understood. Although Katya has come to translate for Aneta, she also asks for funding for herself and her son. A total of only 355 word tokens and 148 word types are used by the two women, mostly by Katya. Significantly, *yeah* is the most frequent word accounting for 5.92% of the Ukrainians' words (see Table 6.4 below).

²⁶ It doesn't rain too much

Table 6.4 Word frequency list of Katya and Aneta

R	Word	N	%	Per M
1	YEAH	21	5.92	59,200
2	YOU	17	4.79	47,900
3	I	14	3.94	39,400
4	LIKE	9	2.54	25,400
5	THEY	9	2.54	25,400
6	FOR	8	2.25	22,500
7	TO	8	2.25	22,500
8	AND	7	1.97	19,700
9	BUT	7	1.97	19,700
10	IS	7	1.97	19,700
11	NOT	7	1.97	19,700
12	THAT	7	1.97	19,700
13	BECAUSE	5	1.41	14,100
14	CAN	5	1.41	14,100
15	FIND	5	1.41	14,100
16	IT	5	1.41	14,100
17	WILL	5	1.41	14,100
18	GO	4	1.13	11,300
19	HAVE	4	1.13	11,300
20	KNOW	4	1.13	11,300

In Fragment 6.3 below, Aneta utters the triple ‘yeah yeah yeah’ (line 9) in response to the funder’s polar question. This gives the impression that she has understood. However, when the funder reiterates (line 10) the comment on the *Yellow Pages*, Aneta utters ‘Okay’ to respond and take the turn, but the rest of what she says is unintelligible and it seems as if the reference to the *Yellow Pages* has not been understood, especially given the fact that the funder seems to be about to explain what the *Yellow Pages* is (line 12). Rather than a polar response then it seems that ‘yeah yeah yeah’ is used as a continuer, that is to encourage the funder to get on with the business at hand.

It is worth noting also, that although Katya is translating for Aneta, the latter other-initiates repair (line 3) of Katya’s reference to ‘kick-boxing. Katya then self-repairs (line 4) and uses the correct word. When the funder begins to explain to Aneta what the *Yellow Pages* is (line 12) he is interrupted by Katya’s ‘yeah’ (line 13), which she uses to let him know that *she* has understood what the *Yellow Pages* is.

The point here is that the two women use *yeah* for different purposes, both involving understanding - camouflaging misunderstanding in the case of Aneta, and emphasizing understanding in the case of Katya, but perhaps both women wanting the funder to move on.

Fragment 6.3

1. **Katya:** Do <pronounced /di/> you know where he can find that kick-boxing
2. **Funder:** What
3. → **Aneta:** No no
4. → **Katya:** Ai ai Akido
5. → **Aneta:** Aikido
6. **Funder:** Aikido I have no idea er look in the Yellow Pages do you know what the yellow
7. pages is do you know what the Yellow Pages is?
9. → **Aneta:** Yeah yeah yeah (1)
10. **Funder:** Look in the Yellow Pages and see if you can find something
11. → **Aneta:** Okay <unintelligible>
12. **Funder:** What the Yellow Pages
13. → **Katya:** {yeah (2)}
14. **Funder:** I'll give it to you now I have one outside. I
15. thought he was interested in swimming no that's not your son

In Fragment 6.4 below both 'yeah' (lines 6 and 13) are answers to polar questions, the first asked with the auxiliary 'did' and the second with 'would'. The second 'yeah' also prefaces a topic-switching turn, (see Jefferson, 1983 and 1993 for this use of *yeah*), Katya requesting funding to go with her baby, using the hedged performative 'wanted' and hedges 'okay' 'maybe' and 'like' for further mitigation.

This is a good example of how one of the residents exploits her pragmatic knowledge, the multi-functional 'yeah', the hedged performative 'wanted' (although at other times she does not use it for simple past reference (line 2 in Fragment 6.4 below), and other hedges, to arrive at where she was heading all along in the conversation – to establish if she can take her baby (who is not mentioned in this utterance) swimming. She has managed to negotiate the conversation in such a way that the funder's final comment in this fragment

'Take a form with you and fill it in for me and find ...' (Fragment 6.4, line 14)

conveys to her that she *can* take her baby.

The use of ‘wanted’ to mitigate the request in light of her non-marking of the past in other utterances also demonstrates the pragmatic priority of her language. The use of unmarked ‘I ask’ for *I asked* in line 2 below (for example) does not interfere with the referential and past meaning as it is embedded in the context, so it does not seem to be a source of concern for the speaker.

Fragment 6.4

1. **Funder:** Somebody asked me for swimming
2. → **Katya:** I ask you but I’m busy I’m not I wanted not for myself I want for my son but small
3. Michael to go with him but it’s not kind of sports you see<unintelligible> she last year was
4. with him a few times Jury’s hotel
5. **Funder:** Did you go?
6. → **Katya:** Yeah (3)
7. **Funder:** and
8. **Katya:** It was okay they said like one hundred sixty for four months and five months you get
9. free
10. **Funder:** How much
11. **Katya:** Hundred sixty euro
12. **Funder:** And would you be interested in it again?
13. → **Katya:** Yeah (4) but I wanted to ask you is it okay or is it like kind of maybe not
14. **Funder:** Take a form with you and fill it in for me and
15. **Aneta:** {ya
16. **Funder:** and find

Katya’s use of *like* also warrants attention as it is relatively frequent in the discourse and is used in different ways. The concordance lines show how it facilitates her discourse.

1. it was okay they said **like** one hundred sixty for four months and five months you get free
2. Yeah but I wanted to ask you is it okay or is it **like** kind of maybe not
3. why you can’t find **like** this
4. if you go to university you need spend for bus and you know **like**
5. they can be **like** these kids small kid
6. you can come back anytime **like** you know if they make some courses
7. because there is coming **like** a woman elderly elderly people
8. for people who can’t swim **like** Margaret
9. yeah she wanted to go there because I said **like** but I will ask everything from that hotel

In line 1, it serves to convey the information with a certain vagueness which lessens the impact the quantity of money mentioned might have on the funder (see Carter and McCarthy 2006: 202). In line 2, as seen previously in the analysis of Fragment 6.4, it is used as a hedge (along with ‘okay’, ‘maybe’ and ‘kind’) to downtone the assertiveness of the reference to her baby (Carter and McCarthy 2006: 223). In lines 3, 5, 7 and 8 it is used in its canonical function

meaning ‘similar to’ or ‘for example’ (Carter and McCarthy 2006: 101 and 768). In line 4, in end position, it qualifies the utterance. In line 6 it is used as a filler (Carter and McCarthy 2006: 102), and in line 9 it is used quotatively (Carter and McCarthy 2006: 102).

O’Sullivan (2004) has also referred to the use of *like* in Irish English as a device of accommodation from one speaker’s discourse to another’s (in this case that of Traveller girls to girls of settled families), although this seems unlikely in the case of Katya, whose main purpose is to acquire funding. Clancy (2010: 225) reports that Markanen and Schröder (1997) and Miller and Weinert (1995) relate the use of hedges such as *like* to avoid face-threatening situations and self-protect. This self-protective impression is evident in Katya’s discourse, but in this case it probably has more to do with the self-protective camouflage of her lexicogrammatical limitations. Katya had spent six months in school in England before moving to Ireland, so it is quite possible that she learned the multiple uses of *like* there, although, of all the residents, Katya was the one who spent more time at the reception desk chatting to the receptionist, so it is also conceivable that she picked up such usage there, as *like* as a discourse marker and especially as a hedge is frequent in Irish English (Farr, Murphy and O’Keeffe 2004, Clancy 2005, Kallen 2005, Vaughan and Clancy 2011, Nestor and Regan 2012, Schweinberger 2012, and Diskin 2013). Crucially, this diverse use of *like* demonstrate how a non-native speaker with a reduced vocabulary can transmit the impression of fluency by exploiting such markers.

Fragment 6.5 is the immediate continuation of fragment 6.4. The funder confirms that Katya can take her baby. He is about to say that she should find other people to go with her so that he can send a group, when Aneta interrupts briefly (‘ya’ line 15 above) and then Katya (line 1 below) says she has the form. This fragment shows how Aneta (through conversation with Katya in Russian) is pursuing her own agenda, while Katya, simultaneously, perhaps through politeness, maintains ‘contact’ with the funder’s ongoing instruction by interjecting ‘yeah’ as a continuer (lines 5 and 8) and then uses ‘ah yeah’ (line 12) to answer what Aneta has said in Russian and also to include the funder as if she were acknowledging new information for him. Katya then responds to the funder’s explanations about transport with a question (line 15), to which the funder replies,

Yes if you find a place. that because last year I sent six people on a course in Shannon . if I have six people it’s okay. (Fragment 6.5, line 16)

which Aneta then acknowledges with ‘yeah’ (line 18), overlaps the funder in Russian (line 20) and then, as if as a solution to what her request comprises, interrupts saying,

Can I take six forms now? (Fragment 6.5, line 23)

The interruption to request the six forms so directly (ignoring the rising intonation of the funder on ‘course’, showing that he was going to continue with the turn), is perhaps indicative of the selective listening and the attention to simple pragmatic priorities. In these fragments Katya is seen to mitigate the language with the funder and to attempt to save face; Aneta, on the other hand, is more direct. Katya who seems more aware of (or perhaps is more concerned with) the need for politeness, mitigates Aneta’s request by saying,

I will give to Meredith and few more girls maybe they want to... (Fragment 7.5, line 25)

Fragment 6.5

1. **Katya:** I have <pronounced /hev/> that form for me
2. **Aneta:** <says a few words in Russian>
3. **Funder:** But there are other places as well that you can get cheaper
4. **Aneta:** <overlapping in Russian>
5. → **Katya:** Yeah (5)
6. **Aneta:** <overlapping in Russian>
7. **Funder:** if you could find for example two or three four people.
8. → **Katya:** yeah (6)
9. **Funder:** with you because maybe the university
10. **Aneta:** <speaks in Russian>
11. **Funder:** <Unintelligible>
12. → **Katya:** Ah yeah (7) <continues in Russian>
13. **Funder:** So if you could find a place that would do four or five people and then you tell me
14. how much it would cost because transport is a problem as well so we’d have to include
15. **Katya:** Why you can’t find like with transport?
16. **Funder:** Yes if you find a place. that because last year I sent six people on a course in
17. Shannon . if I have six people it’s okay
18. → **Aneta:** yeah (8)
19. **Funder:** then I can pay for the bus so you
20. **Aneta:** <overlapping in Russian>
21. **Funder:** if you know people who want to do the same as you and you all want to go to
22. the same course↑
23. → **Aneta:** { can I take six forms now?
24. **Funder:** you find a place you can yeah
25. **Katya:** I will give to Meredith and few more girls maybe they want to

In Fragment 6.6 there are seven uses of ‘yeah’ (one duplicate), one use of ‘yes’ and one use of ‘no’ by the two Ukrainian women. In this fragment Katya uses ‘yeah’ to acknowledge, to encourage the funder to continue, and to mark the beginning of a turn. Aneta, uses ‘yes’ (line 10) to confirm that Katya has translated what she has said correctly and to mark a turn in Russian to confirm and to acknowledge the funder’s comment only when it applies to her personally (line 29).

The funder tells Katya that the funding is only available for people who live in Dun Cluain. When Katya repeats the word ‘Dun Cluain’ (line 2) to confirm she understands, Aneta interrupts (as Katya does not continue) in Russian, probably because she has understood the stipulation about Dun Cluain, is not interested, so continues with her own agenda, which is the funding for her twelve-year-old son - as can be gleaned from Katya’s question (line 4) after listening to Aneta in Russian - ‘Can be like these kids small kids.’ The funder confirms and then talks about finding a project for women and children. Katya (line 6) uses ‘yeah’ as an acknowledgment of the funder’s initiative and a marker of speaker incipency (although the English is sub-standard). Aneta asks a question in Russian again (line 7), Katya answers and then asks the funder (line 9) if it can be an adult, indicating Aneta’s ongoing preoccupation with her son. Aneta confirms the validity of the translation and adds something in Russian, whereby the funder (lines 13-14) goes on to reaffirm that the funding is for adults but will allow Aneta’s son to apply because he is ‘a little bigger’. Katya then uses single ‘yeah’ twice as continuers (perhaps in the sense of *yes I know*) and duplicate ‘yeah’ then to reinforce the continuing and hasten the funder’s ongoing explanation (lines 12, 15 and 17), whereupon Aneta asks another question in Russian and both women dialogue for almost one minute in Russian. The level tone of both response tokens and the doubling of the second supports such an interpretation, as does the fact that Katya’s interest has waned, having already got the information *she* sought (see McCarthy 2003, for example, for the signaling of convergence or satisfaction with how the trajectory and the tendency towards a preference for closing a particular line of talk).

Aneta then also seems satisfied and answers the funder directly with a clear ‘no’ (line 25) when asked if she has any more questions. Then, when the funder comments on her son she responds twice with ‘yeah’ (lines 29) to confirm in the sense of *that’s right* and (line 31) to mark agreement. That she has understood the funder all through the conversation is clear from her interventions. She begins talking in Russian (line 3), as mentioned previously, when the topic

shifts, again when the funder says something that casts doubt on the possibility of her son getting funding (the funder's comment on line 18), and then speaks directly to him when she is satisfied and when the topic moves to her son.

Finally, Katya uses 'yeah' again (line 32) to mark the taking of the turn, perhaps thinking it is appropriate for her to do so in order to show her interest in non-egocentric matters, but her ensuing comment is spoken very quietly and thus unintelligible and the funder does not respond to her.

In Fragment 8.6 then Aneta uses the translator for clarity and is not really interested in engaging in mitigation, whereas Katya seems to be more sensitive to the issue of politeness and saving face, especially now that she has also made her request. What is clear again is that the use of 'yeah' helps both women through the negotiation.

Fragment 6.6

1. **Funder:** Only people who are living in Dun Cluain
2. → **Katya:** Dun Cluain Dun Cluain
3. → **Aneta:** {<overlaps in Russian>
4. → **Katya:** They can be like these kids small kids
5. **Funder:** Yes I tried to find a project that would do er women and children
6. → **Katya:** Yeah (9) is good
7. **Aneta:** <asks Katya something in Russian>
8. **Katya:** <answers>
9. **Katya:** If it can be adult
10. → **Aneta:** Yes <adds a Russian word>
11. **Funder:** This is for adults really
12. → **Katya:** Yeah (10)
13. **Funder:** I would only let allow her child her son son to do it because he's a little bigger you
14. know
15. → **Katya:** Yeah (11)
16. **Funder:** But if it's a mother and child a baby yes
17. → **Katya:** Yeah yeah (12)
18. **Funder:** But the funding I have is for it's adults not for children
19. **Aneta:** <asks a question in Russian>
20. **Katya:** <Katya answers in Russian 30s>
21. **Aneta:** <asks another question in Russian>
22. **Katya:** <answers in Russian 15s>
23. **Funder:** Or even walking around Xxxxxx you might see some place okay you have to walk
24. around <outside noise and funder goes out to tell be quiet 30s> oh okay any more questions
25. **Aneta:** No
26. **Funder:** It's just your son so how old is he <unintelligible>
27. **Aneta:** Thirteen
28. **Funder:** Thirteen
29. → **Aneta:** Yeah (13)

30. **Funder:** Ah he looks taller
 31. → **Aneta:** Yeah (14)
 32. → **Katya:** Yeah (15) he look <unintelligible speech>
 33. **Funder:** Now you've got to fill it in and bring it back to me

There are five uses of 'yeah' in Fragment 6.7 below. The funder begins to explain how he is going to deal with the applications, and in the middle of his turn constructional unit, where there is no possible transition relevance place, Katya utters 'yeah' (line 4) as a continuer that hastens his telling (he moves abruptly from present simple to 'will'). Katya overlaps (line 6) as he begins to explain, using 'yes' in acknowledgement of her taking the turn and stops speaking (which is common after overlap according to Sacks, *et al.* 1974). Katya then uses the triple marker 'yeah yeah yeah' (line 8) to emphasize her agreement and her understanding. The next 'yeah' (line 10) is used again as a marker of her taking up the turn (similar to the discourse function of *right*) which he acknowledges ('alright') and she then reverts to her own issue of the hotel (The Plaza²⁷) where she wants to go swimming with her baby son. Note that this time her comment is long, fully formed, audible and intelligible. The next 'yeah' (line 16) is turn incipient – but the last word is unintelligible because the funder interrupts, perhaps anticipating that she was going to say simply, *Yes, I will*. She returns (line 10) to the topic of the hotel, an issue of personal interest, sidestepping the reference by the native speaker to other residents who might be interested. She embarks on a long turn beginning with 'Because', and when the native speaker takes up the topic of Meredith not being able to swim, she says 'yeah' (line 23) to acknowledge his remark, or acknowledge and satisfy his interest in Meredith. She then reverts to the topic of the hotel.

Fragment 6.7

- 1 **Funder:** Katya one thing you have to explain as well to people if you're
 2 explaining to your other friends <inhales> I get a whole bunch of these back and then
 3 I look through them
 4 → **Katya:** yeah (16)
 5 **Funder:** and I'll see which of them is best, okay?
 6 **Katya:** { Yes you will decide how much <overlapping>
 7 **Funder:** Not everyone can go
 8 → **Katya:** Yeah yeah yeah (17)
 9 **Funder:** Not everyone can go but the quicker the better
 10 → **Katya:** Yeah (18) I will find out today
 11 **Funder:** Alright

²⁷ Hotel name anonymized

- 12 **Katya:** But you see why what I'm saying is much cheaper to go to that er the Plaza²⁸
 13 because bus is stop stop near that maternity²⁹ you not
 12 **Funder:** It might be cheaper <overlapping>
 13 **Katya:** You not been spend money for transport you know what I mean because
 14 if you go to university you need spend for bus and you know like everything
 15 **Funder:** You will find out for me so
 16 → **Katya:** Yeah (19) I have forms and I will ask <syll>
 17 **Funder:** if you have anybody who is interested
 18 **Katya:** Because it's not so far and you can come back anytime like you know if they
 19 make some courses but they don't have really because there is coming like a
 20 woman er olderly elderly people come and they have special for them course and
 21 they have courses for people who can't swim like Meredith she don't she cannot
 22 **Funder:** She can't swim
 23 → **Katya:** Yeah (20) she wanted to go there because I said like but I will ask everything
 24 from that the Plaza
 25 **Funder:** Oh
 26 **Katya:** How they say what they want and how much <unintelligible>
 27 **Funder:** Okay that's great
 29 **Katya:** That's fine
 30 **Aneta:** Thank you
 31. **Funder:** Bye

Of the 20 incidences of *yeah* (counting double and triple *yeah* once) in this stretch of talk between the funder and the two Ukrainians, three of them are spoken by Aneta and 17 by Katya. Both women are negotiating for funding for their children and are successful in that the funder is open to their ideas. Aneta seems to understand everything, but whenever she wants something specific to be asked she interrupts or overlaps in Russian. Katya than asks the question for her. This was generally the case when the residents came accompanied by a translator (except when it was a new arrival who came without any English): they understood but the translator gave greater clarity and did the expressive bidding. Katya is communicatively multitasking here:

- she translates for Aneta who wants her son funded for Aikido.
- she requests funding for herself and her baby in a secondary way.
- but demonstrates that this is her main task as she tries to maintain the conversation focused on the Plaza Hotel where the mother and baby swimming is on.
- she mitigates the requesting, and this task is doubly difficult as Aneta does not seem to be concerned for the exigencies of politeness.

²⁸ Name of hotel anonymized

²⁹ This refers to the maternity hospital

- she humours and encourages the funder when he explains rules and regulations and when he goes off on tangential subjects, but she is also capable of sidestepping these tangential subjects if they do not directly involve her son.
- she agrees with his points.
- she hastens his talk in some cases to get back to her point.
- she tries to include the funder within the overlapping Russian conversation at times.
- she is generally supporting the whole interaction.

Katya's principal communicative tool in the performance of these tasks is the response token *yeah*. Table 6.6 summarizes the used of *yeah* in this stretch of talk.

Table 6.5 The use of *yeah* by Katya and Aneta

Uses of <i>yeah</i>	Yeah	Katya	Aneta
Triple answer and continuer/hastener	1		✓
Continuer	2	✓	
Answer to polar question	3	✓	
Answer to polar question and marker of turn	4	✓	
Continuer and upkeeper	5	✓	
Continuer and upkeeper	6	✓	
Answer to Russian speaker and involver of funder	7	✓	
Continuer	8		✓
Acknowledgement, praise, marker of turn	9	✓	
Continuer (with the sense of I know, please move on)	10	✓	
Continuer (with the sense of I know, please move on)	11	✓	
Double <i>yeah</i> as continuer and hastener	12	✓	
Confirmer in the sense of That's right	13		✓
Agree	14		✓
Marker of turn and manifestation of interest	15	✓	
Continuer/hastener	16	✓	
Continuer/hastener but interrupts the turn of first speaker	17	✓	
Marker of turn and discourse function of right	18	✓	
Marker of turn	19	✓	
Marker of turn and reverter/sidestep to previous topic	20	✓	

The high level of Aneta's, and particularly Katya's, interactional achievement and pragmatic competence, is further highlighted by considering examples of long turns the latter takes (both concerning her own agenda). It is safe to say that if the whole interaction with Katya and Aneta was made up of turns like these, indicative of lexicogrammatical deficiencies and incoherence, the staff and I would not have had the impression of fluency. Minimal interaction would not give this impression either. Minimal responses (especially *yeah*), on the other hand, do give

the impression that the two Ukrainians are constantly engaged in the interaction. They contribute to the minimization of long turns (such as those in the example below) that entail risking deviation into disfluency and sub-standard English.

Long turn 1

I ask you but I'm busy I'm not I wanted not for myself I want for my son but small Michael to go with him but it's not kind of sports you see<unintelligible> she last year was with him a few times Jury's hotel

(Taken from Fragment 6.4, lines 2-5) – the Ukrainian female, Katya, is speaking)

Long turn 2

Because it's not so far you can back anytime like you know if they make some courses but they don't have really because there is coming like a woman er olderly elderly people come and they have special for them course and they have courses for people who can't swim like Meredith she don't she can't

(Taken from Fragment 6.7, lines 18-21, Katya, the Ukrainian female is speaking)

6.4.4 Joyce and Natasha

The participants in the following fragment of discourse are Natasha, a Nigerian female, and Joyce, a Zimbabwean female. They came to the office together, despite, as I mentioned in Chapter Five, Nigerians not usually mixing with other nationalities, and the unfriendly relations existing between Nigerians and Zimbabweans in the Centre. Joyce, the Zimbabwean spoke a variety of English which was close to standard academic English. No phonological or lexicogrammatical deviations caused any problem of interpretation in any dealing that I had with her at later meetings. Natasha, the Nigerian, was university-educated and spoke English of the educated Nigerian variety, although typical phonological and lexicogrammatical variations did cause problems of understanding, but not anything as significant as those I experienced in conversation with speakers of Nigerian Pidgin English. Notwithstanding their apparent lack of difficult with the language, and despite the fact that it is they who are requesting funding, the participation of the two speakers of English as a second language in the interaction amounts to 25% of the total words used.

This interaction with the two speakers of English as a second language is quite different from that of the preceding two speakers of Russian, not as far as the well-formedness of their English is concerned, as might be expected, but with regard to their lack of dependence on *yeah*. Before proceeding with the qualitative analysis of the interaction, a look at the word frequency lists for both interactions (see table 6.6 below) reveals that in the discourse of the speakers of English as a second language:

- 1) *Yeah* figures much less (4 occurrences = 2.37%).
- 2) *Yeah* is used principally as a substitute for *yes* in polar questions.
- 3) *Okay* is the most used token (11 times – 6.5%).
- 4) Other markers such as *um, uh huh* and *alright* are used by the residents.

6.6 Word frequency list for Natasha and Joyce and Katya and Aneta

Natasha and Joyce				Katya and Aneta			
Rank	Word	F	%	Rank	Word	F	%
1	OKAY	12	7.74	1	YEAH	21	5.9
2	YOU	7	4.52	2	YOU	17	4.8
3	MM	6	3.87	3	I	14	3.9
4	HERE	4	2.58	4	LIKE	9	2.5
5	HOW	4	2.58	5	THEY	9	2.5
6	I	4	2.58	6	FOR	8	2.3
7	KIERAN	4	2.58	7	TO	8	2.3
8	NO	4	2.58	8	AND	7	2
9	REMOVE	4	2.58	9	BUT	7	2
10	THE	4	2.58	10	IS	7	2
11	YEAH	4	2.58	11	NOT	7	2
12	ALRIGHT	3	1.94	12	THAT	7	2
13	JOYCE	3	1.94	13	BECAUSE	5	1.4
14	HUH	3	1.94	14	CAN	5	1.4
15	NATASHA	3	1.94	15	FIND	5	1.4
16	UH	3	1.94	16	IT	5	1.4
17	#	2	1.29	17	WILL	5	1.4
18	A	2	1.29	18	GO	4	1.1
19	AND	2	1.29	19	HAVE	4	1.1
20	BEFORE	2	1.29	20	KNOW	4	1.1

The first use of 'yeah' (line 3) constitutes an answer to a polar question but also a slight interruption, the Zimbabwean resident, Joyce, projecting that the funder's turn construction unit was ending with 'up', which was not the case. This slight interruption makes him repair from 'in the wall' to 'on the wall' and he asks again (line 4) 'did you understand it?' to which Joyce again responds 'yeah' (line 5). The third use of 'yeah' (line 30), with rising intonation, is an appreciation of how the funder has written her name into the computer form, in the sense of *that's it*. The fourth use of 'yeah' (line 102) is also an answer to the question, 'Can you come in the afternoon?' (three lines previously) that is delayed after she asks for clarity on which day - to which the funder answers, 'No not tomorrow next week one afternoon a week only one hour.' The intonation contour is fall-rise which gives the impression that she is encoding *of course*.

Fragment 6.8 Natasha and Joyce

1. **Funder:** Okay do you want to come in
<pause 20 seconds>
2. Okay did you understand what I wrote up in the
3. → **Joyce:** yeah (1)
4. **Funder:** on the wall for the the the sports yeah did you understand it
5. → **Joyce:** Yeah (2)
6. **Funder:** Where are you from
7. **Natasha:** Nigeria
8. **Funder:** Nigeria and
9. **Joyce:** Zimbabwe
10. **Funder:** Zimbabwe okay just one second I write your names <P20> what's your name
11. **Joyce:** Joyce
12. **Funder:** Joyce ...<sound from one of the girls here> no that just tell me
13. **Joyce:** 'g' 'r' 'i' 'a'
14. **Funder:** Yeah yeah yeah
15. **Joyce:** Morisi
16. **Funder:** <typing> and you . your name
17. **Natasha:** Natasha Chika 'c' 'h' 'i' 'k' 'a' Nwagannbe
18. **Funder:** What's your surname again
19. **Natasha:** Nwogannbe
20. **Funder:** How do you write that
21. → **Joyce:** Okay
22. **Funder:** 'm' 'w' 'a' 'g'
23. **Joyce:** 'm' 'w' 'a' 'g' 'a'
24. **Funder:** Okay
25. **Joyce:** <inaudible speech> 'm' 'w' 'o' 'n' 'n' 'n' 'n' for Novermber 'n' 'w' 'o'
26. **Funder:** Okay
27. **Natasha:** Remove the 'c' before Chika remove that 'c' before 'k' remove the 'c' remove the
28. 'c' and put <?> no no no 'c' 'h' 'i' 'k' 'a'
29. **Funder:** Okay
30. → **Natasha:** Yeah↑ (3) <Funder typing>
31. **Funder:** Now do you understand what I wrote up on the. on form out there?
32. → **Joyce:** Um

33. **Funder:** Okay so what you have to do is I give you one each you have to take it away you
34. → **Natasha:** Uh huh
35. **Funder:** er have to source yourself . some sort of sports if you want to do some sort of
36. sports you go around the city you look you see how much it costs I have a certain amount of
37. money available so not everybody is going have is gonna be accepted okay because there is
38. three hundred people here
39. → **Natasha:** Okay
40. **Funder:** Okay and I've very little money so you fill in the report you tell me how much it
41. costs and you bring it back to me so you go and you look in Xxxxxx what's available
42. <coughs>and then you find something
43. **Natasha:** We don't understand what you mean by . telling you how much everything costs
44. **Funder:** Sports↑ how much it costs
45. **Natasha:** How do you know
46. **Joyce:** <interrupting> in the town <unintelligible>
47. **Natasha:** Sorry
48. **Joyce:** You can go to town in Xxxxxx here and you find a place <inaudible speech>
49. → **Natasha:** Okay okay okay okay
50. **Funder:** Yes that's it
51. → **Natasha:** Okay
52. **Joyce:** <unintelligible – she speaks in a low tone > how much it is <inaudible speech>
53. → **Natasha:** Okay okay
54. **Funder:** What's your name again what did you say
55. **Joyce:** Joyce
56. **Funder:** Joyce you're from Zimbabwe
57. → **Joyce:** Um
58. **Funder:** <Coughs>Okay do you speak any other language besides English
59. **Joyce:** No
60. **Funder:** No you do no you speak
61. **Natasha:** En↑glish
62. **Funder:** English
63. **Natasha:** <unintelligible>
64. **Funder:** What's your main Ibo³⁰ is it
65. **Natasha:** Ibo <low tone>
66. **Funder:** Okay so do you understand ? so everybody brings me back one of these and then I
67. I I see -
68. **Joyce:** - select
69. **Funder:** - I select
70. → **Natasha:** Okay
71. **Funder:** So it's not everybody is going to be allowed it depends on where it is how much it is
72. how long it is
73. **Joyce:** <unintelligible> swimming pool <word>
74. **Funder:** The swimming pool there's a couple around the city there's one in the hotel called
75. the Plaza³¹ .
76. → **Joyce:** Um
77. **Funder:** now I might try to myself .. er sort of organise a mother and baby swimming group
78. I'll try and we'll see
79. **Natasha:** What I want is gym you can see how big I am so I just want to trim up
80. **Funder:** Okay <Joyce laughs> from eating too much
81. **Natasha:** <Unintelligible>
82. **Joyce:** <unintelligible speech> eating
83. **Natasha:** <unintelligible speech>
84. **Funder:** Oh yeah I know that that's what I mean

³⁰ A Nigerian language

³¹ Anonymized name of hotel

85. → **Natasha:** um
86. **Funder:** when you're in a place like this you don't
87. need to eat as much as when you did when you were at home working
88. → **Natasha:** uh huh
89. **Funder:** because you're not
90. **Natasha:** <unintelligible>
91. **Funder:** moving so you can get fatter and fatter and people people here
92. who came like this <makes an arc with his hand> and now they are <a bigger arc>
93. **Natasha:** <unintelligible or *yeaheh* from Joyce> um
94. **Funder:** when they came they were models and now
95. they're all . now so do you understand
96. → **Joyce:** Um eh
97. **Funder:** Now I'm going to be ready for a computer class you okay for a computer class
98. → **Joyce:** Uh huh
99. **Funder:** Can you come in the afternoon?
100. **Joyce:** When tomorrow
101. **Funder:** No not tomorrow next week one afternoon a week only one hour
102. → **Joyce:** Yeah^v (4)
103. **Funder:** Okay we'll start next week will you come back and see me on Monday and I'll tell
104. you what date it is?
105. → **Joyce:** Okay
106. **Funder:** Come back and see me on Monday
107. **Natasha:** I won't be here on Monday
108. **Funder:** what day
109. **Natasha:** a Dublin <unintelligible> so back here on Tuesday
110. **Funder:** Okay maybe if you come tomorrow at twelve o'clock I'll be able to tell you
111. → **Natasha:** °Okay°
112. **Funder:** Alright
113. → **Natasha:** Alright
114. **Funder:** Both of you
115. **Joyce:** Alright here
116. **Funder:** That's it
117. **Joyce:** What's your name
118. **Funder:** My name is Kieran
119. **Joyce:** Kieran
120. **Funder:** Kieran
121. **Natasha:** Kieran
122. **Joyce:** Kieran alright Kieran thank you
123. **Natasha:** Thanks

There are ten *okays* in the interaction, all but one uttered by Natasha, the Nigerian. The first 'okay' (line 21) serves as a transition, or even a summons on her part to mark her beginning to spell the name for the funder, much like the discourse marker *right* when used for framing. The second 'okay' (line 39) is uttered as an acknowledgement of what the funder has said in his long turn. Natasha uses quadruple 'okay okay okay okay' (line 49) to acknowledge Joyce's explanation to her of what the funder has said as she hadn't understood. After the funder says, 'That's it', confirming Joyce's interpretation, Natasha uses 'okay' again (line 51), with rising intonation, to reaffirm her understanding. When Joyce offers an elaboration on her

interpretation of the funder's words, Natasha uses double 'okay okay' (line 53) to express that she understands, with a tone interpretable as *there's no need to go on explaining*. The next *okay* (line 70) comes after the funder explains the process again and is 'helped' by Joyce who other-repairs a word for him ('select') when he stumbles over the double first person 'I', even though it is a wrong repair (he was going to say 'see'). He then self-repairs. At this stage Natasha says 'okay' (line 70) to acknowledge the explanations and her understanding, giving prominence to the second syllable of the token. Joyce uses 'okay' (line 105) to acknowledge what the funder has said, and finally, Natasha uses 'okay' (line 111) to acknowledge or agree to come back on the following Monday. This final 'okay' is uttered in a low voice.

The vocalizations *um* and *uh huh* are also used by these two residents. 'Uh huh' is used as a continuer (lines, 34 and 88) and as an acknowledgement or polar response (98), while 'um' is used as a polar response (line 32) for confirmation (57), and as a continuer (lines 76, 85, 93, 96).

The use of multiple *okays*, accompanied by other markers such as *uh huh*, *um* and *yeah* in the discourse of the Nigerian and Zimbabwean, constitutes a significant contrast to the predominance of *yeah* in the discourse of the Ukrainians. The elevated use of *okay* by Natasha in sharp contrast (and also by Edith in the first encounter, Fragment 6.1) is not surprising given the multiple functions found for that token in Nigerian English (see Adegbiya and Bello, 2001 who list 20 meanings for *okay* and confirm that its use in acknowledgment is very common in Nigerian English).

When I interviewed Joyce and Natasha I noted that both behaved in a casual and relaxed manner, especially in comparison to Katya and Aneta, both of whom seemed anxious, with Katya, as has been seen in the discourse, working hard at politeness. Natasha and Joyce did not seem particularly worried about managing the discourse or the trajectory of the talk. They, of course, speak English as a second language, while the two Ukrainians are using it as a foreign language or the language enforced upon them because they are living in Ireland. It is possible then that the two Ukrainians may depend so much on *yeah* (rather than on the vocalizations *mm*, *uh huh* and the 'international' *okay*) because of their awareness of its evolution from the archetypal English lexical *yes* to *yeah*. The speakers of English as a second language, on the other hands, use vocalizations such as *uh huh* and *mm* freely. The next encounter with Darya, a Ukrainian, also shows considerable dependency on *yeah*.

6.4.5 Darya

The participant in the next encounter, Darya, a female resident from the Ukraine, had been living in Ireland for two years. She had a one-year-old son living with her in the Centre. Darya had not attended English classes and had not used the Centre crèche. She had met the funder in the corridor a few minutes previously and had said, ‘Swimming, here?’ pointing at the office. She was invited in. Darya fully exploits response tokens, specifically *yeah*, intonation and short answers to negotiate her way through the encounter. Table 6.7 shows the high frequency of *yeah*. The item *okay* is also used frequently, but well below that of the frequency of the same item in the discourse of the speakers of English as a second language.

Table 6.7 Darya Word Frequency List

R	Word	F	%		R	Word	F	%
1	I	30	7.81		11	OKAY	7	1.82
2	YEAH	15	3.91		12	SHE	7	1.82
3	IN	14	3.65		13	LIKE	6	1.56
4	AND	12	3.13		14	ER	5	1.3
5	THE	11	2.86		15	IS	5	1.3
6	KNOW	10	2.6		16	OH	5	1.3
7	NO	9	2.34		17	ONE	5	1.3
8	BUT	8	2.08		18	THIS	5	1.3
9	ME	8	2.08		19	CAN	4	1.04
10	YOU	8	2.08		20	FITNESS	4	1.04

The beginning of the encounter is characterized by pauses as the funder gets his papers in order. He asks Darya if he can have a look at her residence card and she hands it over saying ‘Yeah’ (line 2). The funder then (line 5) invites Darya to tell him what she wants. She accepts the turn nomination, prefacing with the first ‘Yeah’ as a discourse marker much in the same way as *right*, and then utters the second with rising intonation to form a tag question (see McCarthy and Carter, 2006: 198). The funder clarifies that the funding can be used for any sport, and Darya answers with ‘Oh’ (line 8) to acknowledge the new information (see Heritage 1984 for *oh* as ‘state of change’ token, and Schegloff 1987), but without the rising intonation associated

with this marker in such situations, which might be indicative of her knowing already that swimming was not the only sport available.

Fragment 6.9

1. **Funder:** Hello come in <10 sec> have a seat there <P45> Can I have a look at it
2. → **Darya:** Yeah (1) <10 sec>
3. **Funder:** Have you children
4. **Darya:** Yes one son one year three months
5. **Funder:** Okay <P5> okay tell me what you want to do do you understand so what it is
6. → **Darya:** Yeah (2) this is for swimming ↑yeah (3)
7. **Funder:** No it's for swimming or any sport
8. → **Darya:** Oh -

The funder proceeds to explain the process to her, and she uses 'uh huh' (line 12 and 15) as continuers. The funder then tells her to sign the application form and look for the cheapest places. She responds with 'oh' (line 19, in the middle of his turn), as if she had heard new information. He then continues ('stuff like that ...') and asks almost as a tag added to the end of his turn, 'do you understand?' She takes it as a tag, ignoring the question and tells him what she wants (line 21): 'Oh me better I want like er shaping you know.' The 'oh' functions almost as a synonym of 'but' and the 'er' functions as a hedge before she says the word 'shaping'; the marker 'you know' with rising intonation also mitigates the request at the end of her turn, although the prominence and loudness given to the word 'know' serves to reinforce the request. The first requestive hurdle is over – Darya has got the funder to consider 'shaping' rather than swimming as he signals agreement with just one word, 'Okay' (line 24), to which Darya responds 'Better', signalling preference. The funder asks again if she prefers fitness to swimming and she pauses and then confirms 'yeah' (line 27) but mitigates the 'imposition' by using a low voice.

Fragment 6.10

9. **Funder:** I'll I'll explain it to you we've we've received I have received funding so that
10. people here in Dun Cluain can do sports a certain amount of money so to be fair
11. everybody takes away one of these
12. → **Darya:** uh huh
13. **Funder:** signs it and tries to find something in Xxxxxx city
14. that they would be interested in
15. → **Darya:** uh huh
- 16.

17. **Funder:** okay like swimming or whatever and then they sign it and
 18. bring it back to me and er look for the cheapest place <unintelligible>
 19. → **Darya:** oh
 20. **Funder:** stuff like that .do you understand
 21. → **Darya:** Oh me better I want like er shaping you know↑
 22. **Funder:** Fitness is it
 23. **Darya:** Fitness
 24. **Funder:** Okay
 25. **Darya:** Better
 26. **Funder:** Alright . er you prefer that to swimming
 27. **Darya:** .°Yeah °(4)

The funder then puts a hypothetical question to Darya, ‘If you if you if you went swimming would you take your baby with you’ (Fragment 6.11 below, line 28) to which Darya answers almost inaudibly, ‘I can’t no.’ The funder seems to understand her answer as affirmative and responds that he might be able to find her a mother and baby swimming scheme, but Darya responds with continuers, low ‘mm’ (31) and even-pitch ‘yeah’ (33), not showing much interest. When the funder senses that there is no answer coming (line 34) after his TCU ends, he comes in again and says, ‘so whatever you prefer.’ Encouraged or nominated to speak, she clarifies:

‘ Mm... it’s not better together but if not possible without him I can okay.’

(Fragment 6.11, line 35)

Darya has achieved something here that even a native speaker would have found difficult – that is to downplay the fact that she does not really want to take her baby with her. She seems clear in her mind that she wants to do ‘fitness’ alone but does not want to come out straight and say it (perhaps so as not to selfish or a bad mother). She delays (or conceals) the expression of her real intentions by using the continuers to show the minimum interest in the funder’s talk about finding a mother and baby course. Then it is the pause line (35) and ambiguity that gets the message across to the funder, who then requests clarification. She states clearly now (line 38) that she would prefer to do the fitness course, and tries to end the topic with a firm ‘Thank you, no’ (line 40).

Fragment 6.11

28. **Funder:** And. if you if you if you went swimming would you take your baby with you?
 29. **Darya:** °I can’t no

30. **Funder:** You might I might be able to find a place for babies like er Katya has a baby
 31. → **Darya** °mm
 32. **Funder:** there are a few more girls with babies that you might all be able to go together
 33. → **Darya** ↔ yeah (5)
 34. **Funder:** or with the babies ... so whatever you prefer
 35. **Darya:** ... <syll> me it's not better together but if not possible without him I can okay
 36. **Funder:** <types 3 secs> and which would you prefer the swimming you prefer which would
 37. you prefer the fitness or the swimming
 38. **Darya:** Better if fitness
 39. **Funder:** Anything else
 40. **Darya:** Thank you no

In a later section, in Fragment 8.12 below, Darya (line 64) asks the funder to confirm that he knows a cheap club. When he confirms, Darya uses 'oh yeah' (line 66) in the sense of *oh really*. She then takes advantage of his hesitation ('er' line 68) to say (line 69) that she will ask a friend about a club, and thereafter supports and encourages (or hastens) his telling of what to do next with the response tokens 'oh' (line 76), 'uh huh' (line 78), 'okay' (line 83) with prominence on the first vowel as if to reinforce her acknowledgement and understanding, and 'u::m' (line 86) with the first vowel lengthened. She confirms for him with 'Okay.yeah' (line 89) that she will be going by day.

Fragment 6.12

63. **Funder:** There is one club which is very very cheap and when it's for us they do it cheap
 64. **Darya:** You know something cheap club
 65. **Funder:** I do but I can't remember the name
 66. → **Darya** oh yeah (6)
 67. **Funder:** I have to ask somebody it's inside in
 68. XXXXXX³² and they did it for us very cheaply last year if you could find out for me maybe er
 69. **Darya:** <and> ask my friend tomorrow I am going in the city she because she tell me it is
 70. not expensive
 71. **Funder:** Okay
 72. **Darya:** and she tell me if I want I don't know
 73. **Funder:** Okay so so what you have to do then is <P2> you write up here the sport
 74. **Darya:** <word>
 75. **Funder:** you write the price
 76. → **Darya:** oh
 77. **Funder:** per month
 78. → **Darya:** uh huh
 79. **Funder:** the name of the club the address of the club
 80. telephone number
 81. **Darya:** <word>
 82. **Funder:** contact person in the club

³² Name of city omitted

83. → Darya: okay
84. Funder: and his telephone and then you tell
85. me how you get there because that could a problem
86. → Darya: u::m
87. Funder: if it's at night it's a problem but you
88. will be going during the day no
89. → Darya: Okay. yeah (7)

The next fragment (6.13) sees Darya use 'okay', 'yeah', 'ah' and 'uh huh' as continuers and hasteners again, but now, having gone this far in the interaction, she begins to seize a little power or equality and the interaction turns into a to and fro between her and the funder, both of them supporting each other, with response tokens facilitating a fluid, latching rhythmic discourse.

Darya takes a complete turn (line 91), prefacing with 'okay' to say she will need to ask in the club. She confirms that she will bring the application form back the next day. The funder takes this cue and rephrases and says 'Yeah you bring that back', and she responds 'Yeah' (line 93) for him to continue, not simply to confirm. The talk then moves toward two separate 'sections', the first (lines 94-102) where Darya supports (or hastens) the funder's general topic with the continuers 'ah' (line 95), 'yeah' (line 97), 'uh huh' (line 99) and 'yeah' (line 101). The second 'section' (103-109) begins when Darya takes the initiative (lines 103-109) as the funder is about to continue, using 'okay' (103) to signal that she is taking the turn. She then reverts to 'her' topic of talking to her friend the next day. A total shift occurs here as it is now the funder who supports her with the response tokens 'yeah' (104), 'okay' (line 106) and 'okay' (line 108). This can be considered a significant interactional achievement on the part of Darya: not only is the funder supporting her talk, he is manifesting his agreement with her posture.

Fragment 6.13

90. Funder: If it's during the day it's no problem because you can go on the bus
91. Darya: Okay but I need ask tomorrow I can bring to you this
92. Funder Yeah you bring that back to me
93. → Darya Yeah (8)
94. Funder So I get a pile of these and I decide which one is best then
95. → Darya Ah
96. Funder: Okay
97. → Darya: Yeah (9)
98. Funder: So I make I have a certain amount of money maybe about fifteen people

99. → Darya: uh huh
100. Funder: So if you do it fast
101. → Darya yeah (10)
102. Funder: and a
103. Darya: okay because tomorrow I need going to town
<word>
104. Funder: Yeah
105. Darya: and I talk with this <girl>
106. Funder: Okay
107. Darya: And she tell me price for the <word>
108. Funder: Okay
109. → Darya: And I am back at one thirty . okay↑

Darya's interactional achievement here is further evidenced by the funder then changing the topic (line 110 in Fragment 6.15 below), from the formal financial issue to the more informal social topic of how long she had been in Ireland – an indication also that he is impressed by her English. It is the fluency of the interaction between lines 94-102 when she supports him and the fluency of lines 103-109 when he supports her, culminating in a quasi-closing by her (okay↑ on line 109 with rising intonation and prominence of the last syllable) which gives this 'impression'. This is corroborated by field notes of the encounter with Darya on this occasion, which reflected that I thought her level of English was very good and I would have, as an organizer of classes, placed her in a higher level class. However, looking back over her discourse (or more appropriately her 'language' - in the context of EFL assessment), there are many language mistakes (in the Chomskyan sense of 'well-formed sentences') that would impede Darya from obtaining a high score even on the most user friendly of assessment tools such as the Oxford Quick Placement test. Even in these 'fluent' sections she says:

(103) 'tomorrow I need going to town' for → *tomorrow I need to go to town*

(105) 'and I talk with this girl' for → *and I'll talk to this girl*

(107) 'and she tell me price...' for → *and she'll tell me the price*

(109) 'and I am back...' for → *I'll be back*

(From Fragment 7.13)

She is not linguistically competent in the Chomskyan sense, but her negotiating competence, her pragmatic competence, her communicative competence, her interactive competence, whatever it is to be called, is of a high order. This competence is - at the surface level - due to her skillful use of listening and supporting the funder's talk with response tokens, principally 'yeah', communicating through pauses and intervening at the appropriate, strategized places.

At a deeper level - not Chomsky's deep linguistic structural level – it is perhaps due to the innate competence all humans have for interaction and communication through language.

In the final fragment of the interaction, the topic having now changed from the formal issue of the request for funding (the *raison d'être* of the interview), the status of Darya has switched from that of listener (the status quo for residents in Dun Cluain) to that of speaker-listener. She now uses *yeah* not as a response token but as a discourse marker of speaker incipency. The 'yeah' forms part of confirmations (lines 117, 119, 125) and an answer to a polar question (160), but also marks the taking up of the turn and elaboration. The 'yeah' (line 152), for example, prefaces an opinion that Darya offers on life in Dun Cluain. Darya has now taken the floor.

Fragment 6.15

110. **Funder:** Very good where are you from
111. **Darya:** Me Ukraine
112. **Funder:** You're from the Ukraine how long have you been here in Dun Cluain
113. **Darya:** In Dun Cluain from July
114. **Funder:** From July living here that long and in Ireland
115. **Darya:** In February two years
116. **Funder:** Oh you are in Ireland two years okay . you learned English here in Ireland
117. →**Darya:** Yeah (11) I when I came here I was in Doras and I was in the college beside the Doras
118. **Funder:** Okay you were here in Xxxxxxxx³³ before you came to Dun Cluain yes
119. →**Darya:** Yeah (12) in Xxxxxxxxxx³⁴
120. **Funder:** Oh you were in Ccxxxxxxxx³⁵ and they moved you okay
121. →**Darya:** Yes
122. **Funder:** Which do you prefer do you prefer Cxxxxxxxx or here
123. **Darya:** In Xxxxxxxxx³⁶
124. **Funder:** Why because you're closer to town is it
125. →**Darya:** Yeah (13) and er you know I have all I have running water I have inside in the room
126. my small er fridge and nobody can make me like here you know
127. **Funder:** Yes
128. **Darya:** I was free
129. **Funder:** Yes
130. **Darya:** Like er and manager talk with me <two words>
131. **Funder:** He was a nice man
132. **Darya:** He very nice and <unintelligible string> help or something he never become <clicks
133. mouth> like that you know Trisha sometimes make you know . if I something need she make
134. me

³³ Name of city omitted

³⁴ Name of town omitted

³⁵ Name of a different Reception Centre omitted

³⁶ Name of town also mentioned in line 119 omitted

135. **Funder:** Um
136. **Darya:** and <second time> I never did in back <??>
137. **Funder** Um the problem here is that there are so many people in Cxxxxxxx³⁷ there seventy
138. or is it eighty
139. **Darya:** No no now ninety five
140. **Funder:** is it ninety five
141. **Darya:** But
142. **Funder:** There'd be two hundred and fifty here at the moment so it's more difficult than
143. other places bigger
144. **Darya:** It is nice place for babies
145. **Funder:** Yes [
146. **Darya:** No ... we can walk in the night here
147. **Funder:** Um
148. **Darya:** There no
149. **Funder:** Yeah
150. **Darya:** But...
151. **Funder:** You have more freedom
152. → **Darya:** Yeah (14) here a little bit like like in prison or something no
153. **Funder:** <laughs>
154. **Darya** But but it's okay not so bad
155. **Funder:** Yeah and do you use the crèche
156. **Darya:** Crèche
157. **Funder:** Do you use the childcare do you put your baby there or no?
160. → **Darya:** Yeah (15) but I didn't <go> now English class
161. **Funder:** Yeah
162. **Darya:** Because he was sick little bit

6.4.6 Dragana

The participant in the final encounter is Dragana, a female Croatian. She is requesting funding for her two daughters. No greetings are exchanged as she takes a seat. As will be seen in the analysis and as evidenced in the Word Frequency Table (6.12) below, Dragana exploits *yeah* to the maximum: she uses this response token 57 times, which equates to 12.98% of her total discourse, which is notably greater than any other resident. However, 'okay', 'yes', 'you know' and 'no' used as discourse markers and the pause filler 'er' are all prominent as well, and all together these make up 28.7% of her discourse. These and her varied intonations contours contribute greatly to her negotiating her way through the interaction and creating an impression of fluency.

³⁷ Name of the reception centre mentioned also on lines 120 and 122

Table 6.12 Dragana Word Frequency

YEAH	57	12.98		11	GO	9	2.05
AND	26	5.92		12	KNOW	9	2.05
ER	22	5.01		13	DAUGHTER	8	1.82
I	21	4.78		14	TIME	8	1.82
OKAY	19	4.33		15	IS	6	1.37
MY	15	3.42		16	FOUR	5	1.14
YES	14	3.19		17	IT'S	5	1.14
FOR	13	2.96		18	NO	5	1.14
YOU	11	2.51		19	ONE	5	1.14
EVERY	9	2.05		20	PLAY	5	1.14

In Fragment 6.16 the first four uses of ‘yeah’ function as continuers (one single and a duplicate), but not so much in the sense of Schegloff’s (1982) facilitation of extended talk, but rather to hand the turn straight back to the funder despite his attempt at small talk (mentioning that he knows her husband). Dragana’s intonation is unusual to the native English ear; for example, there is a fall rise on two-syllable words such as ‘Croatia’, which is pronounced /kreiʃə/.

The intonation and sound quality of the response tokens uttered here is quite different from that of the normal receipting of information common in English (Gardner 2001). The first three are uttered with a loud voice, high pitch and rising intonation, although the second ‘yeah’ of the duplicate is less loud. These ‘yeah’ could come across to the native English ear as suggestive of ironic surprise, which may explain the doubts of the funder (line 16), and the insistence by her - the ‘yeah’ (line 17) this time sounding softer.

Fragment 6.16

10. **Funder:** Okay . and where are you from
11. **Dragana:** √ Croatia
12. **Funder:** Croatia alright <typing> oh yeah I know your husband
13. → **Dragana:** YEAH <intonation unusual>
14. **Funder:** He used to come to classes
15. → **Dragana:** YEAH YEah
16. **Funder:** No
17. → **Dragana:** °Yeah°

The funder then (Fragment 6.17, line 18) moves to the issue of Dragana not attending classes. She acknowledges with a barely audible ‘no’ (line 19), and when the funder insists she responds with what is called by Tottie (1991) a complex backchannel, ‘Yeah I know’, again in the loud, high pitched whining tone, like that of a child who has been corrected. The funder continues on the subject and she uses overlapping ‘yeah’ (line 23) as a continuer and says ‘Yes I know’ (line 25), again in a child-like way. The funder insists again and Dragana (lines 27 and 29) uses ‘yeah’ to hasten the funder through what is perhaps an uncomfortable subject for her (see Schegloff 1982 on use of *yeah* signalling boredom). She only manages to get the funder to change the topic then by using ‘yeah’ (line 31) to confirm and to take a turn and add something which is not intelligible. The funder seems then, finally, to perceive the sense of disquiet with the trajectory of the talk.

So, in this small fragment, there seem to be a pattern of a high-pitched, loud ‘yeah’ being used to show engagement, a barely audible ‘yeah’ to encourage the funder to hasten his telling and a ‘Yeah’ or ‘Yes’ to initiate a confirming turn when the funder does not relinquish the ‘telling in progress’ (see Drummond and Harper 1993) of the uncomfortable topic. Interestingly, in this the beginning of the interaction, excluding the section dealing with her name, 77% of Dragana’s input is constituted by response tokens. And throughout the rest of the interaction, the same pattern is seen: the proportion of response tokens increases considerably when they are talking about something which is peripheral to the objective of her visit to the office.

Fragment 6.17

18. Funder: Okay you don’t come to classes any more no
 19. → Dragana: No <barely audible>
 20. Funder You should
 21. → Dragana: YEAH I know um
 22. Funder: Alright. er because if you live in Ireland afterwards
 23. → Dragana: yeah
 24. Funder: you are going to need
 25. → Dragana: Yes I know ^
 26. Funder: You are going to need to learn English
 27. → Dragana: Yeah
 28. Funder: I know it’s boring
 29. → Dragana: yeah
 30. Funder: but you should come to class
 31. → Dragana: Yeah I <will>
 32. Funder: Okay so what is it your daughter wants to do something no

In Fragment 6.18, Dragana utters a very clear ‘Yeah’ (line 33) as a discourse marker to initiate a turn concerning the funding. There is a minimal pause and then she says ‘my daughter want to go for’ and she gestures with her arms. The funder supplies the word ‘swimming’. She confirms with ‘yeah’ (line 35). After the funder finishes typing, Dragana mentions that her husband also wants to go (line 37). Then the funder says ‘In where’, whereupon she repeats the word ‘husband’. The funder begins ‘And your husband wants to go ...’ and she overlaps with ‘yeah’ (with rising intonation) before he can say ‘as well’ (lines 39). She confirms with ‘yeah’ (line 41). What is important here then is the emergence of a pattern of differentiation of sound quality and intonation on *yeah* when Dragana becomes more active when they are talking about something which affects her personally.

Fragment 6.18

32. **Funder:** Okay so what is it your daughter wants to do something no
 33. → **Dragana:** Yeah. my daughter want go to for <Gestures swimming>
 34. **Funder:** swimming
 35. → **Dragana:** Yeah
 36. **Funder:** <typing 10 sec>
 37. **Dragana:** and husband please
 36. **Funder:** In where
 37. **Dragana:** Husband
 38. **Funder:** And your husband wants to go
 39. → **Dragana:** yeah↑
 40. **Funder:** as well
 41. → **Dragana:** yeah

Fragment 6.19 below lasts for forty seconds. The conversation appears fluent despite a slight misunderstanding. Dragana’s linguistic deficiency is camouflaged by the multiple uses of ‘okay’ (seven times) and ‘yeah’ (three times) and by ‘no’ and ‘yes’ - all giving the sensation of fluency. ‘Okay’ and ‘yeah’ are used differently: here the former is louder and clearer, signalling agreement and marking understanding; the latter is then quieter, encouraging the funder to hasten his telling, bringing the conversation to a point where she can introduce a new request. Before looking at the interaction in these lines in more detail, it is useful and elucidating to isolate Dragana’s utterances from Fragment 6.19. Table 6.8 shows how sparse Dragana’s language is, highlighting even more the successful pragmatic impact of her use of minimal responses.

Table 6.8 Isolated utterances of Dragana from Fragment 6.19

Now no
No
Okay
Okay
Okay. name and day
Yes
Okay
Yeah I know
Yea::h
Okay
Yeah
Okay
Okay

In Fragment 6.19 then, the funder (line 42) asks if she knows any club and she responds ‘now no.’ He continues typing and then he tells her that she will have to find a place. She responds with a clear and loud ‘okay’ (line 50), and then repeats the word three times (lines 52, 54 and 58) out of four of her next five responses, the other being a clear ‘yes’ (line 56). The funder is explaining what to do with the form, and to demonstrate that she understands what he is saying, perhaps impatient with his telling, she prefaces a short turn with ‘okay’ (line 54), saying ‘Okay name and day.’ The funder understands that she has said Monday and answers, ‘Yes Monday will do,’ to which she responds ‘yes’ not realizing that he has misunderstood. The funder then begins to list the steps that are to be taken ‘You take it home with you’ (line 57) and she intervenes at each possible TRP (lines 58, 61, 63, 65, 67) – I say ‘possible’ here because he had not actually finished his TCU as he was listing out items. The only deviation from the use of ‘yeah’ (chiefly) and ‘okay’ is the complex ‘yeah I know’ (line 61), until she finally seems to want to bring an end to the listing, by uttering ‘okay’ loudly (line 70) to which he also answers ‘okay’.

Fragment 6.19

- 42. **Funder:** <Typing 4 sec> And do you know any club . any place
- 43. **Dragana:** Now no
- 44. **Funder:** Okay
- 45. **Dragana:** No
- 46. **Funder:** < typing>
- 47. → **Dragana:** <clears her throat>
- 48. **Funder:** <Typing 7 seconds total> So what you’re gonna have to do you’re gonna have to

49. find some place
 50. → **Dragana:** OKAY
 51. **Funder:** Take this with you okay
 52. → **Dragana:** Okay
 53. **Funder:** You fill it in for me
 54. → **Dragana:** Okay. name and day
 55. **Funder:** Yes. Monday will do
 56. → **Dragana:** Yes
 57. **Funder:** You take it home with you
 58. → **Dragana:** okay
 59. **Funder:** and you fill it in for me you see here is the the name
 60. of the club
 61. → **Dragana:** yeah I know
 62. **Funder:** just telephone number
 63. → **Dragana:** yea::h
 64. **Funder:** contact person
 65. → **Dragana:** okay
 66. **Funder:** the person you talk to <syllables>
 67. → **Dragana:** yeah
 68. **Funder:** and the price how much it costs
 69. → **Dragana:** OKAY
 70. **Funder:** Okay

Dragana takes the cue from the word ‘price’ (line 68 above) and the floor to deliver her second request (Fragment 6.20 below, line 71), ‘Yes and please my first daughter, Clarissa, go basketball...’ This is done in similar fashion to what Sacks (1972 and 1995 Volume 2:300) describes as a ‘stepwise move’, which is a subtle way of changing topics by finding something that is connected, a ‘topical pivot’. The ‘Yes’ followed by a minimal pause seems to serve to close the previous topic (as a discourse marker), which for her most likely is replete with unnecessary talk, and leads now to the delivery of more compromising requestive *punchlines*. She uses ‘Yeah’ (line 73) to take another turn and there follows a passage (75-84) in which confusion around the numbers forty or fourteen is resolved. Then (lines 83-88) Dragana tries to explain why she needs money for Clarissa’s basketball training – which is to buy her sports gear and pay for transport. These lines constitute a significant struggle for her and demonstrate again how limited her English is. I have isolated her explanation below to further elucidate her difficulties:

For one year and my er daughter before game in my <3 syl> play basketball and want now and go is university . and tell me er mum you ask teacher er I need er . something who for me sometimes paying for dress need dress and er every time I must er buy taxi for city I I it’s my room I think so er er every time yeah note is here I forget <W2> er. er niversity but too much er <P3> house for play and every time another and time and . se er start is seven eight nine o’clock (From Fragment 6.20, lines 83-88)

The funder has understood and recognizes what's coming next and completes for her, 'in the morning' (line 89). Dragana then uses 'yes' (line 90) and 'yeah' in a different way - uttering the words now not so loudly, in a tone that could be called conciliatory, lengthening the /je/ of 'yes' and producing a fall rise on the first 'yeah'. Then (line 94) she begins a turn with 'Yeah' and a minimal pause and says, 'Yeah and every time I must' (line 94), and the funder comes in, not interrupting as might be considered from the grammatical expectation (of *must* + infinitive, except in *yes I must/no I mustn't*) or by the rising intonation on 'must' – but because she pauses. So her TCU is complete. It is simply *Yeah and every time I must*, although that might sound and look anomalous from the native-speaker point of view.

Fragment 6.20

71. → **Dragana:** Yes.and please er my first daughter.Slavica go basketball for play for the <Syllables>
 72. **Funder:** Um
 73. → **Dragana:** Yeah in university every. Saturday
 74. **Funder:** Yes
 75. **Dragana:** And I pay for er one year ... fourteen euro . and er my daughter tell me I ask you
 76. **Funder:** Fourteen or forty fourteen
 77. **Dragana:** Zero four zero
 78. **Funder:** One four one four
 79. **Dragana:** No
 80. **Funder:** <??>
 81. **Dragana:** Four zero
 82. **Funder:** Okay
 83. **Dragana:** For one year and my er daughter before game in my <syllable> play basketball and
 84. want now and go is university . and tell me er mum you ask. teacher er I need er . something
 85. who for me sometimes paying for dress need dress and er every time I must er buy taxi for
 86. city I I it's my room I think so er er every time yeah note is here I forget <W2> er..er
 87. university but too much er <P3> house for play and every time another and time and . se er
 88. start is seven eight nine o'clock
 89. **Funder:** In the morning
 90. → **Dragana:** Ye::s
 91. **Funder:** Saturday
 92. → **Dragana:** Yeah √
 93. **Funder:** <??>
 94. → **Dragana:** Yeah . and every time I must↑.

The funder now (Fragment 6.21 below) gives Dragana the forms she has to sign and her next three 'turns' are realized with 'yes pl yes' (line 90), 'okay' (line 92) and 'okay' (line 94). The double 'yes' is clear, while 'okay' is rendered both times with a fall rise, perhaps indicative of her thinking her participation is coming to a close. The funder then tells her to wait for more forms and when he hands them over she uses 'yeah' eight times (lines 101, 103, 107, 109, 114,

117 (double), 123, 125) interspersing different prosodic contours for different meanings, or at least different attitudes:

- I. She utters ‘yeah’ quietly and with falling intonation when it is used for continuation and hastening - at times when the funder begins an explanation and she may not be interested (lines 101, 109, 114, 125).
- II. She utters ‘yeah’ with greater intensity when her interest is piqued again or, for example, when one of her family is mentioned (103, 107, 123, 117).

After using ‘yeah’ for six successive responses (lines 101-111), she reverts to a mixture of ‘okay’ and ‘yeah’ for the following section (lines 112-121), the former being used for confirmation (line 121) and for continuation using a fall-rise contour (lines 112, 119).

Fragment 6.21

95. → Dragana: yes pl- yes thank you
96. Funder: for I’ll give you another one for your other daughter okay
97. → Dragana: Okay[∇]
98. Funder: I’ll give you two just hold on there a second
99. → Dragana: Okay[∇]
100. Funder: <P10> now this it’s for one daughter this for the you have two daughters
101. → Dragana: °Yeah . °yeah
102. Funder: Now . now the girl who plays basketball
103. → Dragana: Yeah
104. Funder: Okay you write in write that does she speak English
105. Dragana: My daughter ↑
106. Funder: Yeah
107. → Dragana: Yeah ↑<surprise>
108. Funder: Get her to fill it in here for me and tell tell me what she does
109. → Dragana: °yeah ↓
110. Funder: and how much it
111. costs
112. Dragana: Okay[∇]
113. Funder: Right how much it costs for every week
114. → Dragana: ° yeah↓
115. Funder: and have you got the receipt <P3>
116. when you pay the forty euros
117. → Dragana: Yeah yeah
118. Funder: If you have the receipt I might be able to pay you for it
119. Dragana: Okay ∇
120. Funder: Alright so fill fill them both in
121. Dragana: Okay ∇
122. Funder: And we’ll see what we can do for her she goes out every week yeah
123. → Dragana: Yeah every
124. Funder: and she has to get a she has to get a taxi
125. → Dragana: °Yeah

The funder now asks her how much the taxi costs (Fragment 6.22 below), and instead of giving him a straight answer with a figure (because it is not as simple as this), she embarks on a telling, including justification for the request. I have isolated it again from the fragment to elucidate her linguistic deficiency:

Er my daughter every very Saturday go taxi way city and go for bus one euro ... and go and sometimes one mother er . is friend and wait where is Tesco and .. bring you where is and every time I must ask please do you want take my daughter and er er ...bus for one euro it's er. too much late and knows er every Fri go and small time play

Only when these longer tellings occur in the conversation is it evident that Dragana is not 'linguistically' competent. Evidence that she is conscious of this comes in line 133: 'Yeah you understand what I say'. Another example of selective prosody comes with her uttering of 'yes yes' (135), as she lengthens both words with rising intonation to confirm his understanding of her long telling. She then uses a complex 'Yeah thank you' (line 137) with falling intonation on 'yeah' and changes the topic. Thereafter 'yeah' (lines 141, 143) is used as a continuer, uttered quietly with falling intonation, and 'yes' (line 145) to confirm what she has just said.

Fragment 6.22

126. **Funder:** and how much does the taxi cost
 127. **Dragana:** Er my daughter every very Saturday go taxi way city and go for bus one euro
 128. **Funder:** Yes
 129. **Dragana:** and go and sometimes one mother er . is friend and wait where is Tesco and
 130. bring you where is and every time I must ask please do you want take my daughter and er er
 131. bus for one euro it's er. too much late and knows er every Fri go and small time play
 132. **Funder:** Yes
 133. → **Dragana:** Yeah you understand what I say
 134. **Funder:** she gets she gets too late she gets there too late
 135. → **Dragana:** ye::s↑ ye:s↑
 136. **Funder:** Okay . fine I understand
 137. → **Dragana:** Yeah↓ thank you but too much er like.
 138. **Funder:** yes
 139. **Dragana:** play
 140. **Funder:** She likes playing very much
 141. → **Dragana:** Yeah↓
 142. **Funder:** Okay get her to fill in
 143. → **Dragana:** yeah↓
 144. **Funder:** What time does she come home from school
 145. → **Dragana:** Four.I think so yes
 146. **Funder:** Maybe
 147. **Dragana:** same four yesterday
 148. **Funder:** you get her to fill fill in this for me

After taking the forms, Dragana, the relief palpable in her voice, announces that she is going for her tea (line 149 below). From there until the end of Fragment 6.23, a response token constitutes each of the fifteen responses uttered by Dragana, as an appointment for one of the daughters and the funder with regard to the receipt for the forty euro is arranged. The responses are isolated in Table 6.9 below.

Table 6.9 Isolated utterances of Dragana from Fragment 7.23)

Okay okay
Okay
Okay I know
Yeah
Yeah
Okay yeah
Yeah okay
Okay
Yeah
Yeah I know
Yeah
Okay
yeah
Yeah yes of course
Yeah

The complete gamut of meanings or functions with which Dragana infuses these response tokens in the forty-five second fragment (6.23) is isolated in Table 6.10 below. This stretch of talk (Fragment 6.23) is representative of her whole discourse during the meeting and her exploitations of response tokens. While, the interpretation of attitude, functions, emotion or meaning of prosody is for the most part subjective and I have largely interpreted it from an anglocentric point of view, the very infusion of the response tokens with the mixture of different contours (heard in Fragment 6.23 and listed in Table 6.13 below) is evidence that there must be different values attached, whatever they may be, and that such diversity

constitutes a concern to camouflage linguistic deficiency, reinforce the impression of fluency and negotiate meaning and objective. This concern is especially noticeable between lines 159 and 165 when Dragana and the funder are arranging the meeting with the daughter and the former uses a combination of intonation, loudness and pitch to vary the use of the response tokens – as if they were different words each time. Noticeable also is the use of the complex ‘Yeah I know’ (line 170) and ‘Okay I know’ (line 150) with the same intonation pattern on the response tokens, and the same intonation falling on the first and second words of the complex response tokens ‘yeah↑ okay↓’ (159) and ‘okay↑ yeah↓’ (161), even when the first and second words are interchanged.

From the prosodic features in Table 6.11 (isolated from Fragment 6.23) it could be said, in general that falling intonation is used for continuers, rising intonation is used for acknowledgement and rising intonation and loudness is used for surprise and acknowledgement of new information. High pitch is reserved for certain sequences.

Table 6.10 Isolated response tokens and their functions from Fragment 6.23

Line 151: Okay okay > confirms she has understood and signal to continue
Line 153 Okay > continuer
Line 155 Okay I know > discourse marker/or complex response token
Line 157 Yeah > continuer
Line 159 Yeah > expresses surprise or change of state of knowledge okay > signal to continue
Line 161 Okay > confirm yeah > signals to continue
Line 163 Yeah > acknowledges okay > confirms
Line 165 Okay > acknowledges
Line 168 Yeah > expresses everything understood and signals wish to close
Line 170 Yeah I know > signals to continue
Line 172 Yeah > signals to continue or hasten
Line 174 Okay > signals to continue
Line 176 yeah > expresses surprise or express change of state of knowledge
Line 178 Yeah > signals to continue Yes> confirmation
Line 180 Yeah > signals to continue or end

Table 6.11 Isolated response tokens, function and prosody, from Fragment 6.23

Line	Response tokens	Function	Prosody
151	Okay okay	Confirm/signal to continue	Even
153	Okay	signal to continue	∨
155	Okay I know	signal to continue, DM	↓
157	Yeah	signal to continue	↓
159	Yeah	Surprise, acknowledge	↑ Loud High Pitch
	okay	signal to continue	∨ High pitch
161	Okay	Confirm	↑ High pitch
	yeah	signal to continue	∨ High pitch
163	Yeah	Acknowledge	↑ High pitch
	okay	Confirm	∨ High pitch
165	Okay	Acknowledge	∨ High pitch
168	Yeah	Express understanding and close	↑ High pitch
170	Yeah I know	signal to continue	↓
172	Yeah	signal to continue/hasten	↓
174	Okay	signal to continue	Even
176	yeah	Express surprise or acknowledge new information	↑
178	Yeah	signal to continue	∨
	Yes	Confirmation	Even
180	Yeah	signal to continue and close	↓

Fragment 6.23

149. **Dragana:** I now go for my tea
 150. **Funder:** Okay no for Monday
 151. **Dragana:** Okay okay <even intonation here>
 152. **Funder:** And on Monday at four
 153. **Dragana:** Okay ∨
 154. **Funder:** Can you get her to no Monday no Wednesday
 155. **Dragana:** Okay ↓ I know
 156. **Funder:** It's Next Wednesday at four o'clock
 157.➔ **Dragana:** Yeah ↓
 158. **Funder:** You get her to come here to speak to me
 159. **Dragana:** Yeah↑ <surprise> <high pitch> okay∨ <high pitch>
 160. **Funder:** or Monday, Monday at four o'clock
 161.➔ **Dragana:** Okay↑ <High pitch> yeah ∨ <High pitch>
 162. **Funder:** Monday at four

163. → **Dragana:** Yeah↑<high pitch> okay∨ <high pitch>
 164. **Funder:** I'll tell you then
 165. **Dragana:** Okay <high pitch>∨
 166. <P10 while **Funder** writing>
 167. **Funder:** Okay
 168. **Dragana:** Yeah↑ <high pitch>
 169. **Funder:** Monday at 4 pm
 170. **Dragana:** Yeah↓ I know
 171. **Funder:** And you the receipt
 172. → **Dragana:** Yeah↓
 173. **Funder:** You clip it on here
 174. **Dragana:** Okay <even>
 175. **Funder:** Not this now
 176. → **Dragana:** yeah ↑ <high pitch>
 177. **Funder:** the receipt for the forty euros
 178. → **Dragana:** Yeah ∨ yes of course
 179. **Funder:** Okay
 180. → **Dragana:** Yeah↓

There are nine further uses of 'yeah' in Fragment 6.24 below. Most of these carry an even staccato intonational contour (lines 169, 175, 177, 183, 185), perhaps indicative on the one hand of a reluctance to engage in small talk about her language-learning experiences and the Balkan War and on the other hand, a desire to end the conversation, or the realization that the meeting is winding down. The funder's use of 'Er okay' (line 195) signals his perception of this discomfort and the conversation moves on. This consecutive use of *yeahs* may, as Schegloff (1982:85) suggests, reflect 'high incipient disinterest'. The exceptions occur after talk on these topics has finished – on line 191 (fall rise when using as a marker before full turn), on line 194 (uttered very quietly with a falling tone), line 202 (fall rise) and line 204 (fall rise when used as a discourse marker before full turn). A double 'yeah yeah' is also used (line 198), uttered evenly for continuation, but followed by 'yes' for reinforcement. There is another incidence of this type of reinforcement of 'yeah' by 'yes' (204), which also prefaces a full turn. 'Yes' is also used for confirmation and to preface a turn (173) and for simple confirmation (line 179).

Fragment 6.24

166. **Funder:** Er where did you learn your English here and in an other places
167. **Dragana:** No::∨
168. **Funder:** here very little
169. → **Dragana:** Yeah <even> very little
170. **Funder:** In school did you do English in school
171. **Dragana:** Before
172. **Funder:** Yes
173. → **Dragana:** Yes in my country before but it's lo::ng time
174. **Funder:** Long time ago
175. → **Dragana:** Yeah <even staccato>
176. **Funder:** In Croatia is it in Croatia
177. → **Dragana:** yeah <even staccato>
178. **Funder:** are you from Croatia
179. → **Dragana:** Yes
180. **Funder:** You're a Serb then are you
181. **Dragana:** Pardon
182. **Funder:** Are you a Serbian
183. → **Dragana:** Yeah <even>
184. **Funder:** Okay
185. → **Dragana:** Yeah <even>
186. **Funder:** Okay <P2> that's a problem right
187. **Dragana:** It's a problem? <Laughing 5s>
188. **Funder:** No
189. **Dragana:** <Laughing>
190. **Funder:** no it's a problem because you can't live in Croatia
191. → **Dragana:** Yeah ∨ eh it's true you know
192. **Funder:** Yes
193. **Dragana:** Oh you know sometimes er for my country
192. **Funder:** Yeah it's difficult for you
194. → **Dragana:** Yeah ↓ <very quiet>
195. **Funder:** Er okay
196. **Dragana:** Thank you b
197. **Funder:** You should go to more classes improve your English because in the future
198. → **Dragana:** yeah yeah <even>yes
199. **Funder:** your children will be in school
200. → **Dragana:** yeah <even>
201. **Funder:** and you'll need to speak to the teachers
202. → **Dragana:** Yeah ∨
203. **Funder:** So you should go to class
204. → **Dragana:** Yeah ∨and yes I know and I'm shy ∨
205. **Funder:** <Laughing>: okay
206. **Dragana:** Thank you so much and er it's Monday
207. **Funder:** I'll see you on Monday
208. → **Dragana:** Yeah. <even> thank you again
210. **Funder:** Bye bye
211. **Dragana:** Bye

6.8 Conclusion

As mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, after interacting with the residents, not only in short interchanges, but also in longer ones such as those described here, the other staff and I came away from these speech events thinking that the residents' command of English was better than it actually was. The characterization of their English in Chapter Six, however, painted a picture of a very small working vocabulary, massive limitations in the nine broad categories of spoken forms, and avoidance of present simple forms (the -s morpheme) and past forms (both regular and irregular verbs). The isolation of longer turns uttered by the residents in this chapter has also evidenced their lexicogrammatical limitations.

How do the residents negotiate their way through these relatively long meetings then? How do the residents manipulate their way through a linguistic minefield, executing, to use McGregor and White's (1990:1) phrase, 'a crucial influence on the trajectory of interaction,' which results in this case in the gain of the instrumental objective: funding to take part in a sports activity?

The answer is provided by a blend of corpus linguistics and detailed qualitative analysis drawing on conversation analysis and ethnographic detail. Word frequency lists show how dependent the residents' language is on response tokens, especially *yeah* and *okay* (which account for 10% of their output) in the Funding Corpus, but also, to a lesser extent on *yes*. The isolation of long stretches of turns here in which no other word is uttered, is further evidence of this dependency. The detailed analysis of how the residents of the Dun Cluain Centre use these response tokens, supporting Fellego's (1995: 196) claim for them as the 'hinge between the linguistic and communicative competence,' completes the picture of their interactional success.

The pragmatics of the interaction is more important for the residents than referential talk (an example is the non-use of the past simple form for time reference use and in contrast its manipulation for mitigation has been presented above). The residents of the Dun Cluain Centre perhaps will not have the same concerns of well-formedness that, for example, students of English in ELF communities will have – because for the latter well-formedness is usually the objective. For the residents of this 'total institution' the objective is non-pedagogical; the objective is survival. The objective is successful daily transaction and negotiation with the English-speaking staff and peaceful interaction with the other residents (see below Chapter

Seven). But they are conscious of their lexicogrammatical shortcomings and use various means to camouflage their limitations and express their needs. They transmit engagement with, and deference to, the funder, they concede control and take control of the trajectory of the talk when that is needed (and perhaps also camouflage this control). They sidestep topics, they hasten the funder and generally bring the discussion around to topics such as special requests for their children and husbands. They change from the status of unequal submissive listener to speaker.

All of this is done largely by recourse to communicative intuition (their varied use of prosodic features) and the maximum exploitation of minimal responses, especially the token *yeah*. It is not, of course, that the residents manipulate the production of *yeah* in a purposeful or premeditated way. It issues forth unconsciously, at times accompanied by intonational contours common in English language use and sometimes with new and diverse intonational contours. But, given the prominence of *yeah* in the corpus, it is safe to say that, although the residents do not embark on an interaction with the ruse of using *yeah*, they have unconsciously identified its usefulness.

The residents exploit *yeah* and *okay* to the full, both semantically and discursively, linking them with pauses and prosodic features such as silences, loudness, softness, prominence, and different intonational contours in a manipulation of what seems to be an underlying, universal interactional system.

I close this chapter with a summary of the strategies used by the residents in the Funding interaction, principally based on the tokens *yeah* and *okay*.

- *Um, yeah, uh huh, oh* and *okay* are used to avoid the turn.
- Even when *yeah* is used for understanding, at times the evidence shows that the person, in fact, has not understood, so it camouflages any interim difficulty that might cause the system to break down.
- *Yeah* is used to interrupt and to get funder to change topic.
- *Yeah* and *okay* are used as a discourse marker of speaker incipiency.
- *Okay* and *yeah* are used to introduce and change topic in much the same way as *right*.
- *Yeah* is used during background conversation to maintain contact with a foreground speaker.

- *Ah* is used during conversation in a foreign language as a receipt of new information, but directed at the native speaker of English.
- *Yeah* is used as a hedge and as a strategy of politeness.
- *Yeah* is used as a continuer of extended turns.
- *Yeah* is used to pass the turn back quickly.
- *Yeah* is used as a hastener.
- *Yeah* is used for agreement.
- *Yeah* is used for tag questions in substitution of the canonical format.
- *Okay* and *yeah* substitute semantically for both single words (polar *yes*) and long phrases.
- The function of *yeah* is seen to change from that of continuer to discourse marker as the speaker (resident) moves from the status of submissive listener to teller.
- *Yeah* and *okay* are used as part of a sidestep topic shift process
- *Yeah* has been seen to change discursal function according to the intonational contour and intensity.
- *Yeah* is used to express surprise.
- *Yeah* is used to substitute small talk.
- The responses token *yeah* and *okay* may at times be used to transmit boredom, disinterest and impatience.
- *Yeah* signals to the main teller (the funder) that he is in charge of the trajectory of the discourse, which thus saves negative face. However, the signal may be false and may camouflage underlying power over the trajectory of the talk by the residents.
- The response tokens generally serve to camouflage disfluency and lexicogrammatical limitations.
- The minimal responses and specifically *yeah* are used with cumulative effect.
- *Yes* is used for confirmation, reinforcement of *yeah* and to preface a full turn.

Chapter Seven

Interactions

People beside mountains one language next mountain next nation next language

Boris Krasnov

7.1 Introduction

This final chapter focuses on how the residents manage talk-in-interaction with one another. It is based on the recording of a meeting of the residents on the subject of a forthcoming integration day. The complete interaction lasted for 45 minutes and totaled 7,652 words. The residents are Novak, a twenty-four year old male Serbian, Holly, a forty year old female Nigerian, Boris Krasnov, a fifty-four year-old male Georgian, Kenda, a fifty-four year-old male Congolese, Mussimbwa, a twenty-six year-old male Congolese, Cheryl, a twenty-six year-old female Kenyan, and Nassim, a forty-year-old male Algerian.

The consideration (Schegloff 1982) of talk by speakers who share a language and schematic knowledge as an interactional achievement – in so much as they are able to monitor the syntactic, prosodic and pragmatic features of the current turn to project their own responses (Sidnell 2010) with the orderliness of one speaker speaking at a time and speaker change recurring (Sacks *et al.* 1974:700), would seem to vaticinate, *a priori*, significant difficulties for this speech community, comprised as it is of people who speak English as a lingua franca with its ‘extraordinary, deviant, and sometimes “abnormal” linguistic behaviour’ (Firth 1996: 237), in the context of life in a ‘total institution’ (Goffman 1961) and in the context of clear racial tension.

Here, the principles and theoretical underpinnings of conversation analysis (Sacks, Schegloff, and Jefferson 1974) are adopted to analyse the talk-in-interaction of the residents with one another through the medium of lingua franca English. There are various analytical difficulties, not least the fact that conversation analysis is ‘predicated on an assumption that participants are linguistically and conversationally competent, that the competence is shared, fully developed, and stable’ (Firth 1996: 252). Conversation analysis also presupposes co-membership of a community and concomitant access to the culture of that community, which is not possible in the case of the residents interacting with one another and also not possible for this researcher. However, this is why here the cross-referencing to the ethnography in Chapter Four and the characterization of the lingua franca in Chapter Five is, as has been mentioned in the previous chapter, an essential scaffold for the conversation analysis.

In effect, thus, apart from using the framework of conversation analysis to examine how the residents interact with one another, the assumptions that hold true for monolingual and

monocultural lingua franca conversation analysis will also be tested by the close observation of turn-taking sequences, adjacency pairs, overlapping and interruption, topic change and repair as described by Jefferson, Sacks and Schegloff (1974). The question of whether all of these components function in the same way in lingua franca interaction as they do in monolingual interaction, and the larger questions of whether order pertains, will be answered affirmatively: generally one person speaks at a time and speaker change recurs, and the speakers not only monitor features of the current turn to project their responses, they also gatekeep in order for the group as a whole to maintain focus on the reason for the meeting, which is the basis for the data examined in this chapter.

I begin in Section 7.2 with a general overview of collaborative features used by the residents, most of which are found in a stretch of discourse lasting 120 lines which I reproduce in its entirety in Appendix 6. I then devote separate sections to the adjacency pair (7.3), overlapping and interruptions (7.4), facilitative and supportive minimal responses (7.5), repair (7.6), and topics (7.7). The transcription system here omits detailed consideration of pauses, silences and prosodic features as the focus is on the use of the above macro components of conversation analysis framework.

7.2. General commentary on interaction

Fragment 7.1 (Appendix 6) begins with Boris Krasnov, the Georgian, asking Holly Adibisi, the Nigerian, how her country managed to unify its many ethnic races into one nation state. Although the answer comes 120 lines later when Holly finally says, ‘It just happened like that I don’t understand,’ the intervening talk provides substantial evidence of the maximum exploitation of both linguistic and pragmatic resources for the general purpose of facilitating communication. In line 3, Holly interrupts Boris as the result of the understandable misinterpretation of the words ‘how was it’ as the possible TRP and the end of his long question. She is about to say ‘how it was’. But Boris had not finished his question, and he continues. Holly again mistakes the rising intonation on ‘okay’ (line 5) as a question and responds ‘Yes’ when Boris is still in full flow and probably using ‘okay’ as a discourse marker signalling the change to his unfolding point or question. Holly’s confusion is due in part to her misreading of Boris’s intonation but also to Boris’s idiosyncratic penchant for convoluted questions. There is no lexicogrammatical confusion.

- 1 **Boris:** How happened er that two people culture joined in one state it's is very
 2. wonderful how was it
 3 **Holly:** it was
 4 **Boris:** happened English well so long ago join ers your culture
 5. together by force okay↑ <syllables>
 6 **Holly:** Yes
 7 **Boris:** and after that you have a possibility to separate

(From Fragment 7.1/Appendix 6)

The interaction in the following fourteen lines flows as fluently as a narrative. This can be appreciated visually (although with the bias of the transcriber) in the way that I have transcribed these lines (7-23/Fragment 7.1) here into a conflated narrative-type 'paragraph':

... and after that you have a possibility to separate ∩ to put ourselves (???) is like you speak French he speak French so you meet together you start speaking French you (???) from French country but they don't speak the same tonation as they speak ∩ yeah ∩ yeah together but they are under the same state ∩ is the same like the former Soviet Union ∩ yeah ∩ because two hundred about three hundred nations ∩ nations ∩ different languages languages ∩ If everybody will study so much languages is impossible

The symbol ∩ signals speaker change and latching, which takes place when there are no gaps in transitions between participants' turns and the speakers' onset, 'precisely no sooner and no later than the moment at which a possible completion point has occurred' (Jefferson 1983:17).

While such interaction is evidence of speakers closely monitoring features of the current turn to project their own responses, it also constitutes evidence of the collaboration and mutual support, a common feature of the whole meeting (see Firth 1996: 237). There are many other incidences in Fragment 7.1 of such collaborative support, as will be seen in the following examples.

In lines 34-36, Kenda, a Congolese resident, informs the residents that there are four official languages in the Congo. Novak, a Croatian Serb, responds with encouragement in a typical second part agreement of an adjacency pair assessment (see Hutchby and Woofit 2001: 43-44):

34 **Kenda:** in my country we have four national languages
 35 Lingala Swahili Tshiluba and the Kicongo
 36 **Novak:** ah that's good

(from Fragment 7.1)

In lines 40-42, Boris the Russian, can be seen to complete a phrase for Kenda who has paused briefly as if stuck for the word

40 **Kenda:** when you are speaking in
 French
 41 everywhere everyone ...
 42 → **Boris:** everyone understand you

(from Fragment 7.1)

Another example of this is seen in lines 27-32, as Kenda, who is struggling for a word, is helped by Novak's completion (see Rühlemann (2007: 101), on the 'bond' created by such support), and by Holly's repetition of the word 'language' that she perceives Kenda to be having trouble with.

27 **Kenda:** that's what you
 28 think that they are the same . English is the <syll>
 29 **Novak:** official
 30 **Kenda:** official language
 31 **Holly:** language
 32 → **Kenda:** for everybody

(from Fragment 7.1)

The opposite of this type of collaborative co-construction was observed by Firth (1996: 246) in his examination of lingua franca interaction using conversation analysis. Giving one instance of the non-performance of 'candidate completion', he goes on to say that 'such activity typifies the corpus as a whole.' One possible reason for this difference is that Firth was examining a corpus of lingua franca business talk; therefore the business people in question may have been more sensitive to face-threatening other-repair; the residents in the Dun Cluain Centre (except for some university educated Nigerians) did not seem to be overly concerned by their status as non-native speakers. In this chapter, as will be seen, the attention of the participants is directed at repairing content 'mistakes' rather than those of linguistic deviation. Of course, a point

116) before obtaining a full, reply, satisfactory to him. But note how (line 119) he apologizes for pressurizing her and avoids her losing face in this manner in aid of the communication, and in spite of his dislike of Nigerians and of Holly in particular.

- 116 **Boris:** How happened who join this so different and so different languages and er so
117 different er er culture who joined er in one Nigeria country <Novak phone>
118 **Holly:** That is how that is how that is it came about I don't know
119 →**Boris:** so sorry
120 **Holly:** it just happened like that I don't understand
(From Fragment 8.1 below)

In this precursory analysis of Fragment 7.1, I have shown how the residents manage the interaction and collaborate with one another by means of the exploitation of features of conversation as described by Sacks *et al.* (1974) – repair (completions and repetitions) the adjacency pair, latching and direct gatekeeping of the topic. Notwithstanding the awareness of, and the attention to, these pragmatic features, the ‘human’ element and the primary motivation to facilitate communication are very noticeable. For example, Kenda is one of the weakest speakers in this interaction, not in the linguistic sense (his level was close to B2 CEFR), but in the sense of his difficulty to participate due to a weak voice. However, all through the meeting he is encouraged and facilitated in the same way as he is in Fragment 7.1. Boris Krasnov, the Georgian, on the other hand, who in ethnographic interviews gave evidence of extreme racial and gender bias (especially towards Nigerians), is seen here to suppress such inclinations in benefit of the facilitation of the talk in interaction - the communication. He is patient with Holly, the Nigerian, with her interruptions and largesse, and even says ‘so sorry’ (line 119) when he pursues his original question.

7.3 The adjacency pair

The major example of how the residents exploit short adjacency pairs to interact with one another is seen in Fragment 7.2 (Appendix 7). This is a different dynamic from the one that developed at the reception desk (the use of second parts as requests) through daily social practice (see section 4.3.4). Here, the use of adjacency pairs is immediate and communicatively ‘contingent’ (Firth 1996: 238). Although these are not typical adjacency pairs, with first parts

and expected second parts, a very clear adjacency pair exchange pattern develops between Novak and Nassim. There is no overlap or disorder until the rest of the group lose interest and begin to talk in the background (lines 32-35) at a point when the interchange around the doubts about Nassim's nationality has gone on for too long for the others, whereupon Holly intervenes again as gatekeeper.

Between lines 2 and 12 there is a clear question and answer sequence. Novak begins the questioning (Pair 1) and uses 'no' for the tag *aren't you?* Nassim, rather than saying *yes* or *no*, says 'Algeria' loudly as if he is annoyed at the question. Although I am reluctant to interpret attitudes in the prosody of the residents, my background knowledge allows me to interpret that the rising intonation at the end of Novak's next utterance (line 4/Pair 2) suggests disbelief. Nassim takes it as another question and answers affirmatively ('Yeah'). Novak then asks another question (line 6/Pair 3) and intercalates 'not' serving doubly to express his disbelief (for a reason that will become clearer below), giving Nassim the opportunity to retract. Nassim answers 'no' and Holly tries again (line 8) to gatekeep – 'You have to do all this.'

Pair 1

Novak: Q You are from Egypt no↑
Nassim: A ALGERIA

Pair 2

Novak: Q You are from Algeria↑
Nassim: A Yeah

Pair 3

Novak: Q You are not↑ from Egypt
Nassim: A No

In Pair 4 (lines 9-10) Novak asks Nassim if he is from Egypt or Algeria, omitting the standard auxiliary verb *are* and the particle *or*. Nassim responds 'no', perhaps as an answer to the final part of the utterance 'you are from Egypt.' This leads to another question pair, (Pair 5/lines 11-12), in which Novak explains that he thought Nassim was from Egypt – but the explanation ends in rising tone on Egypt, making it interpretable as another question. Nassim replies, giving prominence to the word *told*, highlighting his impatience now.

Pair 4

Novak: Q You are from Algeria you are from Egypt
Nassim: A No

Pair 5

Novak: Q I thought <syll> from Egypt↑
Nassim: A I told you Algeria many times

The foregoing sequence leads to a new conciliatory phase (lines 13 – 20) in which Novak explains why he has doubted Nassim’s nationality, and the latter responds more calmly.

In Pair 6 (lines 13-14) Novak says he has never asked Nassim about this and restates that he thought Nassim was from Egypt. Nassim replies, insisting that Novak has asked before.

Pair 6

Novak: Oh I didn’t ask you I thought you were from Egypt
Nassim: You ask me

In Pair 7 (lines 15-16) Novak begins with the conciliatory ‘But’, to explain to Nassim why he believed he was Egyptian. Novak answers ‘Yeah many times,’ perhaps understanding that Novak has said ‘Algeria’.

Pair 7

Novak: But you say <four syllables>
Nassim: Yeah many times

In Pair 8 (lines 17-18) Novak reiterates that he thought Nassim was from Egypt and he now elicits the confirmation from the other participants. Only Kenda responds.

Pair 8

Novak: Yeah but I thought you were from Egypt he is from Egypt yeah
Kenda: I said

In Pair 9 (20-21) Nassim now begins to concede, judging by the response from Novak ‘Yeah many times’.

Pair 9

Nassim: <syll>

Novak: Yeah many times

In Pair 10 Nassim, now calmer, provides more information, explaining that they are ethnic and speak Arabic, and Novak as an understanding which might be glossed as *really*. Nassim, in a third part, confirms again.

Pair 10

Nassim: Coz we are ethnic <we speak> Arabic

Novak: You speak <syll>↑

Nassim: Yes we speak Arabic.

In Pair 11 (lines 25-26), Novak asks if ‘That’s another dialect,’ and now Nassim answers that Egyptians speak a dialect of Arabic as well. And this is where the misunderstanding arose. Novak and Nassim had spoken previously about this and Nassim had told Novak that he understood Egyptians as well. The confusion could have begun with the word ‘Egyptian’ itself, which signifies both the nationality and the language.

Pair 11

Novak: Q That’s another dialect↑

Nassim: A Yeah Egyptians as well

Finally, in Pair 12 (lines 27-28) Novak returns to his initial assertion that he thought Nassim was Egyptian, but this time he adds the caveat ‘as well’ in admission perhaps that he had misunderstood.

Pair 12

Novak: Egyptians I thought you were from Egypt as well

Nassim: I told you Algeria

These exchanges demonstrate that two participants, who both are from different cultures and speak different languages, exploit short pair exchanges to co-construct or establish meaning. As Goffman (1981: 12) says:

Given a speaker's need to know whether his message has been received, and if so, whether or not it has been passably understood, and given the recipient's need to show that he has received the message correctly – given these fundamental requirements of talk as a communication system – we have the the essential rationale for the very existence of adjacency pairs, that is, for the organization of talk into two-part exchanges.

In summary, Novak begins by asking Nassim about his nationality, having understood from a previous conversation (which he subsequently explained to me) that Nassim was Egyptian. The sequence continues for 12 lines until Nassim gives prominence to the word 'told' and then an explanatory-conciliatory phase ensues in which Novak tries to explain why he thought Nassim was Egyptian and Nassim refers to the language he speaks, which is also spoken by Egyptians. Novak seems to understand and now (lines 21-28) initiates another question sequence, this time avoiding the insistence that Nassim may be Egyptian, saying now that he 'thought'. This co-construction of meaning leads eventually to Novak's final verdict and the sequence when he begins (line 30) 'Maybe you said...' Holly interrupts at the point when he is likely to conclude with words such as *you spoke Egyptian*.

The possibility of exchanging information in such short pairs, where there is a greater chance of understanding, and a lesser chance of misinterpretation, facilitates co-construction of meaning by Novak and Nassim. Additionally, the use of prosodic prominence by Nassim seems to bring an end to the question and answer sequence, leading to a conciliatory phase, and back again to a less insistent form of conversational to and fro.

7.4 Overlaps and interruptions

Jefferson (1983, 1986) has shown that most overlaps occur at possible transition relevance places (TRP) and that the overlaps, both at onset and completion, not only are orderly, but orient to the rules of turn taking itself, or are - as Sidnell (2010) puts it – are a by-product of

the system. Interruptions, on the other hand, are) projections in the middle of the prior speaker's TCU, that is, the projection does not occur in the vicinity of the TRP (Schegloff 1973).

Both overlaps and interruptions are plentiful in the interaction. The interest here resides in the determination of the status of these interactional features in the context of the lexicogrammatical limitations of the participants, the interracial tensions existing in the total institution, and the management of the interaction. Most incidences of overlap in the interaction, in fact, have an orderly onset. The following are some examples.

In Fragment 7.3 below, there are two examples of overlaps that occur at possible transition relevance places. Novak, Boris and Holly joke about charging the management for their services in the organization of the integration day. In lines 1-2 Novak says they must charge for 'that' (uttered with an even tone), and laughs before he has time to supply the noun. Boris overlaps the laughter, possibly either interpreting 'that' as a demonstrative pronoun), or the laughter as the completion of the turn. Therefore, the onset of the overlap, beginning between the final /t/ of the adjective and the laughter, can be considered a legitimate transition relevance place. Novak does not complete what he was going to say, although he takes up the proposition again a few lines later (line 6).

Holly then orients to the falling intonation on 'president↓' (line 4) as a possible end of the turn construction unit ('No, I'm not the president') and overlaps 'just' – which shows that Novak was about to initiate a secondary component to his utterance or a second turn construction unit. This was probably going to be something like *I'm just saying we have to charge*. In fact, after the overlap he repeats 'we have to' twice - such repetition being common after overlapped utterances (Schegloff 1987).

These two overlaps, then, occur at legitimate turn transition places and the first speaker stops as is common in overlapping, and the light-hearted conversation continues without disruption to meaning making.

Fragment 7.3

- 1 **Novak:** Listen now everybody now we have to make plan how much we charge
2 → for that ↔ hahaha
3 **Boris:** ah you are president
4 → **Novak:** No I'm not president, just
5 **Holly:** I'm the president
6 **Novak:** We have to we have to charge
7 **Boris:** President Mau

In Fragment 7.4 below, Boris has understood that Kenda has finished his turn and that the possible turn relevance place is after 'prepare'. But what Kenda was actually going to say was *No it is very good to prepare early*. Boris has misinterpreted the TRP, but there is no disruption. This stops talking momentarily and then finishes the TCU (line 7). What is important here is orientation to solidarity, of which there are many more examples in the interaction.

Fragment 7.4

1. **Kieran:** We wanna do it again in now in November the end of November
2. **Boris:** Okay er
3. **Kieran:** If you've got any ideas
4. **Boris:** It's not so easy to get to think and act on this
5. → **Kenda:** No it is very good to prepare
6. → **Boris:** it's very very
7. **Kenda:** early

Much of the overlapping that is evidenced in the interaction not only orients to possible transition relevance places and the turn-taking system, but it also seems to be purposefully supportive and collaboratively performed. The following are examples.

In Fragment 7.5, Novak realises that the conversation is being recorded. Kieran asks Novak (line 20) if they had been talking about him. Everyone laughs and Novak begins to answer the question, 'Yes coz I said how much we have to charge today.' Holly (line 24) overlaps Novak after 'have to', and says 'yeah we have...' and then repeats what he has said 'to charge' and goes on to repeat it another two times. The overlap happens at a transition relevance place (Holly predicts that Novak will finish the TCU with *charge*), but what is significant again is Holly's face-saving solidarity with Novak.

Fragment 7.5

- 1 **Novak:** Did you record everything
- 2 **Kieran:** Yes
- 3 **Holly:** Yeah
- 4 **Novak:** <syllables>
- 5 **Holly:** <sylla> everything
- 6 **Novak:** Before↑
- 7 **Holly:** Yeah
8. **Kieran:** <unintelligible overlapping>
- 9 **Novak:** No before
- 10 **Holly:** Yeah
- 11 **Novak:** Five minutes
- 12 **Holly:** Yeah
- 13 **Novak:** Ach hahahahahahahahaha
- 14 **Holly:** It's on
- 15 **Kieran:** No no two or three minutes
- 16 **Kenda** <unintelligible stretch>
- 17 **Novak:** Before you gone out eh
- 18 **Kieran:** Yes. to get
- 19 **Boris and Holly:** hahahahahahahahahahaha
- 20 → **Kieran:** Were ye talking about me yeah?
- 21 **All together:** hahahahahahahahahahahahaha
- 22 **Novak:** yes coz I said how hhh much
- 23 → we have to charge today
- 24 → **Holly:** yeah we have to charge we have to charge we have to charge
- 25 money for that

Fragment 7.6 contains another example of such support. Novak identifies the possible transition relevance place at the pause after 'English' (line 23). Holly continues after the pause and says 'that everybody speak English' and Novak overlaps with 'everybody everybody...', Holly stops talking and Novak finishes with '... knows English'. The overlap constitutes a type of repetition and completion constitutive of the co-construction of talk (see Schegloff 1984 and Ono and Thompson 1996).

Fragment 7.6

19. **Novak:** Which one do you speaking with Nigeria
20. **Holly:** Yoruba
21. **Novak:** And English is not official there
22. **Holly:** It's official you can speak in English if you want English but my traditional
23. language is Yoruba the general language is English.that everybody speak English
24. → **Novak:** everybody everybody
25. knows English
26. **Holly:** Yes everybody speak

As further evidence of this type of supportive overlapping, I provide an example which has been seen previously in Fragment 7.1 (Appendix 5). Kenda who as mentioned previously, is one of the weaker participants in the interaction – not in the linguistic sense but in terms of assertiveness and voice intensity – is supported by Boris and Nassim. Nassim, firstly, gives him positive overlapping feedback (line 36). Kenda continues and pauses after ‘French’ and ‘go’ (line 38) clearly interpretable as possible transition relevance places. The fact that none of the other speakers take the turn in these places also constitutes support to him – as they seem not to want to interrupt the flow of his speech which is faltering. Boris then (line 42), orienting towards another possible transition relevance place (after ‘everywhere’), overlaps ‘everyone’ - Kenda’s continuation of the TCU (line 41) - and completes for Kenda ‘understand you yeah’, (in a similar way to Novak previously) predicting what Kenda was going to say. Kenda then completes the TCU (lines 43-44) himself (overlapping some of Boris’s utterance).

34. **Kenda:** in my country we have four national languages
 35. Lingala Tshiluba Swahili and the Kikongo
 36. → **Nassim:** ah that’s good
 37. **Kenda:** and the official
 38. → language is French. if you can go. everywhere in the country
 39. **Nassim:** <council>
 40. **Kenda:** when you are
 41. → speaking in French everywhere everyone <Syll>
 42. → **Boris:** everybody understand you yeah
 43. → **Kenda:** understand you
 44. <syllables>
 45. **Boris:** Like in Russia

(From Fragment 7.1)

Most of the interruptions – taken here as projections that occur in the middle of the prior speaker’s TCU - that occur in the interaction are not deeply disruptive and they do not seem to be hostile in the sense of ‘illegitimately’ taking the floor. In fact, most of them evince sensitivity to the needs of the participants and the interaction as a system. Reference has already been made to Holly’s interruption of Novak at the end of Fragment 7.2. The interruption (line 31) occurs in the middle of Novak’s TCU. From the point of view of Novak and Nassim then and their co-construction of meaning, it is disruptive. Novak is just about to concede to Nassim that he may have misinterpreted a previous conversation with him. However, from the point of view of the rest of the participants, and in consideration of the main given topic of conversation and the management of the interaction, it is not disruptive; in fact, it is facilitative. The ‘private’ and peripheral interlude between Novak and Nassim has excluded the other speakers (who

begin to talk in the background). Holly restates the main topic and reincorporates the other speakers with words such as ‘your country’ and ‘your men and women’.

27. **Novak:** Egyptian I thought you were from Egypt as well <Kenda talking in background>
28. **Nassim:** I told you Algeria
29. **Holly:** Yes
30. **Novak:** Maybe you said
31. **Holly:** {the discussion is <all talking 30 secs>
32. the day we’ll discuss your country and how you’re doing your country what is
33. tradition of your country what the <syll> how marriage is taking place how
34. <syll> how are your men and women viz a vis

(From Fragment 7.2)

In Fragment 7.7, Kieran has just come back into the room to check to see if everybody has arrived. His first turn (line 1) is interrupted mid-TCU by Holly’s interjection of the minimal response ‘yes’. Kieran does not complete the utterance, which could be glossed as ‘Okay when Primrose comes’ with *you can explain to her...* However, the fall-rise tone of the ‘yes’ uttered by Holly seem more facilitative or ‘continuative’ than disruptive. Kieran digresses to comment that Primrose is always late – which he would not have done if Holly had not interrupted. But this change serves to de-formalise the proceedings, Kieran continues and eventually says what he was going to say.

There is a similar interruption by Holly (line 8) in the midst of Kieran’s explanation of how to fill in the participation form. She comes in before Kieran finishes the explanation. However, she could have interpreted the possible TRP at the end of the utterance ‘put them in’. That notwithstanding, the interruption is a joke (Holly does not have ten languages, she has two - Yoruba and English) and may be a further attempt to alleviate the formality, promote solidarity and facilitate the production of shared meaning (see James and Clarke 1993).

Fragment 7.7

1. **Kieran:** Okay when Primrose comes
2. → **Holly:** { yes ∨
3. **Kieran:** Primrose is missing she’s late as usual
4 so when she comes you can explain to her yourselves what we’re doing
5 okay alright so if you wanna have a seat around there <10s> now as well
6 write in your names your nationalities your languages if you have two or

Fragment 7.9 below. This fragment is preceded by a long turn by Holly on why the residents are meeting. She says:

What the activities we feel that it will be beneficial to not only ourselves but everybody from every country so that is why we are selected that is why we selected everybody from different country who give their own idea ...of what you feel this type of traditional day what are we going to do for entertainment for barbecue for cooking or cultural things.

Novak responds, but does not follow Holly's indications re culture and tradition. He begins by using the marker 'you know' to signal he is changing the theme, which he finally concludes and clarifies seventeen lines later.

1 **Novak:** You know what I think what's more nice



17 Now it would be nice Peter to have some list scores statistic you know [for how many countries people pass through]

The initial utterance beginning 'You know' elicits an invitation to be allowed to continue with the turn and the topic and for someone to acknowledge shared knowledge. Novak receives such cooperation from Holly's minimal response 'um' (line 2) with rising intonation (despite the fact that her topic has not been responded to). Instead of saying what he thinks would be nicer, Novak delays his completion for a preview on how he came to his conclusion, signalled with 'Before' (line 3). As mentioned, he is encouraged in this preview by Holly's 'um' (line 4) and 'yeah' (line 6) and his meaning becomes clearer, encouraged by his co-participants:

Before I count ↘ *how many countries* ↘ *as people here*

Boris also supports the topic with 'oh yeah' (line 8), and Holly uses 'ah' to acknowledge new information.

Fragment 7.9

- 1 **Novak:** You know what I think what's more nice
- 2 → **Holly:** Um↑
- 3 **Novak:** Before I count
- 4 → **Holly:** um
- 5 **Novak:** how many countries
- 6 → **Holly:** yeah

- 7 → **Novak:** as people here
 8 **Boris:** Oh yeah
 9 **Novak:** They count fifteen more <sylla> whatever
 10 **Boris:** More
 11 → **Holly:** Ah
 12 **Novak:** Fifty yeah

There is a short digression then on the topic of how many people there are in Dun Cluain, until finally (lines 17 and 18) Novak completes the original utterance, again with the cooperation ('ah me yeah') and approbation ('Uh huh') of Holly. Novak finally gets to his point - which is that he has counted how many nationalities there are in Dun Cluain.

- 17 **Novak** Now it would be nice Peter to have some list scores statistic you know
 18 **Holly** Ah me yeah the statistics of
 19 **Novak:** for how many countries people pass
 20 **Holly:** Uh huh
 21 **Novak:** not moved <pronounced /mu:vid/> <sylla> absolutely <sylla> I counted
 22 before I counted before it was around fifty or something fifty

Another example of such support by minimal response is evidenced in Fragment 7.10 below. Boris is talking about his country Abkhazia, about which no one has ever heard (he was considered a Russian by the other residents). Nassim and Holly support him, principally with the use of continuative minimal responses. Boris's first utterance about his country (lines 1-2) is difficult to understand. Noticing Boris's struggle to make himself understood, evinced by the six occurrences of the pause filling 'er' and 'ser', Nassim offers encouragement (line 3) with the minimal response 'yeah', coming in the middle of two pauses fillers, perhaps already anticipating the second 'er'. Holly contributes similar support (lines 6,11,13) and finally (line 18), completes the turn for Boris.

Fragment 7.10

- 1 **Boris:** It's like er North ser ser Ireland and Ireland it's so stupid er er it's and it more
 2 bad because it's er Georgia and Abkhazia er
 3 → **Nassim:** yeah
 4 **Boris:** er not one thousand years' ser history
 5 and er like (syll) England
 6 → **Holly:** um
 7 **Boris:** or like <syllable> European country like Greek look Abkhazia was

8. er Homer you know Greek poetry he talk about Abkhazia and er <syl> scheme he write a
 9. poem it's about Abkhazia ers Greek came in Abkhazia long long way and only in
 10. nineteen twenty er fifth er Stalin put Abkhazia in South Georgia like <syllable> in public
 11 → **Holly:** Um
 12 **Boris:** Look when Soviet Union was <one/war> by all stupid ers er
 13 → **Holly:** yeah
 14 **Boris:** nobody held
 15 responsible for this er at the present time so much people Russian talk about
 16 oh United States is possible Ireland is possible everybody is possible only all
 17 idiots ers can have(?) rob this country
 18 → **Holly:** run the country

Another example is seen in Fragment 7.11 below. Holly uses 'um' and 'yeah' to support Novak's digression from the simple question as to whether he missed his home. Novak says (line 6) 'You see somebody ask me before if I want to return you know.' The 'you know' elicits a keepgoing response – which is provided in the form of 'um' by Holly (line 7). Novak continues and clarifies 'in time' (line 8) which Holly again supports in the form of 'um' (line 9), allowing him to deliver his main point, which is to say that if he could to go back to 1997, he would accept moving back to his country. Holly (line 11) confirms her understanding of his point of view with the double 'yeah yeah'. This again allows Novak to delve into deeper personal reflections. Therefore, not only is the flow of the interaction facilitated, but a speaker's more personal reflections are tolerated and supported at a meeting which has been summoned in order to discuss the events of an integration day.

Fragment 7.11

1. **Holly:** You don't even miss your home?
 2. **Novak:** No and you
 3. **Holly:** I don't
 4. **Novak:** <syll> miss in Nigeria?
 5. **Holly:** No
 6. → **Novak:** You see somebody ask me before if I want to return you know
 7. **Holly:** um ↔
 8. **Novak:** in time
 9. → **Holly:** Um
 10. **Novak:** I say it would be nice if living in nineteen ninety seven no really
 11. → **Holly:** Yeah yeah
 12. **Novak:** between I don't know when I'm born in nineteen seventy nine and nineteen
 13. ninety seven but now at the moment <?> won't go there because it was
 14. reason what I came here
 15. **Holly:** Ya ya <fifties?> for security's good
 16. **Boris:** The police
 17. **Novak:** It's not just security. everything

The use of minimal responses in the interaction among the residents themselves, therefore, takes on a more supportive role here, rather than being used as a device to control the trajectory of talk or camouflage dysfluency as was observed in the previous chapter. In fact, the residents, in interaction with one another, seem to be unconcerned about linguistic limitations, and fluency in their own talk is facilitated collaboratively as has been shown earlier in the analysis.

7.6 Repair

In conversation analysis repair covers a broad range of phenomena (see Chapter Three). There are two main categories. The first is a procedural in which participants in talk in interaction manage the turn-taking system; for example, they stop talking when there is an overlap. The second is correction of some fault in the content of what someone has said, even though as Schegloff, Jefferson and Sacks (1977) point out, there may be no factual error at all. I will concentrate here on the latter type of repair here given the context of the lexicogrammatical limitations of the speakers.

There are very few examples of self-initiated repair and all of these are performed by Holly, the Nigerian speaker of English as a second language. The example below shows Holly self-repairing by repeating ‘how far is’, but it creates trouble for Kieran who interprets that she means Yugoslavia (or Croatia). Kenda repairs for both Holly and Kieran by clarifying - by means of giving prominence to ‘From’ - that what Holly actually meant was *How far from Croatia is Russia* – which she was pointing to on the wall map.

Fragment 7.12

1. **Holly:** How far is how far is your country from here Russia
2. **Kieran:** Yugoslavia
3. **Kenda:** From Russia
4. **Holly:** It seems very far
5. **Kenda:** Um so far
6. **Novak:** [Not so far

Most of the remaining repair in the interaction is either other-initiated self-repair or other-initiated-other repair, and the majority of the latter is constituted by completions (see Duncan, 1974; Schegloff, 1984; Schiffrin, 1987; Lerner, 1991, Ferrara, 1992; Ono and Thompson, 1996; Rühlemann 2007; and Clancy and McCarthy 2014, for the part played by completions in conversation and the co-construction of meaning).

The following example has been seen already in previous analysis on overlapping. Boris overlaps Kenda supportively, but when the latter makes a further pause, Boris completes ‘understand’ for him, and Kenda then (softly) completes the turn ‘understand you’.

(From Fragment 7.1)

- 34 **Kenda:** in my country we have four national languages
 35 Lingala Tshiluba Swahili and the Kikongo
 36 **Nassim:** ah that’s good
 37 **Kenda:** and the official
 38. language is French. if you can go. everywhere in the country
 39 **Nassim:** <council>
 40 **Kenda:** when you
 41 are speaking in French everywhere everyone <Syll>
 42 → **Boris:** everybody understand you yeah
 43 **Kenda:** °understand you° <syllables>

The next example is similar to the above, and in this form it is representative of many such couplets throughout the interaction where people provide simple completion for one another when there is a pause or hesitation. Novak is explaining that he prefers not to get to know people in the Centre anymore because they come and go so much. Holly perceives the trouble with the slowness of delivery and the pause after ‘is’ and completes for him.

Fragment 7.13

Novak: I’m not interesting for them because every two weeks three weeks somebody is.

Holly: Coming in and coming out

In the next example there is a distinctive type of repair. Novak says that he has counted the number of countries represented by people in the Centre. He then says (line 15) there are fifteen countries, but elicits comment or repair by saying ‘whatever’, showing there is some doubt

the question. As Novak's voice lowers (line 5), Holly overlaps him repeating 'in the integration day'. However, Mussimbwa misunderstands (line 7), thinking that they are going to talk about integration in Ireland, so Holly repairs, clarifying with a full explanation that they are going to talk about the party (8-9). Mussimbwa then (line 10) asks for clarification and Holly confirms with 'yeah'.

Fragment 7.14

1. **Novak:** Where are you from <directed at Mussimbwa>
2. **Kenda:** I am from <syllables> Congo <Dishasa> <mumbles more>
3. **Novak:** What's would- you .like.
- 4.→ **Holly:** to do
5. **Novak:** °in integration day°
- 6.→ **Holly:** in the integration day
7. **Mussimbwa:** Ah integration in Ireland <pronounced /aiInD/>
- 8.→ **Holly:** They are going to have a party in two weeks' time to discuss what
9. they re going to do do on that day
10. **Mussimbwa:** On that day
11. **Holly:** Yeah

There is no factual error (see Schegloff, Jefferson and Sacks, 1997) in what Mussimbwa says in the final example, but the other participants are doubtful and all begin to talk together. Nassim attempts to other-initiate repair with rising intonation on 'who', whereupon Mussimbwa clarifies that he is talking about tribes.

Fragment 7.15

1. **Mussimbwa:** Four hundred tribe
2. **Kenda:** °Four hundred tribe° < simultaneous talk>
3. **Nassim:** Four who↑ <others speaking>
4. **Mussimbwa:** Tribes yes

In general then, there is little self-repair in the interaction. Most of the repair is either other-initiated self-repair or other-initiated-other repair. The majority of the latter is constituted by completions. This is in contrast to Firth's (1996: 256) finding, also working with a lingua franca, who found that other-repair was less prevalent in the data, suggesting that 'such devices have the potential for focusing attention on *the form* of the other's talk - a practice these interactants appear averse to engage in.' As I have said previously, this view presupposes that the participants can identify deviant usage – and Firth (1996: 246) does not doubt this as he

shows other instances where the participants in the interaction incorporate into their own turn deviant grammar and vocabulary of the other party and remarks that this is frequent in lingua franca interaction.

7.7 Topics

The ‘given’ topic in the interaction is the future celebration of an integration day. Understandably, related sub-topics such as language and culture also emerge, as do other more interpersonal topics. The great achievement of the non-native speakers of English in this unchaired interaction (see Burns *et al.* 1996 on how receptionists and information officers etc. gate-keep topics) is that they stay on topic for most of the forty five minutes and each of the eight participants manages to share his or her views. As stated, other topics emerge, and they are initiated without apparent disjunction and managed smoothly. Even the simultaneous background conversations involve the principal topic.

In the following section I will look at how (1) the residents gatekeep the main topic of conversation, 2) how they use simple words and vocalizations as initiators and receptors of topic change, and finally, 3) how even when there is apparent disjunction and confusion in relation to topics, this is not caused by lexicogrammatical limitations.

7.7.1 Topic management

As mentioned previously, various speakers take on the role of topic-gatekeeper and principally Holly, the Nigerian, and Boris, the Georgian have been mentioned in this regard. The following example, which has been mentioned previously, is typical of the continuous gatekeeping of both these speakers. The incidence of gate-keeping occurs (in Fragment 7.16 below) after a long sequence (32 lines) in which various related and peripheral sub-topics have emerged. Holly attempts (line 32) to bring the group back to the initial and assigned topic of conversation:

32. Holly: So what are we saying

Fragment 7.16

1. **Holly:** There are too many Ghanaians
2. **Nassim:** About four or five
3. **Holly:** Because one of his
4. **Nassim:** yeah
5. **Holly:** one of his girlfriends
6. **Nassim:** yeah I know a little better
7. **Mussimbwa:** Um hum
8. **Holly:** Your girlfriend is from there
9. **Mussimbwa:** From there yes
10. **Nassim:** Ah from there
11. **Various:** <unintelligible >
12. **Holly:** And you
13. **Nassim:** No I offer her a <wife>
14. **Mussimbwa:** <There> about sixty countries this the former country here <this I know>
15. **Nassim:** Fifty countries
16. **Holly:** Eh eh ah
17. **Novak:** Maybe forty
18. **Nassim:** Forty
19. **Mussimbwa:** No it's not
20. **Holly:** Hah are we going
21. **Novak:** What that moment
22. **Holly:** We actually got a big compound but they never come
23. **Kieran:** They never <??> <All talking>
24. **Holly:** The Senegalese
25. **Kieran:** One or two
26. **Nassim:** Most of them are from Africa I think
27. **Kenda:** From Africa
28. **Nassim:** Most of them African
29. **Holly:** Most of them from Africa <pause>
30. **Kieran:** Did er did you sign that?
31. **Kenda:** No I think <looks at signing sheet> <3 seconds>
32. ➔ **Holly:** So what are we saying?

Speakers other than Holly and Boris also engage in gatekeeping. Fragment 7.17/Appendix 8 contains an example of another speaker, Novak, the Serbian Croatian, taking on the role over a long sequence. Firstly (line 1), to get the conversation going, he asks a direct question: 'What would you like on that day?' Holly responds and mentions what she would like. Boris and Kenda also respond. Over the next 40 lines the topic moves between traditional food, music and dance and language. Perhaps it could be said that Novak monitors the general talk rather than the content topic, and he does this by asking clarifying questions, supporting answers, asking a review question and closing with the marker 'okay'.

- | | | |
|----|--------------------|--|
| 1 | Line 1. | Novak: ‘What would you like on that day?’ (Direct question) |
| 2 | Line 13. | Novak: ‘Whose songs are traditional songs?’ (Clarifying question) |
| 3 | Line 19. | Novak: ‘Which one do you speaking with Nigeria?’(Clarifying question) |
| 4 | Line 21. | Novak: ‘And English is not official there?’ (Clarifying question) |
| 5 | Line 24-25. | Novak: ‘ everybody everybody knows English’ (support by overlapping) |
| 6. | Line 28. | Novak: ‘National language’ (support by repetition of speaker’s words) |
| 7. | Line 33. | Novak: ‘So is there any more language’ (review question) |
| 8. | Line: 38 | Novak: ‘Okay’ (closing) |

7.7.2 Markers used to for topic changing and accepting

The markers used for introducing and shifting topics in the interaction are principally simple words and vocalizations. These simple markers – *okay, but, so, like, um, listen, you know, ah, yeah* – substitute for more complex markers such as *incidentally, talking of, still, anyway, there we are, really, right* associated with native speaker English (see McCarthy 1998 and O’Keeffe *et al.* 2011 for extended lists). Below I provide some examples and I include markers that are used by the next speaker to signal acceptance or receipt of the topic change.

- **Example 1: A question followed by *yeah* as tag**

Fragment 9.18

Holly: Are we we are talking about how the day is going to be... yeah

Holly uses a question format and ‘yeah’ as a tag to bring the participants back to the main topic.

- **Example 2: *So* and a question**

Holly: So what are we saying?

(From Fragment 7.16)

The conversation had diverged at this point and various minor topics were being introduced (Novak and Nassim were talking about Egypt and Nassim’s nationality). Holly uses ‘So’ and a question to attempt to bring the participants back to the topic of preparing the integration day.

- **Example 3: *You know and um***

Novak: **You know** what I think what's more nice

Holly: **Um**

(From Fragment 7.9)

Novak introduces an idea for the party with the marker 'you know'. Holly accepts the switch with 'um'.

- **Example 4: *Now and ah me yeah***

Novak: **Now** it would be nice Peter to have some list scores statistic you know

Holly: **Ah me yeah** the statistics of

(From Fragment 7.9)

After speaking about the idea of counting the number of nationalities in the Centre, Novak introduces another related topic, that of the management providing them with statistics. He uses 'Now' to introduce the new topic. Holly accepts the change with 'Ah me yeah'

- **Example 5: *Okay listen...and repetition***

Fragment 7.19

Novak: **Okay listen** I am living here more than year and a half

Holly: A year and a half

Half way through the interaction, Novak, who has not spoken for a while, introduces another topic, that of the people who have moved on from Dun Cluain. He uses 'Okay listen' to alert his colleagues to the change whilst Holly accepts the topic switch by a cooperative repetition - 'a year and a half' (see McCarthy 1988, Bublitz 1988 and Tao and McCarthy 2001 for the part played by repetition in the co-construction of meaning).

- **Example 6: *Listen***

Novak: Listen now everybody now we have to make plan how much we charge
for that

(From Fragment 7.3)

Novak, unaware that the recording device is running, uses the marker ‘Listen’ to get everyone’s attention and propose that they charge for their services.

- **Example 7: *Like and Yeah because***

Boris: Like in Russia

Holly: Oh you are (two words)

Nassim: like in Russia ha Russia they many language

Boris: Yeah because more than two hundred languages look it’s impossible

(From Fragment 7.1)

The participants have been talking at length about various languages and countries. Boris, to change the topic to Russia, simply interjects ‘Like in Russia’, which draws the attention of Holly and Nassim (who were the main speakers at this point and time), allowing him then to embark on his topic, which he introduces with ‘Yeah because’.

- **Example 8: *Okay and But***

Holly: If some people are talking in their language in Yoruba I may not even hear but there it is all counted on the Yoruba for there are some <syllables> here but then I’m Yoruba

Boris: **Okay**

Holly: So like in Lagos city we have in Nigeria the Ibo we have about eight states of Yoruba where they are all under Yoruba where they are the states are different and their languages the way they speak their word is different

Boris: **But** I ask you how happen that so different different se culture

(From Fragment 7.1, line 75)

Boris uses ‘Okay’ to acknowledge talk about Nigeria, although Holly does not answer the question he had asked her. He then restates the question using ‘But’. He could have said ‘Okay but’ after her first divergence, but the separation of the two markers shows that he is aware of the need for politeness and for people to have their say.

Boris repeats this strategy again a few lines later:

Boris: **But** will you tell me about what I ask you sorry
(From Fragment 7.1, line 112)

Example 7: *So*

Fragment 7.20

Mussimbwa: So for each province because almost we are given province <S2 whistles> so three province they speak one language

Holly, Novak, Nassim and Kenda are discussing the different languages in different countries. Mussimbwa, who has not been participating, breaks in using ‘So’ as if it express ‘As I was saying...’

7.7.3 Disjointed talk in interaction and non-standard English

Given the linguistic diversity and the diverse levels of English of the eight participants in the interaction, there is surprisingly little evidence of lexicogrammatical limitations constituting a serious obstacle to the co-construction of meaning and the organization of the talk. The most confusing and apparently disjointed sequence is found in Fragment 7.21 below. The apparent confusion may have its roots in non-standard English such as:

‘No I offer her a wife’ (line 13)

and

‘What that moment’ (line 21)

Additionally, the multiple sub-topics – Ghanaians, Senagalese, the number of countries represented in the Centre, new arrivals, the size of the Centre, and peripheral topics – girlfriends, marriage proposals, all introduced in 29 lines of conversation, the apparent paucity of semantic links between these topics, and the apparently random responses (line 3 and line 6) all contribute to what *appears* to be confusion. Closer examination and background knowledge enlighten the situation.

Holly says (line 1) there are too many Ghanaians in the Centre. Nassim responds that there are four or five. Holly then (lines 3 and 5), with the aid of the continuer ‘yeah’ uttered by Nassim,



says ‘Coz one of his one of his girlfriends.’ This first short sequence may seem haphazard to the reader of the transcription and perhaps even to some other participants in the talk, but the confusion is not caused by linguistic or interactional limitation; if such confusion exists it is actually due to a private joke between Holly and Nassim. Nassim’s reply in line 6, ‘Yeah I know a little better’ may seem even more confusing, and Kenda acknowledges (‘um’) as if he understands. From line 8 it becomes clear that Holly was referring to the fact that ‘one’ of Nassim’s girlfriends is Ghanaian. This explains Nassim’s sub-standard English (line 13) when he says ‘I offer her a wife’ (for *I offered to marry her*). But it is not the sub-standard English that causes either Kenda’s misunderstanding or his desire to switch back to an earlier topic (line 14); it is caused by his lack of awareness of Nassim’s situation.

Kenda is responding to a rhetorical question that Novak had asked 50 lines previously (2 minutes) with regard to what he would like to do on the integration and his informing the group that he had counted the number of nationalities in the Centre.

You know what I think what’s more nice ↴ before I count how many countries

After Kenda’s intervention (line 14) the topic moves back to the number of nationalities that are present in the Centre (lines 14-20). Holly tries to gatekeep again ‘Hah are we going?’ (line 20) and the topic changes again. The final stages of Fragment (lines 21-29) may again seem difficult to understand because of non-standard English (‘what that moment’/‘come’ for *came*, for example), but this was not the case for the participants. Holly, Kieran, Nassim and Kenda are actually talking about new asylum seekers who had arrived by bus that afternoon. Holly thinks there are some Senegalese, Kieran confirms there are one or two, and Nassim believes most of them are African; Kenda supports this interpretation by repeating ‘from Africa’, Nassim reiterates the proposition (Line 28), which Holly reproduces.

Fragment 7.21

1. **Holly:** There are too many Ghanaians
2. **Nassim:** About four or five
3. **Holly:** Coz one of his
4. **Nassim:** yeah
5. **Holly:** one of his girlfriends
6. **Nassim:** Yeah I know a little better
7. **Kenda:** Um

8. **Holly:** Your girlfriend is from there
9. **Kenda:** From there yes
10. **Nassim:** Ah <two sylla>
11. **Holly and Kenda:** <unintelligible>
12. **Holly:** And you
13. **Nassim:** No I offer her a wife
14. **Kenda:** About fifty countries this the former country
15. **Nassim:** Fifty countries
16. **Holly:** Eh eh ah
17. **Novak:** Maybe forty
18. **Nassim:** Forty
19. **Mussimbwa:** No it's not
20. **Holly:** Hah are we going
21. **Novak:** What that moment
22. **Holly:** We actually got a big compound but they never come
23. **Kieran:** They never <sylla>
24. **Holly:** The Senegalese
25. **Kieran:** One or two
26. **Nassim:** Most of them are from Africa I think
27. **Kenda:** from Africa
28. **Nassim:** Most of them African
29. **Holly:** Most of them from Africa ...

7.8 Conclusion

In the general preliminary analysis undertaken at the beginning of this chapter, I showed how the residents managed the interaction and collaborated with one another by means of the contingent orientation to, and the exploitation of, typical features of conversation. Crucially, in this preliminary analysis I have also highlighted both the empathetic human element and what perhaps may be called the 'universal' human motivation to communicate or collaborate in communication (see Section 3.6.1.3 on universals in turn-taking). In the subsequent analysis of specific conversational features – the adjacency pairs, overlaps and interruptions, minimal responses, repairs and topics – the same pattern pertained: the residents exploited these conversational features to facilitate communication. In other words, they oriented to a turn-taking system; but crucially they also empathetically and corroboratively and contingently oriented to one another's communicative needs (see Sections 3.7.1.2 on co-construction in turn-taking). They oriented to communicative solidarity. In general, the one-speaker-at-a-time-rule pertained and confusion and disarray that might have been expected in the interaction of eight people who did not share the same language did not materialize. Furthermore, lexicogrammatical limitations had little negative impact on communication and the maintenance of orderliness in the interaction.

Conversational orderliness is a construct of sociology and linguistics in the sense that when people talk, they do so to communicate and not to be orderly. In everyday conversations, as Sacks, Schegloff, and Jefferson (1974) and other conversation analysts have shown, the orderliness is undoubtedly there and the rules of turn-taking undoubtedly apply, but speakers who create such orderliness and follow such rules are unconsciously competent in this regard – just like natives speakers of a language are unconsciously competent speakers in the sense that they produce well-formed ‘sentences’. But neither speaking a language competently (in the linguistic sense) nor maintaining orderliness, constitute the motivation. Orderliness and well-formedness are evolutionary by-products of the primeval human need to interact through communication – which *is*, it is argued, the human motivation. As I have shown in other chapters, well-formedness is not essential for communication. People resort to many different strategies (such as using emblematic gestures and silences, minimal responses that are shaded with multiple meanings, and manipulated adjacency pairs) to transact and negotiate.

In this chapter I have shown that a group of eight non-native speakers of English of widely varying levels who come together to talk about the celebration of an integration day, use the simple strategies of cooperative, collaborative and contingent conversational facilitation in order to interact with success. The byproduct is the orderliness.

In summary, the following specific points were highlighted in this chapter:

- The main topic or *raison d'être* of the meeting was followed.
- The main topic and the interaction was gatekept by various speakers.
- All the residents had a voice, physical and metaphorical, and that voice was mutually negotiated and supported by the residents.
- Adjacency pairs were exploited in order to co-construct meaning.
- Repair, specifically completion and repetition, was exploited to collaboratively facilitate communication.
- Overlapping and interruptions, rather than disrupt the interaction, facilitated communication.
- Overlapping in general occurred at possible transition relevance places.
- The use of minimal responses collaboratively facilitated communication.

- The residents used simple words and vocalizations to change topics and accept topic change.
- Lexicogrammatical limitations did not impact negatively on the orderliness of the interaction.
- Lexical or content limitations that interfered with meaning-making were overcome by collaborative co-construction of meaning, principally through encouragement and other-repair completion.
- The dynamic of camouflaging dysfluency evident in the previous chapter by means of minimal responses was not evident in the interaction among the residents; here it facilitated meaning making and there seemed to be a general disregard for the issue of linguistic limitations.

Chapter Eight

Conclusions

Meredith: *We just keep praying that we get out of this place.*

Reine: *Yeah.*

Meredith: *As early as possible that's all we can do pray.*

Reine: *But it's not easy.*

Meredith: *God is with us.*

8.1 Introduction

Between the years 2002 and 2005 I recorded and studied the communicative interaction between the English speaking staff of the Dun Cluain Reception Centre and the residents, none of whom spoke English as a native language. I also recorded the interaction among the residents themselves, although this was a difficult task given that they networked on the basis of other lingua francas. Between 250 and 300 people were present in the Centre during my stay there, of these many were babies and children under the age of twelve. The adult population fluctuated between 170 and 200 adults. According to Department of Justice records, for example, there were 195 adults present on the 7/3/2004. In the recordings 90 adults appear, which account for almost 50% of the total adult population. I supplemented the recordings with field notes and many of the other residents feature in these.

Over 120,000 words were recorded, 98,000 words of which were transcribed and form the larger research corpus which was used to analyze interaction in detail. Of the 98,000 words, 51,000 pertained to the residents exclusively, and these were isolated into a separate corpus which I used to characterize the English of the residents.

My presence in the Centre from 9am to 5pm every day also allowed me to observe and record the residents' daily communicative behaviour. Over 10,000 words in field notes were gathered in this way. Additionally, I carried out ethnographic interviews, focusing the questions on communicative habits and the communicative practices of the Centre. Invariably, the residents related their histories of persecution and flight, and I have included examples of these in Chapter Four as such context impacted on the way they communicated. Their histories of persecution and flight and the tedium and routine of their daily institutionalized lives was perhaps the only schematic knowledge that they shared when involved in a communicative event, given that there was no one culture or language held in common.

8.2 Addressing the limitations and difficulties of the study

As mentioned in Chapter One, there were a number of limitations to the present study. The following list includes both limitations and difficult issues that needed careful consideration and resolution:

- the fact that this is a study of one reception centre at one point and time;
- the fact that video recordings were not possible;
- the initial reluctance of the residents to provide information;
- the fact that not all the residents were represented.

The conditions of this particular centre are unique in that it was the first system-built reception facility in Ireland. The community is unique also in the sense that it is transient; sometimes people only stayed for a few days, others for a few years. The residents had little opportunity to interact with local people because the Centre was situated in a remote area. In a sense, this uniqueness is not a limitation of the study – this is actually what constitutes the study. Here I have answered questions about *how* people communicate in such a situation. The general tendency was to minimize communication in the acquisition of the basic necessities of survival in daily life, to increase the communicative effort when negotiating in longer processes, trying to maintain control over the trajectory of the talk and, cognizant of the non-native status as speakers of English, trying to camouflage lexicogrammatical limitations, and to collaborate with one another in conversation, reacting in an intuitive or contingent manner, with no great apparent concern for lexicogrammatical ‘infelicities’ (Firth 1996: 253).

Extensive field notes were taken in view of the impossibility of using video recording equipment and of the impossibility of using audio recording equipment in the canteen. In the case of the latter, only *representations* of interactions pertained and these data were not used as part of the lingua franca research corpus. The extensive field notes provided rich ethnographic data as well, but unfortunately, could not provide a complete and detailed ‘picture’ of specific interactions. The interactions which have been analyzed were audio-recorded, but paralinguistic features have only been represented by the ethnographic notes, and suffered the limitation of time and bias.

After initial reluctance on the part of the residents to impart information, my daily presence in the centre and involvement with the residents in everyday activities, facilitated their acceptance of me as a member of the community. Their reflections on their recent histories and their concerns with regard to the asylum seeking process demonstrated how their communication was impacted, but the knowledge of these schemata informed the whole thesis.

Half of the adult residents of the Dun Cluain Centre figured in one way or another in the data that was collected, whether in the ethnographic interviews, the data from observations in the canteen, the observations and recordings at the reception desk, or in the data of the recordings of speech events. This is a good numerical representation of the residents. I also took care to include as many nationalities as possible, especially in Research Corpus B that was used for corpus analysis. There are more female participants represented in the study than male, but this followed the patterns of the population of the centre. No recordings or observations of the children living in the centre were made for ethical reasons.

8.3 The design and use of learner corpora

Most studies of non-native speaker English are in the context of language learners in EFL and university contexts (see Granger 2015, Prodromou 2008, Cogo and Dewey 2011 for example), and these of course, can aspire towards the chimera of representativeness of these communities. The corpus used in this study perhaps less representative in that it did not gauge for the usual variables of age, gender, and educational background, instead tried to capture the natural communication of the daily human struggle in a lingua franca. This corpus, perhaps, contributes more to an understanding of general contingent lingua franca communication than a normal learner corpus would do. It gathered data to delve deeper into interactional competence rather than purely viewing competence in a more atomised way, for example in grammar, writing, speaking and listening. This corpus was collected from life *in situ*. The approach taken here show the benefit of taking a broader view of the potential for studying non-native language.

Of course, when one retrospectively considers corpus design, the conclusion, at least for this researcher, is that for the purposes of the analysis of the use of a lingua franca by a multilingual community in a confined situation, the corpus should be multi-modal. Ethical and legal considerations, for the moment, prevent the constitution of such a corpus. But perhaps for those who design learner corpus,

8.4 Reliability, validity and generalizability

Are the conclusions with regard to this dynamic generalizable? In the case of the replication of the same contextual situation, perhaps bodies such as the Department of Justice could consult

this study, not only as far as linguistic aspects are concerned, but also with regard to psychological and social issues such as those of the evident apathy and isolation of living in a remote direct provision centre. Such psychological and sociological consideration is outside the remit of this study and for ethical reasons I cannot comment here, but the communicative situation described is worthy of consultation.

One, of course, could also see the communicative situation of the Centre as a microcosmic representation of Irish society, given anecdotal reports in Ireland of the reluctance of immigrants to integrate fully in Irish society. Certainly, in my own situation as a public service organizer of English classes for immigrants, asylum seekers and refugees in the city of Galway, I can see on a daily basis that most of the students attend because they are obliged to do so by the Department of Social Protection. Once they have attained a basic A1 or A2 CEFR-level they are even more reluctant to continue. Perhaps this is a realization on their part of the sufficiency of the limited English they possess (as it is for the asylum seekers in the Dun Cluain Centre) to satisfy *their* needs.

The consideration of the communication that can be achieved with such a reduced level of English, and the fact that immigrants are very aware of this (as has been shown in Chapter Six here specifically), has also affected my own specific work as the writer of the ESOL policy for the public service body I work for. Initially I had recommended that provision should move beyond the minimum which is recommended in various policy documents such as the White Paper on Adult Education (2000), that public service provision should offer higher level courses and a greater number of hours. But with the vision of the findings of this thesis, it is clear that once immigrants have acquired CEFR Level A2 (which is what is provided in most public service organizations), they have been provided with the basic tools of communication in English for everyday interaction. Then, perhaps, the onus should be on the immigrants themselves to pursue, independently, higher level courses in specialized EFL schools, in the same way as a native-English speaker would do if there were a requirement in his or her job to acquire a higher level of a specific language. Furthermore, perhaps there is a need to include a stronger focus on learner autonomy and self-directed learning in any modules that such students pursue at basic levels. In this digital age there are many opportunities for people to improve their language without constituting a burden on public finance. While such questions are outside the remit of this study, I have expounded this ultimate reflection as an example of how

the findings of this thesis can contribute to associated questions and serve as a beacon of further research.

8.5 The main research questions

The main research questions were:

1. What are the characteristics of the English the residents use?
2. How do the residents use this English to interact with the English-speaking staff in the daily communicative situations and events?
3. How do the residents use this English to interact with one another?

The quantitative characteristics of the English that the residents spoke were established in Chapter Five. These can be summarized as follows:

- The core-working vocabulary of the residents of Dun Cluain is limited to one hundred words or fewer.
- The frequency of *yeah* is far greater in the research corpus (the 2nd most frequent item) than in the CANCODE and BNC corpora (proportionally).
- The 'nine broad categories of basic spoken English' are massively underrepresented.
- Chunks signalled by O'Keeffe, McCarthy and Carter (2007:46) as 'regularly occurring strings of two or more words which seem to possess unitary meanings or function,' have an insignificant frequency.
- There are no verbs carrying the third person present simple morphemes in the first five hundred words of the corpus. The residents use the infinitive form to express third person.
- There is very little 'well-formed' reference to the past; that is, past forms of both irregular verbs and regular verbs with the '-d' morpheme was rarely used.
- The analysis of sub-corpora highlighted the keyness of *yeah* and *okay* in service-encounter type interactions.
- In the non-service-encounter type interactions (that of the meeting of the residents) the dependence on *yeah* and *okay* was much less significant.

The question of how the residents managed to interact on a daily basis with the staff of the Centre and with co-residents with such apparent lexicogrammatical limitations is not only elucidated in the linguistic analysis but also in Chapter Four, which describes the atypical past and present contexts of the lives of the residents. Their ways of speaking were impacted by these contexts. For example, in some cases they were reluctant to talk about their language abilities or even demonstrate them. Those recognized as group leaders were reluctant to lose face as far as the expression of politeness or submissiveness were concerned, and the fact that such leadership existed in certain groups, which networked on the basis of other lingua francas and languages, nationality, geography, religion and perhaps physical similarity, inhibited the speaking of other group members. The residents generally communicated very little with one another and with the staff of the Centre, despite significant efforts made when they were newly arrived. The institutionalized nature of the Centre, the non-control over such basic aspects of life as when to get up, when to eat, what to, what to feed their children and the daily ritual of signing in, lead to an eventual state of lethargy which also impacted on communication. The communicative efforts made in the beginning of their stays degenerated quickly into communication by gesture, by mumbling, by gazes, and by adjacency pair second parts exploited for requestive purpose. These communicative practices, of course, engendered by the institutionalization of their lives, were also perpetuated by daily social practice. As I have said, there was little communication among the residents and that was not only due to the institutionalized nature of their lives but also to racial antipathy. There seemed to be a general black and white divide, but there was also evidence of specific racial prejudice toward the Nigerians, the communicative rationale for which I showed to be linguistically unfounded.

In Chapter Seven I looked at interaction in the Education Office where people went to request funding for sporting activities. The interactions were much longer than those at the reception desk and canteen and constituted a negotiation process rather than a simple transaction. The isolation of longer turns uttered by the residents in the Education Office provided further evidence of lexicogrammatical limitations. The answer as to how the residents negotiated their way through the requestive process in such circumstances is provided by a blend of corpus linguistics and detailed conversation analysis. Word frequency lists show that the response tokens, *yeah* and *okay*, account for 10% of the total output of the residents. Isolated stretches of discourse further demonstrated this dependence – but not only on *yeah* and *okay*, but also, albeit to a lesser extent, on *yes*, *um*, *uh huh*, and *oh*.

The residents exploit *yeah* and *okay* to the full, both semantically and discursively, combining them with pauses and silences and prosodic features such as loudness, softness, pitch and prominence, and different intonational contours. The minimal responses, on the one hand, camouflage the lexicogrammatical limitations and dysfluencies of the residents, but, on the other hand, they simultaneously give the impression of engaged and submissive listenership and help to control the general trajectory of the interaction, such as that of sequences of turns and adjacency pairs, in their favour. It is not, of course, that the residents manipulate the minimal responses in a purposeful or premeditated way. They issue forth unconsciously, and the control of the discourse also seems unconsciously competent. However, the particular strategies adopted by the residents, evidenced not only an intuitive realization of the importance of fluency and ways of creating an impression of fluency, but also demonstrated that the residents were aware and concerned about their limitations and their non-native status. Further research could investigate the reason behind their attention to language: is it, for example, simply due to the fact that they are talking to a native speaker, or to the fact that the native speaker made decisions with regard to financial funding? The latter would seem to be the case, as, at the reception, desk the language was minimalistic and routinized. Interestingly, concern for linguistic competence or non-native status did not seem to be an issue when they interacted with one another.

In Chapter Seven I analyzed the interaction of a meeting of the residents on the preparations of a forthcoming integration day. As previously mentioned, interaction in English among the residents was short but rare. Such meetings, which were normally chaired by the manager of the Centre, usually generated into a communicative ‘free-for-all’. On this occasion, one Monday evening at 7pm, after dinner, there was no native-English-speaking chairperson.

I was particularly interested in the maintenance of order in the general sense, but also in the specific sense of the maintenance of the orderliness of interaction as described by Sacks, Schegloff, Jefferson, Goffman, Heritage *et al.* in conversation analysis studies. Not only was general order maintained, but there was a definite orderliness in the turn-taking. The one-speaker-at-a-time-rule was observed – although simultaneous conversations did occur at times, usually triggered by one of the participants, a Congolese man whose participation in foreground conversation was thwarted by a low voice and a quiet demeanour, despite a good level of English. Topics were followed and managed and all the residents had a voice - physical and metaphorical. That voice was co-constructed by the residents, two of whom regularly made

efforts to gatekeep the interaction. Despite the inhibitions I spoke of in Chapter Four (some of which surfaced in the interaction) and the linguistic limitations, the residents exploited their English to the maximum, again availing of minimal responses, prosody, pauses and silences. The residents supported one another in the interaction through A turn-taking system – they used repair (completions, repetitions and silences) and adjacency pairs, and they exploited overlapping and interruptions orienting to possible transition relevance places, but more importantly they oriented to the meaning-making and communicative status of their co-participants. In short, people with serious linguistic limitations, contextual inhibitions and mutual antipathy supported one another in communication. But the support was content-based, with little attention or concern paid to linguistic ‘infelicities’, as Firth (1996: 239) calls them. Schegloff (1982: 71), looking at the use of *uh huh* in conversation, refers to discourse as an ‘an interactional achievement’. Firth (1996: 256) refers to ‘accomplished’ and ‘contingent’ achievement. The first author was looking at monolingual discourse, the second author was looking at lingua franca communication amongst business people who, in most cases, had an educated level of English. This puts into perspective the interactional achievement of the residents of the Dun Cluain Centre.

8.6 Associated research questions

Before I embarked on this study, and as I set out in the introduction, I foresaw that there would be insights for research methodologies, for the debate on English as a Lingua Franca, and for the concepts of communicative competence and language universalism.

8.6.1 Research methodologies

The research undertaken in this thesis was ambitious. It therefore needed to harness the tools of an amalgam of research methodologies. The principal methodologies are ethnography, corpus linguistics and conversation analysis, but I also availed of the components of the ethnography of speaking, exchange structure and intonation discourse. These multiple frameworks have their own methodological difficulties. As mentioned previously, ethnography, at times can produce biased accounts, especially in the contexts of asylum seekers who may see the need to exaggerate their stories of persecution for the sake of their asylum applications and exaggerate the difficulties of daily life as many of the residents were applying for private living accommodation in the nearby city. Corpus linguistics, on the other hand,

produces data that is by necessity extremely dense, while conversation analysis is predicated on the predicated on an assumption of linguistic competence and cultural homogeneity, where participants can access the social practices of a common culture, and where the researcher is perhaps an expert of the language in question and has access to the common culture and the emanant schematic knowledge of content and form.

The specific difficulties of each of the methodological frameworks, however, were mitigated by the powerful synergy of the three frameworks working together, not only in the linear fashion mentioned previously that provided a clear picture of communication, but also in the cyclical cross-referencing that addressed not only issues of validity and reliability, but also filled in the gaps opened by each of the frameworks.

In a situation where no one shared native language, no one shared culture or no common schemata pertain, and in a situation therefore where no taken-for granted linguistic or cultural maxims can be assumed, the ethnographic analysis of the immediate past and the present contexts was vital and substituted for that normal picture of homogenous culture that ethnography normally produces. Ethnography not only facilitated a clear background view of the community and past and present contexts, but it also provided information on why people communicated (or not) the way they did (or did not). Ethnography normally provides the ground for the generation of hypotheses that can be then tested using other methods. Here, it alerted the researcher to elements of language use that could be tested by corpus linguistics and conversation analysis. For example, through observation I found that the second parts of adjacency greeting pairs came to be used through routinization and daily practice for requesting. In the analysis of the linguistic material in conversation analysis I therefore watched carefully for this phenomenon, trying to make sense of it within interaction. On the other hand, accounts of the disruption and lack of communicative etiquette labelled against the Nigerian community in the ethnography, were checked in the linguistic analysis (and found not to be the case). Therefore issues of validity and reliability that can hinder ethnography were addressed in the conversation analysis where I employed more detailed and turn by turn or response by response investigation in combination with corpus linguistics (using word frequency and keyword analysis tools) to analyze longer requestive or negotiational processes and casual interaction. Corpus linguistics, which played a major part in the characterization of the lingua franca (Chapter Five), also played a vital role in the isolation of idiosyncratic language in Chapter Six.

As O'Keeffe (2003: 229) observed when analyzing media discourse, 'corpus linguistics is a powerful tool because it can add quantitative weight to qualitative observation and intuition.' Ethnography, in the context of a transient vehicular language and culture serves to balance the heavy weight of corpus linguistics and conversation analysis. Perhaps, one pointer for future research would be to use some type of ethnography (not only for foreign cultures) in combination with corpus linguistics and conversation analysis, anticipating the developing situations of cultural and linguistic heterogeneity in modern society. Of course, most important of all, ethnography places the human as the central focus.

8.6.2 English as a lingua franca

There is no doubt that typical ELF lexicogrammatical features were present in the discourse of the residents, such as the avoidance or non-use of the '-s' morpheme to mark third person present simple, and that such did not impede effective communication. As I have shown, the residents exploited the English they used as a lingua franca to the maximum, in combination with many other strategies to communicate effectively. Function was more important than form, or to put it another way, what was meant was more important than how it was said.

The question of whether English as a Lingua Franca exists as a separate entity and as a variety of English in its own right, as *an English* that is, has degenerated into polarized points of view, circularity and unprofessional jousting at times (see Section 2.3). The linguistic focus should shift towards less anglocentric consideration, given that it is really the lingua franca (whatever the base language), its composition and its exploitation, which is of interest, although perhaps not to the industry of English language teaching around the world. If this study were carried out in Spain, the reduced lingua franca would be based on Spanish, and similar features would emerge, such as using the subject (*yo*) the base infinitive form (*hablar*) and the adverb (*ayer*) to represent the standard Castilian, *hablé ayer*. The fact that it is the particular language of Castilian or the English of the debates, or the reduced form of English described in this thesis, should not, I contend be the main focus, although I acknowledge that there may be elucidation of a particular language.

The study of how people use a lingua franca has the potential of contributing to the unfolding of some of the mysteries of language. As has been seen here, such a study brings into relief what Firth (1996) calls contingent achievement, which I contend is a primeval intuitive communicative reaction. The study of a lingua franca, without focus on the a particular base language, has the benefit of conferring greater priority on the individual speaker as a language user (Firth 1996) and on the interactional achievement with another speaker or speakers, rather than focussing on foreigner talk and interlanguage and beginning with *a priori* prejudices of non-nativeness. Here, a *bona fide* lingua franca has been characterized and its use in interaction has been analyzed. The question of competence does not relate to English as a native language; it relates to communication in the context of survival and interaction in a total institution.

8.6.3 Communicative and interactional competence

Hymes' (1971) paper 'On Communicative Competence' was written largely as a reaction to Chomsky's competence and performance model and the focus of research in linguistics on the abstract competence of the ideal speaker in the ideal speech community, this at a time when Hymes was already researching language in heterogeneous speech communities within the research framework of the Ethnography of Communication. Hymes posited that in addition to the linguistic competence of well-formed-ness, there were three other factors that were essential components of communicative competence. He referred to feasibility, the competence *not* to produce language which although well-formed and grammatical, is undecipherable or too ambiguous – such as multiple embedded clauses. He referred to appropriateness, the competence to choose the right expression depending on the context of place and situation and interlocutor. Lastly, Hymes referred to attestedness, which has to do with whether something is actually said (notwithstanding its grammatical well-formedness). The issue as far as this study is concerned is that the residents were competent (they communicated and understood messages) in their interactions with one another and with the native-English speaking staff not only *without* linguistic proficiency, in the sense that their constructions were frequently not well-formed, but also without the consideration of attestedness. It was not a communicative obstacle for the residents, for example, to say 'fork and knife' instead of the more frequent collocation of *knife and fork*. Appropriateness and feasibility *were* considerations. I referred to the residents being aware of imposing on the staff and using mitigation devices, and I also

spoke and gave examples of situations where the residents seemed to avoid long explanations that they knew would cause difficulty of interpretation.

Subsequent theories added considerations of pragmatic, cultural and interactional competencies (Kramsch 1986), but always within terms of homogeneous speech communities, or at least in terms of speech communities where one language and culture was shared by all members. The lacuna in theories of communicative competence then is the consideration of non-language or non-culture-centred universal and intuitive interactional competence - the procedural management of interaction in a foreign (in the sense of other) language, facilitated as it is in the case of the residents of Dun Cluain, to a large extent, by whatever resources were available to them – minimal responses, pauses, silences, prosodic features and the systematic and ordered to and fro-ness of communication. While Chomsky's model of competence and performance was complete and coherent in that he was referring to the study of the Grammar of an ideal speaker in an ideal community, the models of Hymes, referring to heterogeneous communities (and in his paper, in fact, to non-ideal speakers), and others such as Canale and Swain and Kramsch must be seen to be incomplete. While most of the theories of communicative competence emerged as a response to the so-called limiting aspect of Chomsky's research remit, they are themselves restrictive in that they are constructs of 'competence' in a certain language or languages, in a certain culture or cultures, and in a certain community or communities, because they all prioritize the 'shared-ness' of components. The analysis of a lingua franca here, as mentioned previously, turns the focus toward interactional competence, how people co-construct meaning in talk-in-interaction in a contingent and intuitive way. As Young (2011: 430) says, it focusses on 'what a person *does* together with others' (emphasis in original). It focuses on how the resources that are available to interlocutors are used mutually and reciprocally in the co-construction of meaning.

8.6.4 Language universalism

Chomsky spoke of a left-hemisphere-associated Grammar that is substantially in existence when a child is born. The stimulus of hearing its parents speak a language leads to the (theoretical) grammification of that language by the child's Language Acquisition Device. Chomsky thus viewed the study of this naturally-generated abstract native Grammar of the ideal speaker listener in the ideal and homogenous speech community as the true realm of linguistic research. Since then, Hymes and others have claimed that the study of linguistics

cannot be comprehensive without the examination of performance with all its pauses and hesitations and false starts. Hymes put forward his theory of communicative competence and others followed. What perhaps is missing from all of these formulations, as mentioned previously, is a consideration of a universal, intuitive and facilitative human motivation to communicate, and the apparent, as seen here, pre-existing human orientation to 1) manipulate lexical words and vocalizations semantically and discursively, 2) combine such manipulations with other features such as pauses and hesitations, silences and prosody, and 3) combine these two abilities or competences in the exploitation of an apparently pre-existing universal to and fro interactional system, preliminary support of which is found in the work of Stivers *et al* (2009). Thus, perhaps, theories of linguistics should also consider the possibility of an interactional system substantially in place at the time of birth, along with innate right-hemisphere-associated interactional competencies, all awaiting similar parental stimuli. As such theories, of linguistics should then consider universal communicative competence *shared* by all human beings in the universal speech community of the world.

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Appendix 1. Recordings and transcriptions

Tape Number, People, Topic	Corpus A	Corpus B	Nationalities
Tape A 1 Funding Requests C	4808	1767	Multiple
Tape A 1 Visit from Tami A	76	74	Nigerian
Tape A 1 Visit from Boris K	1447	1307	Georgian
,Tape B 2 Rihana and Mubaarak	7724	3739	Georgian
Tape C 3 Conversation circles	10499	5463	Multiple
Tape D 4 Interviews for crèche	6972	2722	Multiple
Tape E 5 Reception	2539	1058	Multiple
Tape F 6 Boris Krasnov	6934	5779	Georgian
Tape G 7 A Reine when she arrived	126	126	New Guinean
Tape G 7 Meredith and Reine	690	690	Nigerian and New Guinean
Tape H 8 Interview with Moti	5294	4013	Nigerian
Tape I 9 Organization of Integration Day	7672	6544	Multiple
Tape J 10 Class Katya	N/A	N/A	
Tape K 11 Beginners Class	5500	2764	Multiple
Tape L 12 Mubaarak	1000	447	Somalian
Tape M 13 A Chistol	5500	1188	Ukrainian
Tape N 14 Said		1690	Moroccan
Tape N 14 Visit from Meredith		440	Nigerian
Tape N 14 Miro	5499	1742	Serbian
Tape O 15 Guidance	3290	1233	Multiple
Tape P 16 Tshvuila	1534	0	Congolese
Tape P 16 Miro	2793	0	Serbian
Tape P 16 Karim and Zine	3549	3829	Moroccan and Algerian
Tape Q 17 Registering	2552	494	Multiple
Tape R 18 Sociologist with Somali girls	8335	3898	Somalian

Appendix 2. The first 200 lexical items use by Said

R	Word	N		R	Word	N		R	Word	N		R	Word	N		R	Word
1	NO	75		41	CARNET	5		81	FOR	3		121	DO	2		161	SCHOOL
2	YEAH	53		42	CLASE	5		82	GRASA	3		122	DON'T	2		162	SÉ
3	ER	35		43	COSA	5		83	HAY	3		123	DOOR	2		163	SEBASTIAN
4	IS	31		44	FAMILIA	5		84	HOUSE	3		124	EJEMPLO	2		164	SIX
5	A	28		45	HAVE	5		85	IGUAL	3		125	EMPRESA	2		165	SMALL
6	GOOD	21		46	MOROCCO	5		86	IRELAND	3		126	ENFERMO	2		166	SOMETIMES
7	ONE	21		47	O	5		87	KERRY	3		127	EUZKADI	2		167	THEN
8	YO	20		48	OKAY	5		88	LOOK	3		128	FISH	2		168	THERE
9	DE	18		49	ON	5		89	MARRUECOS	3		129	FRUIT	2		169	THEY
10	YA	18		50	PASAPORTE	5		90	MAS	3		130	FUE	2		170	TOMATES
11	COMO	16		51	THIS	5		91	ME	3		131	GLASSES	2		171	TOMORROW
12	LA	15		52	TIENE	5		92	NINE	3		132	GO	2		172	TRABAJO
13	CONOCIENDO	13		53	TO	5		93	OH	3		133	H	2		173	TRICK
14	EL	13		54	UN	5		94	OTRA	3		134	HABLASTE	2		174	TWO
15	PARA	12		55	WE	5		95	PUEDE	3		135	HE	2		175	VIENE
16	PORQUE	12		56	WORK	5		96	SACAR	3		136	IRISH	2		176	VOY
17	UNA	12		57	AMIGO	4		97	SHOP	3		137	KNOW	2		177	WATCHES
18	IN	10		58	AND	4		98	SU	3		138	LO	2		178	WITH
19	THE	10		59	BOOKAY	4		99	TARDE	3		139	MAR	2		179	WOOH
20	IT'S	9		60	ENGLISH	4		100	TENGO	3		140	MARINERO	2		180	YEA
21	OR	9		61	HACER	4		101	YEARS	3		141	MI	2		181	AL
22	SI	9		62	INGLES	4		102	AGADIR	2		142	MONTH	2		182	ALLÁ
23	YOU	9		63	LUNCH	4		103	AHORA	2		143	MONTHS	2		183	ALLÍ
24	AH	8		64	MANHANA	4		104	ALEXANDER	2		144	MUCH	2		184	ALTO
25	EN	8		65	NURSE	4		105	ANHOS	2		145	MUCHAS	2		185	AMIGOS
26	ES	8		66	OTRO	4		106	APRENDER	2		146	MUY	2		186	ANYMORE
27	I	8		67	THREE	4		107	AS	2		147	NOW	2		187	AQU
28	SE	8		68	VERY	4		108	BIG	2		148	OCHO	2		188	AQUEL
29	TRABAJAR	8		69	YES	4		109	BILBAO	2		149	O'CLOCK	2		189	AQUI
30	BOOK	7		70	ANHO	3		110	BOX	2		150	ONCE	2		190	ARMADOR
31	SHIP	7		71	AQUÍ	3		111	CADA	2		151	PA	2		191	ARRIBA
32	Y	7		72	BED	3		112	CALLE	2		152	PERMISO	2		192	ASÍ
33	CERCA	6		73	CAPITAN	3		113	CASI	2		153	POR	2		193	AY
34	CON	6		74	CAR	3		114	COLOR	2		154	PRIMER	2		194	AYER
35	DOCTOR	6		75	CHILDREN	3		115	COMER	2		155	PUEDO	2		195	AYUDA
36	LLAMA	6		76	COME	3		116	CORK	2		156	CUARTO	2		196	AYUDARME
37	QUE	6		77	COMPRAR	3		117	COSAS	2		157	QUIERE	2		197	VALE
38	SABE	6		78	EIGHT	3		118	DEJAR	2		158	ROMPE	2		198	BARIGA
39	SPEAK	6		79	EIGHTY	3		119	DIEZ	2		159	SANTANDER	2		199	BIEN
40	ARABIC	5		80	ELSE	3		120	DINNER	2		160	SAY	2		200	BIN

Appendix 3. Said's final 238 words

201	BOCA	241	CORONNA	281	FRIENDS	321	MAN	361	PATATAS	401	STREET
202	BOOKAYS	242	CORUNA	282	FUI	322	MANINERO	362	PATRON	402	STRONG
203	BOOKAYSHOP	243	COSTA	283	GALICIAN	323	MARCHAR	363	PERO	403	SUNDAY
204	BOXES	244	CU	284	GIRL	324	MARINER	364	PERSONA	404	TABLE
205	BREA	245	CUANDO	285	GLASS	325	MÁS	365	PETER	405	TAMBIEN
206	BREAKFAST	246	CUANTO	286	GLASSY	326	MEDICO	366	PICANT	406	TAMPOCO
207	BRIK	247	CUARENT	287	GOING	327	MEDIODIA	367	PODIA	407	TEN
208	BROKEN	248	CUATRO	288	GOT	328	MEMBER	368	POTATOES	408	TERMINAL
209	BUENO	249	CUP	289	GRACIAS	329	MENOS	369	PRACTICE	409	THAT'S
210	CAJA	250	DEDO	290	GUY	330	MES	370	PREGUNAT	410	THINGS
211	CALENDAR	251	DELI	291	HABLABA	331	MESE	371	PREGUNTAR	411	THINK
212	CALLÉ	252	DICTIONARY	292	HABLAR	332	MILITARY	372	PRENDER	412	TIERRA
213	CAMA	253	DIFICIL	293	HACE	333	MILK	373	PREPARE	413	TIRED
214	CAN	254	DOCTORA	294	HASSAN	334	MIRANA	374	PREPARER	414	TIS
215	CARD	255	DONDE	295	HAT	335	MONDAY	375	PRIMERO	415	TODAY
216	CARDS	256	DUELE	296	HIM	336	MORE	376	PROPA	416	TOMATOES
217	CATCH	257	DUR	297	HORA	337	MUSLIM	377	PROQUE	417	STONE
218	CENTRE	258	EH	298	HOT	338	MY	378	QUIERO	418	TOO
219	CHANGE	259	ELEVEN	299	HOW	339	NAH	379	REPEATING	419	TU
220	CHOE	260	EMPREA	300	I'M	340	NAME	380	RIGHT	420	TÚ
221	CIELA	261	ENCONTRAR	301	IR	341	NINHO	381	ROBOT	421	TUESDAY
222	CINCO	262	ERLAND	302	IRLANDO	342	NINYA	382	ROOM	422	ÚLTIMO
223	CLO	263	ESO	303	ISKERRY	343	NOCHE	383	ROUNDED	423	UNO
224	CLOCK	264	ESPAÑHOL	304	ITS	344	NOKE	384	SAME	424	UNOS
225	CLOUDS	265	ESTA	305	JUST	345	ÑOS	385	SAN	425	VECES
226	COJO	266	ESTABA	306	KITCHEN	346	NS	386	SANDRO	426	VETE
227	COLEGIO	267	ESTÁN	307	LADEOUR	347	NUEVE	387	SATURDAY	427	VIVÍ
228	COLEGIOS	268	EXACTAMENTE	308	LAS	348	OCASIÓN	388	SAW	428	VIVÍA
229	COMIDA	269	FALTA	309	LETTER	349	OF	389	SEGUIRLA	429	VIVIENDO
230	COMÓ	270	FIFTEEN	310	LEY	350	OJOS	390	SEISSIETE	430	VIVIÓ
231	CÓMO	271	FIFTY	311	LIBRARY	351	ONLY	391	SERVICIO	431	VIVIR
232	COMOCOMO	272	FIJO	312	LIBRO	352	OOO	392	SEVEN	432	WALLET
233	COMPRO	273	FISHERMAN	313	LIKE	353	ORZAN	393	SHE'S	433	WEEK
234	COMPUTER	274	FISHING	314	LIMERICK	354	OTHER	394	SHOE	434	WEEKS
235	COMPUTERS	275	FIVE	315	LLEVO	355	PALABRA	395	SIERO	435	WERE
236	CONLLÉVAME	276	FLOWERS	316	LOCUM	356	PAPEL	396	SITIO	436	WHAT
237	CONOCE	277	FORTY	317	LOOKA	357	PAPELES	397	SOBRE	437	WOOOH
238	CONOCER	278	FOUND	318	LOW	358	PAPER	398	SOME	438	YAY
239	CONOCIDO	279	FOUR	319	LUEGO	359	PASO	399	SON		
240	CONQUE	280	FRIDAY	320	MALL	360	PASSPORT	400	SPANISH		

Appendix 4. Translation from Galician and Spanish of telephone conversation (attested field note) between Said and Kieran.

Kieran: Hello Said

Said: Me cago en la puta merda, este sitio es una pocilga es una pocilga.

[I'm sick of this shit. This place is a pig sty it's a pig-sty]

Kieran: Qué pasa Said dónde estás?

[What's wrong said, where are you?]

Said: Estou en este hostel da merda chea de pulgas e merda

[I'm in a fucking B&B full of fleas and shit]

Kieran. Pero, cálmate un momento. Dónde estás exactamente? Es dónde te buscó el Departamento? Igual estás en un sitio equivocado.

[But, calm down a second. Where are you exactly? Is it where the Department found for you? Maybe you are in the wrong place]

Said: Estou no sitio a dónde me mandaron isos hijos de puta y claro es que no soy importante porque a los mierda de los Nigerianos los mandan a hoteles buenos. Isto e una vergonza que non vale ni para cerdos. Vou matarme, vou destrozar este sitio. Vou matar a alguien. Mira hay mil pulgas en la cama.

[I'm where those bastards sent me because I'm not important because those fucking Nigerians they send them to good hotels. This is a disgrace not fit for pigs. I'm gonna kill myself, I'm gonna destroy this place. I'm gonna kill someone. Listen, there's a thousand fleas on the bed]

Kieran: Cálmate, cálmate Said. Voy a hablar ahora con Xxxxx a ver si podemos hacer algo y mandarte a otro sitio. Tienen tu móvil aquí?

[Calm down Said. I'm going to talk to Xxxxx to see if we can send you somewhere else. Have they got your mobile number here?]

Said: Sí

[Yes]

Kieran: Vale, a ver que podemos hacer.

[Good, let's see what we can do.]

Said: Vale. Gracias. Muy amable.

[Okay. Thanks. That's very kind of you].

Appendix 5.

Table 5.38 Word frequency list for three communicative situations

R	Funding	F	%	R	Reception	F	%	R	Integration	F	%	CANCODE
1	Yeah	93	6.7	1	I	31	4.5	1	You	160	3.2	The
2	I	74	5.3	2	You	24	3.5	2	The	149	3.0	I
3	And	47	3.4	3	Yeah	17	2.5	3	I	125	2.5	And
4	Okay	46	3.3	4	Is	15	2.2	4	Is	108	2.1	You
5	You	46	3.3	5	No	15	2.2	5	To	94	1.9	It
6	Er	32	2.1	6	She	15	2.2	6	And	91	1.8	To
7	For	25	1.8	7	The	14	2.0	7	Are	90	1.8	A
8	Know	25	1.8	8	Like	13	1.9	8	In	90	1.8	Yeah
9	In	20	1.5	9	Okay	12	1.7	9	Yeah	90	1.8	That
10	Is	20	1.5	10	For	11	1.6	10	That	89	1.8	Of
11	My	20	1.5	11	I'm	11	1.6	11	We	89	1.8	In
12	But	19	1.4	12	My	11	1.6	12	Have	81	1.6	Was
13	No	19	1.4	13	To	11	1.6	13	No	67	1.3	It's
14	Yes	19	1.4	14	It	9	1.3	14	So	63	1.3	Know
15	The	18	1.3	15	Me	9	1.3	15	Er	58	1.2	Is
16	Like	16	1.2	16	Not	9	1.3	16	Language	58	1.2	Mm
17	To	16	1.2	17	Know	8	1.2	17	But	52	1.0	Er
18	Go	15	1.2	18	Some	8	1.2	18	One	52	1.0	But
19	Me	13	1.1	19	Thank	8	1.2	19	They	52	1.0	So
20	A	12	1.0	20	A	7	1.0	20	Of	51	1.0	They
21	Want	12	1.0	21	But	7	1.0	21	From	49	1.0	On
22	Can	11	1.0	22	Come	7	1.0	22	It	49	1.0	Have
23	It's	11	1.0	23	Don't	7	1.0	23	Know	48	1.0	We
24	Not	11	0.9	24	Eat	7	1.0	24	People	46	0.9	Oh
25	One	11	0.8	25	That	7	1.0	25	Not	45	0.9	No
26	She	11	0.8	26	Er	6	0.9	26	Like	44	0.9	Like
27	Don't	10	0.7	27	Go	6	0.9	27	A	43	0.9	Well
28	Here	10	0.7	28	Problem	6	0.9	28	It's	39	0.8	What
29	It	10	0.7	29	Yes	6	0.9	29	This	39	0.8	Do
30	They	10	0.7	30	And	5	0.7	30	Country	38	0.8	Right
31	Ask	9	0.7	31	Fine	5	0.7	31	What	36	0.7	Just
32	Every	9	0.7	32	How	5	0.7	32	For	35	0.7	He
33	Have	9	0.7	33	Your	5	0.7	33	Different	30	0.6	For
34	Much	9	0.7	34	All	4	0.6	34	Don't	30	0.6	Erm
35	Because	8	0.6	35	Coming	4	0.6	35	Because	29	0.6	This
36	Daughter	8	0.6	36	Have	4	0.6	36	How	29	0.6	Be
37	Thank	8	0.6	37	In	4	0.6	37	There	29	0.6	All
38	Time	8	0.6	38	Lose	4	0.6	38	About	28	0.6	There
39	How	7	0.6	39	Maybe	4	0.6	39	Yes	28	0.6	Got
40	If	7	0.6	40	Morning	4	0.6	40	If	27	0.5	That's

Appendix 6: Fragment 7.1

- 1 **Boris:** How happened er that two people culture joined in one state it's is very
2. wonderful how was it
3 **Holly:** it was
4 **Boris:** happened English well so long ago join ers your culture
5. together by force okay↑ <syllables>
6 **Holly:** Yes
7 **Boris:** and after that you have a possibility to separate
8 **Holly:** to put
9 ourselves (three word uttered) is like you speak French he speak French so you
10 meet together you start speaking French you (three words uttered) from
11 French country but they don't speak the same tonation as they speak
12 **Boris:** Yeah
13 **Novak:** Yeah
14 **Holly:** <syllables>
15 together but they are under the same state
16 **Boris:** is the same like the former
17 Soviet Union
18 **Holly:** Yeah
19 **Boris:** Because two hundred about three hundred nations
20 **Holly:** nations
21 **Boris:** different languages
22 **Holly:** languages
23 **Boris:** If everybody will study so much languages is impossible
24 **Holly:** <syllables>
25 **Boris:**
26 languages only one was Russian around all
27 **Kenda:** that's what you think that they
28 are the same - English is the <syll>
29 **Novak:** official
30 **Kenda:** official language
31 **Holly:** language
32 **Kenda:** for everybody
33 **Novak:** <syll>
34 **Kenda:** in my country we have four national languages
35 Lingala Swahili Tshiluba and the Kicongo
36 **Novak:** ah that's good
37 **Kenda:** and the official language is French if you can
38 go everywhere in the country
39 **Novak:** <council>
40 **Kenda:** when you are speaking in French
41 everywhere everyone <syll>
42 **Boris:** everyone understand you
43 **Kenda:** understand you
44 <syllables>
45 **Boris:** Like in Russia
46 **Holly:** Oh you are <sylla>
47 **Nassim:** like in Russia ha Russia they many language
48 **Boris:** Yeah because more than two hundred languages look it's impossible
47 **Novak:** <syll>
48 **Kenda:** mmm
49 **Boris:** much country
50 <sylla> language

51 **Holly:** Heh well I'm very <syll>
 52 **Boris:** is very small language er
 53 nations <syllables>
 54 **Holly:** very old very old
 55 **Boris:** about a thousand only people
 56 **Holly:** very young
 57 and <syllables> - what about the question?
 58 **Boris:** yap in Caucus area just
 59 one
 60 **Holly:** you know
 61 **Boris:** one mountain and (second boundary?)
 62 **Holly:** yes
 63 **Boris:** people beside mountains
 64 one language next mountain next nation next language <laughs and says
 65 something unintelligible minimally responding it seems>
 66 **Holly:** language yes we have in
 67 main
 68 **Boris:** very wonder
 69 **Holly:** in
 70 **Boris:** one hundred sorry one hundred or two hundred people one
 71 language next language <text message sounds>
 72 **Holly:** In Nigeria we have the Yoruba the Yoruba is an ethnic group if some people are
 73 talking do do you hear me
 74 **Boris:** Yeah
 75 **Holly:** If some people are talking in their language in Yoruba I may not even hear but
 76 there it is all counted on the Yoruba for there are some (three words) here but
 77 then I'm Yoruba
 78 **Boris:** Okay
 78 **Holly:** So like in Lagos city we have in Nigeria the Ibo we have about eight states of
 79 Yoruba where they are all under Yoruba where they are the states are different
 80 and their languages the way they speak their word is different
 81 **Boris:** But I ask you how happen that so different different se culture
 82 **Holly:** Because they was control they was control
 83 **Boris:** <four syllables>
 84 **Kenda:** Look this area er er
 85 **Boris:** All <everyone talking>
 85 **Holly:** is all <talking at same time>okay but country one Nigeria
 86 Nigeria is one country
 87 **Kenda:** Nigeria is one country and different <sylla>
 88 **Holly:** <four syllables>
 89 **Boris:** Okay I understand but
 90 **Holly:** yeah
 91 **Boris:** but different one government
 92 **Holly:** Yes one government
 93 **Kenda:** one government one government
 94 **Holly:** one president
 95 **Boris:** {About this I ask you
 96 how happened was that one government
 97 **Holly:** one president
 98 **Boris:** and so much one president
 99 two president
 100 **Holly:** one president and so much people that's the thing
 101 **Kenda:** That was the organization of the country↓
 102 **Holly:** that was the organization of the
 103 country

104 Kenda: that each area if I can call it each province (??) country you see
105 Boris: we join
106 Holly: you
107 know what it's like in England we have will we have wills we have we have
108 defence in ere so like we have about fifty <phone rings>
109 Novak: hallo hallo <Novak on phone>
110 Kenda: teacher <Kieran comes in>
111 Holly: the whole state is about
112 Boris: But will you tell me about what I ask you sorry
113 Holly: Yeah
114 Boris: I ask you how happened sorry for my benefit
115 Holly: What
116 Boris: How happened who join this so different and so different languages and er so
117 different er er culture who joined er in one Nigeria country <Novak on phone>
118 Holly: That is how that is how that is it came about I don't know
119 Boris: so sorry
120 Holly: it just happened like that I don't understand

Appendix 7. Fragment 7.2

1. **Holly:** So what are we saying
2. **Novak:** You are from Egypt no
3. **Nassim:** ALGERIA
4. **Novak:** You are from Algeria↑
5. **Nassim:** Yeah
6. **Novak:** You are <not> from Egypt
7. **Nassim:** No
8. **Holly:** You have to do all this
9. **Novak:** You are from Algeria you are from Egypt
10. **Nassim:** No
11. **Novak:** I thought <syll> from Egypt
12. **Nassim:** I told you Algeria many times
13. **Novak:** Oh I didn't ask you I thought you were from Egypt
14. **Nassim:** You ask me
15. **Novak:** But you say <four syllables>
16. **Nassim:** Yeah many times
17. **Novak:** Yeah but I thought you were from Egypt he is from Egypt yeah
18. **Kenda:** I said
19. **Nassim:** <syll>
20. **Novak:** Yeah yeah
21. **Nassim:** Coz we are ethnic <syll> Arabic <This talking in background>
22. **Novak:** You speak <syll>
23. **Nassim:** Yes we speak in Arabic
24. **Holly:** Yeah I told you
25. **Novak:** That's another dialect
26. **Nassim:** Yeah Egyptians as well
27. **Novak:** Egyptian I thought you were from Egypt as well <Kenda talking in background>
28. **Nassim:** I told you Algeria
29. **Holly:** Yes
30. **Novak:** Maybe you said
31. **Holly:** the discussion is <all talking last 30 secs>
32. the day we'll discuss your country and how you're doing your country what is
33. tradition of your country what the <syll> how marriage is taking place how
34. <syll> how are your men and women viz a vis

Appendix 8. Fragment 7.17

1. → **Novak:** What would you like on that day
2. **Holly:** On that day I would like to enjoy my traditional music one I would like to have
3. some food like drink and chat with friends then (*speaker utters four syllables*)
4. If possible as time would permit don't know how many minutes are allowed
5. **Boris:** now I
6. know I have other <papers shuffling>
7. **Holly:** er maybe ready (*speaker utters four syllables*) is within the compound
8. **Kieran:** Here ↑
9. **Holly:** Yeah okay I have some <*speaker utters four syllables*> my traditional
10. **Boris:** historic
11. **Holly:** for my traditional for my
12. **Boris:** traditional songs and the dance
13. → **Novak:** Whose songs are traditional songs
14. **Holly:** Yoruba I say Yoruba from Nigeria
15. **Novak:** Songs songs
16. **Holly:** The song
17. **Novak:** Yeah
18. **Holly:** The song <*four syllables*> in my language
19. → **Novak:** Which one do you speaking with Nigeria
20. **Holly:** Yoruba
21. → **Novak:** And English is not official there
22. **Holly:** It's official you can speak in English if you want English but my traditional
23. language is Yoruba the general language is English everybody
24. → **Novak:** everybody everybody
25. knows English
26. **Kenda:** national language
27. **Holly:** Yes
28. → **Novak:** National language
29. **Kenda:** One of the national languages in your country
30. **Holly:** Yes
31. **Boris:** is Yoruba
32. **Holly:** is Yoruba
33. → **Novak:** So is there any more language
34. **Holly:** Yeah we have
35. **Kenda:** <four syllables>
36. **Holly:** Ibo we have <four syllables> is Ibo
37. Hausa and Yoruba
38. → **Novak:** Okay