The Village School and Village Life: An Ethnographic Study of Early Childhood Education

DISSERTATION

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Abstract

This study investigates the forms of social organization found in modern classrooms and classroom lessons, as they are encountered by children in a rural Turkish village, in its village school. It is a study of the early childhood education and educational experience of these children. It is composed of a collection of ethnographic descriptions and discourse analyses that examine the social–organizational forms of life found in the village, those found in the school, and the experiences and attitudes of village children, parents and elders towards schooling and its place in their lives. These three foci organize the early childhood educational experiences of these children. They organize a larger picture of their encounters with schooling in the early grades and the place of schooling in the lives of their families.

All children develop the competencies required of them as they participate in their routine daily activities with little, if any, direct or explicit instruction. Much of early childhood education is of this implicit, participatory character. The instruction that is implicit to their participation, whether in the classroom community or the village community, is both taken granted, and closely studied by the children. It is in these ways that modern school rooms engage in the production of modern students, among village children.
Dedicated to Terzi Ayse, who appears in my study under a pseudonym, passed away as I was writing revisions to this dissertation. She was an elder woman of my village. We might imagine that village life is marked by great regularity and recurrence, in the rhythms of life, and the kinds of people we find there. The rhythms are quite regular. But the people can surprise you. Through my early years, Terzi Ayse always spoke to me of education. She encouraged me. She expected things of me, and all girls in the village, but me especially. She led me to think that distant places might not be so distant.
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Fields of Study

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

The study investigates the forms of social organization found in modern classrooms and classroom lessons, as they are encountered by children in a rural Turkish village, in its village school. It is a study of the early childhood education and educational experience of these children. The village is in Adana Province, on the shoulders of the Taurus Mountains. The school was founded in early 1950s as part of the ongoing educational and modernization initiatives of the Turkish Republic. As Kazamias (1966), Szyliowicz (1973, 1984), Somel (2001), and Akyuz (2001) discuss, the modernization of Turkey was then, and is now, an unfinished project. It is being played out in villages such as this one, wherein village children are introduced to the organizational forms of a modern society, as instanced in modern classroom pedagogy (Hamilton, 1978).

Modernization and Schooling in Turkey

In the Ottoman period of Turkish history education for the ordinary people was provided by private initiative and the religious endowments (cleric). There were two types of schools serving the ordinary people, the Religious Schools (Mektebs) and the Medreses. Both were attached to mosques, and were religious in character. The Religious Schools provided primary education, usually attached to the neighborhood mosques. Instruction was given by Imams (the priest), and was essentially limited to
teaching and learning the Koran. The instruction was catechistic in nature; children would be seated in a circle on cushions, and receive instruction one at a time by approaching the instructor at his seat. For the remaining time they would be engaged in their tasks individually (e.g. reading). These institutions were not universal, but they were available free in most places for those who desired it for their children. For the majority of the students it was the only type of education, excluding a small percentage who pursued further education in Medreses.

Medreses were higher education institutions. They trained both religious and civic leaders including jurists, priests, teachers, and the ulema (the learned men who constituted an elite pillar). They provided spokesmen for the society’s religious ideology. Both of these institutions were essentially designed to socialize the populace into Islamic Ottoman culture. Both functioned to induct the young into the religious culture of the society. But there was still another institution, the Palace Schools, which was designed strategically by the sultans for a special purpose, to train a cadre of loyal administrators to serve in the palace, the army, and the empire, and to secure their authority. The education provided was more secular in nature, but it never served the general public. Instead, these students were recruited strategically from the upper classes of the Christian minorities (Kazamias, 1966; Szyliowicz, 1973).

In the early periods of the Ottoman history, these three types of education institutions served adequately for what was expected of them; the reproduction and transmission of a culture that was traditional and religious in nature, and the recruitment of a technical and administrative class. What was expected from them was the
maintenance of existing values and reinforcement of the existing order. As with most educating institutions, their tasks were essentially conservative in nature, producing a next generation that would show the face of the prior generation. However, where change is essential for survival or competitiveness, reproduction alone will not achieve it. As the Empire entered its final period of decline, collapsing in the wake of the First World War, new generations of leaders and critics foresaw the adaptation of modern institutional forms as the solution to the problems faced by a country confronting the material and cultural resources of a modernizing Europe. Within this modernization movement, the institution of the school and the classroom was among those adapted from the West (Akyuz, 2001; Kazamias, 1966; Kocer, 1992).

Formal, secular schooling was considered a crucial agent for accomplishing the transformation of the culture and the society. The modernization of education meant transformation of the citizens’ dispositions from traditional to modern orientations, a central feature of which was the aim of a unified national identity. To appreciate this task is to appreciate the startling diversity of the many people who have come to the Anatolian Plateau in the last 3,000 years. Perhaps the greatest achievement of the Turkish Republic has been the achievement of national identity, to which its schools have been a central resource.

Starting in the eighteenth century, Western schooling was introduced among imperial elites, as an alternative to traditional schools. It created more liberal ideologies and leaders who ultimately assumed power to reshape the country and its existing educational system in line with more modern forms.
However, 20th century reforms introduced upon the collapse of the Ottoman Empire and the declaration of the Republic of Turkey by Mustafa Kemal Ataturk were the most significant, both in education and modernization. The new government sought a new national and cultural identity for the country. In order to promote the country’s development, the government initiated radical reforms for restoration of state institutions and the adoption of a new legal and social order in all fields. Notable reforms include abolition of religious schools; establishment of a unified secular education system, adoption of the Latin alphabet, disestablishment of Islam as the official religion, abolition of Caliphate, dissolution of various religious orders, prohibition of polygamy, emergence of the concept of the individual citizen, the cause of women’s emancipation, reforms in the trade and industry, and agrarian reform. The development of national education was taken as one of the main tasks of the government, due to its role in helping create a modern secular state and furthering the emergence of community awareness among its new citizens. In the process of reformations, Western educationalists were invited to the country and consulted, including American John Dewey in 1924, the German professor Alfred Kuhne in 1925, and the Belgian Omer Buyse in 1927 (Arayici, 1999; Sezen, 2007; Szyliowicz, 1973, 1984).

Under the republic the educational system was gradually modernized and used as an instrument of nation building. In the early years, a central educational system (Ministry of National Education) was established and all the existing schools in the country were subjected to its policies and control. A national curriculum containing modern subjects was introduced along with school–building programs and teacher
education programs in various parts of the country. Higher educational institutions were established to meet the increasing need for teachers and administrators (Akyuz, 2001; Arayici, 1999; Kazamias, 1966; Somel, 2001; Szyliowicz, 1973, 1984). The major task assigned to the educational system was to produce literate individuals in all sectors of the population to further the development of modern political, economic and cultural forms.

A further step was to initiate expansion of the system to rural parts of the country. Elementary schools were increasingly established in villages, hitherto whose population has been denied the benefits of formal education. Traditionally, the only form of education available for villagers consisted of the memorization of Koranic verses in informal settings in a language that was not Turkish. In the first five years of the Turkish Republic, nearly 85% of the villages had no school and 94% of the villagers were illiterate (Akyuz, 2001; Arayici, 1999; Kazamias, 1966; Szyliowicz, 1973, 1984). Rural populations were socially, culturally, and economically isolated, and much more deprived than the rest of the country.

*The Village Institutes*

However, it became a difficult task to establish primary schools among rural populations widely scattered throughout the country. There was almost total lack of facilities, and a scarcity of teachers. Urban areas were the first priorities. Further, the aim of education was not only to make the villagers literate, but also to guide them in the process of economic and social development, and these were unavoidably cultural matters too. Village life, like urban life, is a cultural matter. Therefore, it appeared that the teachers assigned to villages not only should be prepared in how to teach children, but
also in how to guide the village community, and bring to them the new politic and social order of the country.

To this end, the Village Institutes were established in 1940 (Akyuz, 2001; Arayici, 1999; Kazamias, 1966). The vision was to recruit young villagers who have completed primary education, and after providing them with a five-year period of training, to assign them to other neighboring villages to cultivate the development of a modern national identity. In the following years these institutes were replaced by the primary teacher training colleges, and with them, for the first time, many rural and traditional villages encountered the institutions of a modernizing government beyond those of military or police functions.

In the institution of formal schooling, villagers saw the early childhood experience, education, and socialization re-shaped in modern terms. Village children were to become school children. This encounter marked the foundations of a process that continues today, within which transformations of traditional culture into modern life forms is envisaged. Although this transformation now is a commonplace in the metropolitan parts of the country, it manifests itself as an unfinished project in the rural parts. This study takes interest in this unfinished project in this specific village community, and its school. It is thus a study of early childhood experience and education in a context less familiar than others in the contemporary literature.

Contrary to the traditional approaches in which childhood has been viewed as a preparatory period in which children are socialized into the adult social worlds, and early childhood education as a means to reach this end point, this study takes interest in
childhood in its own terms, and intends to describe children’s experiences in particularities of this village school classroom, in their lived details. Thus, while the traditional approaches treat childhood as a preparatory period, thereby denying them the active role in production of the very social worlds in which they find themselves, in line with recent interest in “social studies of childhood” as proposed by Corsaro (2005), Qvortrup, (1994) and others, this study takes interest in children’s active role in participation and production of their own social worlds, and education. Thus, childhood experiences and education is taken as a social, cultural phenomenon in its own right, and the village children’s encounters with the modern classroom organizational forms, their active participation in construction of social relations and identities found there, and the struggles they go through as they search for instructions for passing participation in these unfamiliar forms is described.

The Village School

School classrooms are modern places, wherein social organizations and relations shaping everyday life in modern institutions are introduced and practiced, and thereby transmitted to next generations. It has long been observed that schooling prepares the students for the world of work, meaning the modern world of work, its relations, organizations and institutional identities (cf., Apple, 1990; Bowles & Gintis, 1976; Foucault, 1975; Willis, 1977)\(^1\). It is in this sense, in the relationship of classroom

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\(^1\) The critical theoretic literature on social reproduction addresses the link between schooling and “the modern world of work”, as expressed in the titles by Bowles and Gintis, “Schooling in Capitalist America”, and Willis “Learning to Labor.” But the
organizations to workplace organizations and their emphasis on collective organization and individual performance, assessment and reward, that we see the place of education as an agency of modernization played out. This role of education becomes more vivid in traditional communities, like this particular village community, wherein schools receive children who, in their daily interaction with family members and the village community, already own the cultural knowledge, relations and competencies that organize the village community. They understand kinship, extended family, rhythms of the day and seasons, agrarian values, and organizations of collective work and responsibility. These children then encounter for the first time in this village school, the modern classroom and the culture and competencies that prevail there. This becomes their first curriculum in school, as the school embarks upon the task of “making modern kids” of them. This study is concerned with the ways in which this task is taken up and, in varying degrees, accomplished in what I will call the Yaylali village school.

In the organizations of the curricula and classroom activities, and the forms of participation, identity and relationship we find there, the students find a cultural curriculum. The newcomers learn the interactional competencies required of them to enter into full participation in the social organizational forms around which modern classroom tasks, events and activities are assembled. Learning how classrooms and their lessons work, and thus jointly producing them are the first curriculum of early childhood commentaries on this relationship are normative too, as in the vocational education movement, or even the recent interest in "apprenticeship". For some, schools are not effective enough in this reproduction. For others, they are too effective. But in the disagreement, there is consensus on the task.
education in schools, and takes place predominantly in the first three years of schooling. Before teachers can teach any lesson contents, students must learn how classroom events and activities are organized, and then join in their co-production (Mehan, 1979). Though they do not know their lessons yet, learning how to co-produce them is their first task.

The distribution of the rights and the obligations to interaction between the teacher and the students, the organization of the student cohort, and the structure of participation and discourse are the marks of modern classrooms. These organizational practices, like all human social practices, are instructed and constructed in routine daily interaction between the members; in this case, the students, and the students and the teacher. Thus the structures of classroom life are constructed over time in interaction among members, and *externalized* in time, becoming part of the social realities that both

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2 This statement does not imply that other pedagogical forms do not have their particular organizational structures distinctive from modern classrooms. However, the focus here is on the organizational forms particular to the modern classrooms. Further, this particularity is centrally derived from how individual students are assembled as members of a student cohort in modern classrooms. The rights and the obligations to interaction, the structure of participation and discourse found in modern classrooms are centrally organized around this distinctive cohorting work. (see Hamilton (1989) for a detailed account of the development of cohort organizations in 18th Century Europe, and a comparison of this form with older organizational forms; see Payne and Hustler, 1980, and chapter 6 for more contemporary treatments).

3 The term “externalization” is taken from Berger & Luckmann (1967). The term is used to express social situations in which habitualized human action is ‘institutionalized’ in its lived history, resulting in a phenomenon where historically constructed social reality becomes objective social fact for the newcomers, thereby
constrain and enable their actions within classroom situations (Berger & Luckman, 1967; Mehan & Woods, 1975). Though instructed matters, newcomers develop the competencies required of them for participation as they participate in routine daily activities with little, if any, direct or explicit instruction. One might say that much of early childhood education is of this implicit, participatory character, wherein the competent practices organizing human daily life are developed in the most routine daily interaction with others. It is a form of instruction that is implicit to the participation, whether in the classroom community, the village community, or any other social group. They are taken granted as part of the *external world*. As Mehan & Wood (1975, p. 300) put it, they are “at once our making and beyond our making.” It is within such a context that the project of ‘producing modern students’ is played out in the study classroom.

In the village school, two different communities of early childhood experience and competencies intersect in one setting. Village children who are already competent to the organizational forms of participation in village life and affairs find themselves incompetent to the organizational forms of the classrooms, just as children everywhere, raised in their home cultures of participation encounter new forms in the classroom. In the particulars of this study, the discontinuities between the village life and classroom life were striking and vivid, and allowed me to see how, upon entering the village school, the village children encounter different forms of social participation that are particular to constraining and enabling collective human activity. Similar perspectives can be found in Mehan & Wood (1975).
schools, for which they are not yet competent. How this is so is the topic of the analytic chapters and especially chapter 6.

_The Village and Its School_

The village is a small community, consisting of around 100–150 families. It has a history of around a century, and was built after the First World War, when the population was displaced in various parts of the country. Ironically, we tend to have view of traditional cultures as taking root in venerable places. But traditional cultures have been moved, displaced and re-established for a very long time. Yet, though the village is not so old, its form of life is much older. It was founded by eight or ten families coming from different locations. Thus, everyone in the village is related in some way, either being part of the original families or through marriages between them. This too is a traditional organizational form.

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4 One might think the work of developing competence to schooled forms of participation is a common experience among all the world’s children, and thus there could be no compelling value for studying the educational life of distinctive groups in particular. However, as the following discussions and the analysis of actual classroom encounters in chapter 6 shows, we will not understand what is the general case in advance of assembling studies of particular cases, and I wanted to understand this case. This is the village school wherein I completed my elementary education to become the only member of the entire school cohort I studied with to pursue schooling beyond high school level. I wanted to closely examine a process there that may indeed show many faces elsewhere. Blumer (1970) speaks of a meaningful social world of distinctive expressions of whatever our concepts may be (see chapter 3). To my understanding, the premise of qualitative work is the primacy of the cases, and what they can teach us.
This village school was built in early 1950s as part of government initiative targeting expansion of modern educational systems in rural areas. The school produced its first graduates in 1954–1955 academic year, a total of 5 students (all boys). Today, these first graduates are in their 70’s, and their grandchildren are now enrolled in the school. Thus, the villagers have been experiencing modern education system for two or three generations. As of this study, there were 22 students enrolled, eight of whom are in the first grade, six in second grade, and eight in third grade. Instruction is conducted by a single teacher in a multi-grade, multi-aged room. Students beyond third grade are transported to the district center to complete further compulsory education.

The children of this school and village belong to the majority population of modern Turkey in terms of ethnicity and religious background. Perhaps the greatest contemporary cultural difference within the country is the one along the continuum of traditional and modern forms of life. In this light, the villagers and their children are minorities, with respect to Turkey’s urban centers. The structure of daily life, language practices, relations among people, clothing preferences, free time activities, entertainments and pass–times, gender, identity, and participation rights and obligations are all distinctively rural and reflect the nature of life in rural areas. Moreover, the social organizations of face-to-face interaction among members that constitutes the everyday routines and activities within the village are distinctive to the village communities,
reflecting traditional orientations. Thus villagers are unfamiliar with the social organizational forms prevalent in modern institutions.\(^5\)

The villagers’ children move between the culture of traditional life governing daily affairs in the village, and the culture of schooling that shows the participatory values of modern culture. This traverse begins in places that are both familiar and unfamiliar. In the village of Yaylali, the school is located on the edge of the village, enclosed by walls marking its distinction from the village. Both physically and culturally, it is an intersection between village life and modern life, and my study takes interest in how the children, and also their parents and teacher, navigate, manage and make sense of the threshold.

\(^5\) One could imagine that this is an un-warranted claim, as it would be for a cultural stranger. But, I am not a cultural stranger. The differences between modern organizational forms and the organizations of village are a topic of commonplace remark for the villagers and urbanites alike in contemporary Turkey.
Figure 1: The village and its school, a view from the entrance.
Ethnographic Study

The implicit and participatory nature of social order and socially–shared knowledge has clear implications for studies of everyday life. A study of participatory forms, as in the forms of early childhood education, recommends an ethnographic investigation of the routine everyday activities that organize in real time the contexts of face-to-face interaction between cultural members, and the tasks, settings and occasions they pursue and achieve together. Our activities are constituted in our engagements with one another, and the sequential order of interaction underwrites our engagements. In classrooms, as elsewhere, contexts can be treated as the “modes of interactional organization” by reference to which activities are accomplished (Schegloff, 1987a), and
the rights and obligations to participation are distributed (Erickson & Schultz, 1981; Payne & Hustler, 1980). In classrooms, curricular objectives are achieved through interactional organizations (Mehan, 1974, 1979, 1982). Thus, a faithful understanding of occasions of early childhood education entails an investigation of classroom contexts as practical enactments, oriented to the achievements of common understanding (Moerman and Sacks, 1971/1988). The study aims to describe the interactional competencies that are distinctive to classroom contexts, and how they are encountered and acquired by village children.

I entered the setting in the second half of the 2008–2009 academic-year. Access was negotiated with Provincial offices of the Ministry of Education, the village elders and families, the classroom teacher, and of course with the approval of IRB review (protocol # 2009B0044). I lived in the village and participated in the daily activities of the class for 3 months, taking field notes, talking to parents and families and the children outside of school, and video and audio taping classroom sessions. During recess and lunch, I joined children in the schoolyard, playing games with them, reading stories to them, responding to their invitations and curiosities about me. Children called me ‘abla’ the address form used for the older sister of the family, predominantly used for women of older ages regardless of kinship among the village community. My time with the children was not limited to school hours; they came to my house to visit me, to invite me on walks to the pastures or gardens outside of the village. I visited their families, talked with their relatives and neighbors as part of an ordinary daily interaction.
The villagers in general simply called me ‘sister’ as a distant member of the village community, for reasons discussed below. Because of my position as an educated person, engaged in educational research, the children and the parents also approached me on matters regarding education and their children. Children came to me, both in and out of school, to ask my help with assignments they could not make sense of, or to teach them some of the materials presented in the class. Some parents invited me to join their visits to local boarding schools where their older children were enrolled after third grade. In short, I found myself emerged in not only daily life in the school, but the life of the villagers in their engagements with schooling, during my time there.

The Study.

This study is composed of a collection of ethnographic descriptions and discourse analyses that may offer some instruction on the social–organizational forms of life found in the village, those found in the school, and the experiences and attitudes of village children, parents and elders towards schooling and its place in their lives. These three foci organize the early childhood educational experiences of these children. They organize a larger picture of their encounters with schooling in the early grades and the place of schooling in the lives of their families. These are the descriptions and understandings this study hopes to secure. It hopes to understand something of the fabric of the early childhood educational experiences in the village school. Such accounts are rare in the Turkish literature, and may be rare in the Western literature as well. They show the ways in which the taken for granted nature of social knowledge shapes the
process of early childhood education, and the ways in which it is consequential for children who have differential cultural resources for understanding classroom culture.

The children’s competence to village life and affairs is developed in chapter 4. Chapter 5 examines the tension between traditional village life and the culture of schooling as expressed by parents and elders in discussing their own early childhood educational experiences in the classroom, and their understanding of the place of formal education in the lives of their children and families. Chapter 5 takes up the question of how 'they' value education, to suggest how conventional wisdoms fall far short of the complexity of their assessments. Chapter 6 takes up children’s actual classroom encounters through the analysis of classroom discourse. Chapter 6 offers a collection of analyses of classroom tasks and occasions in their sequential production, and how the students make sense of them. These analyses aim to show how students discover the first curriculum of their schooling, that is, how classroom lessons, identities and occasions work, how they struggle to see them, and how this first task becomes a source of frustration for both the teacher and the students, especially as the teacher fails to see their struggle, in his commitment to the content of the lessons, and what is 'obvious' about them.

My observations show how taking classroom practices for granted yields puzzles, challenges and confusions for the children, and for our understanding of their early educational experience. The cases demonstrate how the taken for granted nature of classroom organizations and practices can frustrate the understandings that teacher and students bring to the occasion, resulting in a rather complicated and painful process
whereby the children encounter the teacher’s expectations, but cannot find the performances they call for. Those expectations seem central to how it is that modern classroom education makes ‘modern kids’. On the one hand, they are commonly a routine achievement; on the other, the study shows how in some places it is a difficult process, played out implicitly and without notice by the teacher and the students, on a field of practices, identities and relations that are taken for granted. The study also suggests the ways in which professional educational programs may contribute to these difficult dynamics when teachers perceive their work as a technical or administrative activity, rather than a cultural one, of "inducting the next generation" into a community of practice called 'early childhood education' (Lave and Wenger, 1991; Welker, 1991).

Significance

Classrooms show modern forms of social participation, and thus cultural forms. This view stands in contrast with the more familiar perception that teaching and learning in the classroom is a technical exercise, performed in 'neutral' environments, as though the central exercise of instruction were an administrative transfer of information. Yet the teaching and learning practices for any given content domain are embedded in local contexts of participation and sense making, and attempting to understand classrooms as “neutral environments” or places of technical administration results in conceptually confused ways of describing the educational tasks and achievements we find there. For these reasons, this study strives to investigate the classroom contexts within which educational activities take place in the village school. Such an attempt is essential for understanding the early childhood education we find there, and for escaping the
temptation to attribute successes or failures to individuals, or to their ‘attitudes’ or dispositions that derives from a culture-free conception of classrooms.

This study of early childhood education in a rural Turkish village school is conducted as an ethnographic inquiry into how successes or failures are accomplished in interaction among members, and accounted for in the larger village community (chapters 4 and 5), and as a sequential analytic study of classroom lesson enactments (chapter 6). The hope is that such analyses will further our understanding of the nature of education’s actual, practical organizations, and how children encounter and learn to co-produce them. It is hoped that this understanding will yield an awareness that teaching and learning are not disconnected from the daily life outside of schools, and that who children are as cultural members and as analysts of their interactional encounters, and who we are as educators, have consequences in the life of classrooms.

This approach to early childhood education has the potential to reform our conventional understandings of educational processes and their outcomes. Hopefully this study will teach us about the nature of educational practices in classrooms as contextually and culturally dense exercises, and will lead to further studies investigating the diverse contexts in which educational events and activities are accomplished.

An Auto-ethnographic Note

This study entailed both field work, and a homecoming. This village is my village. This is the school wherein I completed my elementary education. My family lives in this village; my parents, uncles, aunts and cousins live there, terms that are familiar enough in the American context, but have different meanings in village life. I left
the village for schooling and urban life in my teens. Unavoidably, this study is auto-
ethnographic too, as it touches on my own path from village life to an urban, modern life
that finds me in Columbus, Ohio. My ties to these topics will recur throughout the
chapters.

I took interest in this village and its school, because I wanted to understand the
dynamics of education there, partly because I felt responsible for the people there. The
achievement levels of these children are not high, compared to the more developed parts
of the country. After completing their compulsory education, some never open a book
again. Most view education as something to get through. Once they are done with
school, they talk about their life there, and how they are glad it is over. Only few reach
the level where they start to see reading and writing as means for gaining knowledge,
improving their life conditions, cultivating and valuing curiosity. I am the only child of
the village to have experienced an international and graduate education. As one might
imagine, my position there, during the field work, was multiple and complex, as someone
who at times was an 'object' of pride, or puzzlement, or uncertainty, and also an expert
about a larger and distant world. But I am also a villager, and understanding village life
as I do, I wanted to understand the dynamics of education, and the reasons for the
dispositions the villagers have towards schooling. Those reasons are more sensible than
educators tend to imagine.
CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

This literature review is organized under two main sections: a historical and conceptual review of the literature in early childhood studies, showing the trajectory from individual and psychological orientations, to the contemporary sociocultural orientation. The second section addresses the development of studies of classroom discourse, and the emergence of different conceptual programs for the analysis of naturally occurring discourse from common dissatisfactions with prior studies of language and grammar as formal systems removed from actual language use. These literatures are central to this field study, and its interests in the early childhood education and classroom experiences of the children of a village school.

Early Childhood Studies: An Overview

An interest in children as a topic for newly emerging social sciences began attracting attention during the later decades of the nineteenth century, when issues of children's welfare, resulting from industrialization and urbanization, became a public issue in Western Europe and North America. More than ever before, urban centers were about masses of children, in factories, in overcrowded slums, in streets, and, for some, in schools. By Gillis’s (2009) account, a social, religious and political movement of "child savers" emerged who campaigned on behalf of the introduction of compulsory education
beginning in the second half of the nineteenth century. Via urbanizations, demographic and policy changes, and the institutionalization of schooling, children became a distinctive category of persons within society. In the developing course of nineteenth century urban life, children’s lives were separated from those of adults:

By 1900, children were segregated from adults in the spheres of both production and consumption. There had evolved a whole new set of times and spaces for children, initiated and policed by self-proclaimed 'child savers', who were quick to transform themselves into professionals acting the name of children and adolescents (Gillis, 2009, p. 118).

In these ways, the construction of childhood as we know it today was underway (Aries, 1962; Gillis, 2009; Woodhead, 2009).

Children became known not only by their name, gender, religion, class, and other social categories, but for the first time in history, their age increasingly became a relevant category for their identification. Childhood institutions were increasingly becoming age-calibrated. According to historian Philippe Aries (1962), an age-based hierarchy and eventual dichotomy was becoming institutionalized in the relationship between adults and children, and the defining criteria for children and adults were increasingly becoming oppositional. By Aries’s account, by the mid-eighteenth century, adults in particular social classes were increasingly beginning to think themselves as not of the same order of beings as their children. In the course of time, children’s lives and activities were departmentalized in separate childhood institutions in western societies, established to serve varying functions, for which the school and classroom were central. In these ways children’s times and places were increasingly separated from those of their elders. In the
course of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries they came to have less access to the times and places of adults in general (Gillis, 2009; Zeiher; 1994).

Through these social and cultural developments, children began to be regulated using age as the metric to identify the beginning and the end of their childhoods, to designate school ages, and to separate, matriculate and assign responsibilities accordingly. In this fashion, childhood became a closely marked passage that individuals walk through in their preparation for adult social life (Davis, 1940). According to Gillis (2009), by the end of the nineteenth century, a series of rites of passage had been created to assist, for example, young men’s distancing from their times and places of childhood, and the marking of their entrance into adulthood.

Accompanying and furthering these new social organizations, new professions emerged, whose practitioners’ tasks were to identify children’s distinctive needs for care, discipline and teaching; for protecting children’s welfare and promoting their learning (Gillis, 2009; Zeiher, 1994). According to Gillis, established by the self-proclaimed ‘child-savers’ whose interests were to protect the essential innocence and vulnerability of children, these institutions justified the prescription of special times and places for children, and furthered the segregation of children from adults, and their sorting of one from another according to their abilities and potentials.

Other developments included the invention of practical and conceptual tools for these professionals to do their work. There has, of course, always been a normative order of childhood, regardless of culture or history. But with the developing professionalization of childhood institutions and services, “normative expectations”
developed to regulate the lives of children, and childhood experience took on an articulate, measured and measurable normativity, displacing the cultural measures and wisdoms that had been in place for generations (Gillis, 2009; Woodhead, 2009). According to Lowe (1982), the Protestant middle classes were the first to embrace the idea of development, organized around the stages identified for each age category (in Gillis, 2009). In these developments we find the point of Aries’s historical analysis, when he maintained that previous societies lacked our conceptualization of childhood (1962).

*Conceptual and Technical Developments*

The transformation and regularization of childhood were also among those developments that followed the technical and conceptual revolutions in the biological sciences. As new languages for describing social life and order were being invented, new scholarly and technical interests in childhood as-a-topic emerged. Application of Darwin’s evolutionary theory radically altered ideas about development on a grand scale (Walkerdine, 1993; Woodhead, 2009). It was a paradigmatic innovation, popularized by Hall and others, and re-wrote ways of taking interest in children and their development. The implication was taken that both individuals and societies moved through a sequence of unrepeatable stages. The now familiar mis-reading of Darwin then held that these stages showed a path, a trajectory and an end point. Thus, childhood and development became a topic for a scientific investigation, and the new conceptualizations fundamentally altered the lens through which scholars, experts, and then the public, viewed children.
Development was perceived as a natural “progression” from immaturity in infants to adult maturity. Once childhood was established as a 'passage', interest turned to the discovery of the stages of this progression (Davis, 1940). The life course was initially organized around childhood, youth, adulthood and old age, and was later included new and finer categories like infancy, adolescence, and middle age (Gillis, 2009). The developmental sequence was seen both as a voyage through time, complete with beginnings, middles and end-points, and a movement through space, starting with a fixed point associated with the family home, and always moving upward and outward into the world. As Walkerdine (1984) states:

Children’s bodies were weighed and measured. The effects of fatigue were studied, as were children’s interests, imaginings, religious ideas, fetishes, attitudes to weather, to adults, drawings, dolls, lies, ideas and, most importantly for us their stages of growth. … Children as a category were being singled out for scientific study for the first time (p. 171).

Thus, early–modern interest in childhood studies took up the task of describing the major milestones or benchmarks of children’s development, to identify the organic processes underlying this progression, and, subsequently, to identify the environmental factors promoting or delaying development. It was a 'maturationist' perspective, a view of development as a natural force with a natural trajectory and outcome. The program became, in the hands of Hall, Gessell, Piaget and others, studies in developmental psychology (Corsaro, 1988, 1992, 2005; Handel, Cahill, & Elkin, 2007; James, Jenks, & Prout, 1998; Qvortrup, 1994; Walkerdine, 1993).
Thus, the early studies of children conceived childhood as an arena for preparation for more developed adult forms. These early studies brought a new energy and technical language to their inquiries, although we can note that the vision of childhood as a preparation was itself not novel. It seems to be quite continuous with pre-modern cultures as well (Benedict, 1976; Mead, 1928). And when social and cultural factors are considered in these modern studies, they are included in the analysis as secondary or auxiliary factor, either promoting or hindering developmental forces that are more or less naturally or biologically disposed.

With these epistemic developments, as childhood became a topic for new, modern and scientific descriptions, we observe re-conceptualizations of children, their childhood experiences, development, and social lives, in languages of newly developed social sciences (Mackay, 1974a, 1974b). The old cultural categories were becoming topics for scientific investigation and revision, as had never been experienced before. Although these new alternative descriptions were different than commonsense conceptions, they still preserved children’s place within the adult world as “incomplete beings” (p. 180). Thus, the fundamental cultural assumption that the point of childhood was for children to become like adults was not challenged. In these ways, early modern social science unavoidably borrowed cultural wisdoms and then rewrote them in scientific terms, as scientific facts, thereby scientizing the culture in multiple different ways. The subsequent developments of these conceptualizations find their expressions in the two major disciplines that traditionally take interest in childhood studies as their primary topic: On the one hand, there are the child development studies of developmental psychology. And
on the other, the socialization theories of sociology and social psychology. In both camps, however, development is conceptualized in individualistic terms, providing accounts of individuals arriving at adult skills and knowledge, depending on a given approach, either individually or collectively. Childhood is taken as an environment for development; its nature as a life form is not taken into consideration (Corsaro, 1988, 1992, 2005; Handel, Cahill, & Elkin, 2007; James, Jenks, & Prout, 1998; Ovortrup, 1994; Walkerdine, 1993). Thus, I will organize my review under these disciplinary headings. The review concludes with a consideration of the more recent critiques of these traditional models that have emerged following the qualitative shift in the social sciences, under the heading of the “new sociology of childhood studies.”

*Child Development Studies*

Throughout the twentieth century, development has been understood as the physical and psychological growth in the young, as they transform from fetus, to infant, to child, to adolescent, and finally to adult. Development is thus viewed as being about change, with a sense that the changes are organic or “naturally” disposed, and thus they follow an ordered, rule-governed projection whose “outcome” will be a more advanced, complex or sophisticated level of being an “adult”, like us. A paradigmatic conceptualization of development as a “progression”, projecting a movement from the “immature” to the “fully developed” is the subtext we find across developmental studies, which has been set out by the early founders (Corsaro, 1988, 1992, 2005; Handel, Cahill & Elkin, 2007; James, Jenks, & Prout, 1998; Qvortrup, 1994; Walkerdine, 1993).
In North America child development studies began with the pioneering psychologist and educator Granville Stanley Hall (1844-1924). Hall’s thinking was deeply influenced by Darwin’s evolutionary theory, particularly the version found in Ernst Haeckel’s recapitulation theory, from which we have the phrase, and conceptualization that “ontogeny recapitulates phylogeny”. Within this theory, an individual organism’s biological development, or ontogeny, is believed to parallel its species’ entire evolutionary development, or phylogeny. Thus, Hall believed that the child’s development recapitulates the history of human evolutionary development. He identified the primary task for the future students of child development as identification of the evolutionary stages in a child’s development. Thereby, the agenda shaping the child development studies throughout the twentieth century was established. Taking up on Hall’s intellectual heritage, Arnold Gesell, one of the early pioneers, established the Yale Clinic of Child Development in 1911, and began to identify “normative summaries” representing stages of normal development in children of different ages. He assembled a massive data bank of young children’s behavior at various ages and stages. These standards were taken as benchmarks of ‘normal’ development and used to evaluate individual children’s developmental progress (Handel, Cahill, & Elkin, 2007; McCullers, 1976; Skolnick, 1976; Walkerdine, 1993).

Within these early programs, children were characterized similarly to the savages in early anthropological studies, who lacked the mind of civilized men, and thus needed ‘correct’ training to develop the ‘reasoning’ required to enter the adult social world. If not trained correctly, they were seen as potential treats to the integrity of adult
civilization, to which children in time would learn to aspire. Hall, for example, believed that the child needs a good dose of authoritarian discipline, including corporal punishment, to discard the vestiges of evil in his nature. In these ways, early formulations show persistence of “original sin” found in theological writings. In time, such conceptions of children and of their nature have been transformed and displaced by new models of theorizing childhood in the disciplines. However, the core of the program, identifying developmental stages and a future–oriented pathway, remained as the compelling engagement. Especially via the comprehensive theories of intellectual, moral and personal development constructed by Piaget, Kohlberg, Erickson and others, child development studies became an established and highly influential field during the twentieth century, shaping the ways childhood has been understood and constructed in contemporary societies. In these ways, developmental psychology colonized childhood studies.

*Piaget.*

Perhaps the most influential among them all, Piaget was concerned particularly with understanding how children develop adult cognitive processes. He set out to map the child’s thinking from her earliest days, and the changes in her cognitive operations that occurs as she grows older and become formal, logical–cognitive operators (James, Jenks & Prout, 1998). Piaget laid out the most clearly articulated and invariant step-wise sequence of cognitive development. By his account, children progress from ‘sensory-motor’ operations at birth, through pre–operational thought and the development of object permanence, to ‘operational’ intelligences. He understood this work as a "genetic
epistemology”, or how the child 'self starts' transformations of cognitive organization that yield her knowledge of the world. In this progression model, the stage sequence is fixed and universal, and particular attention is paid to the transformational organizations and environments where we find the passage from one to a next (Corsaro, 1988, 1992, 2005; Handel, Cahill, & Elkin, 2007; James, Jenks, & Prout, 1998; Skolnick, 1976; Walkerdine, 1993).

Piaget’s model framed development in cognitive–constructivist terms, conceptualizing development as a biological maturation, stimulated by the child’s activity in the world. The stages are marked by periods of "equilibrium", but the stage sequence progression is marked by disturbances too. Thus, in Piaget’s account the child constructs internal representations (schema) of the environment as he/she engages in activities. In the 'secure' phase of the stage, she "assimilates" her encounters to the operational routines she possesses; in infancy, for example, many things become 'suckables'. Subsequent encounters, however, yield conflict or discrepancy, to which the child finds accommodation. This "accommodation" generates new organizing principles with which to overcome the “dis-equilibrium” resulting from a conflict produced as a result of encounters that cannot readily be assimilated into the existing sensori–motor or pre–operational, or operational structure. This alternation drives the step–wise developmental process across periods of equilibration.6

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6 Piaget defined equilibrium as the “compensation resulting from the activities of the subject in response to external intrusions” (Piaget, 1968, p. 101).
Thus, we observe in Piaget’s account that children are assigned an active role in the developmental process (Corsaro, 1988, 1992, 2005). More properly, activity is assigned an active role, the site for the activation of cognitive processes that are owned by no one, but are rather a genetic endowment. In Langer's account (1969), his approach is an “organic lamp theory” of development, in which the child comes into the world already possessing the lamp, whose light glows more brightly as the developmental process unfolds.

In these ways, Piaget was groundbreaking in producing a cognitive–constructivist account of development. However, perhaps because his concern was to understand a universal genetic epistemology, he could easily imagine that his own cultural context, one of Western, scientific rationality, and the cultural forms that sustain it, was definitive. He wanted to understand how children become formal, logical–operating adults, as they sometimes do in Western societies. Children were studied and assessed for their stage achievement, in order to formulate a “gold standard” for development, and was widely used in turn as a benchmark for assessing individual children and their developmental possibilities.\footnote{Again, the interest in and exercise of assessing the possibilities for children is not new. We will see more of it in chapter 5, as parents and grandparent speak of their children. I had teachers, as no doubt the reader did, who saw promise in me, supported me, counseled my parents, etc. But these were assessments without the authority or need of science or universal claims. They were only thoughtful, considered and disciplined. I still possess and treasure one such letter for an esteemed elementary school teacher.}
Thus, what we find in Piaget is further evidences for the vision that the child is biologically endowed with a grand potential to become *not* just anything, but quite specifically something, to which anything less is an implicitly lesser state. He provides an account of intellectual development as a progression through a series of qualitatively distinct stages of intellectual ability. In these ways, Piaget, similar to the earlier founders of child studies, provides further analytical and cultural grounds for establishing differences between adults and children, and differences among children, and places them in a domain of not yet fully developed forms of mature, adult competence. He continues the program of constructing a modern conceptualization of childhood initiated in eighteenth century, and brings precision to the exercise. Because his studies teach us that children perceive and organize worlds in ways qualitatively different from adults, they lead us not to notice how we might take interest in these differences in their own right. In his view childhood is a precursor to the fully developed human being, the adult state, and the task of childhood studies becomes identification of this progression in its most fine detail. In Piaget, childhood becomes a more closely marked passage; he measures the passage more finely than ever before, expanding on the project formulated by the early founders such as Hall and others.

Thus, Piaget serves as another model for Morss’s formulation that “what developmentalists discover in their empirical work may be determined in advance” (Morss, 1992, p. xiii), meaning that they know in advance what things will come to. In this way, though his account also provides a place for experience in shaping how natural dispositions realize their potential, Piaget’s subjects were positioned outside of culture.
and social contexts. When it is taken into account, the cultural aspect of social life is introduced only as environment for the developmental progression. Thus, in Piaget’s account, the social, cultural and historical contexts of childhood are of interest only to the degree that they either support or hinder development. We could instead take interest in them as forms of life, constituting the very possibility of development. As Light and Perret–Clermont (1989) remark,

Within academic developmental psychology the dominant view of cognitive development has always had a more or less maturationalist flavour… Any essentially maturational view of cognitive development necessarily relegates social factors… to a secondary role. Such factors may facilitate or inhibit but they have no genuinely constitutive function (1989, p. 99).

Piaget has been criticized for creating a pyramidal structure of cognitive development, in which Western expressions stand at the top. His constructivism was cognitive, rather than social, and his premise of a universal developmental trajectory has been effectively disputed by studies showing how development and its operations have their origins in how we live, as urban dwellers, pastoralists, school children, etc. (Cf., Donaldson, 1978; Light and Perret–Clermont, 1989; Rogoff, 1990). The critiques gained momentum in the social–cultural turn of the last 30 years, but a critique of Piaget’s cognitivism was developing in the 1930s. To a contemporary of Piaget, the Russian psychologist Lev Vygotsky, the social, cultural and historical aspects become indispensable, for understanding development.
Vygotsky.

Vygotsky’s approach to human development is formulated differently than Piaget. He locates the developmental processes and knowledge acquisition in the context of the developing child’s social world. Similar to Piaget, Vygotsky viewed the prods to development as resulting from the child’s activities in the world. However, Vygotsky made no genetic assumptions to account for the motivating factor that generates the child’s activities, as we find in Piaget’s notion of equilibrium. Instead, Vygotsky attributed development to children’s attempts to deal with everyday problems. For Piaget while the child progresses through naturally sequenced cognitive stages as s/he engages in his or her physical and social environment, for Vygotsky, the child finds her development in social relations and activities with others. Thereby Vygotsky positions the child as a social actor. In his account, in their dealings with the everyday problems children develop collectively in interaction with others. In sum, while for Piaget development is primarily individualistic, resulting from the activities of the sole child, it is primarily social and collective for Vygotsky. He argued that it is through social interaction that children appropriate, internalize, and acquire the skills and competencies that they observe in others (1978). In these ways, Vygotsky acknowledges that social and cultural features fueling development are already in place, located in society, and that children find their developmental resources in everyday activities in the world.

Two of Vygotsky’s concepts are especially important to note, internalization and the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD). Regarding internalization, he argued that all human activities are thoroughly social in origin, that is, all of our psychological and
social skills are always acquired from the external, social world through interaction with others. Children acquire and use these skills at the individual (intra–personal) level only after they internalize them at the interpersonal (social) level. Thus, for Vygotsky, “…every function in development appears twice: first, on the social level, and later, on the individual level; first, between people (interpsychological) and then inside the child (intrapsychological).” (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 57). Similarly, Vygotsky argued that inner speech (or the intra–personal inner thought) appears as a result of transformation of self-directed speech in young children. By self-directed speech, he is referring to the tendency of young children to speak out loud to themselves that is observed frequently in early language acquisition, which was characterized as egocentric speech in Piaget’s account. Vygotsky observed that such speech occurs especially in problematic situations, for example when children are given a task, such as drawing a picture or building a construction out of toys. Based on these observations, he concludes that self-directed speech is a form of interpersonal communication, except the child is addressing himself as another in problematic situations, directing and advising himself through self-directed speech on how to deal with a practical problem. Vygotsky believed that, self-directed speech is transformed over time, or internalized from interpersonal to the intra–personal plane, eventually becoming a form of thought.

In a second, and more familiar interrelated concept, the notion of zone of proximal development (ZPD), Vygotsky argues that development occurs as a result of children’s interaction with adults or more capable peers during their participation in everyday activities with them. He defines ZPD as “the distance between the actual
developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers” (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 86). He maintains that interactions in ZPD allow children to participate in activities that are not yet possible for them acting alone. In Vygotsky’s (1987) words,

What lies in the zone of proximal development at one stage is realized and moves to the level of actual development at a second. In other words, what the child is able to do in collaboration today he [or she] will be able to do independently tomorrow (p. 211).

Thus within the ZPD, children are viewed to be always a 'step ahead' in their development. Further, in Vygotsky’s account, development takes place through participation in cultural activities and events and is mediated through use of cultural tools, of which language is the most significant one. Internalization of culture occurs gradually over an extended period of time as children interact with others through language.

Thus, in Vygotsky’s account we also find a model in which children appropriate the adult culture and values. Yet although the role of children’s play and collective activities are given great significance, the model of development proposed is once again an 'end-point' oriented one. In his accounts too, children are conceptualized as adults-becoming, living their everyday lives so as to become fully developed adults in their respective societies. Especially in his concept of ZPD, we find a controlling interest in what the child can do in the presence of a more competent other (adult or peer). His account shows a normative interest, an interest that orients to children’s futures as adults,
and their present as adults-becoming, in which adults scaffold children in their integration to the society, guiding them in their journeys to become productive members of society. An interest in naturally occurring adult–child interaction in its own right is set aside in preference for a practical orientation to children’s ‘correct’ training. Thus, although Vygotsky is to be celebrated as an innovative figure, pointing to collective activities of children situated within their sociocultural contexts, his conceptualization is transitional, and still aligned with a view in which development becomes a progressive approach to a higher form of being in the world. An interest in children’s lives and activities in their own right has been omitted from these future-oriented accounts (Corsaro, 1988, 1992, 2005; Handel, Cahill, & Elkin, 2007).

In summary, during the first part of the twentieth century, maturationist theories were the predominant approach, within which child development was conceived in organic terms, as reflected in such commonly used terms as “maturation” and “growth.” By these accounts development was a naturally, or biologically unfolding process, and children were going through this preparatory period called childhood as they looked forward to becoming adult members of society. Although each new theory introduced innovative ideas in their conceptualization of development, children, and childhood, the progressive nature of development was the subtext underwritten through each new approach. When social cultural factors were introduced, they became environments for development, or contexts for its unfolding expressions.

During the second part of the twentieth century, the concern shifted strongly to an interest in the social–cultural context of development. The 'maturationist' perspective of
biological development gave way to the influence of 'environmentalist' accounts, and we can see how Piaget’s constructivist theory, and Vygotsky’s sociocultural theory show elements of each. Piaget’s model can be considered closer to the nativistic orientation, although he proposes that development is prodded by human activity in the world. Vygotsky, on the other hand, is regarded as closer to the environmentalist end of the continuum because his account points not only to the effects of the external world in developmental process, but the primacy of social worlds as the developmental context (Corsaro, 1988, 1992, 2005; Handel, Cahill, & Elkin, 2007).

Yet, in their shared orientation to the end-point of development, both Piaget and Vygotsky can be characterized as future or outcome--oriented developmental theories. And in this forward looking, it is easy to lose sight of the formative nature of children’s everyday lives in human development. Led by developmental studies, the 20th century literature of early childhood education has been equally forward-looking in its orientation. When we view children this way, we tend to fail to take interest in their participation in everyday activities in their own right. It is this interest that has marked the literature of the late 20th century, beginning with early theories of childhood socialization.

Socialization Theory

Socialization theory began as a project for sociology, bringing to childhood studies a language and conceptualization different than psychological accounts. It begins with sociology’s interest in social order, stability and integration, and the larger question of social reproduction, or how society's members come to reproduce the order and
familiarity of worlds in common (Handel, Cahill, & Elkin, 2007; James, Jenks, & Prout, 1998; Jenks, 1996/2005). In this sense, socialization theory begins with a well-established concept of society, and a sociological interest in children as its future members. Socialization theory takes interest in understanding how society inculcates its rules of order, conduct and competence, into the consciousness of children. This process of inculcation is referred to as socialization (Denzin, 1977; Elkin & Handel, 1978). In this respect, sociology’s understanding of social order and its reproduction depend largely on the efficacy of socialization, involving the successful transmission of social forms from one generation to the next.

Thus, the socialization model is not so much about what the child "naturally" is, than what society 'naturally' needs and expects of the child (James, Jenks, & Prout, 1998; Jenks, 1996/2005; Handel, Cahill, & Elkin, 2007; Qvortrup, Corsaro, Honig, 2009). In these ways, socialization theory sets out alternative arguments to the familiar nativistic accounts of developmental psychology, an alternative which inverts the direction of influence. That is, society shapes the child (James, Jenks & Prout, 1998). Socialization is the process of this shaping, in which the child internalizes the social constraints through external regulations. And, through socialization, the individual child’s personality becomes continuous with the goals and means of the society. In these ways, the model points to the importance of social context for understanding children and their development. It resists the explanations in terms of naturalistic propensities or dispositions, thereby introducing a conceptual break with the maturationist models of the development. However, the interest in children and their lives still shows a forward
looking, anticipatory approach that views childhood as a preparatory period for adulthood.

According to the most influential and persuasive model, structural-functionalism, the order and balance in society depend on successful training and preparation of children to fit in society. The focus is on specifying what needs to be internalized, and which parental childrearing or training strategies need to be employed for such an effective internalization. According to Inkeles (1968), socialization must be inherently “forward looking”, specifying what the child must become to meet the requisites for the continued functioning of society.

… both the practice and study of child socialization are ‘forward looking.’ It seems obvious, furthermore, that of the various later stages which socialization looks forward to, it is the personally relatively enduring and socially important adult stage which is the critical one to consider. Therefore, a central task of the study of socialization is to enquire into the effects which the experience of the child has on the shaping of the adult (Inkeles, 1968, pp. 76-7).

In the account of Parsons, the most influential and persuasive exponent, the child must be successfully socialized, and a failure to do so poses a threat to the society. There may be no great task on the part of society that intends to sustain itself through time. In his account society is defined as the “intricate network of interdependent and interpenetrating” roles and consensual values (Parsons & Bales, 1955, p. 36), and the child is to be brought within it, and can be only if successfully socialized. Thereby, the child is likened to a “pebble thrown by the fact of birth into the social ‘pond’” (Parsons & Bales, 1955, pp. 36-7). The family is treated as the initial point of entry, and as the child
grows older, the effects are seen as succession of widening waves that expand to the other parts of the system.

Socialization theories begin with a model of social and cultural formation, and strives to recruit and restructure the child’s potential for disruptive difference into a form that fits into the society's normative order. In these ways, the socialization theory deals with the child’s incompetence, inadequacy and dependency with appropriate training. The idea of development is not a natural but a social construct, and the child is constituted purposefully to facilitate a solution to the puzzle of how society is possible (James, Jenks, & Prout, 1998; Jenks, 1992). In this way, however, and although socialization theory is placed in opposition to the tradition of child development studies, it is still oriented to the outcome of development (Corsaro, 1988, 1992, 2005; James, Jenks, & Prout, 1998; Handel, Cahill, & Elkin, 2007; Mackay, 1974a, 1974b; Qvortrup, Corsaro, Honig, 2009). As with the concepts and models of developmental psychology, the socialization theorists turn childhood into a preparatory passage, with an anticipatory outlook (Davis, 1940; James, 2009). The child is taken over by the society and trained, to eventually become a functional member within the social system. As Qvortrup’s (1994) puts it, children are treated as “human becomings” rather than “human beings.”

In this way, the socialization approach still shares certain assumptions with the developmental model. It directs our attention to the social and cultural aspects of childhood development, while at the same time it simplifies a highly complex process, and overlooks the importance of everyday lives and activities. Thus, it has also been characterized as a transitional model. In its orientation to outcomes, socialization theory
fails to see childhood as a segment in social structure, and does not recognize the
significance of children’s everyday lives in their own right, apart from the fact that they
are all heading to adulthood. Not until the arrival of the "qualitative turn" in childhood
studies in late 60s and early 70s, do children and their everyday lives became such a
topic. (Handel, Cahill, & Elkin, 2007; MacKay, 1974a, 1974b; Qvortrup, 1994; Qvortrup,

A Break with Tradition

The interest in childhood and childhood experience is a modern interest.
Rousseau (1712-1778) took interest in the child’s nature on the eve of the French
Revolution. The child was understood as a window for understanding human nature as a
social–moral expression of innocence. Relieved of the burden of churchly accounts,
interest in the child’s nature was reformulated in the nineteenth century, under the
influence of newly developing biological science and evolutionary theory. Childhood
became an ontogenetic recapitulation, in which the child is conceived as an expression of
every stage of maturation and rationality that is manifest in the ‘developed’ adult.
Children came to be seen as 'becoming' adult. These early conceptualizations set the tone
for later developmental and socialization theory, in which children were conceptualized
as living a state of ‘potentials’, a ‘project in the making.’ In these theories “the adult
member [was] being considered naturally as mature, rational and competent, the child
[was] viewed in juxtaposition as less than fully human, unfinished or incomplete” (Jenks,
[1982]/1992, p. 19). According to Jenks, such an approach presents itself most explicitly
in theories of development concerned with the learning process.
Beginning in 1970s (e.g. Mackay, 1974a, 1974b) and in growing numbers during 1980s and 1990s, however, there were increasing critiques of these traditional perspectives on children. Some critiques emerged from within developmental psychology. Donaldson (1978) for example critiqued Piaget’s developmental stage paradigm. Through variations on Piaget’s classic experiments, Donaldson demonstrated young children’s capacities for reasoning and pointed to the role of social context and social processes in shaping children’s development. He was among the first demonstrating that the social context of the laboratory experiment, which was unfamiliar to children, inhibited their responses. When this context was changed young children’s thought and reasoning was much more sophisticated than Piaget had claimed. Thus, “what appear to be ‘faulty’ reasoning actually indicates children’s ingenious attempts to create sensible meanings for what are, to them, nonsensical situations and contexts” (Woodhead & Faulkner, 2000, p. 25). Light and Perret–Clermont (1989) similarly deconstructed the Piagetian conception and investigations of "conservation", finding it "not as transcendent logical entities but as historically elaborated products of certain practical and social purposes" (1989, p. 109).

Similarly radical critiques also began to appear about the ways childhood was being represented in developmental accounts. The foundational concept of ‘child development’ itself came under increasing scrutiny. Child development implies that

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8 They continue: [I]n place of a Piagetian focus on cognitive development as a sequence of emerging logical competences, pragmatic, intersubjective agreements—in—meaning are seen as lying at the heart of the developmental process. (1989, p. 110)
childhood is a transient phase for each child to become an adult, in naturally disposed ways. However, critics argued, the terms ‘child’ and ‘childhood’ are not interchangeable terms (Jenks, 1982; James, Jenks, & Prout, 1998; Qvortrup, 1994; Qvortrup, Corsaro, Honig, 2009). Childhood is a structural and cultural component of societies, within which all children spend their personal childhoods. Thus, childhood exists in society as a social space to receive any child and to include children throughout their childhood periods. That is, childhood has permanence in society, and its existence does not depend on particular members’ entering or leaving it. It is a framework, within which children lead their lives. This point is crucial, according to the critiques, because it shows the multiplicities of childhoods across societies, and various segments within a given society, as well as through history. It establishes both the regularity and the socio-cultural and historical situated nature of childhoods. As suggested by Ruth Benedict and Margaret Mead, children in different societies assume different relations with respect to adults. This changes nothing in the fact that children are heading towards adulthood. However, the conditions and circumstances under which they do, and the adulthoods achieved, differ among different cultural groups. The topic of interest shifts from children as an unfinished model of adulthood, to childhood studies which focus on studying children’s everyday life. The focus of new sociological interest in childhood studies is on cross cultural and historical variations, and its stability within society, rather than on individual dispositions.
The issue was not just about sensitivity to other people’s childhoods ‘out there’, but also about acknowledging the complexity of childhood within modern societies. Children increasingly were seen as “subjects with concerns” as well as ‘subjects of study and concern’ (Prout, 2000). Around the time when Berger & Luckmann (1967) were advancing an argument about the socially constructed nature of reality, new interpretive and interactionist approaches emerged in social science. In such an intellectual climate, childhood could no longer be seen, simplistically, as just the early part of a familiar life-course. Following these developments, it was proposed that the field of childhood studies be engaged in research for understanding the everyday life of children in their constitutive, meaningful detail. Thus, children’s social relationships and cultures increasingly became focus of study in their own right, without regard to the perspectives and concerns of adults (Corsaro, 1988, 1992, 2005; James & Prout, 1990; Qvortrup, Corsaro, Honig, 2009).

Following these developments, British anthropologist Charlotte Hardman (1973/2001) was among the first to suggest that children too, might inhabit a "self-regulating, autonomous world" (1973, p. 87). She proposed an “anthropology of children”, and an agenda to investigate children’s games and rituals as documents of an autonomous system of meaning in itself. Hardman brings into view oral traditions, interactions and iconic representations, which are exclusive to children. In her own words:
My proposed approach regards children as people to be studied in their own right, and not just as receptacles of adult teaching. My search is to discover whether there is in childhood a self-regulating, autonomous world which does not necessarily reflect early development of adult culture (1973/2001, p. 504).

In Hardman’s lead, childhood studies become a matter of understanding an autonomous segment of social–culture distinct not just from other segments, but also from the individuals who populate this segment.

The children will move in and out of this segment into another, but others take their place. The segment still remains. The segment may overlap with others, may reflect on others, but there is a basic order of beliefs, values and ideas of one group which bounds them off from any other group” (Hardman, 1973/2001, p. 504).

In the emerging field of Childhood Studies, Hardman’s formulation of children’s culture produced the distinction between children and childhood. Thus, no longer could development be seen in naturalistic terms, in which children individually progress through stages to become adult members of their respective societies. Rather, as children express their distinctive culture as a collective system of meaning, they were seen to become competent actors in their world and thus generate at the same time the framework which makes it possible for them to become competent in the adult world.

The American sociologist Matthew Speier, a student of Goffman and subsequent student of Garfinkel, also spoke for the study of the everyday life of children (1970, 1976). Following the lead of Harvey Sacks, the founder of the sociological program of Conversation Analysis, Speier also argued that the child’s world is a distinctive world.
Children’s cultural activities have a viable organization of their own and it is this organized world that is not very visible to adults. The nature of the child’s organized world is hardly understood as yet (1976, p. 172).

According to Speier, this distinctive culture poses an epistemological problem, because it is not simply to be seen as one section of a larger social reality. Rather it is a coherent and distinctive world of meaning. He observes how traditional child studies have engaged in research to solve this problem through an “adult ideological viewpoint”.

“[T]he sociologist has incorporated his status as an adult-in-society into his thinking about childhood” (1976, p. 170). He proposes to take interest in childhood studies that transcend the ‘adult ideological viewpoint' to gain insight into the world of children. In these ways, he outlines a division between the world of children and that of adults, and calls for studies that are concerned with understanding the world of children per se. He maintains that these two cultures engage in a process of meaning making. Thus, he proposes that the new childhood studies be concerned with looking beyond the previously presumed familiarity with children, and be engaged in two distinctive problems:

[T]he first problem is to examine interactional events in children’s cultural activities, such as talking, play and games. The second problem pertains to the distinction between children’s and adult’s cultures. (Speier, 1976, p. 174).

*Everyday Studies of Childhood*

Corsaro (1985; 1988; 1992; 2005) draws on extensive fieldwork with young children in North America and Italy to explore children’s social lives. He coined the term “interpretive reproduction” to capture “innovative and creative aspects of children’s participation in society” (Corsaro, 2005). For him, the notion of reproduction is not a
passive process of children “simply internalizing society and culture” (p. 19). Instead, reproduction refers to the twin process of children actively “contributing to cultural production and change” on the one hand, and their being constrained by the “societies and cultures of which they are members”, on the other (2005, p. 19). Children participate in cultural routines starting from the early days of infancy, such as learning to talk, and playing games like peek-a-boo with their parents. Thus they are social actors from the beginning. But as they act over time, they also “strive to interpret or make sense of their culture and to participate in it. In attempting to make sense of the adult world, children come to collectively produce their own peer worlds and cultures” (2005, p. 24).

In Corsaro’s account, this process of reproduction is not a linear one, nor is it an exact copy of the adult culture. Rather, children are continuously engaged in interpretative work in interaction with others. Thus, they are constantly working on ambiguities, and resolving difficulties of meaning making along the way. In his account children are social actors from the very beginning. For example, he shows in his study in a nursery school children’s dealings with a school rule that forbids them to bring personal items from home into school. In his account, children reinforce this rule by actively interpreting it. Forbidden from having these items on view in the classroom, they hide small toys and candies in their pockets, and secretly reveal them to their friends out of view of the teacher. Corsaro shows how, through secondary adjustment, these children both orient to and resist a school rule, rather than simply submitting to its authority. And their collective orientations are not only acts of resistance, they also are part of an ongoing construction of peer culture among themselves.
Peer culture.

Corsaro introduced the concept of a culture that is constructed and maintained by children in their peer interactions. Peer culture is defined as “a stable set of activities or routines, artifacts, values, and concerns that children produce and share in interaction with peers” (Corsaro, 2005, p. 110). Through his studies of preschoolers in American and Italian settings, Corsaro extends and reinterprets children’s social lives and their affiliations with one another as processes of social construction. For example, he shows that in preschool, gaining access to ongoing play is particularly difficult regardless of past shared experiences, because play activities are fragile and children tend to protect their interactive space by resisting the entry of other children (Corsaro, 2003; 2005). Corsaro points to how children’s resistance may seem uncooperative and selfish to adults, but to the children it is an act of protecting the activity they are already sharing. That is, children know from prior experience that the entry of others often disrupts the play they are already sharing.

Over time however, preschoolers develop various access strategies to challenge this resistance. The successful entry strategies involve candidates’ demonstrating their knowledge of a particular game, or their contribution to the ongoing game to ensure their ability to join without being disruptive (Corsaro, 2003; 2005). In a complementary ethnographic study involving young children in Australian and US preschools, Fernie, Davies, Kantor, and McMurray (1993), for example, show how a girl’s successful entry into a boy’s group, despite her gender, is through her successful use of objects that are significant for their play themes, as well as her deployment of social moves that signal
her competence to the activities. Although she is a cooperative student during teacher organized, structured classroom activities, Lisa opposes the teacher’s authority during an ongoing group play, which shows her playmates her understanding of the group's interest in “protecting the play as a peer-dominated arena” (Kantor et al., 1993, p. 143).

In this preschool, the most relevant ethnographic observation concerns a cohesive group of boys who regularly played together using superhero roles and themes such as Batman…. This salient peer group was afforded such social status by other children, several of whom regularly tried to gain entry to their group. It is important to know that Lisa was the only girl allowed regular access to their play. Another analysis examined this girl’s unique successful access, identifying the nexus of relevant cultural knowledge, skilled social action, and easy disposition which allowed her membership within this group despite her gender. (p. 101).

In short, Lisa was able to use particular artifacts to look like a member, and acted appropriately in play situations, demonstrating her mastery of play themes, routines and attitudes valued by the group. Those who were unsuccessful in their bids, on the other hand, showed some understanding of only parts of the group’s norms, carrying for example objects that allowed them to look like a member, but were unable to produce situationally appropriate action and/or employ language effectively that enable them to act like a member (Kantor et al., 1993).

*Peer culture meets classroom culture.*

Kantor, Fernie and a team of early childhood researchers build on Corsaro’s concept of peer culture for understanding classroom processes in preschool contexts. They conceived preschools as a locus of peer culture as young children come together in these places on an everyday basis. Preschools have also become the setting for the first
schooling experience in modern societies, as the number of children attending preschool increases each year. Thus, they became settings for an intersection of peer culture with classroom culture (Kantor and Fernie, 2003). The authors discuss classrooms as a “differentiated social world composed of two intersecting and overlapping realms of group culture” (p. 211).

Kantor, Fernie and colleagues were interested in understanding the process of young children “becoming students” in these settings. They developed accounts of children’s learning to balance between their own interest in peers and peer activities, on the one hand, and the teacher’s expectations of them as students, on the other. The authors urge educators to see “the school culture and the peer culture spheres of the classroom [as] not separate domains of activity” (p. 212). Instead, they recommend that we see these two seemingly different fields of culture and discourse as intersecting in meaningful ways. They found that both the teachers and the students collaboratively integrated the two dimensions. At times, teachers incorporate the children’s cultural themes into their organization of ‘official’ classroom activities. At other times, children bring their own themes to the teacher's organized activities. Their findings show how the teachers and students co-produce peer culture and classroom culture as inevitable parts of their collective lives in school. It is the “shared understanding of classroom culture” between the teachers and the students that held in place “the structure of classroom life” (2003, p. 210), and not the other way around, as one can find in traditional approaches.

Other scholars have described similar classroom processes without reference to ‘peer culture’, per se. Karen Gallas, for example, shows how peer interactions in her
classroom intersect with the classroom teaching and learning activities (Gallas, 1998) in a context of multiple peer cultures. Kantor et al. urge educational researchers to investigate classroom life in its dynamic detail, looking for patterns of activities that are co-constructed between the teacher and the students, and the dynamics of peer relations among students, to develop a fuller understanding of life in educational settings. In this view, the production of classroom life depends on children’s social competence to classroom culture. The traditional perspective, oriented to individual development and achievement, is seen as too narrow to provide a full picture of this life.

From these developments we can see how one of the most consequential features of the paradigm shift in Childhood Studies was the recognition of the central place of children’s social lives, actions, and meanings for the structure of childhood experience. The new paradigm referred to children as social actors within a peer culture, which is taken as the locus of their actions, and meanings. The notion of ‘peer culture’ referred to a world-view distinctive to children. Children begin to be re-conceptualized as active agents in the construction of their own lives, the lives of others around them, both peers and adults, and the societies in which they live. The new paradigm sought a description of children’s collective activities, sense-making practices, and agency in their own right, which provided a way to resist turning children into “cultural dopes” or imperfect adults.

Corsaro and others have shown us through their descriptions how “kids creatively take information from the adult world to produce their own unique childhood cultures” (Corsaro, 2003, p. 4). In the process, they do not simply internalize the adult culture around them, but attempt to make sense of the adult worlds, and then creatively use such
understandings in their interactions with peers. Further, through their production of and participation in peer cultures, they gain practical sociological understandings and competencies that are essential for participation in adult society around them. According to Corsaro, “…with the creation of an initial peer culture, other children become as important as adults in the socialization process” (p. 162). These descriptions show us a novel image of children as socially competent actors, as opposed to the image of incomplete beings found in the traditional literature.

On Social Competence

The new interest in childhood studies cumulatively directs our attention to qualitative, ethnographic studies of children’s everyday lives. Descriptions of children’s everyday lives show us new ways to conceptualize children and childhood, their nature, and competencies with regard to adults. In these ways, descriptions of children and their activities instruct us in the constructed nature of children’s lives and realities, as a form of life distinct from adults.’ Contrary to the traditional perspectives, of both the child development and socialization models, in the new childhood studies children and their everyday lives become the topic for study as a phenomenon in itself.

Joining Hardman (1973) and Speier (1976), Mackay (1974a) was among the first to question the assumptions of the traditional approaches, and how the very category of 'adult' was at play in descriptions of childhood. According to Mackay, to observe that a person goes through changes from birth to maturity or old age is an ordinary expression of a common-sense position in the world. That is, that persons go through changes in life-course is both a common experience and a common remark. However, the quasi-
scientific use of the term *socialization* masks this ordinariness by turning everyday concepts like *childhood* and *adulthood* into scientific concepts, and treating them as discrete and consecutive stages of life. In these ways, the theorists treat the common-sense world as *topic* much as the ordinary member does, thereby expressing their “common-sense position in the world, i.e. as adults” (p. 180). In this way, analysts “reveal themselves as parents writing slightly abstract versions of their own or other children” (p. 181). At the same time, when the literature then uses those everyday formulations and categories as a resource to their own professionalized inquiries, it treats these very matters as both a topic and a resource. In these ways, the traditional literature shows parallels with “Whig history,” where historians present the past as the inexorable march of progress toward 'us,' as though people in the past were living their lives under an aspiration to become like us.

Further, the treatment of *childhood* and *adulthood* as discrete and consecutive stages imply that “to pass from one stage to the other is to pass from one ontological order to another” (Mackay, 1974a, p. 182). Implied in this passage is also a movement from *incomplete* to *complete* forms of being. However, this formulation problematizes the very possibility of adult–child interaction, since adults and children are assumed not to share common interpretive abilities. It makes 'socialization', for example, dependent on an incompetent party. A further consequence, Mackay proposes, is that the traditional approaches leave the phenomenon of adult–child interaction, unexamined. In his words, “socialization is a gloss…which precludes the explication of the phenomenon it glosses,
i.e. the interaction between adults and children” (p. 181). A similar argument can be
developed for the stages of child development studies.

On the other hand, an orientation to children’s interaction with adults will show
children’s abilities to “reason, invent, and acquire knowledge.” It will show how children
are already competent participants, participating in the production of the complex and
orderly world in which they live. In these ways, Mackay was among the first to point out
that contrary to the “incompetent” child found in the traditional models, children are
socially competent actors, actively interpreting the world around them. Further,
children’s interpretive competencies provide for the possibility of any activity adults may
organize in relation to children, including teaching and learning, testing, and early
childhood research itself. Mackay shows us how it is that adults rely on children’s
interpretive competencies in their dealings with them on the one hand, and
simultaneously deny them in their research findings, on the other. Mackay further points
to a separate culture of children, and their distinctive sense making practices, as the basis
for ordinary adults’ attribution of incomplete, incompetent, irrational states to children.
Adults tend to be into the business of assimilating children into their own adult cultures.
Thus, in Mackay’s account, adults hold a practical interest in inculcating adult cultural
values in children. In this light, the traditional theories become part of the order they set
out to explain, leaving the phenomenon of the child's life world, and adult–child
interaction especially, unexamined.

For these reasons, Mackay proposes the study of adult–child interaction for
understanding children’s competent sense-making practices and their gradual inculcation

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into adult society.9 His proposal entails the analysis of talk-in-interaction between children and adults. He shows us cases, for example, of how teachers treat the child as “empty of knowledge (i.e. correct answers)” and gradually moves him/her to “a state of fullness (i.e. knowledge)” in classroom interaction. The process is accomplished as the teacher asks questions and reformulates them until the child gives the ‘correct’ answer. In some cases, the teacher finally gives the ‘correct’ answer herself. Mackay finds in these occasions descriptions of how “Instruction is the occasion for adults to exercise their preference for a certain meaning of the world for the child” (p. 186).

In light of these and other arguments, studies of adult–child interaction in classrooms began to attract interest in childhood studies. There was a multiplicity of interests in these topics, and a multiplicity of approaches; both the literature's conceptualizations of 'discourse' and its proposals for how it might be studied were diverse. The following section offers a review of some of this history and the contemporary diversity of classroom discourse studies, as the examination of classroom discourse is central to this study.

9 The idea of separate children’s culture was suggested by Harvey Sacks in a lecture at a conference on “Language, society and the child’, already in 1968 (Speier, 1970, 1976). Following Sacks’ lead, Mackay also advocates the study of peer interaction and sense making practices for gaining insight into their world. However his focus is on reconceptualizing socialization as practical enactment in the world.
Classroom Discourse Studies

In terms of the relationship of educational studies to the social science disciplines (e.g., sociology, anthropology, philosophy, linguistics), early childhood studies may be unusual in how a study domain long familiar to educational inquiry has been taken up in contemporary sociological studies, as we have seen. In the study of classroom discourse, however, the more familiar relationship holds, in which educational studies tend to rely upon prior disciplinary studies.¹⁰

Early classroom discourse studies developed in response to critiques of the prevailing traditions of educational study, e.g., correlational studies of psychological variables and educational outcomes, or process-product studies whose purpose was to design educational outcomes, without taking into consideration the everyday life of classrooms as cultural and practical enactments. Classrooms as interactional organizations and cultural expressions were largely unnoticed and unacknowledged for the first 60 years of classroom studies. For the early and mid-20th century literature, classrooms were sites for the professional administration of technical expertise. In that context, the move to 'discourse studies' was part of a larger qualitative turn in educational studies, and perhaps its leading expression (Cf., Cazden, John & Hymes, 1972; Cicourel, Jennings, Jennings, Leiter & MacKay, Mehan, & Roth, 1974; Erickson and Schultz, ¹⁰Nowhere is the history of that relationship more clear than in educational psychology. In educational psychology, education's innovation was to propose an applied science of 'what works' rather than an explaining science of psychology. By process–product research designs, effectiveness could be measured, without knowing how or why 'what worked', worked.

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1977/1981; Gilmore and Glatthorn, 1982; Green and Wallat, 1981; McDermott, 1976; Mehan, 1979; Mishler, 1979; and Wilkinson, 1981). These studies introduced the everyday life of classrooms as topics for study that had been ignored, missed or set aside as unworthy of remark. These early classroom discourse studies were showing us the everyday lives of classrooms as dense interactional organizations. They took interest in describing the actual interactions that organize classroom lessons and the experience of early childhood education. The context of education as a social, cultural and interactional fabric came into view, although the interests and understandings of these discourse studies showed different analytic programs and lineages. The disciplines they relied upon were those of linguistics, anthropological linguistics, socio-linguistics (see Duranti (2001) on these relationships and their histories), and more recently, sociology. Classroom discourse studies show lineages to each, and to still later innovations on the concept of 'discourse', and each was novel to educational study.

In the 1970s, classroom discourse studies began with an interest in education in the early grades, and in building new descriptions of settings that were already familiar. 'New descriptions' are perhaps the most familiar promise of the classroom discourse literature (see Cazden, 1988). For some, the promise was conceptual in a way that re-worked the normative expectations of educational studies (see Mehan, 1982). For others, it was a promise of new resources for programs of effectiveness and evaluation that were already in place. Of the latter, the Flanders (1970) system of "interaction analysis", premised on coded treatments of classroom discourse may have been among the earliest
and the least restrained in its promises, though never taken seriously by discourse analysts (see the remarks by Sinclair and Coulthard, 1975).

More generally, the early studies of classroom discourse were a part of studies of Early Childhood Education, though without the emphasis on development or developmental trajectories. They were studies of its practical occasions, as in descriptions of "circle time", "sharing time", storytelling, the interactional 'floor' and other interactional routines, and of the participation and activity structures organizing classroom interaction (cf., Cazden, 1985; Davies, 1983; Merritt, 1982; Michaels, 1981; Phillips, 1972; Shultz and Florio, 1979; Shultz, Florio & Erickson, 1982; Wilkinson, 1982). These early works took interest in how classroom and lesson organizations required the participation of the students and were produced through structures of activity and participation. Subsequently, as the literature grew to include studies in contexts of cultural difference, classroom discourse studies began to address how it was that classrooms were themselves social–cultural organizations, and how children would have to learn how to participate in them, and also how in some cases these forms of participation were not only unknown, but distant from the cultures of the home (Cf., Au, 1980; Phillips, 1972; Gallas, 1998).

_Early Influences: Linguistic Anthropology, Sociolinguistics and Discourse Analysis_

In trying to understand the diversity of programs that seem to rest under the heading of "discourse analysis", it seems that the formative histories begin with Chomsky and his extension of the distinction in structural linguistics between 'language' and speech', wherein 'language' would reveal structure, and speech only variation. In
common with structural linguistics, Chomsky's transformational grammar was taken up with single expressions, either for their normativity or novelty, but not for the social occasions that produced them. One could argue that Chomsky's formulation of the allied concepts of "competence" and "performance", but especially "competence" was foundational for the development of anthropological linguistics, sociolinguistics, and discourse analysis, in an oppositional way. His 'competence' premised a formal and abstract landscape that showed nothing of actual circumstances or situated expressions.

Linguistic theory is concerned primarily with an ideal speaker–listener, in a completely homogenous speech–community, who knows its language perfectly and is unaffected by such grammatically irrelevant conditions as memory limitations, distractions, shifts of attention and interest… in applying his knowledge of the language in actual performance (1965, p. 3-4, cited in Duranti, 2001, p. 17).

Chomsky's premises are striking. There is no place for actual occasions of language use. They are disqualified from interest from the beginning, as "irrelevant conditions". In this light, it seems that the development of discourse studies in classrooms and elsewhere had a great deal to do with a reaction to and dissatisfaction with this extremely formal account. This was especially so in the development of linguistic anthropology, through Hymes and Gumperz.

As Hymes (1974) observes of Chomsky's formulation of 'competence', "Such a theory perfects and gives the ultimate justification to a study of language at once of human significance and abstracted from actual human beings" (p. 92). His dissatisfactions are evident in one of his most influential and powerful formulations, "communicative competence". His aim was to extend the idea of competence to more
than a formal grammar. To that end he formulated four (4) domains of competence: a) systemic potential, b) appropriateness, c) occurrence and d) feasibility (Hymes, 1974, p. 92). His formulation also challenged any formal separation between competence and performance. It entailed a conception of the "speech community" in terms larger than 'language' alone, and led to his later formulation of an "ethnography of speaking".

Hymes' influence has been exceptional in anthropology and also in educational study (especially in foreign language education; see Canale and Swain, 1980 and Krashen, 1981a, 1981b). Perhaps the most important period for the development of Hymes' influence, and the influence of others upon him, was the time in which he and Susan Ervin–Tripp, John Gumperz, Erving Goffman, John Searle and Dan Slobin were faculty colleagues at the University of California (see Duranti, 2001). Formulations of 'communicative competence' and the 'ethnography of speaking' became a more general program, not only affiliated with Hymes. Gumperz (1981/1997) developed the same formulations, and produced still another one, "interactional sociolinguistics", as a "perspective pioneered, among others, by Harold Garfinkel, Erving Goffman and Harvey Sacks" (p. 39). To it, 'communicative competence' is a "key concept", and he redefines it as "the knowledge of linguistic and related communicative conventions that speakers must have to initiate and sustain conversational involvement" (1997, p. 40). Gumperz proceeds to introduce one of his distinctive formulations for the literature, the idea of "contextualization cues" (Gumperz, 1977), a formulation taken up in later educational studies (See Green, 1988; Green and Wallat, 1981; Green, Weade & Graham, 1988.)
Duranti (2001) reviews the several expressions of these developments in the American literature, whether as "linguistic anthropology", or "anthropological linguistics", or "sociolinguistics":

In the 1960s and 70s the term sociolinguistics" served as a cover term for a variety of approaches to the study of language in context, which included quantitative studies of variation both within and across communities, and ethnographic studies of verbal genres and speech events (e. g., the ethnography of communication) (2001, p. 31).

He also observes, how

In the case of linguistic anthropology and sociolinguistics, I will argue that, though in the 1960s and 1970s they were thought of as one field, they have moved further apart since that time (2001, p. 2)

These phrases seem to have a common history oriented to questions about the relationship of language and culture. Sociolinguistics seems to have developed in a special attention to patterns of co-variation: how language performance co-varies with other aspects of social identity and participation, whether race, gender, ethnicity, status, first or second language use, etc. These developments seem to have been largely North American, but there were contemporary developments and similar dissatisfactions with structural linguistics in the English context. Sinclair and Coulthard (1975), among others, were reading into relevance the natural language studies of Austin, subsequently developed as Speech Act Theory. The central insight was that language is not simply, or maybe not at all, a representational form organized by syntax and semantics. It is rather a site of action. In speaking, we are doing things, and this insight is central to the development of Discourse Analysis, at least in the early 1970s.
Discourse analysis.

The phrase "discourse analysis" is known by every graduate student in the social sciences, though what is meant by the phrase may be less clear or certain. As Hymes (1974//1997) observed of sociolinguistics, "[I]t means many things to many people, and of course no one has a patent on its definition" (1997, p. 12).

In educational studies, at least in my experience, the phrase joins a number of familiar yet variously used terms and phrases that can be puzzling for students (e.g., 'constructivism', 'situatedness', 'interaction', 'qualitative research', and others). Yet each of these terms and phrases owns intellectual histories, and Sinclair and Coulthard (1975), who developed their program of Discourse Analysis from similar dissatisfaction with structural linguistics and its tendency to treat little of language production beyond the level of the phrase, offer us some instruction as to the history of the phrase. Bloome, et al. (2009), Levinson (1985) and Duranti (2001) do too, although they are different ones.

Sinclair and Coulthard (1975) discuss a history of linguistics for which language-in-use was absent. Their project was to situate language as a social exercise between people, rather than treat it as an abstract system. Their formulation of "Discourse Analysis" was intended as a corrective to Chomsky's 'competence' as well, and although they pursued their studies in classrooms, it was not because they held a particular interest in education or classroom settings. It was rather because classrooms offered a more formal and constrained setting. Unlike natural or "desultory" conversation, which was

\[11\] Van Dijk similarly observes, "the notion of discourse is essentially fuzzy" (in Bloome et al., 2009, p. 3).
"perhaps the most sophisticated and least overtly rule-governed form of spoken discourse and therefore almost certainly not the best place to begin" (1975, p. 4), classrooms were a more manageable setting for working out their program of Discourse Analysis.

Sinclair and Coulthard were working in the environment of Austin's (1962) prior work on "speech acts", and how it was that language-in-use was routinely a form of social action. Few expressions were not "illucutionary". Working in their classroom contexts, they developed a program of analysis based on the identification of speech acts and the development of rules for their articulation; how they showed organizations of prior and subsequent acts in a nesting structure of formal relations. "Speech acts" were central to the English development of Discourse Analysis and its conceptualization of action, and thus interaction.

In these early days, the 'discourse' of Discourse Analysis referred to people speaking with one another. 'Discourse' subsequently took on other meanings, but in the conceptualization of speech act theory, its objects and interests were directly in face-to-face interaction. Central among Sinclair and Coulthard’s treatment of classroom discourse was the three-turn sequence of a teacher's question, a student's reply, and the teacher's third turn remarks. This organization of 'direct instruction' has been observed across discourse analytic programs, including those who would be critical of it. Macbeth (2000) finds such sequences in the Socratic dialogue of *Meno*.

At the same time, in his review of Discourse Analysis and Conversation Analysis, Levinson (1985) finds a greater continuity among programs of discourse and sociolinguistic analysis with the traditions of structural linguistics that they otherwise
critique. In ways, the fundamental or even paradigmatic program of structural linguistics is reproduced in these programs that have been produced as alternatives to it. Levinson says Discourse Analysis is,

essentially a series of attempts to extend the techniques so successful in linguistics, beyond the unit of the sentence. The procedures employed (often implicitly) are essentially the following: (a) the isolation of a set of basic categories or units of discourse (b) the formulation of a set of concatenation rules... delimiting well–formed sequences of categories... from ill–formed sequences... (1985, p. 286).

An explosion.

Levinson was writing 25 years ago. In that time, there seems to have been an explosion of discourse analytic programs, especially in educational study. The term "discourse" has become a metaphor for a great many things, from texts to fashions, to historical epochs. Continental literatures introduced the notion of Discourse as a historical term, as in the discourse of science, rationality, or sexuality (Foucault, 1975/1979). Gee (1996) effectively collects the explosion in two headings: discourse with a capital 'D', and discourse with a lower case 'd'. The difference is theoretic and structural. Big 'Ds' are bigger; they are abstract and formal, where small 'ds' are local and interactional. Yet in this way Gee re-writes the conventional distinction between 'macro' and 'micro', where the macro, because it is 'bigger', sees more. The 'micro' is in this relationship the provincial or the contingent, and in this way we can see the continuing influence of structural linguistics and its categorizations of 'language' and 'speech'. There are now discourses of literacy, agency, gender, sexual preference, math, science, advertising, and 'otherness'. One can be left with the feeling of a list that has no end. In
this way, an analytic innovation that began with an interest in the organization of
language use on actual occasions has becomes something quite different, and a kind of
meta–category.

Within education studies, however, there are several expressions of the explosion,
and I want to briefly treat two of them. One has to do with how the study of classroom
discourse has been pursued as a new domain for technical analysis. The other has to do
with the analysis of discourse as a form of political–ideological analysis.

*Discourse analysis and classroom studies.*

There are multiple histories that have developed from dissatisfaction with
structural linguistics and its treatment of language, and from an interest in the actual
occasions of classroom interactional organizations, and how the success and failure of
school children are shaped by those organizations. These two topics—the organizational
and the outcomes of those organizations—do not always travel together. Some of the
most instructive studies were organizational studies, or studies of how lessons or
instruction or classroom routines were organized. A recurrent topic in the literature was
the organization of classroom lessons, for which the three–turn sequence of a teacher's
question, followed by a student's answer, then followed in third turn by an assessment of
the answer by the teacher, recurs (cf., Cazden, 2001; Macbeth, 2000; McHoul, 1978;
Mehan, 1979; and Wells, 1993). Many things are made of the three–turn sequence, either
as a topic for inquiry or for critique, but we can see that it has been a major topic in
classroom discourse studies. I will return to it in detail in chapter 6.
Other studies of classroom discourse have been concerned with how discourse organizes instruction and thus the reproduction of competence. Discourse studies of literacy may be central. 'Literacy' is itself a discursive exercise and thus a site for discourse study, as in Bloome, Carter, Christian, Otto & Shuart–Faris, 2005; Bloome and Katz, 1997; Cook–Gumperz, 1986; and Heap, 1982, 1985. One question that follows is whether there are multiple literacies and therefore multiple discursive organizations, and it seems there are, as the literature in "cross culture mis-match theory" suggests (cf., Delpit, 1988; Gallas, 1998; Heath, 1983; Phillips, 1972). As we discover and appreciate different communities we find different forms of participation, discourse and expression.

Classroom discourse studies have been concerned with the organizations of schooling, on the one hand, and the equities of schooling, on the other. Of the former are studies of classroom discourse that seek to describe the organization of classroom schooling in a way different from education's psychological foundations. Treatments of the three-turn sequence of direct instruction are perhaps most familiar. Other treatments of classroom discourse take a more cultural view, as in Bloome, Puro and Theodorou (1989) and their treatment of "procedural display". This conceptualization begins from a normative account of the life and work of society's institutions. Those institutions are seen as cultural events, and classroom lessons are similarly seen

as cultural events in the same way that religious services, family dinners, funerals, fairs, mall shopping, hanging out on the street corner, dancing, race track betting, cock-fighting, and sandlot baseball are cultural events. (1989, p. 266).

The interest is in "not what they are to the future, but what they are now" (1989, p. 266), but also in what they are normatively. It is in relation to the normative
expectation that a "procedural display" shows a different enactment. The question seems to be whether we find an orientation to what the work of the institution should be, or find instead the teacher and class "moving through the lesson rather than substantive engagement in some academic content" (1989, p. 282). The larger insight is that in the particulars of classrooms, whether we find a successful lesson or not, we will in all cases find a "procedural display", or an orientation to what the occasion should be doing. In this way, "procedural display" seems to anticipate the developing literature on "authentic" instruction as different from "ersatz" instruction (Brown, Collins and Duguid, 1989).\footnote{Atkinson and Delamont (1990) raise this question of what the evaluative basis for the assessments of Bloome et al. are, in deciding there is or isn't a 'substantive engagement in content'. See Bloome, 1990 for a reply.}

In a different way, Green and Harker (1988) assemble a collection of studies that looks at "differing views of the academic and social texts of lessons" (p. 3). Their introduction outlines a comparison of two different story reading and discussion lessons as they are taken up by different analytic perspectives, and establishes a number of study themes, e.g.,

the social and academic requirements of lesson participation…, how differences in teachers' interactional styles led to differences in lesson format… and the contribution of each analytic perspective to an understanding of lesson construction processes…” (p. 3).

The first chapter, by Green, Weade & Graham (1988) is presented as a "contrastive case study", and presents a complex and technical system of codes across
multiple "frames" (the local, academic, social, instructional and material), and includes transcripts whose "minimal unit of transcription was the message unit… identified and segmented on the basis of contextualization cues." (p. 17). In turn, lesson structures are separately mapped, to show "interaction units", whose sequences form "lesson phase units" (p. 20). These were then articulated with a "potential divergence map… constructed to permit examination of the fluidity of the developing lessons" (p. 21). The purpose was to identify

three sets of social and instructional factors that differentiate the two lessons: the structure of the lesson; the communicative/instructional demands; and the patterns of interaction between teacher and students, where the middle set, the communicative demands, were then rendered using the following set of strategies: focusing, framing, place holding, ignoring, confirming (+), confirming (−), continuance, extending, bidding, clarifying, editing, controlling, refocusing,, and restating (p. 30).

In part, the study wants to show that such studies are possible, that "hypotheses can be generated within a case and then tested both within and across cases" (p. 43).

My purpose for this discussion is to suggest one of the directions that classroom discourse studies took, following the earlier innovations of the 1970s. Here the analytic program is technical and complex (see also Green and Wallat, 1981). It relies on several levels of factoring the life of an actual lesson and submitting it to a program of measures and factor analysis. It is one branch of classroom discourse studies, and studies like it are cited in Anderson's (1989) discussion of the developing directions of qualitative study in education more generally:
Educational researchers have been moving to systematize ethnographic research in an attempt to make it more scientific… To the extent that they suggest that the final analysis is more the result of methodological rigor than the creative act of researcher interpretation, there are attempts to fit ethnography into a positivist framework (1989, p. 252).

There have been other directions too, as suggested in the studies collected in Bloome, Carter, Christian, Madrid, Otto, Shuart–Faris & Smith (2009), and perhaps the most widely pursued are studies in Critical Discourse Analysis. CDA shows multiple influences in speech act theory, post–modern treatments of "Discourse", and neo-Marxist expressions of Critical Theory in the educational research literature (See Anderson, 1989, on "critical ethnography" in educational studies; see also Apple, 1982; Bowles and Gintis, 1976; and Willis, 1977).

Critical Discourse Analysis

Critical discourse studies are taken up with topics that are prior to classroom discourse or interaction studies, e.g., questions of social equity, hegemony, power and opportunity, and the role of schooling in the reproduction of the social order. The CDA literature takes up those questions in a Critical Theoretic tradition, in classrooms.

My reading of the CDA literature follows Macbeth's (2003) treatment and review. Whereas the discourse studies of anthropology and sociology were a response and alternative to the formal structures and formal theorizing of literatures that had little use for actual occasions of social interaction, the literature in CDA has theorized those actual occasions too. CDA finds hegemonic structures of power relations in the most ordinary interactional occasions, but especially professional occasions, as in a teacher's question to
a student, or a doctor's to a patient's (Fairclough, 1989). It treats the very membership categories of 'teacher', 'student', 'doctor' and 'patient' as ideological expressions, owning no other practical history or reasons. Fairclough's (1989) account is quite clear on this. He treats Discourse as a structure of power:

The way in which orders of discourse are structured, and the ideologies which they embody, are determined by relationships of power in particular social institutions, and in the society as a whole.... The idea of 'power behind discourse' is that the whole social order of discourse is put together and held together as a hidden effect of power (1989; pp. 31, 55).

In treating cultural categories as ideological ones, what is often not noticed is that the hegemony of general theory is itself re-asserted. Yet a critique of general theory seems to have been central to the 'qualitative turn' in social science, as in Geertz's (1973, p. 21) advice to 'take the capital letters off' of the grand concepts and phrases of the literature, such as 'culture', 'power', 'structure', 'agency', etc., and instead be prepared to find them as diverse expressions on ordinary occasions. 13

Geertz is recommending an understanding of social life as local, practical enactments, and in this light, CDA can be seen as a normative analytic program with

13 Geertz summarizes his discussion of 'ethnography' as being "interpretive of the flow of social discourse", as it aims to "rescue the 'said'… and fit it in perusable terms". It is also "microscopic", meaning that it entails "exceedingly close acquaintance with extremely small matters" (1973, p.p. 20-21). Malinowski (1922, p. 18) advises much the same in his regard for the "imponderabilia of actual life". In these ways there have long been arguments on behalf of the good sense of local studies, though the advice is not easily taken.
critical purposes. CDA tends to demonstrate Anderson's (1989) characterization of "critical ethnography" as "conceptually front–loaded", meaning that what might be conclusions about the organizations of ordinary worlds in the normative literature is written as premises in the critical literature. Thus, in the first page of her article on "silencing" in a public high school, Fine (1987) tells us that "silencing constitutes a process of institutionalized policies and practices which obscure the very social, economic, and therefore experiential conditions of students' daily lives" (1987, p. 157). This is not the conclusion of her study, but its beginning premise. The study then becomes a program to document the premises announced at the outset.

But perhaps the aspect of CDA that most sets it apart from the literature of Discourse Analysis is how it has embraced a metaphoric reading of 'discourse'. Gee (1996) speaks of discourse with a capital 'D' (thus reversing Geertz's advice). In this view, discourse is not a matter of social interaction but rather of structures and forces that are prior to any real occasion of interaction. 'Discourse' with a capital D becomes a metaphor for speaking of every cultural expression as a kind of coded expression:

Discourses are ways of being in the world, or forms of life which integrate words, acts, values, beliefs, attitudes, and social identities, as well as gestures, glances, body positions, and clothes (Gee, 1996, p. 127).

But as 'Discourse' becomes a way of speaking of everything, by reducing every expression to an ideological expression, it risks losing any particular meaning. It also tends to lose any use for or interest in what the parties are doing. The parties to the discourse then become in Garfinkel's (1967) phrase "judgmental dopes", enacting scripts they do not see. Further, CDA is proposing a form of 'content analysis', or analyzing and
criticizing the political ideological contents of an expression. But this is a very large task and authority, and it is not always clear what the qualifications for doing so are. What is quite clear, however, is that CDA has left the program of understanding "the natives' point of view". Those views are now objects for criticism. CDA's formal, critical analyses displace whatever first analyses might be on the scene, in preference for their own. When we see it this way, the distance between critical discourse studies, and studies of classroom discourse as competent interactional practices becomes clear. As Macbeth (2003) puts it,

To treat naturally occurring discourse as the expression of formal-analytic Discourse is to offer a decontextualized analysis in the name of contextualization, the relevant context here not being the engagements and orientations of the participants, but rather the analytic authority of a powerful literature… CDA tends to deliver a critical social commentary in the company of a normative analytic one (2003, p. 255).

Conversation Analysis

To the early Anglo–American developments in natural language studies came a program from sociology whose interests were not in "language", as the literature had known it, but rather in the central organization of language use in everyday life, conversation. This literature developed under the name of "Conversation Analysis" (CA, see Sacks, Scheglof & Jefferson, 1974). Although all of the post–Chomskian programs had a common interest in language as it is produced in social interaction between cultural members, they have taken different directions for understanding it. Though I return to the literature of CA in chapter 3, I want to frame it here within the larger field of discourse studies.
Conversation analysis was pointing to an un-examined field of natural language use, which was conversation *per se*. It was not proposing a study of language, but rather of how people talk to one another, do greetings, tell stories, make complaints, compliments, offers, etc. But the idea of conversation as a topic of study placed CA in an uncertain position with respect to the language studies of anthropology, linguistics, and discourse analysis. They did not share a common literature, or a same disciplinary home. Sacks and Schegloff et al. were sociologists. The sociology of conversation analysis was quite different from correlational studies of language production or formulations of speech acts as formal structures. For CA conversation is a major site and organization of social action.

Levinson (1985) directly addressed these relations, and my discussion here relies on his treatments of both DA and CA. Levinson (1985) sees a clear difference between these two analytic programs. He thinks the phrase DA was more stable in 1985 than it is now. For Levinson, the phrase identifies those programs working from Speech Act theory. But he writes on behalf of still another natural language study program, "pragmatics", and identifies CA as "… the outstanding empirical tradition in pragmatics" (p. 285).

Levinson formulates the two programs, DA and CA, and then directly asks the question: "Which is the correct manner in which to proceed?" (p. 287). Levinson is asking his question with respect to studies of natural conversation, and this becomes the basis of his assessment. With respect to the ability of DA to work with conversational materials, Levinson is doubtful:
The methods and theoretical tools advocated [by DA], namely those imported from mainstream theoretical linguistics, seem quite inappropriate to the domain of conversation. Conversation is not a structural product in the same way that a sentence is—it is rather the outcome of the interaction of two or more independent, goal-directed individuals, with often divergent interests. Moving from the study of sentences to the study of conversations is like moving from physics to biology… (1985, p. 294).

I want to risk saying something about what such a 'move' (from physics to biology) entails. It seems to entail producing an analytic program that has use for the temporal organizations of interaction. As Garfinkel (1967) points out, time is a constitutive feature of meaning, and interaction is produced in real time. Pauses can be meaningfully too long. Turns and turn taking are produced so that their completions are projectable in real time. Withholdings or delays in the production of a next turn, as when a student answers incorrectly, and the teacher pauses before saying so, are meaningful in their temporal production. Perhaps a brief comparison between a DA account and a CA account can show the difference.

Gumperz (1981/1997) introduces "interactional sociolinguistics," and then turns to his formulation of 'contextualization cues'. He proposes that contextualization cues work to clarify a central formulation of conversation analysis, the treatment of "turn transition relevance places, which determine when a next speaker can take the floor." Gumperz goes on to observe that Sacks et al. "give no data on how such transition relevant places are signaled." These are places where one party completes a turn at talk, and another begins (1997, p. 42). But, at least to my reading, Sacks et al. do produce their analyses of turn transitions, and in multiple places. However, what they describe
isn't a matter of 'signaling' or cues, but rather a close attention to the production of a turn over its course for its "projectable completion" (Sacks, Schegloff & Jefferson, 1974). The literature in CA emphasizes how turns are produced to be analyzable for possible completion over their course, and only on an actual completion do we find 'transition relevant places'. But they are not cued or signaled. Rather, they are projectable, produced and recognized by the parties to the conversation. Because "projectable completion" is always revisable, a turn must be studied and analyzed throughout its course to discover when it might end. For this reason, the very formulation of "cues" seems to set Gumperz's formulation apart from sequential analysis. A cue does not show a temporal course of production; it is rather a signal. A turn, and its projectable completion, does.14

Levinson concludes:

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14 Because Gumperz's continuing discussion gives us an example of Levinson's account of DA, I want to briefly continue with it. Turning to the idea of "conversational inference", Gumperz recommends a "complex series of judgments", rather than a "simple unitary evaluation of intent" (1997, p. 43).

One can visualize the process as consisting of a series of stages which are hierarchically ordered so that more general relations assessment serves as part of the input to more specific once. Perception of contextualization cues, moreover, plays a role at every stage. (1997, p. 44).

Here we can see an affiliation to studies of discourse that find hierarchically ordered structures, as Levinson describes them. The structure that emerges is a formal, hierarchical one, and it is easy to confuse that kind of sequence with the topics of sequential analysis. But, as Levinson argues, they are quite different.
The strength of the CA position is that the procedures employed have already proved themselves capable of yielding by far the most substantial insights that have yet been gained into the organization of conversation (1985, p. 287).

He says the findings of CA, about things like turn construction units, adjacently paired turns and their first and second 'pair parts', are not in themselves, perhaps, of a very surprising sort [but] these apparently disparate little facts about conversation all fit together in a systematic way, and it is only then that one can begin to see that conversation has in fact an elaborate and detailed architecture (1985, p. 296).

Classroom discourse studies that rely on prior works in conversation analysis will be discussed in chapter 3 and also in chapter 6, where I examine the discursive work and learning in my classroom setting. The interests of CA are neither to reform nor to evaluate. They are rather to describe the local, or situated, analytic work of the parties to the discourse. 'Discourse' on this account is an analytic organization, and the analysts are the persons engaged in producing it. My aim is to describe their analyses, as students encounter in the classroom discursive forms they haven't heard before, and learn how to co-produce them. As Mehan (1979) observed, before students in the early grades ever learn the contents of their lessons, they must learn how to co-produce their lessons.

Issues of classroom discourse then present themselves as part of the first pedagogy in the room, and the first lesson of early childhood education in classrooms.

These two literatures in early childhood studies and classroom discourse studies are major resources for studies of early childhood education. The 'forward looking' orientation of child studies and their characterizations of the child through most of the
20th century aligns with a prior literature of education that Bruner (1986) characterized as follows:

I do not wish to argue against any of these characterizations of the child… Let us assume that, in one degree or another, they are all "right." That is to say, they are "right versions"… of the world of givens from which they take their start… (T)he point I want to make is not about their abstract truth but about their force as ideas shaping educational practice. All of them imply that there should be something rooted out, replaced or compensated. The pedagogy that resulted was some view of teaching as surgery, suppression, replacement, deficit filling, or some mix of them all… (Bruner, 1986:124)

Bruner then calls for a "transactional account" of teaching and learning. But I think that with respect to early childhood education studies, Corsaro (1988), Mackay (1974) and Speier (1970, 1976) are recommending a more focused program. They stress both the study of peer cultures, and the central place of adult–child interaction, and how more familiar accounts that find children as 'unfinished adults' in fact use childhood competence to produce their findings of incompetence. The competence they possess is taken for granted and missed.

My analytic chapters proceed from that insight. In both village and classroom contexts, the analytic chapters look for the competencies of the children and look for unnoticed places and ways in which it is expressed. These are not 'forward looking' accounts, but accounts of competent practices in their own right. The classroom provides the majority of these cases, and in those descriptions we see the clear relevance of the
review of classroom discourse studies. But in all of the examples of childhood
competence described in the chapters, what is central is the place of the child as an
analyst of the unfolding action and possibility that is showing itself to her. The
competence of early childhood that I am finding is an analytic competence. The work of
describing this kind of competence brings into alignment the contemporary literatures in
early childhood and discourse studies, and the topics of this study.
CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

The interests and topics of this study address the place of a village school in the lives of its village children, as their everyday lives as villagers encounter the everyday organizations of a modern classroom. Their worlds are already deeply meaningful, and sometimes confusing, for them. As children of the village they are competent to the forms of life in the village, but upon entering school the confusions start for them as they encounter the demands and expectations of classroom life. Various studies over the last 30 years have documented how children from traditional home cultures can arrive at school possessing cultural forms of competence and participation that are not honored or observed in the classroom (Au & Kawakami, 1994; Erickson & Shultz, 1981; Gallas, 1998; Phillips, 1972; see Au, 1980 for a case where other cultural forms are honored). Their findings demonstrate how children from traditional home cultures routinely encounter classrooms as strange and uninviting places. Indeed, we could say that all children leave their homes and enter their classrooms as cultural strangers. That observation alone, however, would tell us nothing of any actual encounter. It would tell us nothing of the diversity of these encounters. The observation could tempt us to rest content with generic characterizations. Instead, this study takes interest in the ways these village children move from the village to the classroom and take up their tasks of jointly
producing the order of the room, as competent school children. Theirs is a familiar task in the 20th century, but one that is always local in its "distinctive expressions" (Blumer 1970).

Methods and Paradigms

A common interest of the research programs in social sciences has to do with understanding the organization of social worlds. The same can be said for this study. However, analytic programs differ in pursuing their topics, depending on the theoretical—and even cultural—presuppositions that underwrite the research enterprise. The sum of these presuppositions lead the researchers to conceive the world of their topics in particular ways, providing them with a general perspective, a worldview, or paradigm, as discussed by Kuhn (1962/1970).

There is a conventional wisdom in the social science literature, or at least the literature in qualitative research, that we find our methods as we consider our topics. This is sensible. But neither methods nor topics are simply practical matters. There is also the wisdom that methods (and topics) are expressions of paradigmatic commitments. That is, methods and topics follow from understandings and assumptions about the character of social worlds. According to Patton (1978) “deeply embedded in the socialization of adherents and practitioners: paradigms tell us what is important, legitimate, and reasonable” (cited in Sparkes, 1989, p. 133). Elsewhere, Patton continues, “the very reason for action is hidden in the unquestioned assumptions of the paradigm.” (p. 203, cited in Sparkes, p. 133). Sparkes (1989) closely addresses these same topics, and writes a counter argument to the notion that methods only follow from
topics, or that we choose 'best' methods to fit our topics. It is not that we don’t measure our methods to our topics and settings. It is rather that “they can never be independent but rather are inseparable in terms of making sense of the research process within any given paradigm” (Sparkes, 136). To imagine such a separation is to treat methods as only technical matters, and thus to treat inquiry in the same way. But there is no separation of methods from the paradigmatic; the former follow from the latter, and this is so in the same way that our “methods” reveal our assumptions about how social worlds are organized.

In this light, we can see how the borrowing of methods and foundational assumptions from the scientific study of natural worlds, and applying them to social worlds—the program that organizes the mainstream of educational study in the 20th century—transfers assumptions taken from the character of natural worlds. A central assumption is that meaningful social worlds are then measurable and scalable, and thus posses an orderliness that can only be found in aggregates. But to consider the appropriate method of inquiry for social worlds, we have to consider the character of social worlds, and ask if there are compelling differences between natural worlds of science and social worlds of meaning. To fail to ask the question is to treat our methods merely as technical devices rather than conceptual arguments. The failure risks the transfer of assumptions that are developed for a different kind of world.15

15 One might argue that this question of the aptness of the natural science model for the study of meaningful social worlds has been, or should have been, settled by now, and thus the discussion that follows is not necessary. But the resurrection of natural
The history of social sciences is marked by the importation of methods and concepts from natural science studies. The impulse is understandable. Modern social science developed at a time in which the material benefits of natural science were accelerating, and compelling. However, as Deutscher (1966) observed, “in attempting to assume the stance of physical science, we have necessarily assumed its epistemology—its assumptions about the nature of knowledge and the appropriate means of knowing, including the rules of scientific evidence.” The promise of a science of education can be found throughout Thorndike’s (1910) introductory article to the first issue of the Journal of Educational Psychology. It is no less evident in Bruner’s (1966) call for a theory of instruction. And, it has been revived and re-established in the most recent discussions of funding policies for educational research that makes the clinical-trial model the most credibly scientific design for educational study (see Eisenhardt and Towne, 2003; Erickson and Gutierrez, 2002; Maxwell, 2004; National Research Council, 2002; & Slavin, 2002, 2004). The authority of the natural science model in studying social worlds is no less with us today.

Science promises in matters of educational research suggests the depth of those assumptions, and not only in those literatures seeking a 'science of education' (see the commentaries in Educational Researcher, 2002, 31,8 on the National Research council proposals for funding educational research). Sparkes' (1989) entire argument is to point out and caution against what he sees as the developing "parasitic reliance" of an anti-foundational literature [qualitative research] on formalist, technicist and foundational assumptions. For these reasons, there may be good reason to review the question.
Yet whatever the recent policy debates, the promise of the natural science model for the study of social worlds only re-writes the conceptual disputes that marked 20th century social science, its “qualitative turn” in the 1950s and 1960s, and later developments in the educational research community in the 1970s and 1980s. These debates centered on the observation that human social life differed from the material order in the human capacity to produce and share meaning (Erickson, 1986). Perhaps central among those discussions is the observation offered by Schutz (1962) that in the natural sciences, we encounter worlds that don’t ‘mean’. That is, the order of natural worlds isn’t an order of meaning. As he remarked, “the facts, data, and events with which the natural scientist has to deal are just facts, data, and events within his observational field but this field does not ‘mean’ anything to the molecules, atoms, and electrons therein.” (1962, p. 5). For natural sciences, the researchers themselves are the first meaningful actors on the scene. But this is not so for the study of social worlds. As Schutz points out, the observational field of the social scientist has a particular meaning and relevance structure for the human beings living, thinking, and acting therein. They have pre-selected and pre-interpreted this world by a series of common-sense constructs of the reality of daily life, and it is these thought objects which determine their behavior, define the goal of their action, the means available for attaining them—in brief, which help them to find their bearings within their natural and socio-cultural environment and to come to terms with it. The thought objects constructed by the social scientists refer to and are founded upon the thought objects constructed by the common-sense thought of man living his everyday life among his fellow-men. Thus, the constructs used by the social scientist are, so to speak, constructs of the second degree, namely constructs of the constructs made by the actors on the social scene, whose
behavior the scientist observes and tries to explain in accordance with the procedural rules of his science (1962, p. 6; see also Geertz, 1973).

When we fail to observe the difference, we risk engaging in research practices that impose “exogenous” (Emerson, Fretz, & Shaw, 1995) interpretations on the social worlds we study, rather than understanding how those worlds are understood by those who experience them, resulting in a gap between the social scientists’ accounts, and the meaningful social worlds of their interest.

When we engage in research practices disconnected from empirical social worlds, we are tempted to forget that meaningful social realities exist independent of the research enterprise, in the social worlds of cultural members. Those realities can be found only in their ordinary everyday lives. We don’t have to take interest in those lives. It would be helpful if the literature would be clear on the question of whether it does or not. But if we do, it is to them that we will have to look, rather than to formal methods or theories. Perhaps the most memorable formulation of these differences and distinctions is found in Malinowski’s (1922/1992) formulation of “the natives’ point of view.” It is an early formulation of the tasks and circumstances that a social science encounters. It involves theoretical presuppositions about the nature of social worlds, and consequently about the nature of the social sciences.

The Qualitative Turn

The promise of the natural science model for the investigation of social worlds has been evidently compelling. But it has always had its critics. Herbert Blumer (1954/1970), founder of the largest program of qualitative research in Anglo–American sociology, directly spoke of the problems and conceptual difficulties that follow when we
attempt to treat the concepts of social science as though they were as stable and definitive as those of natural science. He insisted on the importance of studying everyday life in its local “distinctive expressions” to close the gap between social theory and worlds of everyday life. He recommended the “direct study” of the social world as we actually find it in the everyday lives of those who live there, rather than ordering the world to fit our theories.

*Studies of Everyday Life*

Qualitative studies developed as a critique of the appropriateness of the natural science paradigm for the study of meaningful worlds, criticizing its basic assumptions along with its methods. A central critique is that the natural science model posits an objective reality existing independently of human cultural experience. In the positive science paradigm, methods are held separate from any study interest. It is believed that given a careful application of the methods, reality can be discovered for what it is. Thus, the borrowing of methods reflects an implicit borrowing of the assumptions of natural science worlds as well. However, such a model becomes problematic when we consider the nature of social worlds. As Sparkes (1989) noted, “each paradigm, world view, and scientific field contains its own particular constellation of assumptions, questions, strategies, and methods into which newcomers are initiated as a rite of passage” (p. 133). Further, the qualitative turn “contains contrasting assumptions, “an interrelated set of views about the social worlds that are philosophically, ideologically and epistemologically distinct” from the assumptions of the positivistic paradigm (Rist, 1977, cited in Sparkes, p. 135). The qualitative turn entails perceiving reality as multiple and
socially constructed, as the cultural members’ phenomenon. Its locus is everyday life
cf., Blumer, 1970; Emerson et al. 1995; Erickson, 1986; Garfinkel, 1967; Geertz, 1973;
Goffman, 1972; Malinowski, 1922/1992; Mehan, 1982; Schutz, 1962). Central to my
topics and study setting is the formulation “everyday life” in the village and its school.

As mentioned, the study of ‘everyday life’ has a long history in 20th century social
science, though much less so in educational study, which began with promises of an
applied science of education (Thorndike, 1910). Ideas of culture or classrooms as
socially and culturally organized environments do not begin to appear in educational
studies until the 1970s and the initiation of its ‘qualitative turn’, as seen in the works of
Erickson (1973), McDermott (1974), Mehan (1979) and others. Bruner (1966, 1986) is
emblematic of a transformative re-thinking. In his “Theorems for a Theory of
Instruction” (1966), culture appears only as contingency of learning, as in whether or not
“predisposing factors” found in a child’s home culture help or hinder his/her tendency to
learn (1966: 198). Culture, in 1966, is one of learning’s lesser contingencies. In this
account,

[T]here are different attitudes toward intellectual activity characterizing different
social classes, the two sexes, different age groups, and different ethnic groupings.
These culturally transmitted attitudes pattern the use of mind. Some cultural
traditions are, by count, more successful than others in the production of various
patterns—the Jews, for example, in the production of scientists, scholars, and
artists.” (p. 200).

Culture is treated as a variable that requires examination in terms of its relationship with
other social factors to explain achievement. It is taken to be a ‘mediating variable’,
providing a causal link between general features of a social group and the fates of
individuals. Thus, in his words “A theory of instruction concerns itself … with the issue of how best to utilize a given culture pattern in achieving particular instructional ends” (p. 200).

In Bruner’s 1966 account, instruction thus takes place largely in a cultural vacuum. Twenty years later, however, education and thus classrooms, by Bruner’s account (1986), have become “cultural forums for negotiating and renegotiating meaning and for explicating action” (p. 123). The transformation is profound, and can only stand on behalf of conceptual developments within the larger literature. Those are part of the “qualitative turn” and the 'socio-cultural turn' in education, which marks a turn to the observational, naturalistic approach of fieldwork for the study of the meaningful social contexts of everyday activities.

The place of meaning.

As mentioned, the project of ‘studies of everyday life’ was central to Malinowski’s proposals for modern ethnography. We find them in Blumer’s sociology, in Geertz’s (1973) cultural anthropology, in Goffman (1972), in Garfinkel’s ethnomethodology (1967), and in the sequential analysis of Sacks, Schegloff & Jefferson (1974). Blumer (1953/1970) pointed to the organizational differences between the social world and the natural world. As with Schutz and others, it turns on the place of meaning for the order of social worlds. Central to his argument is the “distinctive character” of everyday expressions in the social worlds, or how the cases we encounter in empirical social worlds are always contextually embedded, and locally constructed. To understand what is common to a concept like "culture", or "socialization" or "academic achievement"
is to consider and study its variable, contextual expressions, rather than relying upon abstract or generic accounts. Malinowski (1922/1992) similarly recommended observing and appreciating daily life in its ordinary details, in its full actuality, as “the imponderabilia of actual life”. He too argued against making social worlds fit the assumptions brought to the field, arguing against the researcher going to the field with the “preconceived ideas” (p. 9). What was meant with this phrase was the researcher having prior assumptions on the social group of interest, the nature of their life, relations, institutions, and beliefs before studying them thoroughly. He contrasted such a stance with having “foreshadowed problems”, meaning having topics and interests shaped by “good training in theory, and acquaintance with its latest results”. In his words, “preconceived ideas are pernicious in any [social] scientific work, but foreshadowed problems are the main endowment of a scientific thinker [the researcher]” (p. 9).

Malinowski’s argument imposes upon social researchers a fundamental obligation to take interest in her topics in their full detail as found in everyday life. Referring to the central place of meaning on how members understand one another in the most taken for granted details of everyday life, he states,

[I]f we remember that these imponderable yet all important facts of actual life are part of the real substance of the social fabric, that in them are spun the innumerable threads which keep together the family, the clan, the village community, the tribe—their significance becomes clear (p. 11).

The primacy of meaning for the order of social worlds recurs throughout the literature. It underwrites arguments about cultural relativism and the social construction (Berger and Luckmann, 1967). Sparkes (1989) develops the anti-foundational elements
of those arguments, and how paradigmatic differences run deep, and can be ignored only at the risk of mis-understanding conceptual difference. Central to the themes found in Sparkes is that, contrary to natural science, deep, universal foundations do not ‘cause’ the order of social worlds. From an anti-foundational perspective, the methods borrowed from the natural science model are not sensible for the study of meaningful social worlds. Rather, in social sciences “knowledge is not seen to be built upon a certain or indubitable base, and where knowledge claims can only be well warranted since no warrant or foundation is so firm that it cannot be open to question” (p. 132). To choose appropriate methods of inquiry, we have to understand the differences of orderliness in natural and social worlds. These are not technical questions, but conceptual ones reflecting the worldview taken for the empirical social worlds.

\[16\] The problems faced by anti-foundational researchers are not those faced by foundationalists, e.g. the problem of validity. From an anti–foundationalist perspective, there can be multiple validities, as in those that separate gang members, and the police. Thus, Sparkes cautions against employing arguments written for the qualitative research literature that only re-write foundational criteria (e.g., "trustworthiness" in Lincoln and Guba, 1985). Cultural members are already engaged in developing practical accounts of the worlds they encounter. Thus, it is well expected that the "first-order" constructs of the cultural members and the "second-order" constructs of the social scientists would be of different kinds since each is formulated in relation to different interests (Schutz, 1962). In this light, Sparkes notes how techniques such as "member checking" still aspire to a single truth of social reality, and are in that way continuous with the assumptions of foundational studies. He recommends that the anti-foundational paradigm should be faithful to its own tasks and questions.
The order of meaningful worlds.

As Schutz (1962) argued, the social world is the world of daily life as lived by its cultural members. For cultural members, social reality is natural, evident, and obvious. Analytically, it is sustained by the actors who jointly co-produce it, and it is already meaningful before the first professional analyst sets foot on the scene. That is, the social world is an intersubjective world in which actors jointly construct its meaning and coherence.\footnote{The meaning and coherence Schutz speaks of is seen in his comments on the "natural attitude of everyday life", an attitude marked by the suspension of doubt about the evident character of social worlds. Thus, we ride the bus or attend class without wondering if this is 'really' the bus driver, or the professor. Schutz was, of course, describing ordinary 'life worlds', rather than the pre-occupations of social science. Where skepticism organizes a great deal of social science, the taken-for-granted nature of everyday worlds works differently.}

It is the world of cultural objects and social institutions into which we are all born, within which we have to find our bearings, and with which we have to come to terms. From the outset, we, the actors on the social scene, experience the world we live in as a world both of nature and of culture, not as private but as an intersubjective one, that is, as a world common to all of us, either actually given or potentially accessible to everyone… (Schutz, 1962, p. 53)

Given this account of social reality, Schutz argued “the facts, events, and data before the social scientists are of an entirely different structure” (1962, p. 5). Whereas the order and structure of natural world may be organized through chemical bonds, social worlds show an incommensurate organization grounded in meaning. Meaning yields
order, including moral order, in social worlds. Meaning underwrites structure and recurrence. Thus, Schutz argued that the appropriate social study methods would treat the meaningful constructs that actors already employed in their everyday lives.

Geertz (1973) made the similar point when he called for an interpretive study of cultures. For him culture consists of a social fabric of meaning—webs of signification—in terms of which human actions are produced, perceived, and interpreted. In his account, culture is presented as jointly constructed in social contexts. Thus, the field of inquiry into the social world requires interpretation of ordinary, everyday, lived experiences of the cultural members. In Geertz’s account, culture becomes context within which social scientists can intelligibly describe social actions, events, institutions, or processes using the members’ perspective. His argument was developed in opposition to cognitivist treatments of culture as “mental phenomena, which can be analyzed by formal methods similar to those of mathematics and logic” (p. 12). Citing Gilbert Ryle, he called for the “thick description” of meaningful cultures, a description that is faithful to the significance that meaning has for its members. Such analysis involves “sorting out the structure of signification… and determining their social ground and import” (p. 9). "What we call our data are really our own constructions of other people’s constructions” (p. 9), thus cultural analysis needs to be a thoroughly interpretive exercise. And the interpretive study of cultures entails a description of locally produced, socially shared procedures organizing collective life.
Meaning-in-context.

Mishler (1979) provides another account on how meaning is central for the organization of social worlds and how the contextual analysis of meaning is obliged for a social science. Mishler answers his title question, “Meaning in context: Is there any other kind?”, with a decisive “No”. For Mishler, meaning is contextual, and thus social, and local. We mean and make sense in situ. He states, “we rely on context to understand the behavior and speech of others and to ensure that our own behavior is understood, implicitly grounding our interpretation of motives and intentions in context” (p. 98). Context is thus the field of “our everyday consciousness and awareness” (p. 98). It is the site of everyday life, and the order of everyday life. Thus, Mishler maintains, human action can be understood “only within its own context of socially grounded rules for defining, categorizing, and interpreting the meaning of our conduct” (p. 105). He provides a deep critique of “the context-stripping methods” of normal social science in its pursuit of generalizations. He notes that the context stripping methods are borrowed from the physical sciences and thus assume, the unity of scientific method despite the diversity of subject matters, the ideal of explanation consisting in the subsumption of individual cases under general laws, and the formal structure of mathematical physics as a methodological ideal (1979, p. 101).

In Mishler’s account, context-stripping entails meaning-stripping, and a social science that recognizes the constitutive differences between the natural and the social worlds.
requires a faithfulness to the contextual primacy of meaning in social worlds, and for the order of social worlds.\textsuperscript{18}

Similarly, the primacy of context for meaning, and therefore ‘common understanding’ is brought to our attention by Moerman and Sacks (1988). In their account, understanding is a ‘natural phenomenon’ of face-to-face interaction among cultural members, and the turn-taking systematics in natural conversation. The production of a next turn, on time, is understanding’s first evidence, as an intersubjective production. Moerman and Sacks are observing how in natural language use, understanding is routinely produced in turns at talk. Every next turn displays an understanding of what was just said. In this sense, understanding's "first evidence" is the production of an apt next turn, on time. Next turn is the first place to see whether and how the other party has understood what has just been said. We can see their account especially well in classrooms.

\textsuperscript{18} The clear implication from Mishler is that meaning is always contextual, and if so, the question of how to proceed with a contextual analysis then becomes a large one for social science. Erickson and Schultz (1981) take it up directly. They describe their procedure for working with a corpus of videotape. It is what we find in 'collection studies', where materials are collected, and we look for rubrics within the collection to organize the analysis: "Essentially, our procedure for discovering the constituent structure of occasions consists of making judgments of same/different and next across real time" (p. 152). This exercise in my study is most evident in chapter 6, where modest collections under different headings are assembled. But the central phrase in their account is the work of describing "the constituent structure of occasions…" The formulation reminds us of the 'occasioned character' of meaning, which is the primacy of context.
For Moerman and Sacks and the program of Conversation Analysis they foreshadow, meaning and understanding are not only contextual, but sequential in their production. Thus, meaning, understanding, commonsense, or ‘how we mean’ and ‘how we understand each other’ are tied to the use of natural language in interaction between members.\(^\text{19}\) McDermott (1977) provides a similar analysis of the contextual organization of sense making. As the argument goes, the order of the meaningful worlds of classrooms and classroom lessons is jointly constituted in the context of social interaction.

Mishler and others thus took the conceptual argument on the organizational differences between the natural and social worlds one step forward, pointing to the actual, constitutive practices of cultural members (Cf., Garfinkel, 1967; Goffman, 1972; Sacks, Schegloff & Jefferson, 1974). They pointed to how social order and organization is achieved in face-to-face interaction. It is not only that face-to-face interaction is socially organized. It is also that the organization of interaction underwrites the organizations of institutional life (cf., Berger and Luckmann, 1967, and Drew and Heritage, 1992 [Talk at work…] on "institutional talk"). Through it all, the organization of meaning is the building block of social organization. From this it follows that to study how social worlds are organized, as in the organization of the classroom, is to study how members organize their face-to-face interactions, and thus make sense of them.

\(^{19}\) By the phrase 'natural language' I mean its most overwhelmingly familiar occasions of use: conversation, or talk. For some, language, like 'discourse', has become an indefinite metaphor. But my meaning for it is not metaphorical, but rather descriptive and observational. Natural language is the mother tongue we use in interaction.
Natural language.

Interaction is overwhelmingly conducted through language, whose central form is natural conversation. It is in and through language-in-use that most of the actions we perform and daily activities we achieve are done. Talk-in-interaction is “the primordial site of human sociability” (Schegloff, 1987a, 1987b). Further, talk-in-interaction is deeply and sequentially ordered. The 'depth' lies in how the parties are engaged without 'timeout' in the analytic work of producing and fitting turns within emerging sequences of turns. Within this order, the relation of utterances to each other is organized in a projectable fashion, in that an action addressed or directed to one party produces a sequential horizon of response possibilities form the other party. The actions of the participants are thus tied together to produce appropriate and intelligible next actions. Every next turn shows its "tie" to the local sequential environment of a prior turn, and the organizations of conversation includes systematic ways to locate and repair failed understandings as they occur (see Schegloff, Sacks and Jefferson, 1977). For examples, questions call for answers as the appropriate action in the next turn, just as greetings call for greetings in return. Thus, what an utterance in interaction means, and is doing, is understood within its sequential context.20 Language-in-use by the members is

20 Sequential organizations are temporal organizations. They organize the production of next turns, but not simply or only next turns. A remembered name, for example, produced days or weeks after it had been called for, is produced with remarks that refer back to the sequential context in which it was first called for. See Schegloff (1979 [on Syntax for Conversation] on the difference between a turn's location as it is numbered in transcript, and a turn's "position" within a sequence. An answer can come
particularly central to formal educational activities, as teaching and learning take place in and through classroom discourse.

As has been suggested, the conception of language taken here differs from the language referred to by linguists as abstract formal structures and systems. In everyday interaction, members don’t simply recite linguistic codes, independent of the circumstances of their situation. Nor do they speak sentences or phrases in isolation (Sinclair and Coulthard, 1975). Rather, they produce turns of talk that fit to the talk of others, and show their orientations to and understanding of the talk that contexts their own. In the process, they shape and renew and also revise the contexts of their speaking. The organization of turn taking in the village school is the focus of chapter 6.

*Social Competence.*

By these understandings, sense and meaning, and thus competent participation, is achieved through social practice, produced locally, then and there by all the parties involved. Members own these practices as part of their cultural instruction, enabling them to participate in daily interaction with others. Thus, being a cultural member entails competence to interaction “as the requisite skills, abilities, and knowledge

weeks later, and yet be heard as the second position answer to a question heard weeks before.

21 'By 'own', I mean that cultural members are in possession of competent practices. To be a member is to be competent to the community's ways of doing things. They 'own' that competence, in the sense that it can't be taken from them. I think virtually all of it is an instructed matter. The village children in the early grades, for example, don't yet own the practices of competent classroom participation.
necessary for participation in a given community” (Mehan, 1980, p. 133). Newcomers, though their participation is initially peripheral, over time develop full competence-to-participation, simultaneously re-constructing the tasks and occasions of the group (Lave and Wenger, 1991).

Further, different settings and occasions have different practices, developed within their own socio-historical context, and these practices are taken for granted by the members. Competence is taken for granted. Among other things, this opens the possibilities of “becoming incompetent” as we move from one setting to another, as can be seen in classroom studies that document how students can arrive at school possessing cultural forms of competence and participation that classrooms do not honor (Au & Kawakami, 1994; Bloome, Katz, Champion, 2003; Erickson & Shultz, 1981; Gallas, 1998; Michaels, 1981; Phillips, 1972). These studies have documented how classrooms are indeed cultural forms, modern cultural forms, and how children from different cultural orientations routinely encounter them as strange and uninviting places. Central to my study is an investigation of how these village children discover the newly encountered classroom forms, and take up their tasks of jointly producing them in the room. A further interest concerns the impact of the taken for granted nature of social practices on the acquisition of the organization of modern classroom forms, and how depending on the task, setting and occasion, we may be teaching them these novel competences, or not (See McDermott and Varenne, 1995).

This account of the contextual availability of meaning-in-interaction between members points to the local production of both meaning, and social order. That is,
members jointly produce their understanding of what is happening ‘there and then’ as they participate in interaction with others, and as they do, produce the order of their interaction.\textsuperscript{22} Thus, meaning is a natural, practical task that is observable, socially produced, and publicly available. More importantly, meaning underwrites order. To put it in Geertz’s terms, “culture is public because meaning is” (1973, p. 12).

What follows from these arguments is a proposal for a naturalistic study of social life that is oriented to the local production of interactional order, an order that is overwhelming the order of talk-in-interaction. As Sparkes (1989) observes, there is a linkage between the worldview and the methods chosen for studying it. Methods thus derive from the first principles about the nature of social life and organization. If the order of social worlds is accomplished locally, in interaction by the participants, then an understanding of social life requires a descriptive program that takes interest in the members constitutive work. This conception points us to the socially assembled situations as unit of analysis. It recommends the naturalistic study of the organizations of activities as they are found in the classroom and in the village. In this perspective the observational field of the social scientist is not necessarily taken as different from the observational field of members. In situations of daily life, members display to each other

\textsuperscript{22} One might imagine that the order of interaction is 'merely' an order of turn taking, rather than, for example, an organization of meaning, or 'kinds of persons', or rights, obligations and relationships. But the insight of the sequential analysts is that things such as 'relationships' are themselves practical enactments, and thus possess interactional tasks, occasions and organizations. Turn taking becomes a central site for the organization of meaning, whether about relationships or other tasks of understanding.
what they ‘mean’ through socially competent practices that are usually taken for granted. As do the cultural members, the social scientist orients to these publicly available affairs, and to their temporal order in order to find the sense of what the parties are doing. However, having a different interest in the field than that of the members, the social scientist differs in that what is taken for granted by the members becomes the topic of interest for the analyst.

Central to my analysis will be the organizations of classroom talk in their natural setting, and the organizations of competent participation in village life. In each setting, the taken for granted practices that are constitutive of the setting will be the topic of my investigation. In this way, the study will produce a “second order rendering” (Geertz, 1973; Schutz, 1962) of the members’ first order understandings, to the best of my ability.

Significance

Significance is always the judgment of later readings; we can’t know in advance what significance will be found. Nevertheless, this study points to the importance of understanding the social contexts of education as a field of practical actions, and how those fields are inseparable from the teaching learning of the academic content that goes on there. If teaching and learning takes place through Geertzian “webs of significance”, then it is important to understand the social practices that spin the meaningful webs of interaction. If not for any other reason, it is important that we understand how both teaching and learning are possible only through effective participation in interaction. Competent participation is an analytic exercise on its every occasion, and this study aims to recover some of the competent analyses of these village children as they set out to
become modern, competent school children.

There is also the significance of this study in the Turkish context. The Turkish educational research literature has not yet experienced either the ‘qualitative turn’, or the ‘social-cultural’ turn. Its habits and points of reference are still those of the mid 20th century Western literature. Nor has it become skeptical about the national project of modernization. The Anatolian plateau has been a “melting pot” for millennia. If the phrase has any deep historic sense, it is in places like Turkey. And there, in Turkey, classrooms really are sites of cultural innovation. The great urban centers are confident in their modern forms. They take them for granted, much as they are taken for granted in Columbus, Ohio. But elsewhere, in the rural village life of Turkey, modernization is an unfinished project, and schooling is central to its completion. How village parents see this process and commit to it, or not, is also part of this study. It is also part of how their children find the measures of success that they find in school.

The Study Procedures

This study was designed as a naturalistic study. It required access to a setting located abroad, in Turkey. Thus, gaining entry required coordination of official permissions from the Ohio State University and the Turkish authorities, both in provincial and district level. I acquired the teacher’s permission before I applied to the authorities in both settings. After receiving entrance to the setting in Turkey, I was required to wait until a second authorization for videotaping the classroom or any of the school activities. I had to meet with the authorities in person and explain to them the details of videotaping procedures and to assure them of my intention of using these
records only for educational purposes, and not to secretly record any activity. The following section will provide information on the study setting, participants, and data collection and analysis phases.

Background and Setting

The village is a relatively small village with a population of around 100–150 households. It is located on the shoulders of the Taurus mountain range, surrounded by the mountains on each direction. The villagers are mainly occupied with farming and livestock raising. Places in the village, other than homes, include two men’s traditional coffee houses, two convenience stores, and a small scale, weekly-set-up open bazaar. Men usually socialize with other men in the coffee houses, though as will be discussed, there were occasions where they spoke with me, an un-married woman. Families visit each other for afternoon and evening teas, wherein women and children socialize with each other. The weekly bazaar is also a women’s setting where they come together as

23 It was asked in a prior draft of this chapter whether my return to my home village to study its school was "a matter of convenience or was there some systematic process of decision making?" Given the question, one cannot know what would count as a 'systematic process'. I have been away from the village my entire adult life. Yet, I can still see the pace and rhythms of village life. Many of my childhood age-mates live there still with their families. As indicated, they received me as ‘sister’, 'abla', not a stranger. They trust me and I can then speak with them about topics on which they would not speak with a stranger. It was otherwise not a convenience to travel 7,000 miles at my own expense. When my advisor first proposed that I needed to conduct my study within the Turkish educational context, I thought it was an unfair burden on me. I knew of no other international students who had returned 'home' for their dissertation studies. Looking back, I'm glad I did. But there was nothing convenient about it.
they look for household items. The mosque and the Elementary school are the only official institutions that are everyday extensions of the central government. The school has been part of the village since early 1950’s. As of this study, the school is composed of a multi-grade, multi-aged classroom wherein first, second and third graders received instruction by a single teacher. Instruction takes place Monday through Friday, from 8:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.. Children return home for an hour lunch break between 12:00–1:00 p.m.

For some subject areas, e.g. art, music, hand works, physical education etc., activities were planned for all students to participate, regardless of the grade level. For others, like mathematics, Turkish language, and social studies, instruction was designed for specific grade levels. At times, second graders were instructed in conjunction with the first graders; at other times, they received instruction together with the third graders. Even though a central curriculum developed for mixed grades was available for the teacher’s use, depending on the children’s level on certain subject area, he modified this curriculum for the needs of his students. While a given grade received instruction, other grades usually were assigned a reading or other 'silent' tasks (though they routinely took interest in what the instructed matters were about; see chapter 6). The teacher routinely divided class periods into different phases, each intended for a different grade level, and in this way, the order and organization of lessons was always local, occasioned. For the students, it could be un-predictable too.
Participants

The study participants included the school population with its 22 students and the teacher, as well as the adult family members of the students. Eight of the students were first graders, six were second, and eight were third graders. Half of them were girls, the other half boys. More than half of the students were closely related: A total of 13 children were either siblings or cousins to each other, and in some way, they were all related to each other. Four different last names covered them all; 13 children had the same last names. Around 35 villagers, most of them family members, usually mothers, grandmothers, and older siblings, also participated in the study, joining in conversations with me about school, schooling, and the experiences of their child—and their own experiences—in school. They discussed their perspectives about their child’s future in school, and how they related to schooling and village life in general.

Data Collection

Data was collected over a period of 5 months. Data collection in the classroom was mainly through observation and video taping of naturally occurring events, during the class meetings. I collected 15 class hours of classroom lessons and saved them chronologically onto my personal computer.24 Conversations with the teacher and

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24 The taping' was not a scheduled exercise. Instead, we wait and develop the occasions that make taping relevant. To 'average the 'hours per month', for example, is to ignore the work of field work, and how the parties need to be comfortable with the collection of audio-visual records, and how appropriate occasions are found. Videotape is not a commonplace in Turkish villages. Taping was the last phase of data collection, rather than the first. The records were collected as the fieldwork and relationships
children during breaks and after hours were a major source of material. I participated in various activities with the children after school hours, like going on field trips, or joining their play or group games during breaks. I visited their households, talked with the family members, went on walks with them, joining them in collective public activities, like women going to fields to collect plants, fruit, or cooking bread, etc. I collected photographs of many of these activities. In a village of this size, it was not hard to try to arrange meetings with the family members; I encountered them in public places and used each occasion as a chance for further interaction. Having been seen by them as a ‘homecoming researcher’, it was not hard to move the talk to “the things I was there to be involved in”. It naturally became a topic of our conversations sooner or later during each encounter. My corpus is a collection of observations drawn from all these daily experiences both in school and out, recorded as daily fieldnotes.

Data Analysis

Initially, on returning to Columbus, I wanted to organize the data I had collected. The task was not simply organizational, but to begin working with them again. I viewed the videotapes in chronological order, taking notes on the relevance of each occasion regarding the topics of the study. Then I created logs for each tape, recording dates and times, building description of the events recorded and attaching notes of analytic interest. In the process, as the work of describing the contents of the tapes leads to finding multiple instances of same kinds of sequences, collection rubrics are developed, e.g., the developed. The relevant schedule isn't one of averages, but of field experience. Judgments are indispensable in every case, whether in videotaping or conversations.
teacher's work of organizing a two-party structure of the teacher and the cohort, or finding occasions of failed understanding between students and the teacher.

A similar process was undertaken with the field notes and interview materials. Many interviews were collected on a digital audio recorder. These records were organized and logged in a similar fashion, listening for topics and the recurrence of topics, and assembling loose collections of them, and collections of conversations with mothers, elders, fathers and other membership categories of villagers. Observational field notes were also logged, although these were more difficult to organize. They tended to yield vignettes, some of which struck me as very revealing of the lives of these children and their families, in school and out of school.

The following three chapters, 4, 5 and 6, are the analytic chapters. Chapter 4 will develop a description of the social organization of everyday life in the village community. It discusses and provides vignettes and interviews about village life and everyday interaction, including the children's competence to these organizational forms found in the village. Chapter 5 describes the cultural tension between schooling and village life. The chapter takes up the familiar refrain that villagers do not 'value' education as they should, or as others do. It is a familiar refrain about many communities in many other countries. The chapter examines the ways schooling is experienced by these families and their children in their everyday lives, and finds a far more nuanced understanding of the place of education and the village school in their lives.

Chapter 6 turns to the classroom videotapes and analyses how classroom lessons and activities were constituted in face-to-face, discursive interactions between the teacher
and the students. The chapter is organized across three collection rubrics, and analyzes multiple sequences of classroom lesson activities for their sequential organizations, documenting in detail the constitutive work of the students especially. These collections will help readers see the children’s work of co-producing their tasks and lessons as organizational forms, and see their analytic work of achieving common understanding. The chapter concludes with a discussion of how they find instruction in the acquisition of competence to classroom interaction and the organization of its activities.

On Position

Following the insight provided by Vidich (1960), a discussion of my "position" within the study and the village will context the analyses found in Chapters 4 and 5. As Vidich (1960) states, “the [participants] form(s) an image of [the researcher] and use that image as a basis of response. Without such an image the relationship between the field worker and the respondent, by definition, does not exist” (p. 355). Position shapes the worlds we see and what is revealed to us, and I was perceived and related to by the children and the villagers as a ‘sister’, a distant member of the village community ‘coming home’ to study ‘our children’s education’. I hope I have done so in a way that honors their lives.
CHAPTER 4: THE VILLAGE

Village life has been one of the great topics of modern ethnography. Malinowski’s study on the Trobriand islanders (1922/1994), Geertz’s (1973) Balinese cock fighters, Mead’s (1928) Samoan adolescents, and Rosaldo’s (1980) work with the Philippine Ilongots are among anthropology’s classic works. Each found its topics from within village life. And as Geertz (1973) remarks, “the locus of study is not the object of study. Anthropologists don’t study villages (tribes, towns, neighborhoods etc.); they study in villages” (p. 22).

Anthropology has long been concerned with documenting disappearing forms of life in distant places (Geertz, 1973). Traditionally, ethnographic study has been the practice used to apprehend other peoples’ life experiences, and bring home descriptions of the realities that bind them together. By Malinowski’s account (1922) understanding distant forms of life allows us to reflect on our own cultural ways. And while different

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25 Anthropology has long been associated with ethnographic fieldwork. Yet ethnographic fieldwork has been familiar in sociological study throughout the second half of the 20th century (as in Chicago School sociology and Blumer’s Symbolic Interactionism, among other programs). My resources for this study are thus in anthropology, sociology, discourse studies and elsewhere. These are among the convergences that Geertz (1973)[Local Knowledge] formulated as "blurred genres".
studies can be conducted in different places, some interests can best be pursued in certain places. As I hope to show in the following three chapters, the village of what I will call “Yaylali” is a revealing setting for a study of traditional forms of life that are in transition, and the role of schooling as site of modernization. 

The transition is from traditional village organizations and experiences to modern forms of social action and even identity. What constitutes ‘the modern’ has of course been one of the great topics of the 20th century. But the term and project of modernization has a longer life in actual worlds, and a practical life in ordinary worlds. For example, the modernization of Turkish society has been the explicit policy of Turkish governments since late Ottoman period, and in rural, traditional places, such as this village, the schooling of village children has been a practical place for doing it. Indeed, during the early years of the Republic of Turkey, the expansion of educational system to rural areas of the country was perceived as one of the most urgent needs in the formation of modern Turkish nationhood (Szyliowicz, 1973; Somel, 2001). As a result, for the first time rural village children throughout the country encountered the cohort organization and culture of individual performance and reward that mark modern societies.26

26 There are of course many forms of ‘cohort organization’. One can find them among football fans, military platoons, and monasteries. But as Hamilton (1978) and Payne and Hustler (1980) note, these are not those of the modern classroom. I am using the phrase ‘cohort organization’ not as a generic for the organizations we might find among any grouping of participants, but rather as the particular organization of collective identity (the class) and individual performance that we find in classrooms. See Hamilton (1989) on the early development of “teaching to the class.” It was an organizational
In the village of Yaylali, the processes began in 1950’s when modern schooling was introduced. Then, as now, modernization is an unfinished business in the most rural areas of the country. My study concern is with the process in which the village children in Yaylali develop competencies to classroom lesson and cohort organizational forms. That they own other competencies to other forms is also a central topic. And it should be noted throughout my discussion that the terms 'modern' or 'traditional' are not simply topics for an academic literature. The literature on 'modernity' is no doubt enormous. But these terms have a vernacular life too. Villagers commonly speak of the differences. Sometimes, they are speaking of how 'city people' are not like themselves. Sometimes they are speaking of how Provincial officials puzzle them. But they commonly speak of this divide, and it is on their authorization, in addition to literature's (e.g., Hamilton, 1978), that I speak of the difference between 'traditional' village organizations and 'modern' classroom organizations.

It should be noted that this is my family’s village, the village that I left at a young age after completing elementary school. I received my elementary education through grade 5 in this same village school. In my continuing education, I visited the village regularly during breaks from school. For a period of time as an undergraduate, I served as a teacher’s aide. Since I started graduate school in the US, I haven’t visited it as often. But in these multiple respects, my return to the village for the study of its school was a “homecoming” experience (Schutz, 1962). I stayed there for five months during the innovation, where students were organized as a cohort, but assessed individually. The teacher taught to everyone, while everyone performed by herself.
second semester of the school year 2008–2009, and a month into summer break. I participated in the school activities throughout the school day; and in the everyday life of the villagers on the weekends and after school hours. It was a time of study, and also homecoming with family, extended family, and a cultural and physical landscape I knew well, but had not seen in many years.

During my stay there, I was approached and responded to by the villagers and the children alike as a distant member of the village community. Children called me “Zekiye abla,” a term used among younger persons to address an older sister in the family; it is also used to refer to older, unmarried women in the village community. As will be discussed in the following sections, children sought me as an intermediary between the teacher and themselves, asking for my help to make sense of the materials he presented in the classroom (or in books) and also to make sense of the teacher and expectations that were at times baffling for them. Similarly, parents and family members called me “sister,” a term used typically to address women of younger ages. They also recruited me as an intermediary with the schoolteacher and also in their dealings with the staff of the local boarding schools. My relation with them was shaped by their perception of my position as a distant member, and a competently modern one. I will return to issues of my position in chapter 5, and chapter 7.

Background

The village is in southern Turkey. It is in the province of Adana in the Mediterranean region, located in approximately 180 km north-east of the city of Adana. It is part of a least developed district within the province, due partly to its isolated
location. It rests on an uneven, sloping plateau high in the Tahtali range of the Toros Mountains. The village is a relatively small one. As of 2000, it had a population of around 538 permanent residents. Today, the village has approximately 150 households. There are two very small convenience stores, a mosque, two coffee houses (strictly for men) and an elementary school. There is also a village clinic, but it was not staffed at the time of data collection. Villagers usually travel to the district center for health concerns and various shopping needs, which is 15 km north of the village.

The village and surrounding area are occupied mainly by the descendants of Turks from the Caucasus and the Avsar (Afshar) tribes. The former were dislocated as a result of the Russian incursions into the Caucasus in the 18th and 19th centuries. Avsar tribes were formerly nomadic, Turkish migrants from central Asia, who were involved mainly in pastoral sheep herding. Even though the area was occupied as far back as the Bronze Age, and throughout the Hittite civilization and many other civilizations subsequently, the history of the village is relatively new. It was founded approximately

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27 The district area historically marks off the well known Cappadocia and Cilicia regions. Some couple kilometers north of the district center, around 20 km north of the village, are found remains of the ancient city of Comana (the Hittite toponym Kummani). It was the capital of the kingdom of Kizzuwatna, second millennium BC. The city was known as Hieropolis, the 'sacred city', owing to a famous temple of the Syrian Moon goddess Enyo or, in the local language: Ma. Famous historical figures visited the temple, including Strabo and Julius Caesar.
150 years ago by 8–10 pilgrim families. In time, these families developed kinship with each other and the surrounding villages.

The Village Economy

Historically, the village depended on a subsistence economy. Villagers farmed and bred animals for their livelihood. Traditionally they raised sheep, and lived a half-nomadic rhythm of spending summers in the surrounding pastures. Today, they have completely left behind the nomadic tradition. The young male population seeks seasonal jobs in various places, mostly in the construction industry. It is common for young men to travel to distant places for employment, to other city and towns, even out of the country. During my stay there, four of the student’s fathers were employed in construction, three in Ukraine with Turkish companies, and one in Bursa, a town in northwest Turkey. Young women also seek employment in the surrounding town and cities, and live there accompanied by some family members. The villagers also work on local farms, or government-related services.

But the village produces most of what its families consume, the grains, vegetables, dairy products, and the like. Some products are dried, or processed in other

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28 During the Ottoman period, the land of the village and surrounding area was used as farms and summer resorts by some noted generals residing in the city of Adana. The land was granted to those who needed to settle after the establishment of modern Turkey. At the time, various government initiatives were undertaken to settle nomadic groups and those who were affected by the population movement in various parts of the previous Ottoman lands. A couple of villages were newly established, Yaylali being one of them.
ways, for winter. There are various tasks involved in these productions; each is
accomplished at a different time throughout summer. Families usually come together to
accomplish these tasks; some take turns working for each other, while others sell their
labor. The children’s contribution is indispensable, as will be clear in the following
discussions. They participate in the routine practices of daily life starting from an early
age, as the real tasks are accomplished. Children are part of the productive routine,
accomplishing their share in the organization of tasks.

There are to this day vendors visiting the village on weekly basis to sell items not
found regularly in the village. They sell anything from cleaning products, household
utensils and clothing, to stationary materials. When it comes to consumption, while the
older generations prefer local products that are their own products, the younger
generations have a preference for commercial items, or items with attachments to
contemporary popular culture. Thus vendors introduce products for which parents can’t
resist their children’s demands, such as clothing with popular cartoon characters
[conveyed through the television programming which most families have]. In this sense,
the transition to the fashions of contemporary popular culture can be observed in the
orientations of family life. In this way, children’s contributions not only to traditional
village life, but also to the modernization process can be observed in their everyday
lives.²⁹

²⁹ One could say that modern commodities are things made by others, whose
manufacture is out of view, preformed by invisible hands, and delivered as a
convenience. They are ‘time saving’ devices, and implicate a culture where time itself is
Isolation

Transportation from the village to the provincial center and other parts of the province has long been a challenge. It requires climbing through escalating mountain passages. Before the current highway was built (approximately 30 years ago), people used traditional ox-cards for local transactions within the district. They would transfer to a motor vehicle in the next district center 20 km. to the south of the village, which is located in the lower altitudes, in order to travel to the Adana city center. It is not unusual today to hear elderly villagers tell stories from the old days about the difficulties of travel, of sick people dying on the way to the city center.  

Today, there are daily transportation services picking up passengers from their homes and taking them to provincial centers. The same travel that took days now takes only a couple of hours.

The modernization of transportation also affected access to schooling. Some families started to move away to surrounding towns and city centers for a better education. Usually, a part of the family moves with the student, taking turns to stay with them throughout the school year. During breaks they return back to the village. For the middle school and high school years, children must leave the village and enroll in schools a commodity. Yet its attractions are not universal. See the section on the “parable of bread.”

One story is regularly told by my father. Driving a familiar section of the modern road, he often points to a sharp rock and a pine tree next to it, and tells me, “See that tall tree beneath that rock? My father passed away right there. I was taking him to the doctor, and he looked fine when he asked for a rest under that tree. He never woke up. I am never sure if he died out of the sickness, or if the travel was unbearable for him.”
located in the district center, 15 km. north of the village; some move to the neighboring district center, which is 20 km. away to the south. Some students are boarded at the school, visiting their families on the weekends. Others have families who make arrangements with other families to transfer the student to the district center on daily basis.

Improvements in transportation also increased the interaction among the villagers and those whose permanent residency is in different parts of the country, even abroad. Those who moved permanently to distant cities and towns started to visit village more often. And the villagers started to visit family and relatives in different parts of the country. Thus, increased interaction also influenced the life in village, including expectations for formal education. Further, the population of village increases as much as threefold in summer owing to these visits. In these ways, the rhythms of annual life have been changing.

*The Rhythms of Everyday Life*

The rhythm of life shows different faces throughout seasons. Winters are calmer and uneventful; responsibilities are limited to animal care and household tasks. In the villagers terms “winters are time to consume what was produced in summers.” They say, “You work hard during summers, and rest in winters. You don’t have much to do in winters, so you enjoy afternoon and evening visits with your relatives and neighbors.” Some say, “The city people take vacation in summers, but we take ours in winters.” Others say, “The harder one works in summers, the better off they are in winters.” Still others, “one should know to work hard in summer in order to have more to enjoy in
winter; only those who know to work hard will know how to relax and be comforted.”

Unlike city dwellers, the seasons punctuate village life.

When asked how life is in winters, one women offered,

You know how it is around here. Men go to their daily ‘shift’ in the coffee house. You know they have to go there daily, as if they will receive a fine if they don’t. They come home for lunch and dinner, to feed animals, etc. Sometimes you have to call them up; otherwise they even forget the time there. We women meet with other women, do hand works, and follow up on the village rumors. What else can you find around here? (Hanife Kahvehaneci, 39; March, 2009)

Another added, “Most women have a network. They meet regularly in the afternoons, taking turns hosting each other. They do ‘kisir’ parties (Turkish version of tabooli). This is how time flows.”

What is there to do sister, other than following up on each other’s affairs? People follow up on their neighbors and relatives; they gossip about who is meeting with whom, how regularly; who is going where; how often; how in-laws are getting along; who has long distance guests, who the guests are, where they are coming from, how long they will stay; how elderly are doing, how sick are doing; the affairs between young; are there any engagements or weddings coming up. This

31 Turkish is the language of the village. Thus, throughout chapters 4, 5 and 6, the reader will be reading my translations from Turkish, and within that the ways of speaking in this village. Conventional wisdom tells us that something is always lost in translation. My experience as a second language learner tells me that it's not quite 'always'. Translation is very useful. More is gained than lost. Thus, in my judgment, and acknowledging that there are no unequivocal translations, the presentation of these materials in English is quite useful in conveying what the participants are saying and doing.

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is all what they do; this village is all about gossip! They gossip about anything you can name. Only couple people have interest in schools and children, and education. (T. Asiye, 65; March, 2009)

When asked about summers, some say with a laughter that “it is coming up you will see.” Most make fun of me saying, “Oh boy! She has forgotten the life over here; she needs to be reminded. Why don’t you stay over throughout summer and help us, you will be revived.” They continue, “It is the time when it occurs to all that life needs to be taken seriously. Everybody in the village already knows that the life costs and they have to work. But, it is in summers that you can see that well.” Another,

It is busy in summers. Starting in spring, animals are taken out to the pastures daily, the planting of various products starts, then comes time to water them, hoeing follows. Cropping pasturage in spring, then the wheat in summer, sorting the wheat for different purposes and processing them accordingly, things keep coming up successively. Most of the vegetables and crops are harvested in fall. Until late fall you can’t tell how time flies, day after day you have some tasks to be taken care of. (Nurdan Gulmez, 40; April 2009)

Another adds, “I can’t imagine how it was in old days, they say only scything the wheat would take a month by hand, now the motor harvester does the work, but still the rest of the work is too heavy.” And another remarks, “What do you expect to find in a village in summer, a life of work. We work in summer continuously, and consume in winters. Villagers and the village life are all about cultivation. You already know that.”

The ease and intimacy with which they speak to me of their lives, their families, tasks and pass-times is evident, as is their sense of difference from the tasks, occasions and rhythms of urban life. In nearly every extended home visit or conversation I had
with the adults in the village, some of whom were close relations, some distant and even uncertain relations and others who were age and grade peers with whom I shared my early years before taking a very different path, my presence as one who once knew, but might not any longer, was a familiar remark. It was always said with humor and kindness, and the expectation that indeed I had not forgotten.

First Encounter with Schooling

The expansion of modern schooling in the rural areas marked a shift in the perception of childhood in the village community. Before the expansion of schooling, children were primarily engaged in agricultural labor along with their families, reproducing familiar cultural categories and relations, as the elders attest (see below). The arrival of modern education and increasing primary school enrollment was viewed by many adult members of the community as challenge to the life of the village as they knew it and had received from their parents. Formal schooling was initially resisted in the 1950’s when the first schoolteacher was assigned. The resistance was based upon concerns about the immediate economic consequences, and perhaps also the re-writing of the roles of adults and children implicit to these arrangements. Children were now to be students, learning from a strange person, on subjects not immediately useful to the villagers. Memories of an older women, who was then school aged, convey the reactions to schooling that was prevalent at the time:

I hadn’t gone to school when I was a young girl. I used to hide in the barns, or run away to the gardens when I saw the teacher collecting students for the school. The teacher used to visit each household to convince parents of the good intentions of the school, to convince them of the need to develop literacy among
village children. Literacy was told to be required in the modern world, the time was different, we were to know about our country, nation, history, literature etc. But not many cared for it. Some thought the school was run on infidel lines. The teacher was a sort of agent, not like us. I was scared myself; I was scared of the teacher. I believed that he collected children to beat them in the school. That was true too; teachers used to beat the pupils in old days, with an iron bat. And, that was accepted by the parents and all. They believed children will be cured by beating, and learn to behave. My parents never encouraged me for school too. Actually, I think they were the ones who had made me scared in the first place. They did not want me to enroll in the school. However, that was pretty acceptable thing to expect from them; they needed children to help shepherds watch sheep or to herd the lambs; they needed us to be the watchman for the crops in the field. Children were good help to family in those days; they would be handy to have around adults for almost any village work. They were good to have especially in summers, when we started the establishments (a kind of camp) in the pastures out on the skirts of the mountain. Herd owners used to have tents there, part of the family would live there and the other part in the village. Children were of great help carrying things between the village and the tents. They would convey messages between the family members. Care of the lambs in particular was the children’s task. It was unreasonable to expect parents to give up their children to school. It was a pretty normal thing. Things have changed, everything is different now. If you don’t send your child to school, people would think evil of you. Back in time, the entire family used to live together in the same household. Children would not leave their parents’ even after marriage. Now, they are leaving for school, even before they grow up to be adults. Nothing is the same… (She continued her story about how hard people used to work, but how much better humans they were. How happy and respectful they were of each other, and cared for poor, they did not care as much for the worldly things etc.)
(Zahide Koca, 65; May, 2009. She is the wife of a retired school teacher, who resides in the district center.)

Another woman of the same generation, who lives in the village, told the story of her objection to her daughter’s enrollment in the Village Institutes.32

When my daughter was invited to the boarding school in Adana, not even far, to receive an education to become a schoolteacher in only a couple of years, I strongly objected to it. God knows, I did not want her to leave, not slightly. I would not even send her to the next village. Adana seemed too far then. It was the same time when your cousin Emine, and the store owner Yakup’s sister was invited. They both accepted the invitation and enrolled, and everything worked out well for them. They are schoolteachers now, already qualified for retirement. I don’t know whether I interfered with her “kismet” (fate, destiny), whether I should feel guilty for that. But, I did not have a choice at the time. She hasn’t forgotten that, and uses it against me whenever she gets upset with life and with me. Well, what could I do, it was a harsh life then. You are too young to know it. Ask your mother, or aunt, they will tell you more stories about those times. Your aunt and I are peers, got married around the same time. She will tell you what I have been through. If a family had a herd of sheep, things were even harder. People admired you, they thought you were wealthy, had everything, all the dairy products and everything. But it was a hard life for you to bring about them all. But we were lucky too; never knocked on anybody’s door asking for things. That was good. We used to get up early in the morning, before the roosters, running around for the entire day, never taking a moment to breath. Being done with one task, another already was lined up, needing to be attended to right then. Carrying water from the fountains and the wells was enough in itself, a never-ending task.

32 Village Institutes (in Turkish, Koy Enstituleri) were part of the rural development of the 1940s and 1950s. Their primary focus was teacher training and the establishment of primary schools in the rural areas (See Arayici, 1999, and Somel, 2001).
If a woman did not have a daughter, that was a pity. The women used to go before noon everyday to the summer resorts to milk the sheep, carrying things there on horseback. We would return back after reuniting the sheep and the lamb, carrying back the milk to be processed. We did all this in addition to the fieldwork, which was the only responsibility for some. The children were with us at all times, they were like the household servants ("yumus usagi"). They would carry milk in buckets to large pans as we milk the sheep. They would carry provisions between the village and the camp. They were our hands and arms that extended to things we could not reach; we needed their help for almost every task. The girls were of a particular interest to mothers. When it was so, how could I let my daughter go, she was my only daughter at the time? (Bahriye Ersoy, 68; June, 2009)

In the recollections of these older women, we gain a sense for how the village first received its school, and in the encounter, how villagers saw themselves, their children and their lives, and whether this proposal for a new form of early childhood experience was one they could afford. In their different ways, these women sensed an intrusion on the familiar rhythms of their lives, on the place of their own children in their lives, and in this way on the demands and implications of what a new, modern form of life meant.

First Graduates

In thinking about this early schooling experience, gender had a clear relevance. I investigated the records of the first graduates from the school. They were all boys; one of them was my uncle, who is a couple years younger than my father. Another was their cousin, who enrolled in the Village Institutes and became a village schoolteacher himself who retired years ago. Most stayed in the village, and now have grandchildren enrolled
in the school. I talked to some of those first graduates who lived in the village. I asked them to tell me about the old days, about those days when they were in school.

Regarding the first years of schooling, the first graduates said some children continued regularly, some did not. Also, they said that not every child of school age was registered; some preferred to join the mosque and learned to decode Arabic script. According to these men, the teacher would encourage children and the parents for enrollment in school, but some didn’t want to, and some could not because they were needed for the family work. Further, those enrolled would not attend daily. When the farming starts, the teacher would be forced to call summer break, because the children were all elsewhere.

Prior to the 1950’s, the modern school was not available in the village. In order to learn reading and writing in new letters (the Latin alphabet), school aged children would travel to a neighboring village. The elders recount that girls and those who could not afford to travel joined the mosque to receive a type of Quranic education, in which

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33 These men are in late 70’s now and they regularly visited the men’s coffee house meeting each other there. The coffee house was in the first level of my house, so I saw them often. When the weather turned nice they sat outside. Some pulled their chairs to the front of the building, where I regularly sat, and we conversed. These were good occasions for me to pull stories regarding the village’s first encounters with the schooling.

34 In these recollections from these elder men who were among the school's first students, the question of gender, or, for example, whether their sisters were encouraged or not for schooling, was not raised. These conversations were about their recollections and their experiences. No doubt there were other experiences too, as suggested by the remarks of the elder women we have just heard, about their daughters. But the remarks by these elder men are no less revealing.
children learned to recite certain prayers and decode Arabic script. According to them, the Imam at the time did not approve the modern school and discouraged villagers from sending their children. The accounts given to me resemble the memoirs published by those first schoolteachers who were assigned to village schools (e.g. Mahmut Makal, 1954). Makal talks about being perceived as a threat by the village Imam who, dependent on villagers for his payment, feared that children would not continue to the mosque anymore. The Imam would discourage the villagers from sending their children to school, spreading the word that the children were given education in school on infidel lines. Similarly the Imam in Yaylali village objected to schooling because girls and boys were put together. He claimed the practice was not good for the moral well being of the village community, although enrollment records show that it was not until the compulsory education law passed, that girls were allowed to enroll at all.

Village Life as Early Childhood Education

Traditional theories of child development focus on individual development, taking a “linear view of the developmental process” (Corsaro, 2005, p. 23). As we have seen, their analyses focus on the child’s activity, the child’s developing abilities to reason, and the child’s becoming more like an adult in her skills, capacities and attitudes. Even when others—parents, peers and teachers—are taken into consideration, the focus of analysis remains on the effects of interpersonal relations on individual development. The focus is overwhelmingly on the endpoint of development, where the child is molded by adults from immaturity to adult competence, as though there is a universally expressed, natural–biological developmental path, common to all children independent of cultures (Corsaro,
There is little, if any, consideration of how interpersonal relations are culturally shaped, or how children’s development is culture dependent, taking place as they participate in everyday life experiences and become cultural members. Traditional models imply that an individual child’s participation in society occurs only after he/she has ‘developed’. Childhood is seen as a period wherein children internalize the society and culture without contributing to it.

However, children and childhoods are shaped by the societies and cultures in which they are born and live. Further, childhood is a period in the life span during which children are active members of the society. By their participation in everyday life, they contribute to the tasks and reproduction of the society as a whole, though the nature of such participation is initially peripheral (Lave and Wenger, 1991). Depending on the social and cultural contexts, the kind of participation and taken-for-granted activities differ, and thus the competencies children develop in and through this participation. The children of this village and the competencies they display provide an example of this diversity.

Village Children

When I question mothers about the children, their roles and contributions, they reply, “Our children work with us. Whatever the task is, they are all along with us; they hold the work from one corner.” They say that “children have their own tasks assigned based on their ages and abilities. From early ages slowly and increasingly they learn the work, by helping us with the work.”
Without children, we could not possibly keep up with things. They are like our little servants; to carry news, deliver things. One does not understand their contribution until they don’t have children available. Then, they call up the neighbor’s children and ask for their help. (Nurdan Gulmez, 40; June, 2009)

As another mother observed,

Children work with us, they help us, and meanwhile they grow up to be men and women. We give them light tasks, which they accomplish as they play. They like to be around us too. For example, they don’t like to be left in the village when we go to fields. When we are going to the fields, younger children fear that we will leave them behind, so they get up early in the morning. They want to come with us and play around there. (Guzide Gunturk, 30; June, 2009)

When I ask what kinds of tasks are assigned to the children, mothers differentiate between the tasks assigned to the girls and boys. They say girls usually stay with women, and help with their tasks. They would contribute to household tasks, like cooking, cleaning, doing the laundry. They would go to the fields too with women, hoeing and picking up vegetables. They initially practice along with women with smaller scale tools.

When they are too young they would be stationed under trees, or in tents producing the work in play format, imitating adults. Gradually they would become responsible to enter the field to be involved in the real work.

Boys, on the other hand, would take the animals to pastures, herd them there, go to the fields with men to help them plow, water, and harvest the crops. The harvesting men and boys do involves machines for reaping (e.g. wheat). When boys are too young for such work, for example around 3–4 years old, they would be supervised by their elder male family members. Their participation would have a ‘pretend’ character, as in
pretending to drive tractors or pickups as they watch the work in the fields. Within the village, both boys and girls would be sent to the stores to buy quick provisions, to take and bring things from neighbors, to wait for the cattle in the evenings and lead their own to the family stables.

*A Legitimate Peripheral Participation (LPP)*

In these ways, children participate in cultural routines of village life very early in life. These routines, matters of everyday life, are no less, and no less central, an aspect of their early childhood education. If anything, they are more central to their education. In the early years, the adults interact with them as if they have the communicative skills of competent interaction. I watched a 2-3 year old interacting with his family members, whom I will call Yavuzhan. He obviously did not give mature communicative competence, as in adult language skills. But he was positioned as a messenger between adults and given tasks of participation in places the adults were already within each other’s presence.

It usually proceeded in the following way: Yavuzhan spent his days in the company of adults. He did not have many age-mates, and older children were in school. Indeed, the adults he encountered tended to be older adults, his grandfather’s peers, as he usually accompanied his grandfather around the village. And in the company of these older adults, it often happened that as a small group would gather, one person would call Yavuzhan over, and tell him to go to another person in the room and tell them something. In some cases they would entice him with a chocolate or candy. The message could be anything, from a question to an order or request, even the delivery of a curse word. It
tended to be an activity made up to engage Yavuzhan in the company of his elders. For example, once his grandfather called him over, handed him his empty tea glass, and told him to take it to his mother and tell her “god bless your hands” (meaning god job making the tea). Yavuzhan took the tea cup to his mother, produced some unintelligible words, to which his mother replied with the equally formulaic, “be good to your health.” Yavuzhan excitedly turned back facing grandfather to hear, “my boy, good job.” He then received a next order, “tell mother, ‘grandpa wants refill.’” Yavuzhan repeats the words as best he can, imitating the intonation, and receives the appropriate reply from his mother, as if she were replying to his words. And, he receives another “good job.” This was a daily, routine way in which Yavuzhan was engaged in and developed his language and interaction practices. In some cases he would go to the designated person, but then turn back to face the sender because he could not remember the message. The sender would repeat it with exaggerated intonation, and Yavuzhan then repeats the intonations as best he can.

Through such routines, I think Yavuzhan was involved in what Lave and Wenger (1991) speak of “learning in practice,” and “legitimate peripheral participation.” Much of childhood can be so characterized, and parents and children in this village and elsewhere have known and produced these organizations long before these phrases had been coined. Lave and Wenger’s Situated Learning (1991) might best be read as a text in early childhood education, the education and curriculum that is enacted before there is ever an encounter with formal schooling and classrooms.
Everyday Life as a Curriculum

Yavuzhan occupied many of my lunch breaks and afternoons. He lived next to my house, and I would find him playing in the front yard every day. As I kept seeing him around my house, I developed an interest in him. He spends his days outside, playing in his family’s yard and the village common spaces, running after older kids trying to join them in their games, going to the store to spend some of the coins given to him as rewards, and visiting neighbors when he sees them available. I have seen him visiting the men’s coffee house. He joins the men sitting outside, asking them questions about the games they play there, pointing to objects and showing his interests in gestures and uncertain words. He asks them to explain things in their immediate surroundings, and what is happening there. Most of the time he accompanies his grandfather’s visits with other adults, but at times he comes alone and convinces other men to have a walk with him, or come see what he has built in his play ground. He usually approaches elderly men, rather than young adults or middle aged ones

He goes into the house only when his mother calls him to meals, or when his clothing needs to be changed because he fell into the mud or had an accident. In the afternoons, he usually disappears again. Questioning his mother I sometimes found that he’d fallen asleep after lunch or a snack. At other times, he would be out in the pastures, or accompanying his grandfather on his trips to supervise his sons plowing the field. The rhythms of his everyday life are unimaginable in the modern neighborhoods of Istanbul. I observed him on many occasions joining his grandfather’s supervision of the labor produced by his sons. Yavuzhan would observe the process of work and simultaneously
summarize the work with short comments like “dirt is gone”, or “shoveled” (all mimicked with gestures). His summaries would be confirmed by one of the adults (usually his grandfather) with “yes, that’s right, dirt is gone.” I understood Yavuzhan’s expressions based on the commentaries given to him by his grandfather. Otherwise there was no way I would understand, at least in my initial contacts with him.

During these sessions, he would watch what the adults were doing, and try to bring them the tools they needed for their work. These efforts were of course matters of his analysis of what they were doing and what they would be doing next. He was usually correct. If it was a small tool, like a hammer, he was able to bring it, and they let him. If it was a heavy one, like a shovel, he would run before the adult to the tool, and try to lift it up, mimicking the gesture of having handled the tool himself after it was taken by the adult. He was able to follow the course of the work, what the adults were doing now, and what they were about to do next. He studied them and would join in conversations with them about the work, about what was coming next.

Yavuzhan would reproduce these same organizations, or similar ones, in his play and in the play-ground in his front yard that he constructs anew each time with the available tools around. I observed him many times taking care of his make-believe animals in a made-up corral, enclosed with small pieces of wood. He would group his cows and sheep separately, in different spaces, as the adults do. Using a shovel he would clean up their dirt, gesturing as his elders did. He would bring water for them, leave them outside one by one, put them back in, etc. In short, he reproduced in his games the work produced by the adults he had observed in close detail.
During my first encounters with him, I was sometimes frightened to see him with tools much bigger than his size, pulling them here and there. I would run to take them away to protect him from hurting himself. But, his mother told me it was fine, nothing would happen to him because he was used to it. (I think she came out hearing her son cry about me “protecting him”). Later on, I joined him in his games, helping him with some of the tasks he set himself to accomplish, such as driving in nails to some large pieces of wood laying around. I helped him to straighten some nails that were pulled from other pieces, and thus bent, which he was not able to accomplish by himself. After having the nails straightened, with the ends already placed in the wood, I saw him nailing it using a hammer without any problem.

Vygotsky’s (1978) speaks of a “zone of proximal development,” (ZPD) defined as the difference between a child’s “actual development as determined by independent problem solving,” and “potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers” (p. 86). I think the notion can be invoked to demonstrate the ways in which adults, as the more capable members of society, structure interaction so that children can participate in activities that they are not themselves capable of. Though Vygotsky’s formulations have been routinely taken up as remarks on cognitive development, they are perhaps more useful in understanding how Yavuzhan’s cultural development was taking place through repeated practice with others. When he completed a project, he would bring his grandfather or anybody else who was available, to show what he had done. In such encounters, he would list what he had accomplished (plowing the land, watering and feeding the
animals, fixing the barn, etc.) in an organized way very much recognizable as the procedures followed by his adult family members in their daily life tasks. He was not only practicing how to produce organizations of activities within ZPD, but also how to speak of them.

Yavuzhan is only one example of how the children of this village community (just like children of any other community), develop competencies for their participation in the social organizations of daily life found there, from an early age. Their studied attention to the organizations of activities local to their culture, specific to the social practices within their communities, comes natural to the children of this village, just as it would be in any human community. However, as we will see in chapter 6, when they encounter the social organizations that are peculiar to classrooms and the organizations of cohort instruction, they can’t find their way. They struggle to see what is required of them. Reproducing the social organizational practices of the classroom does not come ‘natural’ to them, if only because they have no ‘way in’ to them (Lave, 1990). They encounter the classroom as a place that, somehow, they must already know. Yet, there has been no prior study or play or engagement in schooling, as there has been in the organizational life of the village.35 They therefore cannot see those organizations, as they have learned

35 There was a remark on children's 'playing school' and its relation to learning of classroom life in the previous draft. In my observations, children have their after school play routines, but I saw them 'playing school' only once, in which they were oriented to who would be the teacher to enforce the rules, and who would be the students that would be subject to the teachers authority. It may be that their routine plays are more equitable or symmetrical in role relations than the hierarchical relations of 'playing teacher'.
to see the organizations of village life. They have not had time to live with them, and their dilemmas in classrooms are the same as every next generation that has encountered the promise of the modern classroom as a portal to the competencies of modern worlds. These children are competent to their worlds, and the challenges they confront in becoming classroom students are instructive for those who would understand the place of the modern school room in their lives.

I would now like to turn to a second grader, and provide a description of how deeply she is competent to the organizational forms of village life. As promised, it is an analytic matter throughout.

Seeing the Social Order of Village Life

Meltem is nine years old, petite in size compared to other girls in her age. She is usually very quiet, spends most of her free time with her best friend, Buse, inside and outside of school. When she needs to approach adults, she usually observes them and makes sure that they are available for her, and not already involved with others. Whenever she approached me to initiate conversations about various things, she always approached when I was alone. If I were involved with other children, she stayed away.

Moreover, in such plays they enact their understanding of the life in generic terms, as in enacting the generic features of the roles found there, rather than learning the life itself. Similarly, while television is now common, as are cartoons and a Turkish version of Sesame Street, these are child–centered programs; they are premised on affiliation rather than authority. They may be very instructive, but not of the organization of classroom lessons." I have myself grow up watching TV series depicting American family life, but that only gave me a sense of difference, I did not learn the life itself. Without having ever participated in it, I do not think I know it up to now.
and observed us until I was done with them, before she made a move to talk with me. She usually approached carefully, searching for signs that she is welcomed. She usually asked questions about who I was, to whom I was related to in the village, why I lived away from the village, and where America was. She wanted to know if it was close to Istanbul, or farther away than Istanbul.

She also approached me to tell me that she was a neighbor to some of my relatives, and she was friends with their children and visits them regularly, or to tell me about their conversations about me. She repeatedly asked me questions about why I left the village, and if I didn’t miss my mother when I was away. She was very sensitive, trying to create a bond between me and the people of the village, bringing me news about them, especially about the ones she felt I was related to, and those who knew me.

She also approached me to ask for my help with her understanding of various classroom tasks. She brought me her completed assignments, to check if they were correct. Sometimes she wanted to know if her examples would meet the requirements specified by the teacher, or in the book. She sought my explanations of the math problems provided by the teacher or given in the books. Looking for what she did not understand, she was looking for resources to help her make sense.

Each time she approached me, she used a very low tone of voice to ask her questions. Combined with the background noise that always was present in the classroom, it was usually hard for me to hear her. So, I repeatedly asked her to repeat, at least during my initial contacts with her. She approached the teacher in a similar fashion, although during my stay there, she approached me more often than the teacher. She also
approached me to tell stories about her life and family events. I didn’t see her talking to
the teacher about such things, except to give excuses about why she could not complete a
given assignment (e.g., due to her mother’s sickness, etc.).

In the classroom, she volunteered to take turns in recitations. She usually
volunteered for short answer turns; during my stay there, I didn’t see her volunteering for
prolonged turns, like telling a story. She was also hesitant during her turns to speak up.
The teacher tended to ask her to repeat her answers, and to repeat it loudly for everyone
to hear. Sometimes, while answering a question, she interpreted it in relation to her daily
life outside of school rather than in relation to the meaning presented in the lesson. These
answers sometimes were taken to be funny by the teacher, but not always. They were not
usually negatively consequential for her, because even though not-quite-relevant to the
classroom activity, her answers were coherent, and sometimes coherent enough to puzzle
the teacher too. Nor was Meltem the only student involved in such transactions. At
times, the students’ ‘irrelevant answers’ were building on each other’s responses, in such
a way that they became consequential for everybody in the room, collectively. In such
moments, the teacher lifted his stick and hit the table trying to regain attention, and
commanded children to “pay attention to what he had been talking about.”

36 We will discuss issues of how students and the teacher achieve “common
understanding”, and its problematic cases, in Chapter 6.

37 The teacher had a stick in the classroom, which he used at times as a pointer, at
other times to gain children’s attention hitting his desk with it. I have heard children
making fun of each other for being hit with the stick because of their awful misbehavior,
but I never saw such occasions.
I will provide analysis of such occasions to bring life to the sequential organization of such transactions.

Observing Meltem’s life outside of school, however, I rarely saw her failing to see the order of daily life. Indeed, the competence she owned for recognizing the affairs of life in the village would be astonishing to an outsider, as in the following example: Meltem, Buse, and a couple other children visited me one afternoon, asking if I would go out for a walk with them. We went out to the main road, to the entrance of the village, walking toward the highway. Meltem’s house was located at the edge of the village, within our view, but pretty far from where we were. Beyond her house, there were farms and pastures. As we chatted and walked, all of a sudden, Meltem screamed and told me that she had to leave. She said she had to leave right then, because the cowherd was approaching the village from the pastures beyond her house. She assured me that she would come back another day and complete the walk. She then bolted off, running at full speed, toward the short cut, rushing through the fields. By the time I saw the herd she spoke of, she was half way there. She made the distance in minutes, which would have taken me around half an hour; and made it to the destination right before the herd did. I was baffled as to what had urged her in this way.

The following day I asked her what had happened. In her depiction of the “disaster [she was] about to cause,” I was able to understand how at a glance, she was able to see the organization of village life, her part in the organization, its structure of social relations and obligations, and what the consequences could be if she failed in her part. She explained that it was her duty to meet the herd everyday to help the herder
leading the cows into the village, and then leading their own cows that walked off from the herd into the stable. She said her mother relies on her for this task, so she does not come out to check. Thus Meltem needed to be there on time, and without fail. She continued, if someone is not outside waiting for the cows, they go all over the place, eating and trampling not only their crops but their neighbors’ as well. And it was the responsibility of the owner to make sure their cows does not hurt other people’s crops. Thus, if she had failed, her family would have gone into conflict with the neighbors, and “everyone all [would] know that the fault belonged with [them].” So, if one joins their cows in the village’s herd, it was their responsibility to wait for the herd in the evenings. Meltem concludes, “This is how it works in the village, everybody knows that.”

These things were for her matters of landscape. They were available as visual spectacles. She could look out on the village and see its order. This is something I could not have done. It is something that most urban dwellers could not do, although urban life has its own spectacles of social order. But what I want to emphasize is that Meltem was deeply competent to this order. She could see it where I could not. It was an evident world for her in ways that other landscapes, the classroom for example, were not. And it is this tension and alternation between deep competence and the puzzles of incompetence that I want to develop through the next chapters.

Conclusion

As it was described in the elders' accounts of participation in village life, the children of this village learn to make sense through participation in everyday life activities. The nature of their development proceeds from something like peripheral
participation to full participation (Lave and Wenger, 1991). The children are seldom provided with verbal commentaries as they participate. The pedagogy of their competence to village life is not so articulate as the formal pedagogies of classroom lessons. As the activity takes place in real time, they start with observing the events from an early age. They are initially given small tasks, which are part of the work. Increasingly they are given more responsibilities. They grow up seeing, being talked about, and learning how to speak of their good work, bad work, failures, successes, etc. Their performances are noted in direct and indirect ways. The children reproduce the real life affairs in their pretend play, and receive commentaries from adults regarding their play. However, they are not introduced to the two dimensional representations found in text books (see Rogoff, 1990). Nor are they asked to create abstract categories or rubrics, disengaged from actual tasks and occasions. When they start first grade, some can’t differentiate between the sense of questions found in textbooks, and those found in their everyday lives. The differences in these kinds of coherences can produce comical results, at least for the moment. Given the task of finding the answer to a question in the book, they are not sure how to find it, and try to figure it out by looking to the books in the hands of their peers. Students don’t know how to read a work sheet, or where to write their names. They encounter stories about things they have no understanding of, such as

38 There are multiple cultures of literacies. The holly Quran for example is in Arabic language. It is a sacred book and its uses are highly regulated. There are other books in the houses, like storybooks that are bought by parents for their school age children upon request of teachers. But, the image of parents reading to children as in the West is not found in the village life.
computers and computer games, rules of living in flats in apartment buildings, or appropriate use of elevators or complicated shopping centers. Every curriculum is a cultural curriculum, and the cultures represented by classroom curricula, cultures of modern, urban forms, activities, dispositions and organizations, are cultures they have not seen before. Given the same circumstances of strangeness, our performances and perplexities would be no different than theirs.

Yet they must encounter the classroom. And in the encounter, they are required to leave behind the worlds to which they are competent, and submit to a world to which they are not. The tension is expressed not only in their lives and experiences, but those of their families. Schooling is no longer the experience of a single generation. In whatever ways they do, they learn from the schooling experiences of their families, and experience the tensions between the organizations that give structure and sense to their village life, and those that make the more modern demands of classroom life. Chapter 5 examines the tensions, and chapter 6 examines their actual classroom encounters.
CHAPTER 5: A CULTURAL TENSION

Village schools in Turkey have a reputation for low achievement levels. After the eight years of compulsory education, not many village children continue their education. As the grade level increases, the numbers of village children in the student body decreases (see Egitim Reformu Girisimi [ERG], 2009a, 2009b; Dincer & Kolasin, 2009). And most of those village children who do finish high school drop out of the education system when they face the university entrance exams. Among my extended family and friends, I know of no other village student who scored on the national examinations well enough to yield a scholarship for international study. To return to my village school to pursue a dissertation at an American university is a very unusual homecoming. For my generation of school children, the possibility was not seriously considered. That it happened in my case is difficult to account for, and yet the homecoming is completely familiar too. I, and we, have many positions in life. But they are rarely, if ever, in play at once. Instead, we are found in terms of relationship most familiar for those who find us. For me, that was Zekiye abla, and it is deeply familiar. This village has never been not familiar to me, even though I have now spent more time in the US than in any continuous residence in Turkey.
In the entire country, the number of villager children represented in universities is very low and even lower in the highly ranked universities (Dincer, & Kolasin, 2009; ERG, 2009b). There have been many explanations developed to account for this outcome. Most involve characterizing the villagers and their dispositions in some way. The central themes of these accounts are that villagers “don’t value education as we do.” My impression is that this is a familiar refrain wherever we find modern schooling, and find communities whose children chronically do not find success there. The community and their children are found as the source of the trouble. As this village teacher remarked: “What can a teacher possibly do, if the children don’t listen, don’t care about their lesson. If children are not taught better in their families, teachers will find themselves hopeless trying to teach them.” (March, 2009; similar accounts are given by other teachers serving surrounding villages, whom I met in the Teachers’ Clubhouse in the district center.) While one might regard such accounts as descriptive of actual circumstances, or even common circumstances, my reading of them is that these are professional accounts; they reflect the ways of seeing, speaking, explaining and 'accounting' that mark professional education. The commonality here may then be to a professional discourse, rather than to, e.g., rural communities everywhere. In the American literature, such accounts are characterized as ‘blaming the victim’ (Delpit, 1995; Delpit and Dowdy, 2002). My study explores a different way for accounting for these outcomes.

At this point, it may be helpful to provide an overall picture of how teaching appointments are organized in Turkey. It has been the government policy to require
beginning teachers to serve a period of compulsory service in underdeveloped parts of the country. The duration can vary according to the regions, but the familiar assignment is for two years. School sites are assigned ‘points’ according to their developmental level, and assigned teachers must collect a certain number of points before they can transfer to an urban center (see MEB [Ministry of National Education], 2008, 2011a, 2011b for the regulations the Ministry of National Education [MEB] published regarding the teachers’ assignment and re-location). The premise of such a system is that working in urban centers is preferred, and teaching in rural places is how one achieves a better position. Within these arrangements the most experienced and skillful teachers end up teaching in more developed parts of the country, and the least experienced teachers work to amass the ‘points’ that will allow them to do so too. In such a system, the village schools end up serving as training sites for new graduates. Further, new graduates are assigned to schools based on their ratings in the employment examination, so those with lower ratings are sent to more remote villages, those with higher ratings are sent to less remote villages. In many ways, the problems faced in Turkish rural education are similar to the problems encountered in urban education in the United States: The best teachers go elsewhere, and those students and communities who need the most support and resources are held responsible for their failures to achieve.

Rather than drawing quick and easy conclusions as to why village children regularly fail in schools, this chapter takes interest in showing the complexities of what indeed the villagers do value, and the care of their thinking about schooling. It shows that the villagers do care for their children and their education, and invest in them the best
ways they can. However, those who identify with and find identity in professional education tend not to take interest in how the villagers see and care for their children, and the education they receive. As suggested in the teacher’s comments above, they tend to hold the villagers responsible for what comes of the intersection of village life and classroom life, as though the one site were suspect, and the other 'obviously' rational, sensible, and well intended. Those outcomes are played out in actual village schools.

Classroom Culture and Differential Success

When asked to identify his best students, the teacher of the village school listed Musa, Kadir, Umut among the first graders, Sulttan, Mahide, and Gozde among the third graders, and Meltem from the second graders. In ways mindful of Rist’s (1970) re-analysis of the organization of ‘reading ability groups’ in an urban elementary and African American classroom, all of the children listed by the teacher, except Gozde and Meltem, had a father who was a high school graduate. Musa’s mother attended, but did not complete high school; she held the highest level of formal education among all mothers. And Kadir and Sulttan are siblings whose mother was a middle school graduate, and father is a high school graduate. Both of these mothers valued their education, and their children were thought of by their teacher as promising students. But, both had to drop out because they were unable to pursue schooling away from the village. Meltem has an older brother who is high school graduate. And Gozde transferred to the village school from a city school and lives with a high school graduate aunt.  

39 In conversations with family members, I would ask if they continued school after their elementary education. Most of these conversations were with mothers, and I
None of the other children have any family members who went beyond elementary education. Some parents did not even have the elementary education. Regarding the ‘best students, the teacher thought that they were coming from families who understand the role of education in society, and valued education highly. He said they had an interest in their children’s education, and were attentive to them and to their life in school. He specifically spoke of Umut’s grandmother (at the time Ugur and his older brother lived with his grandmother in the village while both of his parents lived in an urban center.) and Sulttan and Kadir’s mother as those who were highly interested in schooling, and valued education.

The teacher identified Ali and Omer among the first graders, Behzat C. and Behzat, Buse among the second, and Serhat, Sariye, and ve Kader among the third graders as the ‘worst’ students. The teacher said that they were the worst students because “they don’t listen, so they don’t learn.” He said that on many occasions he would ask of their husband’s situation too. Or, I would simply ask for confirmation if I had an idea about their education level, saying things like, “as I remember Kadir abi (you) finished the high school, right? When I was a child in the village, he (you) would be away during the school year… he (you) used to tell us about what it was like.” Such initiations routinely brought forth further stories as to their experiences in schooling, or who else in the village went through similar experiences at the time. These are matters of distinction and local history for the villagers. They know who among them went to school and how long. They also know who were contemporaries, who studied together, supporting each other’s motivations, who was successful and who struggled. These conversations would always tie in with what they currently do for their children’s education, or can’t do for that matter.
warned them, asked them to obey classroom rules, explained to them how important it was for them to listen, punished and rewarded them, but that these efforts did not change anything. When asked as to his opinion to why these children were less successful, he said,

I think their parents do not pay attention to how they are in school. They do not show any involvement in what it is that they are doing in school. Indeed, they don’t care about their children’s education, not being able to see what schooling has to offer… Also, these children don’t have much discipline at home; after school they are free to do whatever they like; they go to the fields, to the playgrounds as they wish… They are left free, they don’t learn to ask for permissions to do things, and they think they can do the same here, in the classroom. Some of them go to home and their mothers are not even around, so the children leave their bags and rush to the village common areas. I think this is why these children are not good students in school, they can’t learn anything.

He continued,

When I was first assigned to the village, I tried to talk with the parents about these problems, organized regular parent meetings, but not many showed up. I tried to talk to individual parents in the village (the fathers) but each time they said ‘yes teacher, you are right teacher’ but then go on to their own way, so I quit trying. I just think these students do not have the enough training from their parents. Their parents don’t talk to them about behaving well in classroom. They are not told to sit in their seats and pay attention to what the teacher is teaching. So, they don’t listen, and don’t learn. That’s why these children are not good in school… Except Kader. I think Kader has disability issues; she is different from other children of her age. Thus, I am not expecting much from her anyway. Indeed others are like disabled too, you talk to them, show them, they don’t get it (March, 2009).
These assessments of the children’s levels of success in school seem to be related to the resources available to them within the family. This is reflected both in the teacher’s comments and in the levels of familiarity with schooling the parents or other close family members have. Reflected in the teacher’s comment as the virtue of ‘valuing education’, the familiarity and knowledge that family members own of schooling and school life seems to be paying off as resources for some children. Those without such resources struggle the most, and are assessed most harshly. They repeatedly failed to make sense of life in school. The teacher talks of their behavior in the classroom as a result of their uncaring attitude. However, it may be that they lack the resources, the curriculum, for learning the culture of classroom life that others have. If they don’t listen, perhaps it is because they do not know how to listen, or that listening is what is called for now. They are not able to make sense of the organizational forms of instruction that go on in the classroom. Having access to the culture of classroom life seems to be criteria for those children who do find success in acquiring what schools have to offer. However, the teacher does not see this possibility. He directs the fault to the values and orientations of children and their families. It is their character that is at fault. At the center of these characterizations one finds a tension between different cultural orientations.

Complexities of Value Orientations

Without doubt, the parents of these village school children differed in their orientations to childhood and schooling. Some engaged their children in the values and expectations of village culture, its tasks, relationships, and traditional forms of
interactional organization, while others leaned toward more modern values and identities. It’s difficult to say exactly what these different orientations and forms are; they seem to have to do with a tension between traditional forms of civility, identity, and relations, and modern forms of choice and individuation (see Deyhle, 1988, Gallas, 1998; Hamilton, 1989, and Phillips, 1972 for expressions in the educational literature and classroom studies). For example, grandmothers and mothers who were not educated beyond elementary school were concerned about teaching their children and grandchildren appropriate manners and gendered responsibilities. When I entered their yards or homes or balconies, grandmothers would tell their daughters to stand up and say ‘welcome to Zekiye abla, to offer her their own seats, and be seated only after she, as the guest, has chosen a seat. They would be told,

You would not possibly know her, but she is related to us. She could be considered your aunt, from your father’s side. She is also a teacher, she teaches children like you. Don’t think she is your friend because she sits in the same seats with you in school classroom. She is not your friend! You have to get up and offer her your seat, you better be respectful40 (Done Ergenc, 68; March, 2009).

40 Though these elders did not know, from firsthand experience, how I related to the children in the school (approaching them as a friend rather than an authority figure; playing with them, getting involved with their conflicts without trying to solve them for them, relating in ways very different from the teacher or any other adult authority figure of the village community) they were indirectly showing me my place or position within their network of relations. As these roles are reflexive, in teaching children how they should relate to an older relative, they were giving *me* lessons on how older relatives are expected to regard children. I was to expect the children to honor my status as ‘Zekiye
Further, on these occasions, where I am in the presence of the children and their elders, the elders would question me about whether their children behaved well in school, if they were respectful of older people, of the teacher, of me, if they were using curse words etc., all while the children listened to our conversations. In such moments, I felt a conflicted accountability to both elders and the children. Each was hoping I would find ways of answering that showed my affinity and cultural loyalty to them, I tried as best as I could to be loyal to them all. On the other hand, these adults never inquired about how the children were doing in their subject matter. The questions were not about ‘knowledge’, ‘success’, grades or ‘academic performance’, but rather about cultural civilities, the manners expected from them in the village. For them, education was not about 'information.' It was about character.

*The Attentive Mother*

The concept of ‘attentive parenthood’ emerged as a central theme in my conversations with the village women about their children and grandchildren, and how they were finding success, or not, in school. It emerged as a contest. In claims and counter claims about the ownership of ‘attentive parenthood’, the origins of the phrase, and opinions as to what it looks like, I was able to see the workings of a tension between two cultural forms, for which the phrase 'the attentive parent' set the contest in play. For example, some parents perceived themselves as ‘more modern’ and emphasized how they try to help their children succeed in school. They would, for example, advise their

* abla’, a person of higher status. Having been away, perhaps they reasoned I needed a reminder.

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children to "make use of Zekiye abla.” They would tell them “She is a teacher too, if you don’t understand the teacher go to her, ask her questions she will show you. Talk to her about school; she went through them all. Learn from her.” One mother in particular, I will call her Hanife Kahvehaneci, spoke of herself as an ‘attentive parent.’ She became the exemplary case, not only in my encounters but in conversations with others. The phrase achieved currency as an account of her parenting and attitudes towards schooling, and how she positioned herself among the other parents. She would follow up on what is going on in the school with her children, Sultan, a third grader, and Kadir, a first grader. She regularly visited me, sought me out, and called me her best friend. She would ask me if the teacher teaches the children well, or if he beats them, etc. She would also bring her children with her when visiting me, telling them often to take me as a role model. In my presence, she would ask her children questions about their assignments, and kept talking about how she cares for school and education. She insisted that her children would finish college, saying,

I did anything to make sure my eldest son made it to college, and he did. And now my eldest daughter is getting ready for the entrance exam. She does not have any other option, she has to make it. I keep telling my children that they don’t have any other options that they have to study. I myself could not continue after the middle school, and I am still upset about that. I could not continue but I want my children to finish college, and they will. I attend to my children, and their lives in school. This is how a parent should be (Hanife Kahvehaneci, 39; mother of four children; April, 2009).

Hatice had two children in the village school. The teacher named her son Kadir as one of the best first graders. He was one of the three best (Musa and Ugur are the
other two), and the other first graders would copy their work from these three when they failed to make sense of instructions. And Sulltan was also named to be the best student among third graders. She was the classroom president, having charge of the other students when the teacher was absent. She was regularly selected to represent the village school for competitions with other schools, and in the classroom and the schoolyard, she would also try to dominate other children. She would yell at them, and threaten to report their misdeeds to the teacher. During the ‘Children’s Day’ performances, organized among the school population for the village community every April, she was awarded first place in every category. Some parents left the site before the celebrations were over.

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41 Sultan’s attitude towards other students is mindful of Rist’s (1970) early classroom study, and how the more able students at table one began to assume the relationship of the teacher toward the less able students of table three.

42 It is the most important celebration of the year for primary school students. In 1920, Mustafa K. Ataturk dedicated April 23 to the children of the country to emphasize that they are the future of the new nation. Since then, known fully as ‘the 23 April National Sovereignty and Children’s Day,’ this national day has been celebrated in all of Turkey's public schools. Schools participate in ceremonies marked by performances in all fields, and village schools organize their performances for the village community. Children read poems, sing songs solo or in groups, and perform folk dances. They also compete individually or in groups, in such games as rope pulling, sack race, threading needles while racing, carrying eggs in spoons while racing, feeding each other yogurt with covered eyes in groups of two, etc. There are small prizes for the winners, usually as school supplies. Being part of a performance, individually or in a team is very important for the children and they get ready for it days before. It is a socially important
Just as children speak of other children, parents speak of other parents. And parents occasionally spoke of Hanife Kahvehaneci in caustic terms. Calling her the 'attentive parent,' they mockingly told each other that they should learn parenting from her, and then would remark in a serious tone, “Who would not care for their child. We all do what we can.” In this expression we can see their hearing of ‘the attentive parent’ as a complaint aimed at them. At times, a couple of mothers would complain that Hanife Kahvehaneci kept mentioning what a wonderful mother she was, as though the nature of her motherhood was a topic of interest for all. On one occasion, one mother, referring to Hanife Kahvehaneci, said,

I don’t even pay attention to what she thinks, or how she speaks. I know where she is getting these expressions from. The teachers said all along that the villagers are not interested in their children. Now she has that mouth; some people simply think that they are better than others. They simply don’t know how to have manners and teach them to their children (Hanife Yapici, 40; June, 2009).

In her account, this woman reveals a clear articulation of cultural differences. For her, ‘cultural civility’ and its instruction were among the primary responsibilities of parents. Setting it against ‘knowledge of schooling’ and its professional culture (or 'where she is getting these expressions from'), she builds a contest of value orientations between these two worlds. She was also instructing me in these matters, while providing an insightful critique of those who assume that the worlds they value constitute ‘normal’ standards against which all others are to be measured. Clearly, she does not perceive her event for parents too as they find pride in seeing their child being acknowledged among adult villagers.
value orientation as a lesser kind. Central to her insight is the tension between these cultural forms and commitments.43

Another mother spoke of it directly:

Zekiye, sister, how do I teach my daughter reading, writing, arithmetic, I don’t know them myself. Ibrahim abin (referring to her husband, “abi” is a term used to address an older brother) is not any better than I am. I am the youngest school runaway in the village; I did not even enroll in school. I can see that the times have changed and the life is getting harder for those without diploma; education became increasingly more important. And, I hope my children succeed in school. But I can’t help them. I teach them what I know. I work for them, take care of them, make sure they are brought up as right persons, and their father works hard too, all for them. What else can we do? (Nurdan Gulmez, 40; mother of five, whose youngest, Buse is in the second grade. Buse was identified as 'not so good' by the teacher.).

Nurdan neither reads nor writes. She says even the elderly, some of the grandmothers, are in better shape than she is, because they can ‘at least’ decode Koranic verses. She regrets her lack of schooling, and is upset with her mother for letting her be the last school runaway. Still, she empathizes with her mother saying, “she did not understand how it would be for a person of my age to depend on others to read even letters.” She says she depends on others for everything, and can’t even go to see a doctor, or the district center alone. And, seeing other women of her age accomplishing their own business does not make her feel good. Nurdan thinks it is even more important for girls

43 By the terms of these comments, these are cultural matters, insofar as they are matters of values, commitments and identities. For the parties to this dispute, they are citing differences that run deep. Thus the emotion of the expressions.
to be schooled. She reasons that men always know how to find their way, but girls need schooling to open up. Nurdan has two other daughters older than Buse who are in the middle school studying in the district center. She says, they are not doing so good. They complain about missing home, the difficulties they face in the district center and the boarding school, but she discourages them from complaining. She advises them to face the difficulties the best they can rather than whining about it. She tells them it would be harder to have regrets for the rest of your life than standing up to the difficulties for a couple of years.

As can be seen in her remarks, Nurdan is also well aware of the tension between cultural forms. Her remarks point to the collision she is experiencing between what forms of knowledge are to be valued. As with Hanife Yapici, above, and Hanife Kocaker, below, she is quite aware that the values of formal education and its measures of success have little use for what she and her husband can teach her children. She is quite aware of the differences between these cultural forms of knowledge, and knows through personal experiences what it means to lack the knowledge and competencies that come with formal schooling, and thus how a person can be rendered disabled. She advises her children the best she can to do their best in a difficult situation for which they are ill prepared. She’s also aware of the claims of moderns to own the greater moral value, even though she and her husband are devoted parents. Yet she does not view herself and what she has to teach her children in a lower light. And, she expresses her frustration with those who strive to authorize their orientations as the measure of all others.
An elder woman provided the most profound expression of this tension experienced in their encounters with schooling “Our ancestors had a saying, ‘crows keep crowing without looking at their own dirt!’ What I know and will always repeat is that one can always learn the school subjects. The children need to learn to be humans first. It is our job to teach them that” (Hanife Kocaker, 68; June 2009).

In this light, these women thought Hanife Kahvehanecei had failed as a mother for focusing on school performance and her children’s acquisitions of subject matters without attending to the values and discipline of life. They said her daughter Sultan “sounded like a mad cow” shouting out to other children in school, wanting things always for herself, not having respect for her elders. One woman said, “If Hanife does not realize soon that child rearing, especially of a girl, is not all about school subjects, her daughter will cause problems to their family when she grows up. I wonder if she will then preach about being ‘attentive parent’” (Sukriye Yaksin, 39; June, 2009).

Generational Difficulties Reflected

Complaints about what they don’t understand of school subjects often surfaced in my conversations with parents and elders about schooling. I first heard them when I visited families upon my arrival to inform them of the study and ask for their participation. In each household, I was invited in and offered tea or coffee, as expected. These were also occasions for us to renew relationships. As I tried to explain to them why I had returned to the village this time, what I was going to do in the school, and why I needed their permission, they became defensive and said that they could not be of much help to their children with their school work. It was as though they were anticipating a
request they could not fulfill. When I explained the study, some said “it is better we
don’t join in this study because we have no understanding of school subjects. We will
ruin your study.” Others said, “We would join, we are not going to say ‘no’ to one of us
if it helps with her accomplishments, but we can’t help you with the school work,
because we don’t know it.” Still others jokingly said, “If you are willing to deal with us
we are ready, but don’t get regrets soon and start complaining like the teachers do. You
soon will discover we don’t understand the school work; we will jeopardize your
project.” One father recommended that I do the study in a neighboring village, where he
has relatives who were teachers with their own kids; they knew how to deal with their
children’s schoolwork, and would be happy to help me out if I tell them I was from this
village and knew him. Most of them made the point that if they understood the school
subjects, they would not live in the village, thus making a distinction between villagers
and urban dwellers in terms of closeness to schooling’s practices. When I explained to
them that I wasn’t there to evaluate their knowledge of schooling, and that my study was
all about observing children’s life in school as it is, and talking to the family members
about their experiences as students and parents, they relaxed and said “you are always
welcome!”

A specific occasion arose when I was invited by a first grader, Ali, to visit his
home during a lunch break in my second month in the village. He insisted that I visit his
house, saying I never visited it before. I think he was referring to my visits to the
families to inform parents about the research in my first week there. Although I told him
I already saw his mother, and she was not expecting me that day, he insisted I come home
with him. He “enticed” me through promises of his mothers tea and offers of his tasty cookies, as he pulled me not leaving my hands go. He said, “then we would watch cartoons together.”

When we arrived I found out his mother was not expecting a visit at all, and had to quit her work to talk with me. Then, Ali brought out his assignments that were due the same afternoon, and asked me to help him complete them before the cartoon on TV starts. It occurred to me that this was not entirely a social visit for him. As he spread out his papers and I explained to him how to go about doing the calculations, his mother watched us, and said she wishes she could provide him help too. She said Ali complains that she is not helpful for the school work like other mothers. Ali joined in the conversation telling her to ‘learn from Zekiye abla how to help.’ He continued, “Kadir ’s mother teaches him, Umut’s grandma teaches him, how come you can’t teach me. You listen to Zekiye abla so that you can learn how to help me.” She laughed and replied “what is the teacher good for if I am going to be teaching you. You learn it from the teacher.” And, she explained to me in an apologetic manner that she can’t help because she herself could not learn these subjects in school.44

Other occasions arose during afternoon or evening visits with mothers. These were commonplace gatherings among the women, but when I joined them the topic

44 A couple days later I run into Umut’s grandmother. She told me that Ali visited her one afternoon, asking if she is willing to be his grandma too. Ali also told her that if Zekiye abla would be willing to be his mother, he would not leave the best position to anyone else in the school. He never approached me with that proposal, but always sought my help in the classroom.
would move to school experiences, partly via my initiations (e.g. by telling an event that took place in school that day). Sometimes they would narrate an experience they went through with their children. At other times they spoke of their own past experiences in school. Some of the mothers were my classmates and referred to their memories of school days asking me if I remember them too.45 That I shared similar experiences with them helped a great deal in their willingness to talk to me through such experiences.

Once a story is told, bells would ring for others about their own stories. Often such moments would turn into an occasion for mothers to entertain each other; they would try to remember the ‘worst experiences’ they went through in school, and others would tell theirs, in a friendly, entertaining competition. On one occasion, one mother said,

Listen to me women! I was the worst one in the entire school. There, I just did not make sense of anything. The years seemed to be never ending. I completed some grades with double sewing; it took 7 years before I could get out. Luckily, failing a student was forbidden at one point; otherwise I would be in school forever (Sukriye Yaksin, 39; June, 2009).

She continued,

I would have at least a couple of strokes each day. After a while, I got used to it. It was like a daily shift. I used to get up and move to the teacher’s desk whenever I heard my name called. Sometimes the teacher used to clarify that he is just

45 I recognized these initiations as not only a memory check, but as questions of alignments and affiliations. I heard the inquiries as “do you still affiliate with us as friends, can you remember our common experiences together.” In those times, even if I do not recall the specific occasion in question, I say things like, “it rings a bell, or tell me again.” Sometimes I will tell stories that I remember for them to recall.
asking a question or talking to me, that I did not have to leave the seat. Otherwise, I would find myself at his desk, with palms up.

The other women joined in with laughter. Such occasions usually would close as they made the point that since they were not good in school, as seen in their histories, how could they be expected to teach their children? They were keenly aware that some parents owned resources for their children’s success in school that other parents did not possess.

In these ways, in and through their personal histories, the mothers show us that the parents already know the difficulties their children face in school. For the villagers, these are second and third generation difficulties. As we have heard in their recollections, they are well aware of the cultural divide of ‘not knowing’ or the conflict between 'different cultures of competence’. They speak directly of the challenges and difficulties of ‘seeing’ the organization of classroom lessons in their own experience, and can imagine it well in the experiences of their children. Not being able to change this reality, they acknowledge and affirm it among themselves, when the occasion arises, and even turn it into an object of humor and commiseration. Sukriye, Yavuzhan’s mother (the preschooler about whom I presented a vignette in chapter 4, on his ‘legitimate peripheral participation’) summarized the experience of not seeing the lesson’s organization in terms that younger school children might immediately recognize:

I remember how it was in school. Somehow the things work differently there. When the teacher gives you a turn, in front of the blackboard, facing the entire classroom… I remember that I used to freeze there… I would think I knew the answer to a question, but being asked, I could not answer.
The ‘somehow’ is the puzzle of classroom success and failure for these village children, and perhaps for children elsewhere too.\footnote{This last parent's comment is mindful of Phillips' (1972) description of Warm Springs native children. A central feature of cohort education is individual public performances, and they resisted them. It was an alien organization, and not something they could do. In such cases, we can see how organization is an enactment; here, in my materials, our student couldn't do it.}

A ‘Good Fit’ for Schooling

The villagers valued education in general and were proud to have family members who were highly educated. But their perception is not the same as those who live in urban centers and whose lives are underwritten by classroom success. That is, they did not see the school and formal education at the center of childhood development or life experience; they don’t see it as essential to ‘becoming a person of admirable character’ or even as one with a promising future. There are other futures of promise too.

There is, of course, diversity in their views and opinions; different parents perceive schooling differently, and many measure their assessments to the child in question, what her inclinations are or the situation s/he was in. In general, these parents and elders had an idea about whether a particular child was good fit for schooling, but they did not presume that every child is. Various factors were taken into consideration. These were not necessarily only those aspects related to the child’s particular skills or abilities, even though the talk is produced in that kind of register. The resources of the family, the child’s position in the family, the number of siblings, and each family member’s orientation to a child’s future played a role in shaping perceptions and
assessments. In some cases, a child’s propensities regarding school work contradicted how family members saw ‘the fit’. That is, while the child may be very successful in school, his parents would highlight his propensities toward the village life and affairs, rather than highlighting his school performance. A grandmother’s reflections regarding her grandson clarify the point.

Musa is in the first grade. I would say he is one of the top three students (this was the teacher’s assessment too), if not the top student. At one point, the teacher identified him as better than some children in higher grade levels. Musa has an older brother, who already has left the village for middle school, and was studying in city schools at the time. His father is a high school graduate, working in seasonal jobs in the construction industry. His mother attended, but did not complete high school. She is perhaps the most educated mother of them all, and she helps Musa with his schoolwork. She expresses her desires that Musa pursue further education beyond the compulsory years. However, his grandmother, who lives with them, does not believe he is a “good fit” for schools. For her, it is not in his nature to pursue further education.

One afternoon, I had a walk with Musa’s mother in their neighborhood, and she invited me over for coffee. There, Musa’s grandmother asked me about my position in

\[47\] My characterization is of course completely within the register of ‘professional assessments’. We don’t quite know what such an assessment would be within a traditional community. They might say ‘the best’ student would be the ‘most trusted’, or the ‘wisest.’ See Rogoff’s (1990) discussion of who a ‘smart person’ is, across cultures e.g., a ‘good person’, a ‘person who respects the elders’, or one who holds the common good as the highest value. These alternatives are unimaginable to modern confidences.
the school, and my thoughts of Musa. She specifically wanted to know whether I thought Musa was a good student, whether he was paying attention to the lesson, behaving well in the classroom, etc. I expressed my thoughts saying, “He is one of the best.” She well accepted my praise, and said that I made her feel proud. She asked me to intervene with Musa in school if I ever see him misbehaving, and not to hesitate to proceed as an older sister to correct him whenever needed, or at least inform them so that they could ‘pull his ears.’ Then, she started to talk about Musa’s older brother, giving me details on how good he too was in the village school, and how well he was doing in the city schools now. She expressed her pride in him that he would not be a source of shame for the family, e.g. by returning home unsuccessful, with complaints about the problems he causes in school (e.g. misbehaving, objecting to authority) like some other kids have. He wasn’t wasting all the support and family resources devoted to him; he was working hard, and is making them all proud.

Having initially spoken of the two brothers in terms of both being good students, at one point she switched to contrasting them in terms of how she expects their futures to be different, simply because they had very different dispositions. She maintained that Musa’s disposition was too much into the village life. She noted how he would run back to the village after returning from school, throwing his school uniform and bag away, hurrying to meet other children to play. That he liked going to the pastures, to the fields, playing with the animals, etc. He liked the village too much to leave it behind. She projected that he would stay there, which she could tell from the way he was now. She
said, “He can’t possibly stand the life in the cities.” Further, she reasoned that it was the responsibility of his elders to accept a child’s disposition as it is. She said,

There are some things one can’t change, like a child’s disposition. If a child is not disposed to pursue schooling, to dedicate his time and energy in it…only to become a clerk to work for wages in the government offices…but is disposed to care for the land inherited from forefathers, it is a wise thing to accept that reality as his elders. It won’t be smart to push the child for school, if he is not into it. An interest in schooling comes natural to a child, and then he will pursue it even if the family does not encourage him. Take my older grandson, God bless him, he is disposed for schooling, he said he wanted to go, and we let him. But Musa has a different disposition. Why force him to school, while we have the land and the village business to manage. What I know and will repeat is that ‘neither you can turn a child aside from school nor implant it in his mind because that is what you desire; it depends on him, on his natural disposition.’

She continued, “Am I nonsense to you Zekiye, my daughter? You tell me if I am wrong. You are a smart girl, you know better!”

I think, as she talked about whether Musa is a good fit for further schooling, she revealed her own disposition in a rather indirect way. She indirectly expressed her preferences for Musa to stay home and take care of the land inherited from forefathers, and that this too is a no-less high value. In this way, she also presented Musa, who had been attending to the entire conversation as he played, with an alternative venue, letting him know schooling is not his only or best option, nor is the other option a lesser option. It is common among the village children, to stay around and listen to conversations when adults talk to each other, especially when the talk is about them. In this unremarkable
way, the villagers, and perhaps all parents, design their talk for the ears of their children, when they are directing it to an interlocutor.

Initially, the grandmother seems to be producing inconsistent accounts of her grandsons\textsuperscript{48}, but taking into account how they reveal \emph{her own} disposition, her remarks produce a coherence. For her, education and schooling are not the only possibility in a child’s life, nor the only honorable or praiseworthy possibility. Village life is of value too, and needs to be honored and preserved. Thus, all the children can’t leave, and we should not be surprised that all the children do not want to leave. Through her talk, she was pointing to the other possibilities for her grandson, and his future responsibilities. Meanwhile, she expressed her respect for education and educated people. And she identified their position as valued and needed. However, she expected the same respect and understanding for her ways from the educated individuals, and asked me for it directly. For her, I was the educated person, supposedly a smart one (as schooled persons claim). She was giving me a chance to affirm her view—that I was smart enough to understand what she was saying—to demonstrate my ability to understand that they were a family, a union, and it was good to have both those who leave and become acquainted

\textsuperscript{48} She acknowledges Musa as a good student, just like his brother. She offers no reason to imagine that he won't continue to be successful in school, as his brother. And yet she does not draw the same future for them both. She reasons Musa likes the village affairs, but I assume his brother did so too. It is common among the village children, especially boys, to take interest in village affairs, as they meet after school and play as village children. Perhaps what we do not hear is only why it would be less difficult for the brother to leave his attachments behind.
with the modern world, and those who stay and honor and sustain village life. And that their forms of life have meaning and value, for them and their children. Land and history have their values too. To agree was to display the greater wisdom she was recommending.

I think her remarks and questions were also a chance given to me to agree that smartness wasn’t all about being literate, mastering school subjects, or knowing city life. It was also about understanding different forms of life, and paying respect for them. She was telling me that, as a villager myself, she expects me to understand her words, and show my respect for them too. And I do.

The Basics and Foundations

I talked with fathers on some occasions, and their talk about schooling and children was somewhat different, as was the way topics developed. The conversations were more formal or restrained, less taken up with personal stories or recollections, or humor. A regular topic, however, was the difficulties their children have in school, and it was difficult not to have the impression that they were speaking to me as someone who might, in some way, have something to say or do about it.

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49 I usually spent time with woman in the village and most of my conversations were with them. However, cross–gender relations had their occasioned character too. Fathers would sometimes ask me if I had business in the district center when they were going there, offering me a ride. I gladly accepted the offer even if I did not have any business there. On such occasions I engaged them in conversations regarding school. These trips also gave me chance to meet other teachers in the local Teacher’s Clubhouses. Sometimes, they scheduled their trips around my schedule. As it often happened, however, their offers were on behalf of more practical purposes. See below.
They often said that their children lack “the basics” in school; the foundations that will help them learn. On a first hearing, it is not at clear what ‘basics’ they mean, or the foundations of what? Asked, “Do you wish your child to pursue schooling?” Some say, yes they do, but they are not hopeful that it will happen. Some say that somehow their children can’t make it in school because they are similar to their parents, in that they can’t push themselves hard enough to understand their lessons. Others had remarks about the school itself.

One father said,

I don’t think it is the children. It is the school here; the teachers serving around here are not as good. They can’t teach children anything. Take Hussein for example (another father from the village). Hussein was the worst student in school ever. He moved to a neighboring district center, and his son is schooled there, starting from the first grade. He became a very good student. The child was here last summer, and you can’t believe his knowledge. He sounds like an administrator. When he reads stories from a book, you want him to keep going. He turned out very smart. I don’t think it is the children, the village schools just can’t teach well. The teachers take it easy around here, looking for their own comfort. Take our teacher; he used to leave the children in the school, and come to the coffee house to play games with men. He stopped it only after some villagers informed the officials in the district center. They came over to inspect

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50 The story is saying an academically unsuccessful father can have a very successful son, at a district school. So the point is that with good teaching, all kids can succeed, itself a very modern promise and expectation.
him, and he received warnings. Only then, did he stop going there during school
hours.51

Another father joined, “Yes, yes, You are right! It is not because our children are
less intelligent. They are sharp like “wolves”, but it is the village schools to be
blamed!”52

In general, the villagers were in agreement that village children struggle to find
success in school. To the question of ‘Why?’ there was more diversity of opinion. For
some, as we have seen, it was a matter of disposition. For others, it was the inferiority of
the schools—and teachers—themselves. But often, among the fathers’ conversations,
someone would say, “I don’t follow this or that argument. I know what I know. Our
children lack the basics; they don’t have the foundations of schooling.” And all the
interlocutors would agree and affiliate to the statement. What, then, does it mean? What
do ‘the basics’ stand for in this community discourse?

‘The basics’ seem to stand on behalf of how the villagers recognize that
competence to village life is not the same as competence to urban life, or the life of
modern, wage-earning institutions, like having an understanding of how books are
organized, or how modern institutions are organized. The children, like their parents, do

51 This is not the only criticism I heard of the village teacher. I have my own
assessments, though teacher evaluation is not my purpose in this study. See chapter
seven.

52 Wolves and foxes are believed to be smart animals, able to manipulate people
to get their prey (e.g. farm animals), though in different ways. Foxes are considered to be
sneaky creatures in reaching their ends, while wolves are brave and determined. To be
‘like a wolf’ is a high compliment.
not have those basics.\(^{53}\) For example, some first graders did not know how to ‘open to the appropriate page’, when told. They did not know that pages are identified with numbers and used for the purpose of searching through them. They would look at another child’s page to ‘find where they are’, or look for the same pictures on the page, or the same ‘looks’ of the page, rather than a page number. Most first graders could not write their answers on the appropriate lines, or use the lines to keep their letters straight and words separate from each other, and other tasks of navigating the two-dimensional space of the page (see Rogoff, 1990, on the central skills that classrooms teach). They were also confused by classroom discourse practices. They often failed to recognize when it is their turn to speak, they did not know how to receive a turn, or what was a reproachful turn and what was not (as evidenced by the mother who expected ‘strokes’ every time her name was called; she may have recognized that her turn had been called, but the 'for what' was a mystery for her.)

It should also be noted that these conversations about their children and their encounters with schooling recurred in interesting ways. Especially among the fathers, talk of 'basics' and 'foundations', and what their children did not have became a familiar narrative that I heard several times. The tellings seemed to have something to do with my presence. As the struggles their children encountered in the village school were discussed on this and that occasion, positions would be staked out. One position would

\(^{53}\) They of course have other ‘basics’, e.g., the basic to village life. Yet somehow, those basics—village ‘basics’—have become ‘basics’ of a lesser kind in school classrooms. This seems to be part of the narrative of modernization, a discourse on whose basics count as ‘more’ basic. The villagers are quite alert to the competition.
be that village children simply can't compete. It would be said that their village life experience stood between them and schooling success. The contrary position was that it wasn't their fault; they were able enough. Rather, they weren't getting the best instruction or resources, or weren't receiving the encouragement they deserved. More interesting, in different conversations, different fathers would express and represent these different positions.

But in this narrative structure, in these conversations, the conclusion of the contesting positions was regular too: The way to understand how their children so struggled with schooling, and found school success so difficult and distant, was a matter of 'basics' and 'foundations'. In this interesting way, the practical outcomes of their experience as parents (and perhaps also as students) were accounted for. In the accounting, the normative judgments of professional education were produced; the children simply weren't competitive within this meritocracy. And yet, in the final judgment, the conclusion of the narrative and the conversation, what their students lacked was not ability or promise, it was not being smart enough. It was rather that, in terms the fathers did not quite own, they lacked the 'basics.' They lacked advantages. They lacked familiarities that village life could not afford (or owned familiarities that were not relevant to success in the classroom). I think I agree, and in that sense, this study provides an account of what those 'basics' and 'foundations' that the fathers sensed, might be. (See especially chapter six.)

Thus, in my view, the parents were right in their understanding that their children lacked the basics/foundations. But the foundations they were speaking of were far more
cultural than ‘informational.’ These foundations are seldom matters of direct instruction. They are rather a part of the ‘taken for granted’ of every local culture, and thus taken for granted in the professional culture of classroom education too. For these reasons, nobody, including and especially the teacher, was particularly aware of these foundations they were taking for granted, and thus no attempt was made to help children acquire them. I address these foundations in chapter 6. Children repeatedly failed to see the order in the practices of school. The following chapter elaborates on classroom life as a field of ‘foundations’ like these, and the children’s competencies and/or lack of competence to the practices of classroom life and lessons.

Conclusion

There are two social–organizational expressions that recur in this study. Their differences organize my topics and interests. There are: "modern" organizational forms, of which classrooms, classroom lessons and classroom ways of speaking and acting are the ones of particular interest. And there are more "traditional" organizational forms, for which the phrase ‘village life’ is the example I regularly offer. What I mean by these phrases is of course tied to certain settings. One of those settings, urban life, is quite familiar to us all. The other, village life, is less so. I am thus using the phrases to speak of behalf of these places. I am also, and especially, speaking on behalf of how villagers see and speak of their differences. There are of course other, more formal ways of developing them. The most familiar is via the literature, and especially literatures that write theories of modernity or modernism, and theories of pre-modern agrarian life. Though I have read some of them (c.f., Bourdieu, 1977; During, 1993; Foucault,
it is not for a theory that I take interest in my study setting. Rather, the phrases are part of making sense of what I have seen in the village and its one-room school. So, rather than a formal account of these phrases, I offer exemplars, to show what I mean. Of the former, the classroom as a modern organizational form will be the topic of chapter 6. Of the latter, the village as a traditional organizational form, I want to offer the following expression as an exemplar.

The Parable of Bread

There are two types of bread consumed traditionally in the village, and the production of both is accomplished through collective activity among women. One type is yeast-leavened sourdough bread, baked in traditional stone ovens, perhaps once a week for each family. The other is known as ‘yufka,’ a round and unleavened flatbread similar to lavash, baked on iron sheets. While sourdough bread is baked for weekly consumption, flat bread is produced in large quantities and stored for winter. There are other types baked inside the households for daily consumption (e.g. skillet bread, a Turkish style tortilla), but their production does not involve collective activity, so they are excluded from this discussion.

Women are in charge of bread making, which is more than a productive activity. It is a routine practice which has a regular social organization, in which women collaborate to align multiple tasks for a common good. Further, it creates a different social network among women, in which they create bonds with others outside of their daily networks.
Traditional Stone Ovens

There are a number of wood-burning ovens in the village, used commonly by the neighboring households. Even though they are privately owned by individual families, and even though those families may have bought them at one time or another, they are considered to be the property of a neighborhood.\textsuperscript{54} They ‘belong’ to the neighborhood, in the sense that the neighbors are expected to use them. In this light, the owners’ function is more as coordinator’s, guiding the users in the distribution of their turns.

Usually the ovens are fired a few times a week. Whoever needs to use them schedules the timing with the owner. Firing them is no small task, and an expense. Because it takes a long time and lots of wood to heat the oven for the first time in a given day, particularly in winter, ovens are most effectively made use of when they are used throughout the day. This is a matter of social organization. Women achieve the efficient

\textsuperscript{54} Owning a private oven—one that belongs to one's family exclusively—does not appeal to the villagers, probably because a private oven only increases the cost of bread making, and perhaps also isolation. If an oven is needed in a community, either because the old one is worn out and the owner does not intend to renew it, or a community grows large enough to need more than one, a candidate is chosen who can afford to buy and bring the special stone needed to build one from another town. Usually an older woman is seen to be capable of managing the task of running an oven, because it is the owner’s responsibility to clear out the embers and position the bread under the stone dome. Not every woman is seen as being capable of these tasks. Aligning loaves next to each other using wooden paddles without impairing any, and doing so without picking up ember remains is seen as a fine skill that requires experience. When someone is seen as a candidate, they are talked into it. Or, if someone is planning to build an oven, she consults the neighbors’ opinions, before proceeding.
use of the ovens [and the wood] through building a communication network with each other; letting others know of their baking plans, coordinating with the needs of others and setting in place a schedule of use. On any given day of baking, their lives are thus integrated towards a common task and resource. And the news spreads in the network.

The owner is the locus of the coordination; she is called up to inquire if anybody is planning to fire the oven, to let one’s plans or needs to use the oven be known. Based on the information and circumstances gathered, women communicate between each other to decide the order of turns. In the process, they tell what else they and their families are doing, what other tasks, obligations, plans, hopes, etc. there are. At times there are negotiations about who should go first. Once it is decided, the owner is informed. The first timer, and others subsequently, informs the owner of the timing of kneading and leavening of dough, the temperature to be kept in for yeasting etc. The order of the queue is not simply a matter of conveniences. The owner uses this information to guide others about the timing of kneading and yeasting the dough. And in these ways, lives, purposes, tasks, and needs are knitted together to a single, common task and resource. To proceed with common tasks and needs is to know one another, to reveal to one another, to

55 In addition to the skills, resources and organizations of firing an oven, most women use sourdough starter produced naturally and maintained for several generations. If not baked on time the leavened dough goes sour and the bread does not rise as desired and the quality is not as good. At times the order is rearranged during the day, because somebody’s dough has yeasted faster, or takes longer time, or for other unexpected things occurring. In these organizations of skill, resources and contingency, community life flourishes and finds its expressions.
produce a practical logic of resource management, fitting needs together in sequences of use that are not only logical, but social and in that way moral. The organization is underwritten and secured by a sense of restraint and understanding of common tasks, needs and circumstances. In ways difficult to imagine in modern organizational settings, it takes a village to raise a loaf.

*Making Yufka Bread*

Yufka is a type of Turkish flatbread made from wheat flour, water and salt. After kneading, the dough is allowed to rest for around 30 minutes. Dough pieces are rounded ‘about the size of a fist’, and rolled into a circular sheets about 18 inches in diameter. The sheets are rolled until they are as thin as a sheet of paper. The sheets are baked on a heated iron plate called sac. As baked, they are turned over once to cook the other side. After baking, yufka bread has low moisture content and a long shelf life. Before consumption, dry yufka is sprayed with warm water and covered with a cotton cloth and allowed to rest for approximately 10-15 minutes to soften. This can be done weeks and months later.
Figure 3. Women making yufka bread.

Women come together to make the yufka bread. Each brings her own board and rolling pin. Usually a ‘sac’ is set outside in an open arena, and a fire is started under the sac using splinters and pine needles. The sac is used by all, and tending the fire is no small matter. It must be kept even and continuous, and the women show their skills, knowledge and commitment to the common good as they tend the fire and prepare their bread.

One of the women takes the responsibility for feeding the fire, while others roll the yufka sheets. After cooking, the sheets are placed on trays and carried home to be

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56 The traditional houses had a section detached from the living quarters that was designed for this type of task. The reason for using small pieces of kindling to feed the fire is that the fire needs to be really light, otherwise the bread gets broiled or burned.
stored. Because, each sheet takes no more than 2-3 minutes to bake, at least six-seven
women are needed for rolling to keep up with the pace of cooking. This is one reason
why the production of yufka bread requires collaboration among women. Thus women
take turns rolling and cooking for each other. At one time the need of 2-3 households is
prepared by a group of approximately 8-10 women, each oriented to what each family
needs, how many children and elders there are in the household, how long they must
continue working, etc. Making bread shows the life of the village.

*The Social Life of Bread Making*

Bread making in stone ovens is thus one of the organizational activities that binds
the village community together. The ovens are commonly used by women, both for their
practical tasks, and as socialization sites. In and through the collaboration required of
bread making, women and their families become part of each other’s daily network.
Some households are located in comparable distance to more than one oven, so the
woman may go to a different one each time, thus collaborating with different women
each time. Others go to a more distant oven simply because the one she regularly uses
has not been fired recently. Still others drop in, just to have conversation with the women
who are there. Thus, ovens also function as the center where news or stories about the
villagers collect and get distributed. An oven can be ranked after the men’s coffee house
[or equal to it] regarding the function it plays in the exchange of news and the renewal of
bonds within the village community. Men have the coffee house and women their ovens.

Ovens are also sites for mothers to check out potential brides for their sons. For
example, knowing her son is interested in a girl, mothers can meet the girl at an oven to
gain an idea about her personality and abilities. There are times in which oven owners are visited because she is believed to have developed an informed opinion about others. She is also thought to know the most recent news in the village. Someone from a distant corner of the village might visit the owner saying, ‘I thought of you sister, haven’t seen you in a long time. I did not have much to do, and said to myself, why don’t I visit her, we will chat. I thought that since you see different women every day, you should know about the villagers. Here I am, and I hope you have the time.’ The logic is intricate, social, moral, and relational, and the ovens organize its locus.

Yufka making is also an occasion in which women socialize with others who are not in their daily networks. Some women are known to be skilled at baking and others for rolling. When an exchange of skills is needed, each woman works out with others who is skilled and available on a given day. So they go out of their daily network to exchange services and renew relations. Also, because the work is produced in open arena, the site becomes a location of gathering among the passersby. Some women drop in just to watch others working and to socialize with them. Men too stop by, engaging in chitchat with the women as they wait for their treat of freshly baked tortillas, or other sorts of stuffed pastries.57

On Position

57 It is customary to offer treats to by passers. So, men usually walk by expecting invitations for treats. But women visitors usually sit around until the work is completed, at times helping women with their work. Whenever a by passer approaches, one of the rollers will take break and prepare a quick treat for them. After the work is completed, they bake some treats for themselves and those who have been visiting.
As should now be clear from the materials and from the background to the study, my position within this village and to the villagers, while being no single thing, and showing multiple faces and occasions, is a distinctive and formative one for the study. I was born and brought up in this village. I received the first five years of my primary education in this village school. My parents, siblings, extended family, cousins, peers, childhood friends live there. Thus, my return was a true ‘homecomer’ experience (Schutz, 1976), as reflected in my relations with the villagers, and their expectations of me.

As mentioned above, it is a relatively small village; and all the villagers are ‘related’ to one another, even though the degree of intimacy varies among different relations. According to Schutz, life at home takes place in what he terms “pure we-relations,” a structure of social relations without ‘others.’ Further, members share a common vivid present in face-to-face relations, as they constitute their we-relations, wherein they experience one another as “this unique individual personality in this unique particular situation.” Each individual holds regular positions within this network of social relations and relates with one another from within this axis. If, as Berger and Luckmann (1967) among other suggest, objective forms of knowledge are constructed from these intersubjective grounds, then “what an observer will see will depend largely on his particular position in a network of relations” (Vidich, 1955/1960:354; emphasis added). This would be true in every case, both for the member, and the fieldworker.

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58 The scare quotes are to remind us that kinship and family relations are not the same everywhere. Yet we all recognize family.
Thus, the social position of a participant observer shapes “the circumstances under which he works, and the type of data he will be able to collect.” (Vidich, 1955/1960:354).

Ethnographers usually enter alien cultures, and participate in those experiential worlds as ‘strangers’, living their way into a new expressive universe. They participate in the joint construction of face-to-face interactions as they engage in the everyday lives of cultural members. In any participant observation, “… the respondent forms an image of him and uses that image as a basis of response” (Vidich, 1955/1960: 355). Thus, “the social role of the participant observer and the images which respondents have of him have a decisive influence on the character of the data collected” (1960: 354). This is an important point for understanding the construction of ethnographic accounts of the field. It is perhaps the central point for taking interest in questions of 'position' (see Lather, 1997 [Troubling the Angels] for a different, politicized interest). These relations are part of what field workers must study in order to understand how their accounts of ‘the native’s point of view’ are constructed.

Similarly, in thinking about how fieldwork is conducted, and how language use is central, it is important to consider Bakhtin’s treatments of language. According to the Russian critic, language always “lies on the borderline between oneself and the other.” (1981, p. 293). Further, there is no ‘neutral’ language; “the word in language is half someone else’s.” Thus in any actual use “language has been completely taken over, shot through with intensions and accents.” It is so whether the members interact with each other, or with the ethnographer. One’s position in the social network is reflexive to this language use.
Returning to Schutz, the “homecomer” is one who has been away, living the life of a ‘stranger’ in a distant place and culture, who then returns home, as I have done. On returning home, “it is possible to re-establish the interrupted we-relation and to continue where it was broken off last time” (Schutz, 1976, p. 111). As a member who had been distant for years, my field work was an occasion for re-establishing we-relations with the villagers. On the other hand, as a homecomer, my relations to the village had changed. I had changed. And yet we were not strangers, and there was much that I was expected to know.

In various ways and on various occasions, my knowledge was tested, as it was when I offered to help a small group of women who were baking flat bread outdoors. Initially my offer was received with doubt that a city girl would know how to do such things. I had been away too long. I would no longer know, and thus would be a visitor to indulge. Nonetheless, I joined in their bread-making work. Where the stranger tries to relate to others in their intersubjective worlds having no firsthand experience of those worlds, the homecomer tries to establish we-relations, and her credibility and familiarity with worlds once known. I still remembered how to do it, and subsequently, the woman who was most doubtful about my position as a villager was told that my bread was better than hers. My credibility, on this occasion, was found in my bread.

Generally, I was approached and responded to by the villagers as a distant member. The address terms used reflected my position in the life of the village community. As discussed, children called me ‘Zekiye abla.’ ‘Abla’ is a term used to address the older sister in a family, also used for unmarried single women. Middle aged
persons, fathers and mothers called me ‘kele’ or ‘sister,’ kele being a more informal, local expression for sister. Older people, grandmothers, grandfathers called me ‘daughter.’ Village culture is quite alert to the discourse of ‘position’ in ways that those who write its academic literature may not imagine.

In the course of re-establishing our we–relations, I was expected to understand their dispositions, as seen in the conversation I had with Musa’s grandmother, and with ‘Bahriye abla’, who provided her account of why she objected to her daughters enrollment in the Village Institutes. I was also tested at these times, as to my loyalty and competency to the village affairs. They were willing to open up and tell me of their history and relations to schooling as I demonstrated my membership in the village community, and my sympathy to the difficulties they and their children face in school. I was a contemporary with some of the mothers; we received education in the same classes, shared a same desk, etc. Similarly, it was easier to have fathers speak with me when I recalled some childhood memories with them or with their sisters. Even a comment about how bad ‘student so and so’ was, or how good he was, would entice them to start talking about education, their own experiences, or their children’s. These are all positional matters.

My position in the village also had an occasioned character. It was no single thing. I was seen as a member, but also as one who is competent to modern life and the professional affairs of schooling. Gender was also significantly related to position. In the village, it was mothers who conversed with me most easily and in detail about the school, the teacher, the children and their own histories with schooling. Fathers did not
spend extended time with me. They left for the Coffee House when I visited their homes after the customary “welcome, how are you” routines. After these first encounters, in which most villagers offer their ‘welcome’ to a homecomer, most of the village men ignored me in the village common areas. Yet the same men sought me out as an intermediary in the local boarding schools, where their older children were enrolled. In my trips to the district centers, rather than dropping me off where I needed to be, they drove me into the neighborhoods, taking me to the local boarding schools, introducing me as a sister to the school staff. Only then would I realize that in their invitations to ‘give me a ride’, they were asking me to speak for them. I was both a relation, and a ‘modern’ competent to the institutional forms that they recurrently found confusing and opaque. As Schutz (1976) states,

The way of life at home governs as a scheme of expression and interpretation not only my own acts but also those of the other members of the in-group. I may trust that, using this scheme, I shall understand what the Other means and make myself understandable to him. The ‘system of relevancies’ adopted by the members of the in-group shows a high degree of conformity. I have always a fair chance—subjectively and objectively—to predict the Other’s action toward me as well as the Other’s reaction to my own social acts (p. 108-109).

By the same measure, where ‘conformity’ does not obtain, the depth of confusion can be profound. In short, I was related to the villagers as a sister, abla, daughter, woman, single woman etc., who is competent to the village relations as well as modern life, whose assistance can be sought at sites where the traditional life encounters modern life. My position among them was in these ways ‘bipolar’, and without doubt or question it shaped the worlds I saw. I can find no critique or dissatisfaction in these contingencies.
They shape the worlds we find, and if they pose a problem, it is only when we fail to see how consequential they are.
CHAPTER 6: CLASSROOM DISCOURSE

Introduction

Starting from the late Ottoman period, European institutional forms have been borrowed and installed as models of modernization in Turkey. Modern schooling was a major one, although initially it was introduced selectively in certain segments of the population, for certain purposes (e.g. military training). After the establishment of Republic of Turkey in 1923, formal, institutional classroom education was installed as the model for national education, and initiatives were taken by Ataturk, the founding father, to develop the model throughout the country so that every segment of society would be reached. Various reforms were established to accelerate the process, enabling modern schooling to replace the traditional religious educational model prevailing in the country. Thus, children from traditional communities increasingly encountered modern organizational forms for the first time in the classrooms of modern schooling. Even today, although these social organizational forms are commonplace in urban society, they are still encountered as novel in some rural areas. In those places, children encounter
classrooms as Schutz’s “cultural strangers” (Schutz, 1962). And, as we have seen in chapter 5, their parents and elders did too. Such a place is the focus of this study.  

Foucault is a prominent figure in the historical study of the emergence of modern social forms (Foucault, 1975). He provides multiple historical accounts of the transformations of societal institutions in eighteenth century Europe. According to Foucault (1975), these transformations emerged as the disciplining power of simple instruments, such as surveillance, normalizing judgment and the examination, were realized and integrated into the life of institutions, permeating the organization of activities. Among his examples, schooling is a major one. According to Foucault (1975), elementary education was reorganized in the eighteenth century according to the principles of disciplinary power. New school buildings were designed as a mechanism facilitating surveillance, and teaching activity was reconsidered according to the principle that “a perfect disciplinary apparatus would make it possible for a single gaze to see

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59 As indicated in chapter 5, the experience of the classroom was novel and puzzling for our students' parents. As we will see in this chapter, it is for many of our students too. To say the classroom was and is strange for them is to contrast it to worlds we know well. Schutz points to the “readily natural conception of the world” handed down to each of us within our social groups that is taken as unquestioned and unquestionable as it guides our participation in everyday life. He is pointing to how cultural knowledge is taken for granted. According to Schutz, the “stranger” loses this 'natural conception', and encounters a world where little can be taken for granted, and the questionable displaces the unquestionable. We will see in chapter 6 multiple cases where children encounter the classroom as an uncertain place where they do not know how to proceed. Schutz was not offering a theory of culture; he was describing the taken for granted nature of inter-subjective worlds.
everything constantly… a perfect eye that nothing would escape from and a centre
towards which all gazes would be turned” (1975, p. 173). In these ways, early–modern
social organizational innovations were oriented to efficiency.

David Hamilton (1989) provides a closer analysis of the history particular to the
development of classroom education. According to Hamilton, today’s multi-room, multi-
teacher format emerged during the educational reforms of the late eighteenth century in
England and Wales. They were part of the forces of urbanization that were replacing the
traditional pedagogical forms of apprenticeship, catechism and tutorial. “Teaching to the
class” was a novel development that owned its own arguments about efficiency and
effectiveness. Teaching to the class, or cohort instruction, developed as a form of group
instruction known as “simultaneous instruction” that was linked to David Stow and Adam
Smith.

Although earlier forms of simultaneous instruction involved children’s response
in unison (e.g. speaking in a single voice where there is no questioning of individuals),
adoptions of Adam Smith’s concept “moral sympathy of numbers” lead innovators like
Stow to foresee the efficiency of group teaching without losing sight of the individual.
Smith believed that the “fellow feeling” or “sympathy” was an ethical bond that held the
civil society together. Similarly, Stow accepted “sympathy” as a “principle of our
nature” and adopted the idea to justify the groupings of children for simultaneous
instruction. Stow proclaimed that simultaneous instruction would allow teachers to
command the simultaneous attention of all the learners, and that the learners themselves
would experience mutual sympathy. He further proposed that the method would not only
embrace the answers provided by a ‘single’ student, but it would also benefit silent children through turning each child’s answer to an instructional occasion for all.

The girls or boys may answer, or a single class may be named, or a single individual may be called upon; all, however, listen and all learn. Perhaps the one-half of the children only may answer; but if the teacher so commands their attention as to keep their eyes upon himself, then he is quite sure they are receiving the instruction” (in Hamilton, 1989, p. 103).

Stow held that the efficiency of this method derived from keeping “the mind of each child…at all times under the influence of the master” promising greater efficiency and achievement. By the nineteenth century, a “class teaching” model was adopted that could, without contradiction, be conducted through the questioning of individuals, while the whole group receives instruction.

These historical accounts remind us that what are now familiar social organizational forms were once novel forms, newly formulated, and thus encountered by people as strange forms, although they are taken for granted in the present day. Once learned, we tend to forget that the organizations of our everyday lives are not given: They are produced and, more importantly, learned. As Reid (1990) reminds us, the organizational forms of instruction are historically situated, and once lost, they become foreign and puzzling for the subsequent generations. If we were to walk into the schoolroom of the monitorial system, where up to 300 students are grouped for instruction,

we simply would not know how to act as either student or teacher: the technology of the schoolroom, so well known to the participants, is hidden from us so that we wonder how anyone could tolerate such strange arrangements… Discarded
inventions such as schoolrooms, puzzle us, while living ones, such as classrooms, dull our imaginations with their excessive familiarity (Reid, 1990, 208, 210, cited in Hamilton, 1989).

Reminding ourselves of this fact helps us understand the difficulties children may experience when they encounter organization, including discursive organizations, that are novel to them. In just this way, when the children of our village encounter ‘class teaching’ in the village school, they are puzzled by its organizations. They can’t see how the teacher is speaking, how his every utterance has an organizational world attached, including attachments to their occasioned identities as students. Even though they are competent analysts with regard to village life and order, as we saw in Chapter 4, where Meltem could see the organization of village life, its identities, rights and obligations and her place in their production at a glance, (she knows it well enough to tell strangers about its nature), in the classroom the students struggle to see the organizations that others take for granted. Their struggles, successes and failures are the focus of this chapter.

Classroom Discourse and Sequential Analysis

Although the historical accounts remind us of how it is that practical social organizations are historically situated and socially instructed, and that they are taken for granted once learned, or forgotten once replaced with newer forms, they do not show us how indeed such things are taught and learned and produced as the work of the real world.

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60 The 'others' I am referring to are those who know it already, e.g., teachers, educational professionals and researchers, older students and parents who learned its ways and were successful there.
This chapter is organized around a collection of transcripts that shows how the children struggle to see the organizations of classroom teaching they encounter, the relations between members, identities, roles, tasks, purposes and occasions in the classroom, and what resources they employ for making sense of these things, and thus make visible the organization of the room. As Mehan (1979) puts it, their first real task in school is one of ‘learning lessons’, and participating in the joint production of their lessons. It is not lesson contents that they must first master, but how their lessons are produced and assembled. This entails learning how to join in their production, and how to see their organizational possibilities and horizons. My study is concerned with the ways in which they learn the organization of their lessons in and through participation in classroom life. Someday, many of them will see these organizations as Meltem sees the village, but to learn it is their first task.

As discussed in Chapter 2, classroom discourse studies show many different analytic orientations, and many similarities too. The conceptualization of ‘discourse’ employed in this study follows the sequential analysis of natural conversation, or Conversation Analysis (CA). From this perspective classrooms are viewed as places wherein curricular worlds are brought into view in and through organization of classroom discourse. In other words, whatever it is that is designated as the objective of any given lesson (i.e. math, reading), the teaching and learning of it (or failures for that matter) is accomplished in and through the talk-in-interaction between the teacher and the students. The sequential analysis of those discursive interactions is employed in order to make visible the interactional and analytic work invested in the production of teaching and
learning that goes in classrooms. To appropriately, competently engage in any discursive community is to be an analyst of its ways of speaking, and specifically of its turn taking systematics. Every turn belongs to a sequence of turns, and sequential analysis looks for those sequential–analytic relations, and how speakers find and orient to them.

Central to this analysis in classrooms is the cohort organization of its discourse, wherein members are assembled as two parties; the teacher constitutes one party, and the students the other. Distribution of turns between these parties alternates [ABAB], with other organizations and analyses determining who of the student party will speak the cohort's turn (see McHoul, 1978). The two-party organization is central to classroom discourse. Further, classroom lessons are routinely organized within the three-turn structure commonly known as Initiation-Reply-Evaluation (IRE), wherein the teacher initiates the talk (I), a student replies (R) in next turn, and the teacher provides an evaluation (E) to the student’s reply in third turn. Within this structure, the turn returns to the teacher at the end of each cohort’s turn (compare to distribution of turns in natural conversation, SS&J, 1974).

Empirical studies show that turn transitions with no gap and no overlap are quite common in natural conversation (Jefferson, 1973; SS&J, 1974). Speakers are shown to be orienting to what a “current” turn is doing, and thus what it calls for next, and also to its first possible completion, so that the production of a relevant next turn can be produced in a timely fashion. In the most precise cases, these analyses produce a speaker transition [turn taking] wherein exactly one person speaking on both sides of the transition, with neither a gap nor overlap across them (Moerman & Sacks, 1988). These
kinds of turn transitions can be done only by understanding not only the import of a current utterance and its possible completion point, but what it calls for in next turn, and who has been designated to produce it. And these orientations are central to the analytic orientations of any potential speaker interested in speaking next. As Moerman & Sacks (1988) points out, “any intended next speaker must work on understanding the current utterance so as to know what it will take for that utterance to be completed” on time (p. 183). Thus, these orientations are also tasks of understanding. Turn taking itself is a task of understanding, and thus understanding underwrites the very organization of conversation and its turn-taking system. As turn distribution is accomplished in a one at a time fashion, it requires ongoing sequential analysis for its completion. Speakers are “never relieved from current and future listening and analysis for the utterance completeness they must locate for that transition” (p. 184). These tasks are interpreted as tasks of understanding by the parties too, as they take “failing to talk when one has been selected to and another stops as evidence of failing to understand what has been said” (p. 183).61 So, for example, if a question is asked in a current turn, an answer is called for in

61 According to Moerman & Sacks, as it is with other essential operations of the social order, e.g., food distribution or public order, it is reasonable to expect to find social organizations to be devoted to understanding’s recurrent achievement. If we agree that understanding matters a great deal to the work of human social organization, and if we agree that organization premises understanding, then understanding matters to all fundamental human activities that are achieved by social organizational means. And if that is so, then we have reason to expect that there are disciplined social resources dedicated to understanding’s recurrent achievement. Turn-taking in natural conversation is central to those resources, and classroom discourse is an exemplary case of how
the next turn, and “all must listen and analyze in order to know whether a question has been asked and who has been selected to answer it” (Moerman & Sacks, 1988: 184-185). Thus, the very organization of natural conversation is a practical orientation to the achievement of understanding, built in the production and orientations to every next turn.

Although the turn taking system in classroom differs in some respects from that of ordinary conversation [see McHoul, 1978], the features highlighted above are still in effect. It is in and through our orientations to “current” and “next” turns and the transitions between them that student understandings (or failures of understandings) are revealed. It is in the turn taking that “right” and “wrong” answers are produced and leveraged into public view as evidence of the speaker’s understandings, and understandings of who among the students is to speak the next cohort’s turn are revealed. For example, in the delay of the production of a reply by a student after the teacher’s initiation, others in the classroom may find in the delay evidence of the student’s inability to provide a response (Macbeth, lectures). Similarly, students find in the delay of the teacher’s third-turn evaluation after a student’s response, evidence of the inadequacy of the answer provided (Macbeth, 2000). These temporal durations, along with many other production features, become the basis for classroom teaching and learning activities as they are jointly produced by the teacher and the cohort. Sequential analysis gives us access to these features as the parties produce them, as the first analysts of classroom understanding is oriented to, and achieved. Whether they succeed or not, we see those orientations in our students. They work to find the sense of their classroom affairs, and to produce appropriate next turns, on time.
discourse. Further, and as in natural conversation, the order of classroom discourse requires work from the participants to accomplish it. Their competence to those productions is gained in and through interaction with others in the everyday life of the room. Learning these organizational forms is the first curriculum of the early grades in school (Mehan, 1979).  

My study takes up the sequential analysis of the discourse within this one-room, multi-grade village school classroom. It hopes to show the children’s encounters with this novel world and their work and struggles to understand it. The analysis will be organized under three headings: The cohort organization of party structure, lesson sequences, and the work of common understanding. Transcripts will show these organizations, some showing unproblematic sequences of lesson productions, while others show failed organization due to failures of understanding and co-producing the discursive organization of the sequence. Still others demonstrate how it is that the children and the teacher proceed at times on the basis of alternate competencies; while the teacher is oriented to classroom forms, the students are producing village forms.

_Cohort Organization and Party Structure_  

Classroom order is routinely achieved through the organization of the students as a cohort, a single party vis-a-vis the teacher. The normal or most familiar organization of classroom discourse is therefore one of a two party structure: the teacher and the cohort.

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62 As will be seen in the exhibits, these forms include cohort organization and party structure, turn transitional organizations, the organization of preference structures, the work of appositional remarks, and the tasks of hearing and co-producing them. IRE sequences are made of multiple organizational enactments.
Cohort organization is largely accomplished in unnoticed ways; it’s familiar to all observers, including students and teachers, and the work invested in its achievement is taken for granted as part of the teacher’s professional expertise, except when problems arise. Although its accomplishment is taken for granted, the resulting organization not then ‘automatic.’ Cohort organization is always and essentially an organization that is achieved “then and there”, on each and every occasion of a lesson. Hamilton (1989) spoke of it as an 18th century innovation that enables the teachers to do their teaching to ‘the class’, but also to individual students. Payne and Hustler (1980) begin to show it to us, not as an historical innovation, but as a practical organizational enactment.

Cohorting enacts a two-party organization of talk between the teacher and the students. The students as a collectivity are constituted as one party, and the teacher as the other party. The turns are distributed between the parties, and the pattern shows an alternating sequential organization in which the teacher speaks to the students, and the students speak to the teacher (ABAB). Various mechanisms are employed to select individual speakers for the cohort’s turn; nevertheless each individual selected speaks the cohort’s turn. Therefore, it is fair to say that classroom discourse organization is not contingent upon the individuals, but upon the parties. To say the party structure accounts for the cohort organization is to say that the classroom’s occasioned identities—those of teacher and student—are produced, maintained, and managed through sequential organization of talk between the parties. They are “made available to the parties in the occasion and to us as the hearers/readers/observers of the interaction” (p. 53).
Further, cohort organization is an ongoing achievement; it ebbs and flows. It is a routine object of repair or restoration work, and the parties are relentlessly oriented to its structure. The teacher addresses the students as a cohort, thereby urging them to act as a unit, “making their individual fates collectively interdependent” (Payne & Hustler, 1980, p. 54). The students orient to each other’s and the teacher’s turns as they assess their candidacy to speak for the cohort’s next turn. As the cohort is identified as one party and so addressed by the teacher, the possibility of individual students talking to each other is formally ruled out. Yet classrooms are fertile grounds for development of “schism,” where a single conversation between two parties can break up into two or more conversations wherever four or more persons show themselves (SS&J, 1974).

The work of cohorting and orientations to its organization can be witnessed anywhere in the course of a lesson, but it is most clear in the beginnings or transitions between activities. Beginnings are places where the students are first constituted as a cohort. They enter the room as brothers and sisters, boys and girls, cousins and neighbors, as friends and the task is to constitute them as ‘the class.’ The cohorting work routinely begins as the teacher addresses the students as a cohort, and routinely, the

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63 According to SS&J (1974), when four or more conversationalists are present in natural conversation, turns are distributed across the participants to prevent “schism.” Party structure is relevant here too. Two couples can produce a two party organization, where the parties are the Jones, and the Smiths. They can also produce two conversations of two parties each, e.g., between wives and husbands. In classrooms teachers constantly orient to cohorting work to keep a single conversation in place; a single conversation, between two parties.
teacher’s address is competing with multiple conversations among the students. In some occasions, the cohorting is achieved only after a first student is individually addressed, as it demonstrates the candidacy for anyone else’s address, as we see in our first fragment.

It is not a class beginning, but rather an organization of the cohort resuming from a prior activity. 64 (See Appendix B for transcript notations.)

(1) A class on word formulation.  
((29.Mayis-2 / 00:40))

The following sequence resumes a prior lesson that entails creating new words from the consonant sounds given.

2. 6.0 ((background chatter))
3. T: First graders, ‘m’, ‘k’, and ‘l’ (…) ((writing on the board))
4. 1.0 ((background chatter.))
5. T: Second graders. (….. ...... ...... ‘t’, ‘m’, ‘n’) ((writing on the board))
7. Yh: //kalem, man. ((a third grader))
8. 0.5 ((background chatter))
9. Kd: Teacher, I have written.
10. 1.0 ((background chatter))

64 All materials were collected in Turkish. As the collection work progressed, identifying exhibits that show us features of our organizational topics, I began the work of translation to English. Though speakers of different languages commonly do same things, they often do them in different ways and with different words. For this reason, translation is often not a strict word–for–word conversion. With this understanding, I believe my translations to English are faithful to what the parties are saying and doing.
11. T: (Don’t write.) Let’s do this lesson together, without writing.

12. ((background chatter decreases as the teacher moves to students))


14. Ms: Without writing, teacher?

15. T: Yes. ((cohort address)) Musa tell us, what? ((background chatter drops))

16. (0.5) ((Musa attempts to erase the writings on his notebook))

17. T: ‘Kalem’. Kalem, what is- what does it mean Musa?

18. Ms: /*Ka::lem*

19. Ms: Ka:lem (.5) means Kale::m.

20. T: What does it mean, for example. Kalem. Let’s talk about it.

21. Ms: Writing with a kalem (pencil)=

22. T: =A tool that is used to write.

23. T: Let’s write ‘kalem’ first graders.

In fragment (1) the teacher addresses the first graders collectively in line 3 as he writes down on the board the consonant sounds they are expected to use in this word formulation exercise. In line 5, he addresses the second graders collectively as he enters the sounds they are expected to use. However, the background chatter permeating the classroom as the teacher addresses them shows us that the cohort addresses alone do not produce the cohort organization of the room. Rather, producing the cohort always shows a course of work. Multiple children are engaged in conversations with each other, and those responding to the teacher’s address respond individually, as seen in lines 6, 7, 9 and
13, and thus are not producing themselves as a cohort either.\textsuperscript{65} In line 11, the background chatter decreases as the teacher moves away from the board and faces the class, using Kader’s remark in line 9 to address the cohort. The teacher tells the students to wait collectively to do the lesson “without writing.” However, the teacher continues to be addressed by individual students, as seen in Engin’s overlapping remark in line 13. The background chatter continues, though diminished.

As of line 14, the room has not yet achieved the organization of the cohort despite the teacher’s three attempts so far. In line 15, the teacher addresses the cohort one more time, through “Yes”\textsuperscript{66}, and re-directs his address to an individual, Musa, who has just asked a direct question in line 14. His is a second direct address, following Engin in line 13. The teacher’s turn in line 15 shows that Musa’s address is not simply ignored. Rather, it is used. The teacher’s turn of line 15 makes use of Musa’s uninvited inquiry in line 14, to find a member of the cohort for a direct address in line 15. The address to Musa is direct, though the question is oblique, and the teacher repairs it (Schegloff, Sacks

\textsuperscript{65} It is important to notice Engin’s timely and on topic remark in line 13. It is an overlap, yet precisely placed. Its placement at the possible completion place of the teacher’s turn shows us his orientation to the organization of turn taking systematics. However, its production also shows Engin’s failure to recognize the teacher’s cohorting attempts. Here and elsewhere, as the teacher tries to get them to act collectively, as a class, Engin continues to orient to the teacher individually. He looks for occasions to engage the teacher as a party of one, rather than as a member of a cohort. This organization recurs in my materials.

\textsuperscript{66} In Turkish “yes” (“evet” in Turkish) is routinely used as a boundary marker, rather than agreement. It works similar to “alright” in English.
& Jefferson, 1977) in line 17. This shows us the teacher’s work of finding in individual contributions, whether welcome or not, resources for the task of cohort organization. In “Musa tell us what?,” the teacher is not only inviting Musa to propose a candidate word for the sounds given for the first graders. The teacher is displaying to everyone their candidacy for address. He is producing an initial turn to a question sequence, to which everyone then orients, as evidenced in the diminished chatter of line 15. In line 17, the teacher repairs his question, perhaps hearing difficulty on Musa’s part in the duration of 0.5-second pause in line 16. Musa, however, shows his readiness for the question in line 15. Overlapping the teacher in line 18, he produces a reply, though softly (indicated by the notations *). And then, as the teacher continues with his re-formulated question in line 17, Musa replies to it in line 19 “kalem means kalem.” As of line 19, we then have the first two turns of a first IRE sequence, attended to by a listening cohort.

In line 20, we see a redo of the initiation of line 15. It’s heard by Musa as the inadequacy of his reply in line 19, and he replies in line 21: “Writing with a kalem (pencil).” The teacher then latches Musa—a turn transition without gap or overlap—in

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Note that the word “kalem” was already available to the class as it was proposed by a third grader, Yavuzhan in line 7, and reproduced by a first grader, Engin in line 13. In this way, ‘classroom discourse’ can produce resources for ‘classroom discourse’ in ways that are difficult to imagine, or anticipate. The teacher is making use of turns that don’t show an orientation to his efforts to produce the cohort organization of the lesson. Yet they become a resource.
line 22, and reformulates his response, thereby accepting it. As of line 22, the first IRE sequence of the lesson ends as the teacher positively evaluates Musa.\(^{68}\)

Note especially that the completion of this sequence is also the achievement of the cohort order of the room. As we see in the transcript, the background chatter drops as of the introduction of the lesson’s first IRE sequence in line 15. As Musa is selected to speak the cohort’s turn in line 15, others hear their candidacy for address too, and orient to the sequence that has been initiated, and thereby orient to the order of the cohort and party structure that is set in place. The room achieves the cohort organization, as the teacher achieves a listening cohort. Thereby, competing conversations come to an end, as the students comport themselves as one party to the conversation with the teacher. In this way, on this occasion, the two party structure of classroom discourse is achieved.

Fragment (1) shows us the work of cohort organization and how it was produced and achieved on that occasion. It is work in every case, but in some cases it is more work than in others. The second exhibit shows a more difficult and problematic achievement.\(^{69}\) In fragment (2) the work of cohorting takes time and energy and seems to be

\(^{68}\) As shown by Mehan (1979) and others, in classrooms, positive evaluations are produced on time and without delay. A ‘latched’ third turn is such evidence, and not for us, but for the participants in the room.

\(^{69}\) The transcripts were collected around the rubrics announced above. Each exhibit shows us some feature of the rubric. Presently, I am working with cohort organization. The exhibits show cases that are straightforward, or problematic, or unsuccessful. The collections were organized to show variation in the expression of the rubric and its production–in–interaction. But the rubrics are not \textit{a priori}es. They are rather tied directly to the literature of prior classroom studies.
accomplished only after the teacher produces a series of cohort addresses (eight times), four of which are attempts to begin reading to everyone the cultural story of “Hoca and a neighbor.” Nasreddin Hoca is Turkey's best-known fictional legendary satirical Sufi figure, who is believed to have existed around the 13th century, in Aksehir, and later in Konya, under the Seljuk rule. He is remembered for his funny stories and anecdotes. Hoca (or Hodja) is a title meaning teacher or scholar. His legendary wit and droll trickery are believed to be based on the exploits and words of a historical imam. He is a part of the cultural curriculum, and a major resource for moral lessons. There are many many ‘Nasreddin Hoca’ stories, and every Turkish child has heard the phrase. Here we have a place where an oral tradition is taken into a classroom lesson.

(2) A reading lesson: Nasreddin Hoca and a neighbor. ((29.Mayis-2 / 22:36))

The class has been working on a word formulation task. The teacher has been working with the students individually at his desk. Now he sends them to their seats to begin a reading lesson. In this occasion the reading is produced for everybody in the room, without regard to grade levels.

11. (8.0) ((Background chatter increases. T. is at his desk.))
12. T: Yes. Let me do reading, you are listening.
13. (1.0) ((Background chatter))
14. Yh: Teacher I am doing that one, okay? ((reporting that he is busy with a task))
15. Fy: Should we get ready teacher? ((she means, to go home))
16. T: Hoca and a neighbor.
17. Sm: Hoca and a neighbor.
18. Sm: //Hoca and a neighbor.
19. Al: Hoca and-
20. T: //You are listening. ((said slowly, with an exasperation))
21. Kd: Teacher, I am listening. ((background chatter.))
22. (1.5) ((Background chatter increases.))
23. Mh: *Teacher is it Hoca and a neighbor?* ((she comes to T.’s desk to ask it.))
24. T: *Hoca and a neighbor. Get back* ((said to Mihriban))
25. Kd: Teacher, ask me?
26. Al: Title! ((out loud)
27. T: //Hoca:::, (. ) every eveni:::ng, would pray, ‘My Allah,? send me:::::
28. a thousand gold pieces’ (. ) ‘but let it be exactly a thousand (. ) I will not
29. Fy: //A gold.
30. S: //Hoca?
31. T: take it, if it is nine hundredth ninety nine.’ ((some students are still
32. walking around, talking to each other))
33. S: Musa?
34. S: Koca? (”Koca” means ‘husband’))
35. T: /*(You can’t hear if you don’t listen) * ((said to an individual student))
36. (1.5) ((background chatter. Multiple conversations are going on))
37. T: I am reading it one more time from the beginning.
38. (1.0) ((background chatter slows down))
39. T: Get back to your seat. ((said to an individual student walking around))
40. (0.5) (background chatter)
41. S:: Be quiet kids. ((a third grader))
42. T: Hoca and a neighbor.
43. S:: Huh!
44. Al: Koca and a neighbor.
45. Sm: //Hoca and a neighbor.
46. Bz: //Shut up man! ((said to first graders))
47. Is: Koca and a neighbor–neighbor ((he is playing with sounds))
48. T: //Hoca every evening would pray saying, 'My Allah send
49. Ms: //Hoca and a neighbor, neiybor, neighbor.
50. T: me a thousand gold pieces.’
51. = Okay Musa.=
52. = would pray, “send me a thousand gold pieces. ((they start paying
53. attention, T. keeps reading))

In line 12, the teacher addresses the cohort and announces a shift or transition in their activity with “Yes”, and announces that he will be reading to the class, and that the students all are “listening.” (“Yes” (evet in Turkish) works as a boundary marker in Turkish language, similar to “alright” in English.) To say that they are ‘listening’ is an indirect instruction to listen, rather than a description, though it is not clear that everyone hears it that way.

70 The full story is included in the appendix.
In lines 14 and 15, two third graders consecutively approach the teacher with other concerns, showing no particular orientation to cohort organization. The first, Yavuzhan, ‘informs’ the teacher that he is engaged in some other activity; he evidently feels no particular identity as a member of a listening cohort. The second asks a puzzling question that is tied to an earlier remark by the teacher. Neither remark seems oriented to the activity the teacher has just announced, and both are ignored, as the teacher starts his reading in line 16 with the title of the story. Line 16 is the second cohort address in the sequence.

In lines 17 and 18 multiple students overlap each other, repeating the title after the teacher’s reading. Still another first grader begins to do so in line 19 and is cut off by the teacher in line 20, where he addresses them as the cohort a third time, telling them again that they are listening, and by implication he is the one to do the reading. Yet once again, it is not clear that they hear his indirection, or the exasperation in his tone of voice. A student responds in line 21, doing just the opposite of what they are called upon to do, to assure the teacher that she is indeed listening. In the assurance, we can see how the self-selecting reply show no orientation to organizing oneself as a part of the cohort, or acting collectively in doing the “listening.” In line 23, another individual student, a first grader,

71 The teacher’s earlier remark had to do with ‘having a headache.’ During my stay in the village, I witnessed the teacher calling off class and sending the children home due to his or a family members’ sickness. I would hear from the children that they were sent home early on those days when I wasn’t observing, but was visiting the town, city center etc., because the teacher was not feeling well. Fulya’s remark in line 15 is anticipating that they might be sent home early again, if the teacher isn’t feeling well.
leaves her seat and approaches the teacher asking him if the title was “Hoca and a
neighbor.” We can say she’s certainly ‘on task’, but shows no orientation to the
organization the teacher has been calling for. She asks quietly, the teacher answers
quietly and sends her back to her chair. And another student solicits the teacher in line
25. Again, we can say the students are oriented to the lesson, but not to its joint
production. Ali’s announcement in line 26 seems to be addressed to no one in particular,
and the teacher overlaps and, from within this context of individual remarks and inquires,
attempts to read the story a second time. This is his fourth direct cohort address.

Yet this attempt is also hampered by overlapping commentaries in lines, 29, 30,
33 and 34. In these lines children repeat parts of the story (29, 30) or address one another
(33), or engage in a word play regarding the word “hoca” (34). The teacher responds to
the last one in line 35, saying “you can’t hear if you don’t listen,” and then resumes his
cohort address in line 37. Here he announces that he is going to try it ‘one more time,’
perhaps trying to say directly what he has been trying to do. And indeed, he is heard at
least by the student in 41 who also produces a cohort address, speaking to his fellow
members as ‘kids’ and telling them to be quiet. (In this way, of course, the student is also
orienting away from the same organization he calls on others to produce, i.e., silence.)
The teacher then speaks next, repeating the title of the story and marking the beginning,
again. But again, as seen in lines 43 through 47, the organization of a single cohort party
has not been found or produced by the class. Yet again, all but the remark of line 46,
telling the first graders to ‘shut up,’ and thus re-doing the turn in line 41 (this could be the
same older student speaking again), seem to be ‘on task.’ They are remarks about the
reading in one way or another. Of them, Musa’s, in line 47 is quite sincere: he’s working on his pronunciation. The title is not an easy phrase for him to say, and it is this turn that the teacher overlaps, in line 48, to resume his reading for the third time, and his address to everyone for the sixth time. The teacher is in turn overlapped by Musa in line 49. However, it is not that Musa is doing competitive talk, but rather he is still practicing pronunciation. Note further that as of line 52, Musa is the only one who hasn’t comported himself as part of the cohort. The teacher then overlaps Musa in line 50, completes his reading phrase, and then gently addresses Musa individually, with “Okay, Musa.” The teacher then quickly resumes his reading, and for the moment at least, the order of the cohort and its two-party structure seems to be achieved.

*Multiple grades, multiple cohorts.*

The literature routinely discusses cohort organization as a two-party structure, wherein the teacher, dealing with a single grade, constitutes one party, and the students collectively constitute the other party (McHoul, 1978; Payne & Hustler, 1980). This is the commonplace situation in contemporary classroom schooling. In the village schoolroom, however, the cohorting shows a far more complex organization, wherein a single teacher deals with multiple grades, and thus has the task of organizing multiple cohorts. At times the teacher addresses everybody in the room collectively as a single cohort, thereby producing a two-party structure, at other times he addresses each grade separately as a distinct cohort thereby producing a multi-party structure. In short, during a lesson, up to four different party structures can be made relevant in the village.
schoolroom. Working with multiple cohorts brings complex organizational difficulties in the room, as we can see in the following segment.

(3) **A math lesson.**(20.Mayis-1 / 31:54)

The segment starts in the beginning of a math lesson. After a break, the teacher enters the room and starts distributing handouts as he tries to set multi-party organization in place, addressing both everyone and the grade cohort.

1. T: Okay! (1.0) Get back to your seats! (1.0) Kids, just shut up huh! (2.0)
2. Now get back to your seats.
3. (2.5) (Background chatter.)
4. T: First graders! (1.0) Still (.) >some can’t do addition with carryover kids.>
4. ///((chatter drops. distributing handouts to the 1st graders.))
5. Ms: I can.
6. (0.5)
7. T: As an example, let’s color (one of) them. ((instruction to the 1st graders.))
8. ///((background chatter re-begins.))
9. (6.0) ((T. is still distributing handouts to the 1st graders))
10. T: Pay attention to (arrow) signs, okay. ((said to the 1st graders.))
11. (2.5) ((Two third graders, Sulttan and Yavuzhan are arguing loudly.))
12. T: Our first question is already solved as an example. ((to the 1st graders.))
13. (10.0) ((background chatter. T. is distributing the handouts to the second graders. One of the third graders complains about the other loudly.))
14. T: (Be quiet at your seat!). ((said to the third graders))
15. (5.0) ((some 1st graders are doing the calculation))
18. T: Oooyh::::: Oyh! ((exclamation, implies exhaustion.))
19. (2.0) ((background chatter. Starts distributing handouts to the third graders.))
20. T: Don’t start solving yet. After I explain it to you! ((said to the 1st graders))
21. (3.0) ((background chatter.))
22. Yh: Will I do that one first?
23. T: *Not. First (………………)* ((said to Yavuzhan.))
24. Yh: Yah teacher, not that yah! I can’t do:: this. (1.0) (I’ll turn it without doing
25. anything.)
26. ((Yavuzhan is extremely loud, being playful with his style.))
27. T: >If you say I can’t, of course you can’t do anything.> You should say I
28. will do it. ((said to Yavuzhan))
29. Yh: Oh::: what is this yah! (I will do this one the last.) ((speaking to himself,
30. out loud.))
31. (2.5) ((background chatter.))
32. Bz: Teacher (…………………..) will we do? ((a second grader))
33. T: Whatever it says kids. Whatever it says in the instructions. If it says color,
34. you are supposed to color. If it says write, you are supposed to write.>
35. T: First graders. (.5) Look here kids. (.5) Sample question. (.5) Our first qu-
36. Yh: //((…………………. sample question)?
37. T: Yavuzhan shut up! ((T. gets really angry.))
38. T: (3.0) ((chatter drops))
39. T: Our first question is given as a sample question. ((to the 1st graders.))

The teacher enters the room, and addresses the entire class in line 1, speaking over
background chatter, he orders those students who were away from their desks to get back,
trying to establish the two-party structure between himself and all the students. Although
individual students get back to their seats, the background chatter continues until line 4
where the teacher addresses one of the three grades in the room, the first graders, as a
cohort. As of line 4, and through line 20 it can be seen that the teacher is oriented to
doing this lesson with the first graders. He addresses the first graders collectively in line
4, and states, “still, some can’t do the addition with carryover kids”, thereby announcing
that the task for the first graders is “addition with carryovers.” Then, he starts
distributing handouts to the grade cohorts, and as he does he instructs the first graders as
a cohort in lines 8, 11, 13 and 20 in what they will be doing with the handouts. However,
as we will see, establishment of the two-party structure with the first graders is not only
between him and the first graders. It requires work from the members of the other
cohorts, and the public availability of his orientation to the first graders also instructs the
second and third grade cohorts.

We find in the overlap in line 5 that the cohorting attempted in line 4 found some
success as the chatter drops sharply. As of the quieting the teacher has a listening party;
every student in the room seems to be oriented to a single cohort party. However, the
cohort address in line 4 also produces an individual response from a first grader, Musa in
line 6. Further, the background chatter re-starts in the teacher’s next turn in line 8 as he
announces that he will be working on an example with the first graders (the overlap in
line 9 indicates that the background chatter started as the teacher’s turn was underway)
and continues as can be seen through line 38. The background chatter, an argument
between two third graders (overheard in lines 12 through 15), the first graders doing the
calculations individually (heard in line 17), all show us that the cohorting achieved in line
5 is short lived. As of line 19 he starts distributing handouts to the third graders and in
line 20 he addresses first graders one more time and urges them to wait before working on the questions.

So far in the sequence the teacher includes everybody in the cohort address (as in line 1 and 2), or only the first graders (lines 4, 8, 11, 13, 20). His successive address to the first graders tells us and the other grade cohorts that the teacher is oriented to proceeding with the first graders. As the talk is publicly available to all in the room, whether they are included in the cohort address or not, the cohorting work directed to one grade has implications for the others. However, the question in line 22 by a third grader further puts off the cohort organization, as it becomes an extended exchange between him, individually, and the teacher.

In line 22, Yavuzhan ask the teacher, “Will I do that one first?” And, the teacher replies to him in line 23.\textsuperscript{72} As far as we can hear in the teachers turn in line 23, he replied to Yavuzhan “No,” and pointed to a different task.\textsuperscript{73} As Yavuzhan responds to the teacher in line 24\textsuperscript{74} and 29, thereby displaying the “last speaker speaks next bias” in conversation (Sacks, Schegloff & Jefferson, 1974). The teacher ignores Yavuzhan’s comment in line 29. In line 32 however, another student self-selects, this time a second

\textsuperscript{72} The asterisks indicate low tone of voice, considering the teacher’s proximity to Yavuzhan, it is fair to say that the response was produced only for Yavuzhan to hear.

\textsuperscript{73} Yavuzhan’s question is produced as a question of understanding question, which is not easily ignored in conversation or classrooms. See Schegloff, Sacks & Jefferson, 1977 on the organization of repair, and how repair "initiations," because they are oriented to problems of understanding, tend to be replied to.

\textsuperscript{74} Yah, spelled as “ya” in Turkish, does similar work as “please” in English. It is a commonly used expression between peers, but not used with adults.
grader, Behzat, producing another question. Parts of his turn are inaudible, however the placement of it in the sequence tells us that Behzat having just witnessed an individual student’s exchange with the teacher, presumes that the teacher is available for another one. However, the teacher in line 33 addresses his answer to the cohort, rather than replying to Behzat individually, thereby displaying his unavailability to individual inquiries. In doing so he closes the door to other next individual inquiries possibly upcoming, and renews his orientation to cohort organization. In line 35, he resumes addressing first graders collectively, as a cohort, but is overlapped by Yavuzhan in line 36. The teacher cuts off his turn (“…Our first qu-”) and reproaches Yavuzhan in the following turn with some anger, and this time instructing him not only interactionally (e.g. ignoring an individual remark as in line 29) but saying it. After a 3.0 second pause in line 38 where the chatter drops, the teacher resumes the cohort organization work in line 39, addressing the first graders as a cohort.

As seen in the transcript, the teacher is oriented to constituting a two-party organization with the first graders in order to accomplish a lesson. However such an organization requires participation from the members of the other cohorts. For example in the cohort address of the first graders, the other grade cohorts are required to comport themselves as the members of the class (the category “teacher and all students”). The accomplishment of a two-party structure with a single grade thus seems to be dependent

75 Note how Yavuzhan’s overlap shows his orientation to the projectable completion of the teacher’s turn. This shows us his competency to the organization of natural conversation, however much his reproach has to do with his failure to orient to how classroom discourse is organized.
upon constitution of all the students as class members first, then the constitution of the selected cohort. As we will see in subsequent materials, however, there are indeed more than the three cohorts and four parties in the room that we have seen so far. The complexity of cohort organization in this classroom is greater still.

As discussed in the beginning of this section, the cohort organization of the classroom is an ongoing accomplishment, produced, renewed and oriented to throughout the day. Cohort organization shows a party structure, in and through which the two parties alternate turns and organize the discourse. McHoul’s (1978) modification of the turn-taking rule set found in natural conversation (SS&J, 1974) shows that the distribution of turns in classrooms shows this ABAB organization, in which the teacher addresses the students collectively, and the students, or a single student, speak in next turn. Further methods and resources are employed for the selection of individual speakers for the cohort’s turn (e.g., teacher nomination, self nomination (hand raising), and self selection). Across these alternative expressions of their discourse organization, the students are continuously oriented to cohort and party structure, so that they can anticipate who is selected to speak next, when to volunteer for a turn, or when to answer in unison. Such orientation is necessary for the order of the classroom. However, the order so produced is not so much a rule-governed order, as a normative analysis would see it. Although everybody in the room is oriented to the rules of participation, these rules become resources for their participation rather than formal structures. As we have

76 The distinction between 'rules of participation' and 'formal rules' relies on the place of 'rules' in sequential analysis. 'Rules' in sequential analysis are resources to the
seen in the materials so far, these rules are seldom explicitly ‘enforced’. And as we can see in the following excerpt, orientation to these organizations can be seen as a form of productive participation even in their violation. These violations teach us about the ways in which “rules” are made use of for different purposes, and how each demonstrates the member’s orientation to the tasks set in place.

(4) A Math lesson. 

This sequence is taken from a math lesson with the first graders. The teacher is instructing them into how to proceed with addition with carryovers through a sample problem given in the textbook: 18+5=23. The arrow signs the teacher refers to in lines 53 and 54 are placed in the text to highlight the process of doing the calculation.

51. T: Our first question is the sample question. What it says? ((coughing)) (0.5)
52. We are supposed to add eighteen with five. (0.5) Eighteen, five. ((T. writes on the board)) Add them. Look there are arrow signs there. What does eight plus five make there. (.) It makes thirteen. Now (.) why are the arrow
53. Al: //Three. //three of thirteen, we have the
54. T: signs placed there, kids? To point out we are supposed to write three of thirteen down there. (.5) three of thirteen. It also says to add one here.
55. Al: //Two. //Two.
56. 57. T: What does one plus one make? We are moving the two down here. See?
58. Al: //Two.
59. 60. 61. (1.0)

work of hearing and making sense. Such rules inform how another is speaking. In this way, rules in sequential analysis are different from familiar accounts of rules as things that are enforced. They are not for enforcement, but interpretation. They allow us to hear how something has been said 'according to a rule', or not.
62. T: Let’s do the other example too.

The sequence starts in line 51 as the teacher addresses first graders collectively through “Our first question is the sample question.” He asks them what it says, and following a brief (0.5) pause, answers the question himself in line 52. He then moves into clarifying what the sample problem is, what it calls for for its completion, and how to go solving it in lines 51 through 59. His instruction runs through multiple projectable turn completion places (places where a turn might be hearably complete), and as SS&J (1974) show recipients orient to such places as places for potential speaker transition. Thus, in natural conversation, a speaker who is oriented to keeping the turn through multiple turn transitional places often rushes through the turn transitional environments to rule out self-selection of a next speaker. In classrooms however, this possibility is relaxed for teachers, as they are entitled to extended turns, and the self-selection of students for next turn tends to be ruled out. In classrooms, it is usually the teacher who selects the next speaker to take the cohort’s turn.

But, as we see in this sequence, Ali speaks in lines 55 and 60, overlapping the teacher. And we might think that in doing so, he’s violating the turn taking rules of the

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77 In this way, the teacher repairs his question. Schegloff, Sacks & Jefferson, (1977) treat repairs as having to do with problems of hearing or understanding. In this case, the teacher repairs what was a question that can be answered in many different ways, to an introductory statement, to a more direct question that he himself answers.

78 One of the modification of turn taking in natural conversation that McHoul (1978) finds in classrooms is an increase in the occurrence of intra-turn pauses, especially when teachers produce extended turns, as can be observed in lines 51, 52, and 58.
room. But a closer analysis of Ali’s overlaps shows us that he is deeply oriented to the discourse, and to the task at hand. Ali does not overlap just anywhere in the teacher’s ongoing turn; rather his overlapping remarks in line 55 are placed at projectable completion places. They also show his orientation to the task. The first overlap (“three”) is an answer to the teacher’s question, in an interesting way. It is not an answer to the teacher’s current question (“What does eight plus five make there.”). ‘Three’ is not that answer. Rather, ‘three’ is the answer to the question that the teacher’s current question projects next. Thus ‘three’ is an answer that displays Ali’s keen attention not only to the course of the teacher’s turn and the order of the discourse, but of the projectable production of the lesson by the teacher. Ali is ‘speaking ahead’ of the lesson.

As the teacher continues his extended turn, however, he answers his question about the sum of 8 and 5: “It makes thirteen.” And to this, which may sound like a correction, Ali overlaps and shows the sense of his answer, that it is “three of thirteen, we have the one at hand as carryover.” He thus shows his competence to the entire calculation in a way that has not yet been called for. He ‘interrupts’ the teacher, but also, in producing it this way, shows his close study and engagement with the lesson. This may have something to do with why the teacher makes no remark on these ‘interruptions.’

We see more evidence of Ali’s close listening in his overlap in line 60. It too is well placed and is a response to the question asked, “What does one plus one make?” Still, we see that Ali speaks out of turn, overlapping the teacher, thereby violating the rules of participation in classroom turn taking. But this can seem problematic only if we
fail to see Ali’s engagement in the lesson, or disregard his orientation to the rules and how he turns them into resources for displaying his understanding and his attention. Thus, while obedience to and violation of the rules may do different work serving different purposes, both display the member’s orientation to them. As we find in this transcript, the teacher does not take Ali’s violation as a failure to obey the rules. In short, the rules are resources to organize interaction, rather than prohibition devices. As SS&J (1974) observe, what may be a violation from the analyst’s perspective may not be so for the participants. The organization of classroom discourses is more than a set of formal rules requiring compliance. 79

So far we have discussed how cohort organization is central to the organization of classroom discourse and the orderliness so produced in the room. We also discussed how cohort organization is achieved in and through a two-party structure as the turns are distributed between the two parties (the teacher and the cohort) in ABAB format, and the complexity of multiple cohorts. These organizations not only yield the order of the room but the occasioned identities of the teacher and the students. Now, we turn to a discussion of lesson organization and the central place of Initiation-Reply-Evaluation (IRE) sequences. Although they are continuous with cohort and party organizations, they do the work of organizing classroom lessons. They are commonplace in classroom

79 To speak of 'rules' can tempt us to imagine formal authority. But the rules of conversational or classroom discourse are the regularities of conversational practices. 'Turn taking', for example, is a 'simultaneous analytic achievement', meaning that all the parties to its production are engaged in its production. In this case, the teacher can see the coherence of what Ali is doing, as of the analyses they share.
discourse, especially in the early years of schooling. Thus, their working has been
extensively treated in the educational literature (Cazden, 2001; Macbeth, 1991, 2000;
Mehan, 1979; McHoul, 1978; Sinclair & Coulthard, 1975; Wells, 1993). Each study of
IRE organizations shows a different orientation to its analysis, and our orientation in this
study is sequential.

*Initiation-Reply-Evaluation Sequences*

The previous discussions show how the order of the room is not a content-based
or a rules-based order but a social organizational one, whose achievements include the
ongoing production of the parties in interaction. Central to this organization is turn
distribution between the two parties, as the turns alternate between the teacher (the
single-member party) and the cohort (the multi-member party), and various turn
allocational techniques are employed to select an individual speaker for the cohort’s turn.
Turn taking shows sequential organizations in which turns are structurally tied to one
another in regular ways. That is to say, any given turn is a turn in a sequence of turns; it
is produced as a response to its last turn, and projects a next turn. Thereby the parties are
never relieved of listening if they are to produce a next appropriate turn as the sequence
unfolds (SS&J, 1974). This is true in conversations and in classroom discourse. Thus
classroom discourse and the order it produces is a joint production, involving constant
orientation of the members to the sequential ordering of the discourse.

“Adjacency pairs” are one orderly product of sequential organization (SS&J,
1974). They are composed of two pair parts: The first pair part projects the production
of the second pair part in next turn. For example, a question produced as a first pair part
calls for production of an answer as the second pair part (Other familiar adjacency pairs include, the greeting-greeting pairs, complement-response pairs, insult-reply pairs, etc.). The well-known pedagogic vehicles of IRE sequences are produced as adjacency pair structures too.

IRE sequences are produced as three-turn sequences in their most familiar structure, wherein the teacher initiates the sequence asking a question in the first turn. A student replies in the second turn producing an answer, and the teacher evaluates the adequacy of the answer in the third turn. But the three turns show two adjacency pairs. The first two turns in the sequence show a question-answer pair. This adjacency pair so produced becomes first pair part of a second adjacency pair in which the evaluation by the teacher becomes its second pair part (Mehan, 1982). That is, the question and answer produced in the first two turns conditions the production of evaluation from the teacher in the third turn. Thus, IRE sequences are reflexively constituted as the turns unfold.

Further, these sequential productions presume members’ orientations to current and next turns and also to the designation of the person who is to produce the next turn. Students routinely address the teacher. Yet teachers alternate between cohort address, and an address to single students. McHoul (1978) points out how in the beginning of a teacher’s turn every student must attend and discover whose question it will be. And teachers in turn, routinely, but not always, name the student addressed in the last position of the turn.

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80 The question may be addressed to everyone, or a single student. When addressed to everyone, there are organizational resources for selecting who among them will answer. Hand raising is part of this organization, as is ‘first starters’ (the student who starts first is the one to answer). (See McHoul, 1978).
Thus a teachers initiation could be addressed to anyone, and all then have a “warrant to listen” throughout its course.

The organization of IRE sequences is a powerful social technology for cohort pedagogy. In and through its joint production, the lesson is brought into public view. The pedagogic power of IREs derives from their ability to produce a field of action wherein novices can participate in the production of their lesson without having a prior understanding of its contents (Macbeth, 1991; 2000; Mehan, 1979). The knowledge and understanding of the subject matter develops as children produce and witness the public production of right and wrong answers, adequate and not so adequate responses, and so on that are afforded in the organization of the IRE sequences. But note that this account of the joint construction of the lesson is not a learning theory. There is no need for one in order to describe how lessons are put together as public enactments. Rather than a theory, we can directly observe how the lesson's construction organizes the student's encounter with the curriculum.

For example, the organization of IRE sequences shows two turn transitional environments, each of which creates an analyzable field within which students witness and co-produce the developing course of the sequence. The first is between the first and the second turns, the transition between the “question” and the “answer”, the duration of which is analyzed by all to develop judgments as to the difficulty of the question, whether it was heard and/or understood, and the competencies of the respondent (McHoul, 1978). Thus, on hearing the question, a developing pause can be seen as evidence of difficulty for the nominated student, and other students may then self nominate. (Nominated
students may also 'pre position' remarks in advance of an answer, to show that an answer is pending.) The second transitional environment is found between the second and the third turns, the transition from “answer” to “evaluation.” In this duration the adequacy of a reply is made public for all in the room to see, before it is ever produced by the teacher (Macbeth, 1991, 2000). Roughly, there is a preference structure at play; positive evaluations are produced on time, while negative evaluations are preceded by delays. In these durations, the adequacy of answers is leveraged into public view. The public fields of IRE organization may account for their commonplace occurrence in the early years of schooling and in early childhood socialization and other occasions that involve the teaching of novices.

Although IREs are deeply familiar in classrooms, they require a competent cohort to do them, and are strange organizations for those who don’t already know them. For this reason, as they are assembled in interaction between the teacher and the students, participation in their enactment becomes the first curriculum for children in school. As Mehan (1979) outlined in his Learning lessons, children first learn how their lessons are organized (as seen in the playful use of the phrase “learning lessons”) before they learn about subject matters introduced through these organizations. In the exhibits that follow,

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82 There are of course many pedagogical forms, each with its cultural attachments. Yet IREs are a pervasive form in modern contexts. Macbeth (2000) discusses an early expression in the Socratic discourse of Meno.
the materials show how these village children develop competencies to participate in the joint production of IRE sequences in this multi-party, multi-grade village school room.

(5) Question marks. 

The following sequence is taken from a lesson on punctuation marks, question marks in particular. The teacher is working with the second graders.

5. T: Behza::t, (.5) ‘Has the sun risen?’ (1.0) what are we supposed to use at the end of this?
6. (0.5)
7. Bz: Question mark=
8. T: =Why?
9. (2.0)
10. Mr: It is a question, teacher.=
11. T: =We are asking a question, ‘has the sun risen?’ Because >we give a “yes” or “no” answer in return>, we are adding a question mark.

The teacher addresses Behzat in line 5 and asks him what punctuation mark is supposed to be used with “has the sun risen?” In producing the example of this sentence, the teacher ‘speaks’ it as a question, with a question’s intonation. Following a (0.5) second pause (line 7), which is a normal turn-transitional space (SS&J, 1977), Behzat answers in line 8, “question mark.” McHoul (1978) shows us that on hearing a question directed to one of them, students are routinely allowed delays for ‘due consideration’ or “time outs” to think through their answers. But here, Behzat seems not to need one. His answer is prompt, and is latched by the teacher in line 8 with “=Why?” (A latch is a turn transition without gap or overlap; it is very precise turn taking.) As we mentioned before, positive evaluations are routinely produced on time and without delay in the teacher’s
third turn, while negative evaluations tend to show a delay in their production. But turns in interaction can do many things simultaneously (see SS&J, 1974 for examples in natural conversation, and Heap, 1982 in classroom discourse). Thus, the teacher’s latched turn in line 9 is both a positive evaluation, and a next Initiation, "Why?" Positive evaluations mark sequence closure, and thus in initiating a next sequence, we have an implicit remark on the adequate completion of the last one (cf., Heap, 1982; Macbeth, 2000; and McHoul, 1978). This next initiation, however, proves more challenging for Behzat. Here, Behzat does indeed take a ‘time out’, in the (2.0) pause of line 10. And as McHoul (1978) anticipates, such pauses can be analyzed as evidence of the ability of the addressee to produce the answer. Thus, Behzat’s 2.0 second delay in line 10 is analyzed by Murtaza as evidence of his inability to produce an answer, and Murtaza self-selects in line 11, producing the answer called for. The teacher latches Murtaza with a positive evaluation, and continues his turn with further reasons about his assessment. The sequence thus shows us both normal IRE enactments and a variation that it itself normal, in how sequence completion is co-produced.

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83 Two features of the turn sequence show us that the teacher's turn is accepting the student's reply:

11. Mr: It is a question, teacher. =
12. T: =We are asking a question…

The latch (=) shows turn transition without gap or overlap, and positive 3rd turns are overwhelmingly produced without delay; a latched 3rd turn is emphatically so. Second, as teachers often do, the teacher's turn begins with a reformulation of the reply, fitting it to the teacher's on-going turn. The reply is thus a resource for the continuation of the sequence. Interactionally, this is what 'correct' answers do.
The following sequence is taken from a reading lesson, where the teacher reads a story about a villager and his two donkeys to the whole class. The story gives a moral lesson by depicting a journey undertaken by a villager and his two donkeys to a neighboring town. One donkey is carrying a heavy burden of salt and the other a lighter burden of sponges. As they pass through a river, their burdens are reversed; the salt dissolves, but the sponges get heavy with water, and the villager struggles in the water with this new load. Though read to everyone, after the reading, the teacher addresses only the first graders with his questions, telling the second and the third graders explicitly not to participate.

43. T: Alright (.5) Let me ask this one (.) to Ali. Ali? (1.0) Look, now I will >ask you a good question, you give me a good answer.> (1.0) While passing through the river- passing through the water, why did the sponge-loaded donkey have difficulty?
44. Ali: He just did.
45. (1.5) ((Ali makes thinking gestures.))
46. T: Why did it become heavier?
47. (7.0) ((Some second and third graders raise hands, volunteering for the turn, a second grader calls out “First graders?” Some of them are heard speaking to those who volunteer among themselves saying, “Not for second or third graders” or “Only first graders are answering”))

This is a brief sequence. After the reading, the teacher has been questioning the first graders about the story, checking their understanding of it. A couple IRE sequences
have already been completed when, in line 43, the teacher transitions to a new sequence addressing Ali in the first position of the turn. We can see it following the teacher’s search for a recipient: “Let me ask this one (. ) to Ali.” As we discussed before, naming students in first position of the teacher’s turn is a marked form in classrooms. Naming the recipient in the turn’s last position gives everyone a reason to listen throughout the turn. But first positioned addresses are often produced for struggling students, or students who aren’t paying attention. This turn is interesting in that in addition to the pre-positioned name address, the teacher prepares Ali before producing the question. He instructs Ali in what they are about to do: “I will ask you good a question, you will give me a good answer.” Each party is responsible for ‘good’ work. And, in producing the question the teacher repairs his initiation, replacing “river” with a simpler and perhaps more accessible term for the first graders, “water” in line 45. All these are produced to prepare Ali for his next turn. Ali, however, replies, “He just did”, following a 1.5 second duration in line 47. The teacher’s third-turn evaluation is called for next, and delays in its production, as we see in line 49 (1.0), are routinely heard as projecting a critical evaluation. Another way of so evaluating a reply is to repeat the question, or ask it in a different way, which is what the teacher does in line 48: “Why did it became heavier?” Note how the re-formulated question implicitly answers the question as it was asked the first time (“…why did the sponge-loaded donkey have difficulty?).

84 Not only did the teacher find Ali’s reply inadequate, some second and third graders did too. They are heard teasingly repeating Ali’s reply, making fun of it, and thus remarking on Ali’s competence to the task. Note also how the teacher's re-formulated
teacher’s re-initiation in line 51, there is a 7.0 second duration with no answer from Ali, and as the duration progresses some second and third graders are heard volunteering for the turn. Others remind those who volunteer that the questions are not for the second and third graders. Still others call first graders’ attention, reminding them of their part to produce the lesson. These are all remarks on Ali’s and the first grader’s competence to ‘what any second grader would know.’

The sequence shows us that Ali, and by implication his cohort of first graders, are not yet competent to the lesson discourse, and how both the teacher and older students orient to this fact. A competent hearing would carry the lesson forward. Here, the competent hearing would be to find in the question, and the tale, its lesson relevance, and to hear the lesson relevance is to find the ‘why’. Instead, we hear Ali’s "He just did" in line 48, and the (7.0) duration of line 52, neither of which moves the lesson sequence forward. For the older students especially, Ali’s failure is evidence of an immaturity that they—the second and third graders—no longer possess. They can see what the question calls for. Competence to the lesson discourse is thus a matter available to the teacher and to others in this multi-grade, multi-cohort classroom.

(7) Major IRE sequence. ((26.Mayis-2 / 5:02))

The following sequence is taken from a math lesson with the first graders. They are working on additions with carryovers. The sequence begins after the teacher deals with two first graders who, having already solved the first problem given, approach the question, in answering the question as it was first produced, produces resources for answering, and thus for carrying the sequence forward.
The teacher to consult whose result was correct. The teacher sends them back to their seats urging them to wait for the lesson to begin before working on the problems. Most of the first graders seem to have already started to work on their own before the teacher’s explanations. The problem they are working on in this fragment is $27+35$.

1. (3.5) ((T. moves back to the board))
2. T: Ali! (.5) let’s see. ((Ali is busy with his notebook and did not recognize his address.))
3. (1.5)
4. T: Where at do we start adding, Omer?
5. (0.5)
6. Om: Right.
7. T: At the right side.
8. T: Elvan, which ones are the numbers at the right ((Buse, a second grader approaches T. with her notebook))
9. (1.5)
10. T: Look at the board.
11. (1.5)
12. En: Seven and five.
13. (1.0)
14. El: Seven and five.
15. (1.0) ((The second grader returns to her seat))
16. T: Seven and five. (.5) A:::nd, Kadir (.5) What would we get adding up seven and five. (…….)=
17. Al: =Two of twelve, one carryover.
18. T: What would we get when we add up five on seven, Kadir ? ((T. smiles at Ali))
20. T: Twelve. (.5) Of twelve (.) kids, we are writing 2 here, 1 stays with us.
26. T: Stays in our hands. (What do we have in hand.)
27. Sm: //(She said that!) ((Multiple third graders are speaking at once, arguing))
28. T: Yes! ((Addressed reproachfully to the third graders)).
29. (0.5)
30. T: Yes! ((Addressed reproachfully to the third graders)).
31. (0.5)
32. T: Now everybody close their left hands! ((Resuming address to the first graders))
33. (1.0).
34. T: What do we have in this hand?
35. (0.5)
36. Ms: One.=
37. T: = One. Now (.5) let’s keep the one at hand for now; move to the left side, we have 2 and 3 there. What will we get adding 2 on 3 (.5) Musa?
38. S2: Five.
40. T: =Five! Umut Can, we had 1 in the hand?
41. (1.0)
42. T: What will we get when we add five?
43. Al: Six. ((Speaks in Umut Can’s turn))
44. T: Six. Okay?

Following an address to Ali in line 2 to pay attention, the teacher formulates his first lesson question in line 5, and selects Omer in the last position of the turn. (The duration in line 4 seems to be used by the teacher to survey the class and assess who is available for the question.) Omer’s last position address again confirms McHoul’s (1978) observation that an address at the turn’s end gives everyone a warrant to listen
through its course. Omer replies, “Right” to the question initiated by the teacher in line 5 within normal turn-transition duration, and the teacher positively evaluates it in line 8, reformulating Omer’s answer as “At the right side.” Thereby a first IRE sequence finds its closure in its most familiar, three turn structure.

A next sequence is initiated in line 9, as the teacher addresses Elvan in first position of the turn, and asks her to name the numbers listed at the right. Elvan does not reply within a normal turn-transition duration. Rather, we see the 1.5 second duration of line 11, and it is the teacher who speaks next. He tells her to “look at the board”, and presumably in the duration of line 13 she does. In this way, lines 12 and 13 show a sequence embedded in the larger IRE sequence. But Elvan does not speak next. Instead, another first grader, Engin self-selects to produce the answer. His reply, “seven and five”, is correct in terms of the math, but receives no response from the teacher (perhaps because he is busy with the second grader who approached in line 9). Elvan then reproduces the answer herself in line 16, and following the (1.0) duration of line 17, the teacher puts closure to the sequence by repeating, and thus positively evaluating the reply in line 18.\(^{86}\)

\(^{85}\) As we’ve seen in exhibits 1, 5 and 6, the teacher also produces student names in the first position of his initiating turns. When he does, we tend to find an address to an inattentive student, or to a student who can benefit from knowing that the question is theirs from the turn’s beginning, as a resource for understanding to it.

\(^{86}\) Note that positive evaluations usually arrive on time, i.e., without delay. In this case it was delayed, perhaps because he was busy with the second grader at the board.
In line 18 the teacher continues his turn to initiate a next sequence, beginning with a search (“A:::nd”) that finds Kadir, addressed in the first position of the turn. The question is “what would we get adding up seven and five”, and Ali latches the initiation in line 20 and replies, “two of twelve, one carryover.” Ali’s turn is interesting in a couple different ways. First of all, he speaks out of turn; the turn has been allocated to Kadir. Second, his reply is not the answer to the question asked for. Third, his latch is a case of “precision timing” (Jefferson, 1973). In the timing, he displays his orientation to the teacher’s ongoing turn. Finally, his answer is 'beyond' the answer that is called for.

Instead of an answer to this question, Ali produces an answer to what is projectably the next question in the lesson sequence. The teacher’s initiations project an order: identify the numbers at right side (Omer), name them (Elvan), add them and tell the result (Kadir). What follows is how one proceeds with writing down the result. Taken together, each IRE sequence becomes a step, a part of a larger instructional guide on how to proceed with doing carryover additions, and Ali sees the projectable sequence. In short, Ali is oriented to the sequence beyond the one at hand, and the competence of his seeing is appreciated by the teacher too: He smiles at Ali as he re-initiates the question for Kadir in line 21.

With the re-initiation, the teacher displays his orientation to classroom discourse organization, giving the turn back to Kadir, and also displays his commitment to follow the order of the instructional sequence. Kadir replies, “twelve” in line 23, which is positively evaluated by the teacher in line 24, thereby closing the sequence. But then again in line 25, Ali overlaps the teacher’s repeat at its first possible completion, and
again produces an answer that shows his orientation to the larger sequence and what it projects. Ali is displaying his grasp of the math in his interactional productions.

As the teacher continues the lesson, instructing children how to proceed with the result (line 24-26), a disruption is heard from the third graders in line 27, resulting in a side/embedded sequence in the course of the lesson. The teacher reproaches them with an angrily produced boundary maker “Yes!,” produced sarcastically, in a way to mean “what is it that you want to do now?” Hearing the reproach, the third graders cut off the disruption.

After the reproach, the teacher resumes the lesson with the first graders in line 31, and re-does the initiation of line 26 in line 34. The turn is addressed to everyone, and thereby opens the floor for self-selections or self-nominations. Musa is the first to start, with “One” in line 36, and the teacher latches and positively evaluates it in line 37, repeating the answer. The teacher continues with a next initiation. The next task to complete in the problem is the ‘carry over’ of the number to the left column, and he nominates Musa again. Another student answers in line 39, and Musa overlaps in line 40, reclaiming his turn. Musa’s reply is latched by the teacher and repeated, thereby producing a positive evaluation and sequence closure. Umut Can is addressed for the final initiation in line 41, with a preliminary or 'pre' initiation: "… Umut Can, we had 1 in the hand?" Receiving no verbal response across line 42, the teacher continues with the 'real' question in line 43: "What will we get when we add five?" It is also addressed to Umut Can, but Ali speaks next, and produces the answer (line 44). And perhaps because it is the last sequence of the lesson, the teacher accepts and positively evaluates Ali’s
reply by repeating it, and thereby the sequence finds its closure.

Across the lesson, we see both normative IRE productions, and non-normative productions. Yet in each, we find the students oriented to the collaborative productions of their lessons. In each, we find evidence of how they have learned their lessons, and how their lessons are collaborative productions. Underwriting their efforts are their foundational orientations to the tasks of common understanding. It is impossible to imagine a classroom lesson, or a conversation without those tasks, orientations and achievements.

(8) The moral order of IREs: A villager and his two donkeys. ((20.Mayis-1 / 25:40))

The following sequence is taken from the reading lesson introduced in sequence 6, in which the teacher reads a story about a villager and his two donkeys engaged in a journey, one carrying a heavy burden of salt and the other one sponges. As they pass through a river, the difficulty of the travel is reversed for the donkeys, and the villager struggles in the water. Though read to everyone, the teacher addresses only the first graders with his questions, telling the second and the third graders explicitly not to participate.

87. T: Alri::ght (.5) Elvan? (1.0) ((Elvan was staring in the air))
88. The sponge sucked in water, right? The owner and the donkey were about to be drowning, the owner exclaimed “he::lp, he::lp”, who saved them?=
89. Um: =Raises hand. ((self nomination))

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87 By 'normative' I do not mean a frequency distribution. Rather, it is a structural description. A normative IRE sequence, for example, shows its minimal three–turn sequence.
The teacher addresses Elvan in line 87, naming her in the first position of his turn. Routinely, students are named in last position (McHoul, 1978), and before asking his question (line 89), he summarizes that part of the story immediately prior to the event in question: the sponge sucked in water, the donkey and the owner were about to be drowning, and the owner asked for help, calling for Elvan’s agreement about the story so far, “…. right?” (line 88). Only then does he produce the question, “who saved them?,” in line 89. Umut Can immediately raises his hand in line 90, self-nominating for the turn. Given the observed regularities that selected students have time for considering their answers, Umut Can’s self-nomination seems to be out of turn. However, when we consider the teacher’s pre-positioned address to Elvan, and the extended turn he produces to instruct her in the question, the teacher has produced an analyzable field for the witnessing cohort too. He is showing us something about Elvan’s readiness for the task. Umut Can’s latched self-nomination may then follow from his analysis of the teacher’s turn production, and whether Elvan had been paying attention, or had been selected because she was not paying attention. Thus he latches the teacher, self-
nominating in line 91, before Elvan’s entitlement to due consideration. So while we can say that his self-nomination is ‘out of turn order’, it may also be evidence of his keen attention to the production of the teacher’s prior turn. It also opens the door onto how IRE sequences are not just about lessons, or 'information.' They may have multiple tasks, including those of reproducing the order of the room and the responsibilities of the cohort. We see further evidence as the sequence continues.

Despite Umut Can’s self-nomination, Elvan does receive a “time out” of 4.0 seconds in lines 91. That is a long time, and we see the cohort’s analysis of this duration as they begin raising their hands, and in line 92, where a student volunteers his candidacy. McHoul (1978) shows us that when such delays are “too long” they are analyzed as evidence of a problem, whether of hearing, understanding, or ability to answer. In such cases, the question is often repeated, reformulated, or another student is nominated for it. But here the teacher leaves it without remark, and in 93 the turn continues to be Elvan’s and uncomfortably so for another (3.0) before the teacher selects Omer in line 94. Elvan’s uncomfortable smiles as she exchanges eye contact with the teacher (lines 91 through 93) shows us that she is given the extended delay to live the discomfort of not paying attention.

The teacher’s redo of the initiation in line 94 is answered by Omer in line 95, “A man was walking on the road.” In the third turn of our extended IRE sequence in line 96, the teacher reformulates and affirms Omer’s answer, “Someone walking by saved them.” This brings closure to the IRE sequence, but not to the larger sequence of disciplining Elvan. The teacher addresses Elvan in the last position of the same turn, this time not
with the aim of addressing her for a next turn, but to call her attention ("Elvan?"). After 3.0 seconds of his direct gaze in line 97, the teacher in line 98 says in words what the sequence has implicitly been saying: “Listen carefully!” And then Engin, in line 99, self-selects and narrates the teacher’s reproach, “Elvan is chatting however”, displaying his analysis of the sequence as a sequence of reproach to Elvan. The student analyses and co-productions throughout the sequence are very thoughtful and attentive.

(9) Punctuation marks: A problematic sequence. ((27.Mayis-1 / 03:03))

The following sequence is taken from a Turkish language lesson with the second graders that we first saw in sequence 5. They are working on punctuation marks, question marks in particular. The sequence begins after the teacher addresses the entire class, and assigns first and third graders their task, reading storybooks.

1. T: Yes. Now. Second graders. (1.5) The punctuation marks I have drawn on the board, kids, are those (.) that we see when we read (.) books.
2. But, what are these marks used for? (1.0) For example (.) question mark.
3. ((He is at the board, writing))
4. (1.5) ((the second graders are not paying attention))
5. T: Buse, what do you think the question mark is for? ((T. moves toward Buse as he produces the turn. She is busy with a notebook. Children start paying attention))
6. (1.5)
7. Bz: *Does the work of asking a question.*
8. Mr: //Teacher!
9. Bs: //Teacher, when we write something we use it at the end of it. =
14. Sh:  = ((Raises hand.))
15. (1.0)
16. T:  At the end of what, do we use them? (points to Meltem's raised hand)
17. MI:  Teacher, (‘Tamer, come to school…’) ayh- (0.3) ‘they’ (.) when it says.
18. ((She is producing an example sentence, playing with its subject structure.))
19. (1.0)
20. ((1.0))
21. T:  *No, that’s not it.* At the end of what do we use them? (points to Murtaza)
22. (0.8) For example?
23. (2.0) ((Meltem raises her hand and continues.))
24. MI:  ‘Tamer (………)’ ((produces another example sentence.))
25. (0.5)
26. T:  No, (not those kind). (T. begins to move to the front of the room.)
27. (1.5)
28. T:  At the end of questions.
29. (1.5)
30. T:  If a question is being asked (.) if an answer is forthcoming (.) what is used at the end of that sentence? (T. stops at the front facing the second graders.)
31. (1.0)
32. T:  What gets used Murtaza? (Murtaza was seated with his head facing down.)
33. (1.0) ((eye contact with Murtaza))
34. T:  What gets used? (as Murtaza turns his gaze away)
35. (2.0) ((Murtaza does thinking gestures))
36. T:  Keep your mind here. (.5) Pay attention!
37. (1.0) ((T. walks to the board))
38. T:  Yes. (.5) What gets used at the end. Let’s write it down here.
In line 1, the teacher produces the boundary marker “yes” and “now”, marking transition to a new activity. He addresses the second graders, and then introduces the topic of “punctuation marks.” He gives an introduction to where we find them (line 2), and narrows the topic down to the usage of “question marks” in particular, in line 3 of his on-going turn. But the second graders don’t seem to be paying much attention. They are busy taking things out of their bags, and begin paying attention only when the teacher addresses Buse in his initiation in line 6. Note that Buse’s address in first position. McHoul (1978) shows us that tag positioned addresses are the commonplace in classrooms, since “the teacher’s out-going question is, until the arrival of the address term, potentially addressable to any member of the class” (p. 206). However, Buse’s address in first position not only gives her resources to attend to her question across its production, it also displays to everyone else their potential candidacy for address, and thus furthers the work of cohorting the second graders. And it seems to work; they begin paying attention.

The initiation turn is followed by a delay in line 9. As we have seen elsewhere, the regularities of classroom discourse show how students designated for a reply are entitled to such “time outs”, or “due considerations” to formulate their answers (McHoul, 1978). However, the progression of Buse’s “time out” (1.5 seconds) seems to be taken as “too long”, since in line 10 a self-selecting student produces the answer called for, though in a low voice. Another student overlaps his self-selection in line 11, and Buse reclaims the turn in line 12 with her reply, "Teacher, when we write something we use it at the end
of it." It is partially accepted by the teacher, who uses it as a resource for his embedded initiation of line 16 ("At the end of what, do we use them?"). And this is not the only assessment; Meltem latches Buse’s reply with a raised hand in line 14. Meltem’s latch shows her analysis of Buse’s answer as being insufficient before we hear anything of the teacher’s assessment, and perhaps because of her keen analysis, Meltem is nominated for the question of line 16.

In her reply, Meltem produces an example of the “what” that the teacher’s initiation refers to: “at the end of what, do we use them?” Rather than providing an explanation or an argument, she produces a ‘for instance.’ We can see in her partially audible turn that as she produces her example, she repairs it, cutting off her turn with “ayh-” (‘ayh’ is an expression that accompanies a mistake), and changing the subject of her sentence from a proper name (“Tamer”) to pronoun (“they”). But she does not complete the sentence. We can also see in the video record that as she begins to answer, the teacher, whose back is to the camera, is oriented to other students for their readiness to answer. Her un-finished turn is followed by a (1.0) duration (line 20), which is followed by the teacher’s softly spoken negative evaluation in line 21. (The asterisks in line 21 mark soft or low speaking.)

The teacher reinitiates the question in lines 21-22, and designates Murtaza to answer. But note that in this re-initiation, the form of answering through examples that Meltem introduced is taken up. The teacher invites Murtaza to give an example (line 22). Following the 2.0 second duration in line 23, Murtaza's due delay, and her analysis of it, Meltem volunteers again for the reply. She produces a different example sentence in line
24. We can't clearly hear it, but this too is negatively evaluated by the teacher in line 26.

Having produced four different initiations with three different students, the teacher produces the answer to his initiation of line 16 himself in line 28: “at the end of questions.” He faces them in a cohort address, and provides further explanations as to what a question statement is. In doing so he attempts to explain questions and question marks as part of an interactional sequence: question/answer sequences. That is, one has to see an interactional sequence to see the answer he is posing to his question. But no volunteers are observed (line 33), and he addresses Murtaza again (line 34). The question is repeated again in line 36, as Murtaza ends his eye contact with the teacher. Murtaza produces instead a thinking gesture in line 37. The teacher reproaches him in line 38, and walks to the board and resumes a cohort address.

The transcript shows how, having not received an acceptable answer across his multiple initiations, the teacher produces the reply himself (line 28) to his first initiation of line 6. In this way, he produces sequence closure and continues with the lesson. However it is hard to say that the students simply did not have correct or adequate answers. We see a useful answer produced at the very beginning of the sequence, in line 10. Not finding a positive evaluation, it is not produced again, by either the same student or others. We then have Meltem’s tries in lines 17 and 24. But thereafter, we see no student replies. On the face of it, this suggests that the children are having difficulties understanding the teacher’s questions, or the answer that he prefers. Perhaps they fail to see what this sequence is about; they can’t see where it is going. Moerman and Sacks (1988) discuss how the first mark of common understanding is the production of a next
turn on time. In our sequence however, we don’t see next turns by the students after Meltem’s line 24. The teacher selects an individual student, Murtaza, in line 34, but even this strategy does not produce contributions from the students. The teacher ends up producing the sequence single handedly himself. In this respect the lesson fails to achieve or sustain the co-productions that every lesson requires. We will consider this outcome in the next and last section of the chapter.

*The Achievement of Common Understanding*

Moerman and Sacks (1970/1988) discuss how the notion of “understanding” has been central to the disciplines of linguistics and anthropology, at least to the formulation of their programs. Both “have hung their fundamental issues on it: whether by anthropology’s loose formulation of a culture as a system of understandings, or by linguistics’ goal of accounting for the fact that speakers understand novel sentences” (p. 181). But, they note, understanding has in this way been “a formally central but unmotivated concern” for these disciplines, meaning that while central to the identity of their programs, understanding is otherwise taken for granted as a practical task in the world. Moerman and Sacks then pose the question of how indeed people understand one another. In doing so, they propose a novel approach to the common topic of these disciplines in language, culture and society.

They point to other examples of social organizations that are essential to the production of the social order, such as food gathering and preservation of public order, and observe, “If understanding matters in anything like the ways that these do, then social organization is likely to be decisively involved in its accomplishment” (p. 182). They
then point to conversation, the “central institution of language use”, as the locus of understanding’s work, and propose the sequential analysis of natural conversation for understanding “understanding.” In this view, understanding becomes a naturalistic phenomenon achieved between parties to conversation as part of the practical work of conversation. They go on to describe the social organizations of natural conversation as the organizations that assure understanding’s “recurrent achievement.”

Their analyses of the sequential organizations of natural conversation (SS&J, 1974; 1977) show a relentless orientation toward the achievement of understanding in common with others. The organization of turn taking is both central to this work, and understanding’s first evidence. For example, speaker transition is accomplished so that routinely only one person speaks at a time. This outcome requires multiple tasks of understanding, including the collaborative location of speaker transition points, and the collaborative use of means for arriving at who speaks next. These tasks are tasks of understanding, as their accomplishment presupposes understanding of a current turn, and participants take “failing to talk when one has been selected to and another stops as evidence of failing to understand what has been said” (1988: 183). Thus, common understanding is routinely displayed in an appropriate next turn, produced on time. This is so in ordinary conversation as it is in workplace conversations, or classroom lessons.

88 “The information relevant to whether a next speaker is being selected, and as to who he is, is tucked into the current utterance in such forms and at such places that the current utterance must be attended to and analyzed over its course to yield an understanding of whether anyone, and if so, who, should speak immediately next and, sometimes, of what he should do with his speech” (Moerman and Sacks, 1988: 184).
Moerman and Sacks also note how the location of turn-taking transition points requires participants to orient to a turn’s projectable completion, and thereby attend to turns over their entire course. In other words, to find and co-produce turn transitions, “any next speaker must work on understanding a current utterance so as to know what it will take for that utterance to be completed” (1988, p. 183). Thus, “participants are never relieved from current and future listening and analysis for the utterance completeness they must locate for that transition” (Moerman and Sacks, 1988: 184). This last point brings us to how the parties are oriented to the sequential implication of turns. Turns in conversation are linked sequentially, each is produced as a response to a previous turn and projects a next turn. Thus, every turn is to be understood as a turn in a sequence of turns, and further, every turn displays its understanding of the prior turn. Understanding is thus written into the fabric of what any next speaker says, and conversation works that way so that the parties can discover and repair failed understandings. In short, conversations are built of sequentially ordered turns, and the production of each next turn requires participants’ understanding not only of the sequential history, but the sequential projections of a current turn. And as it is for natural conversation, so too for classroom discourse.

In classrooms, competence to the organization of discourse comes prior to the understanding of lesson contents. Especially in the early grades, students develop competencies to these organizational forms first. Discursive forms premise the understanding of lesson contents. Yet in classrooms the children are encountering ways of speaking, sequential and cohort organizations that they have not seen before. Thus the
work of achieving understanding can sometimes be especially vivid, as on those occasions where the students were unable to produce an appropriate next turn, on time. These contingencies are what our last set of exhibits hope to show. Although the students are always engaged in analysis of classroom discourse, they do not always find the work of a teacher’s turn or its sequential horizons, and thus can fail to produce an appropriate next turn on time. However, the materials also show them engaged in a search for the resources that will permit them to speak next. Often, those resources can be very different from what the teacher expects or intends.

(10) Questions and Answers. ((28.Mayis-1 / 36:48))

The following sequence is taken from a lesson with the first graders. They are working on the grammar of question-answer sequences, and, as it turns out, they interactionally produce them. The teacher produces questions as mock-ups of question answer sequences, but some students do not see the mocked up nature of the teacher’s questions.

5. T: Okay (. ) listen.
6. (3.0)
7. T: I have asked Ali a question, what (. ) will he give me?
8. Ms: He will give an answer.=
9. T: =He will give me an answer.
10. T: What would we expect?
11. Sm: [Answer]
12. Ms: [We will expect an answer.
13. T: [We will expect an answer (.5) when a question is asked, isn’t it?
Ms: I knew it, I knew it.

T: //Umut Can, Where are you from?

Um: Answer-wha:it?

T: You are to give me an answer, where are you from?

Um: Uhmm. ((T. is facing Umut Can, smiling))

Ms: From Yaylali.

(1.0)

Ml: You are supposed to give an answer. ((Meltem, a second grader, speaking to Umut Can. He shrinks his shoulders, smiles, looks at others playfully.))

T: What is your last name? ((Asked of Mihriban. T. is questioning them in order of the rows.))

Mh: Ozhan.

T: Look, I am asking a question of her and she gives me an answer.

(.5) ((T. walks to next row.))

T: U:::hm, (.5) >who is this> Kadir ! (1.0) How old are you? ((T. struggles to identify Kadir, who was bending down.))

Kd: Eight.

T: Eight.

T: What grade are you in, Engin?

En: First grade.

T: Look! They are giving me answers, right? When I ask these questions. ((T. turns, walking to the front seats again))

Ms: //I want to give an answer!)

T: Ali? (1.0) where do you live? (In Turkish “oturmak/oturuyorsun?” translates as “stay/sit” literally, commonly used to mean “live” in Turkish)

(1.0) ((A. is staring at the teacher, being playful, making faces.))

Ms: In Yaylali.

Mh: Teacher, can I say?

Al: He:re:. ((Said playfully.))
T: Here, in the classroom, good.

Mh: Teacher (Mihriban stands up raising hand, and gets nominated.)

Mh: In Yaylali (It is not taken up.)

Ms: Teacher, talk with me too.

(5.0) (T. walks to the next seat, turns back responding Musa’s call.)

The sequence begins in line 5 as the teacher addresses the cohort and initiates an IRE sequence in line 7: “I have asked Ali a question, what will he give me?” It is an address to everyone, and Musa replies first: “He will give an answer” (line 8). Musa’s on time answer shows his understanding not only of the teacher’s question, but his understanding of it as a question open to individual self-selectors. Musa’s response is latched by the teacher, and repeated in line 9, thereby positively evaluated. The IRE sequence thereby produced shows the most familiar three-turn structure, and with it the teacher introduces what a “question” and an “answer”, and their reflexive relations, are. More practically, he is showing the students a format of speaking for them to jointly produce, then and there.

In line10, the teacher addresses the cohort and asks, “what would we expect?” and multiple students simultaneously reply, on time in line 11. Musa also replies, simultaneously, in line 12. Note that the question asked is a reformulation of line 7. However, rather than re-initiating the question, it solicits the participation and agreement of everyone, and gets it. Note also that the teacher produces his evaluation in line 13,

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89 Re-dos of initiations are routinely found in extended sequences, when the answer called for is not produced in the first reply turn. But here the reformulation is
simultaneously with the student replies. Their simultaneous starts show not only shared understanding between the teacher and his students, but identical analyses in the co-production of the sequence. What comes next is a remark from Musa, “I knew it, I knew it”, showing with excitement his discovery that he had heard correctly how the teacher was speaking in line 7. His remark also shows how hearing correctly how the teacher is speaking is a pending discovery for children, always achieved there and then.

Starting in line 15, however, achievements of common understanding—of hearing how the teacher is speaking—become problematic. The teacher initiates a next IRE, through which he intends to extend or ‘model’ the work of "answering questions" with actual cases. Presumably, the students are to see the recurrence of the sequential pair. But some of them fail to see this extension of the exercise; they can’t find what kind of work the teacher’s initiation turn is doing. They don’t see how he is extending a form already produced and recognized. Said differently, they don't see what he intends to instruct. Instead, they only hear 'questions'.

In line 15, the teacher asks of Umut Can, “Where are you from?” It produces a mock-up of a real question calling for a mock-up of a real answer. And it receives an on time reply in the next turn, though not the answer called for. In line 16, Umut Can’s reply shows his orientation to the prior sequence, inviting him to identify his turn either as a “question” or an “answer.” He produces “answer”, but immediately initiates its repair, as seen in his cut off: “Answer-”. He returns the turn to the teacher through his produced after the closure of the sequence, i.e., after the teacher’s positive evaluation. It is doing its own work, rather than returning to un-finished work.
repair initiation, “what?” (SS&J, 1977). His question is a belated recognition that the exercise has shifted slightly. The question is not about a generic QA sequence [‘what comes after a question?’], but rather a ‘for instance’ question. Line 15 is thus a ‘demonstration question’ that nonetheless calls for a ‘real’ answer. If this description is difficult to express, it is also the students’ interpretative task to hear the difference. They need to hear how the teacher is speaking now, and this is Umut Can’s difficulty, as seen in line 18. Further, it is also what Musa does see in line 19, and once others see it too, once they see how the teacher is speaking through the next several iterations, the lesson proceeds with enthusiasm and even competition to answer next.

In line 17, the teacher gives instruction to Umut Can in how he is to speak next, and repeats the question (“where are you from?”). It’s still Umut Can’s turn in line 18, which he acknowledges with his pre-position “uhmmm.” Musa then self-selects in line 19. Again, it’s not only an answer, but a display of his recognition of what kind of ‘game’ the teacher is playing. We find a 1.0 second duration in line 20. The teacher offers no third-turn remark on Musa’s reply, and we hear a second grader Meltem telling Umut Can “you are supposed to give an answer”, showing us her analysis of how the teacher is speaking, and how Umut Can is to speak next. But in response, he only shows his continuing difficulty in understanding the question and the task (line 22). He can’t find an apt next turn, on time.

In line 23, the teacher starts a new round, addressing Mihriban by gaze, moving from one row to the next. This time he poses a question with only one possible answer, “What is your last name?,” and we can say he has been instructed by Umut Can’s
difficulties. She replies in line 25, and, in line 26, the teacher summarizes what it is that they are doing, “asking and answering.” He is giving them instructions in how he is speaking and how they are to speak next. Then, he asks Kadir his age (line 28), and Engin his grade level (line 32). He receives prompt and appropriate answers from both of them. In line 34, he summarizes again what it is that they are doing together, “Look! They are giving me answers, right? When I ask these questions,” and the students are getting it, as seen in the on-time production of appropriate answers between lines 25-33. However, given that questions routinely call for answers as appropriate next turns, both in IREs and in natural conversation, it is hard to tell if they understand his questions as part of a demonstration round on behalf of a lesson, or as “real questions” that can be easily, directly answered. We see the difference more clearly in the following sequence.

Musa again shows his understanding of the exercise as ‘answering in the round’ and self nominates for a turn in line 36. But the teacher initiates another sequence in line 37, addressing Ali in first position of the turn and asking, “Where do you live?” Ali shows difficulty for the question across the duration in line 39. His difficulties are seen by all. Musa self-selects in line 40, and answers, “In Yaylali,” and Mihriban then self-nominates for the reply turn (line 41). Mihriban and Musa thus show their orientations to the question as a lesson’s question produced within the cohort organization. Ali does too, as he reclaims his turn in line 42, and answers, “here.” Said playfully and with a long stretch, he displays alternatively his uncertainty or his playfulness about the open horizon of the question, or what kind of answer is called for, but not about sequential or cohort
organization per se. The teacher accepts Ali’s reply in line 43, and a next student self nominates in line 44, and offers her answer in line 45. Musa then again requests a turn at answering, and we can see that for those who see the exercise, the sequential organization of questions and the projectable horizons of answers, and thus the understanding that yields apt next turns, is transparent for them. For those who cannot, however, they are not. For them, they are still learning how their lessons work.

(11) Oppositional meanings. ((25 Mayis / 14:39))

In the following sequence, the teacher is working with the third graders. They have been reviewing follow-up questions to a passage they read before. These questions were given as a homework assignment, and thus some children have answers written on their notebooks. One of the questions lists some words from the passage, and asks children to find their antonyms. So far in the sequence, they have covered a couple of words without difficulty. The sequence below starts as one student announces the next word on the list, “novice”.

50. Mh: Novice ((identifies the next word in the list.))
51. T: What is the opposite of “novice” Gozde? ((Gozde is facing the teacher))
52. Gz: Not novice.
53. (1.0)
54. T: What? ((looks at Sultan, she shakes head, “don’t know”))
55. Gz: She has written the same, teacher. ((Referring to Sultan’s writing))

90 In Turkish the word “oturmak” translates literally as “sit”, and “yasamak” as “live,” but both words are interchangeably used in the form “where do you live” and always understood by a competent speaker as asking of a place name. Thus, what is playful about Ali’s “here” in line 42 is that it is not. The teacher accepts it in line 43.
T: What is the opposite of “novice”? (leans forward facing the students)

(2.0) (T. scans multiple students, and does not find volunteers. Fulya raises hand and gets nominated through eye contact.)

Fy: Hmmm, it’s- (Fulya cuts her turn and sits down without an answer)

Sl: Hard work::er.

T: Serhat what is the opposite of “novice”? (Serhat was not paying attention to the lesson)

(2.5)

T: What were we doing to find an opposite, we were supposed to add “not being” at the beginning. “Not being novice.”

(2.0)

T: What is ‘not being novice’?

Gz: Novice vs. not being novice.

Sl: [*Not being hard worker?*

T: [No! ((Said to Gozde))

(2.0)

T: A person who is not novice.

(1.0)

T: What? ((Addressing the cohort, redo of initiation.))

Sl: A noun.

(2.5)

T: For example:: (3.0) I am a carpenter (. ) starting the job for the first time.

Who do I learn it from?

Yh: From me. ((Oh is fooling around with the lesson, Sulttan gives him a look))

Gz: From a master (h).=

T: =From a master, isn’t it?

T: I am a novice, who am I learning it from.
//Let me pretend to be a master (h), hah ha!. ((He is ignored))

Sr: Master.

Sm: Master.

T: What is the opposite of novice then?

Sm: Master=

T: =Master

T: Yes. You are writing ‘master’ across ‘novice’.

The sequence begins in line 50 as Mahide proposes the next word, “novice,” from their worksheet. The teacher initiates an IRE sequence asking Gozde, “what is the opposite of novice?” Gozde replies “not novice” in line 52, which is followed by 1.0 second duration (line 53). As discussed before, delays following a Reply turn in IREs tend to show the inadequacy of the reply, projecting a negative evaluation. We find it in the next turn (54), in the form of re-initiation addressed to a different student. In the teacher’s “What?” Sulltan is addressed through eye gaze. Note how three different tasks of “evaluation,” “re-initiation,” and “next speaker selection” are done in this single and brief turn. Sulltan shakes her head “no” as her reply (54), and Gozde’ comments, “she has written the same, teacher” (55), meaning that Sulltan has written the same answer (“not novice”) that Gozde offered.\footnote{Gozde and Sultan are often in competition to give a correct answer first. Thus Gozde is saying Sultan doesn’t know either, and Sultan, having heard the teacher’s response to Gozde, has no other reply to offer.}

Not having received the answer called for, the teacher bends down in line 56, and faces Yavuzhan who has been busy writing on his notebook, most probably finishing up
his assignment. Receiving no response from Yavuzhan (who does not realize the teacher’s invitation/nomination through proximity), the teacher re-initiates an address to everyone: “What is the opposite of “novice?”” (line 57). He leans forward, facing the students as he asks, and scans the rows of students searching for self-nominators. Finally, Fulya raises her hand (line 59) and gets nominated through eye contact. She produces a pre-positioned remark acknowledging the nomination (“hmmm”), but cuts off the first particle of her response “it’s-”, and sits down. Technically, her cut off is a repair initiation, but she apparently can’t do the repair it projects (Schegloff, Sacks and Jefferson, 1977). In line 61 Sulltan self-selects for Fulya’s unfilled turn, and proposes “hard worker.” This is the second actual answer so far offered in the sequence (the first being Gozde’s “not novice” in line 52), but neither is taken up. As Moerman and Sacks (1988) observe, every next turn displays an understanding of the previous turn. Thus, replies that are not taken up show different understandings from what is projected in the teacher’s initiation. Although, they are on-topic answers (Gozde produces an opposite meaning by attaching ‘not’, while Sulltan identifies a kind of person), they are apparently not the answers called for, and we can say the student’s are not hearing how the teacher is speaking. Across the teacher’s initiations we find either failed answers or no answers at all.

In line 62, Serhat is addressed with the same initiation of line 51, although here a reproach for inattention may be the teacher’s practical purpose. There is no reply as we observe in the 2.5 second duration of line 64. There is a next initiation in 65, but this one is different. Perhaps seeing their difficulties, the teacher instructs students in how to find
the opposite of a word, by adding ‘not being’ to the formulation he provides (line 65-66). It is apparently a device they have used before. But rather than being a way of formulating the answer, it becomes a re-formulation of the question. That is, by adding ‘not being,’ he produces his next question, in line 68.92

In lines 69 and 70, Gozde and Sultan take up this new formulation and seem to ‘practice’ with their prior answers. They show us their orientation to finding the answer called for and their search for resources to produce it. Though I don’t think they are ‘answering’ the teacher’s question, in part because Sultan says her line 70 softly, the teacher treats Gozde’s line 69 as an answer, and evaluates it harshly. His question of line 68 is thus still waiting for an answer. There are none across line 72, and if the children have been struggling to see how the teacher is speaking, the struggle seems to continue.

In line 73, the teacher repeats the question, but changes it too: “A person who is not novice.” He gives another resource and instruction for hearing what kind of answer it calls for. “What is the opposite of novice” becomes a 'kind of person.' Rather than confronting a logic of opposites, the students can search worlds they know. Yet they continue to struggle to make sense of it, and we hear a next redo of his initiation reduced to, “What?” (75). Showing her struggle, Sultan says, “a noun.” She seems to be looking for the category of ‘thing’ the teacher must be asking about. An even longer duration is

92 Note that the teacher’s formulation “not novice” was already used by Gozde in line 52, (and by Sultan), but wasn’t taken up. This suggests how students’ answers are resources for teacher’s to re-formulate their questions, although little seems gained by it in this case.
produced in line 77, and these several long durations show us that the students are not only not answering, but not offering self-nominations. Whereas Moerman and Sacks (1988) show us how smoothly achieved turn transitions are marks of understanding, here we see problematic transitions, across the teacher’s several initiations, or none at all.

Things change, however, in line 78 as the teacher more directly employs the cultural knowledge children already possess regarding carpenters and their apprentices, saying, “For example I am a carpenter, starting the job for the first time, who do I learn it from?” Yavuzhan is the first starter, but replies with a playful remark. Though not a ‘real’ answer, he nonetheless shows that he can now speak in next turn. The question’s new formulation allows him to answer, at all. Gozde then replies in line 81, “from a master.” The teacher latches her, repeating her answer and positively evaluating it (82). Having allowed them to use their ‘social’ logics, they can now see how he is speaking. With these resources for their understanding, he then returns to the category of novice and asks not ‘what does it mean?’, but ‘who am I learning it from?’ The sense of the question is now social and actionable, and Yavuzhan replies playfully again, although we can note that in his well-placed overlap of line 84 he clearly sees now the pair ‘novice-master’ that no one could see before. Everyone now sees it: Serhat in line 85, multiple speakers in 86, and then in line 87 the teacher returns to his first formulation of line 51: “What is the opposite of novice, then?” Multiple students produce what is called for in unison, “master” (88), and are positively evaluated by the teacher through his latching.

As we see how turns fluently move when common understanding is accomplished, we also see how the teaching’s work is produced: Children look to the
teacher for resources to their tasks of understanding and next turn production, and teachers produce their turns to guide them, though not always equally well. Once children are able to see how he is speaking and produce their turns, then the teacher ties those turns back to the content of the lesson. In this case, he ties the concept of ‘novice’ and ‘opposite’ back to cultural organizations they already own. Both “novice” and “master” are known to the students as practical matters, and once seen that way, they can see the oppositional relationship of ‘not being’ that the lessons intends to teach.  

(12) Where is your paper, Ali? ((20.Mayis-2 / 14:00))

In this sequence, the teacher is working with a second grader at his seat. Ali and two other first graders leave their seats, and start to play in the common area next to the second graders. As they get louder, the teacher cuts off his instruction, and turns his gaze to the unruly first graders. As he stands up, two of the first graders rush back to their seats. But Ali, with his back to the teacher, does not see him approaching and is caught by surprise. The teacher grabs Ali by the shoulders and leads him to his seat. Then he crosses his hands behind his back, taking an “interrogator’s” posture, and starts questioning Ali. The transcript starts at this point.

1. T: “Where is your paper.” (Said quickly and reproachfully.)
2. (2.0) ((Ali does head gestures, looking around, confused.))
3. T: Where is it.
4. (2.0) ((A points to his backpack.))

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93 We can see their newly found understanding across line 85–88. Where there were no or uncertain attempts to answer beforehand, now multiple students are answering at once (multiple voices are noted as 'Sm:' in the transcript.)
5. T: Answer me (.) "where is your paper."

6. (1.0)

7. Al: Here(h) (Pointing to his bag, smiling. A third grades approaches with her
notebook.))

8. (0.5) ([T. is staring at Ali.])

9. T: Why is it in the bag?

10. (3.5) ([A smiles, makes hands and body gestures, shrugs shoulders. Looks
at the third grader.])

11. T: *(Get back).* (Makes get away gesture to the third grader.))

12. (1.0)

13. T: Ali::: (2.2) where are you: now? (Uncrosses hands, and bends down,
placing hands at Ali’s desk, encircling him, & draws his face up to
Ali’s face.))

14. (2.0) ([Seeing the gesture, A. reaches to give him a hug, and T. pulls his
face back quickly.]))

20. T: "Pull your hands back!" ([A. pulls hands back.])

21. (0.5) ([T. aligns his face with Ali’s and stares at him.])

22. Al: *In school.* =

23. T: = "Where in school?"

24. (1.0) ([A. does thinking gestures.])


26. T: = Where inside?

27. (1.0) ([A makes thinking gesture])

28. T: What place is this? ([Hits the ground with one foot.])

29. (0.5)

30. Al: *(Inside).*

31. T: "Here here." ([Hits the desk])

32. (0.5)

33. Al: De::sk. = ([Taps where the teacher hit])
34. T: = Desk.
35. (0.5)
36. T: Where is the desk? (0.5) What is the place beyond this door. ((Pointing to the classroom door.))
37. (2.0)
38. Al: Desk.((With a baby like intonation.))
39. T: Where is the desk? (0.5) What is the place beyond this door. ((Pointing to the classroom door.))
40. (0.5)
41. T: The place(.) we are inside of.
42. (1.5)
43. T: Go back to your places now. = ((speaking to third graders))
44. Al: = Classroom. (Said excitedly.))
45. (0.5)
46. T: >Classroom.> (.2) so where were we?
47. Al: Classroom. =
48. T: In classroom, (you are not supposed to be) this way.
49. (1.0) ((Ali looks down.))
50. T: You are supposed to (listen to what the teacher says) okay. =
51. Al: = Okay.
52. T: I don't want to see this again. ((Taps on Ali's cheek, and turns to the third graders waiting to show their assignments.))

The teacher's question of line 1, "Where is your paper?,” is, on the one hand, a question soliciting an answer, and thus a first pair part (FPP) to a “question-answer” adjacency pair (SS&J, 1974). On the other, however, the teacher initiates the sequence as an indirect reproach to Ali for not recognizing the order of the room as a place of rights, obligations and responsibilities; he and his friends should not have been playing while
others worked. But it seems that Ali does not see the question that way; he doesn't see (or hear) how the teacher is speaking, and thus doesn't reply, but only looks around (line 2).

The teacher re-initiates, in an even more demanding tone, in line 3. And to this, following a pause, Ali only points to his backpack. He seems not to realize the sense of the question (that papers are not yet to be in backpacks because the class is not over). Instead, he seems to be taking the question as a “real” one, an informational question, rather than a reproach to which he is responsible for giving an account. The teacher makes the point in line 5, demanding an “answer” from Ali, and repeats the question a third time with a quickened pace (marked with >…>), and Ali answers in line 7. Yet he still speaks as though he is answering a “real” question, a question about a “place” rather than about a course of action, replacing his point to the book bag in line 4 with “here” this time, and saying it with a smile. The teacher then asks a next question, “Why is it in the bag?”; and in the (3.5) duration of line 11, Ali seems further confused by the sequence; he smiles and shrugs his shoulders, and seems to offer a kind of “I don’t know, it just is” reply. But the teacher’s point here seems to be, as it was from the outset, that the session is still underway, there is still work to be done, and papers should be on the desks and not in bags. And, by implication, students should be at their desks and not away from them. But, Ali still does not hear reproach in these questions. He can hear the displeasure, be he can't find the organizations implicit to the teacher's string of questions; he can't find *himself* in them. Note how his difficulties are evidenced in the pauses across the sequence; in the duration of each pause, Ali demonstrates no signs of either hearing
these questions as reproach, nor finding the affairs that prompt them (Macbeth, 1991). Ali’s failing to make out how the teacher is speaking and the order he is indirectly pointing to continues to line 20, where there is no mistaking the teacher’s displeasure.

In line 15, the teacher asks: “Ali, where are you now?” as he bends down, placing his hands on Ali’s desk. Thus we have another initiation, one that is again not simply a matter of information, but one for which one must see its occasion to make sense of it. It is a question in a series of questions, the same series initiated in line 1, and thus a question implicated in the same reproach. Invoking the kind of place they are in (classroom) as a relevant category, the teacher invites Ali to hear his questions in the light of institutional occasions, identities, participation rights and obligations, but once again Ali does not hear it for those organizational horizons. Rather, he hears it for a different organization, a different order of “next actions.” In the teacher’s gestural complement (his leaning in and coming closer), Ali seems to find a sequence and occasion he can make sense of, an occasion for hugging. Receiving what he takes as the teacher's invitation, he reaches up to hug the teacher in return. But the teacher produces a direct reprimand to this “reply”, telling Ali to “pull his hands back”, which Ali quickly does. Note that Ali’s gesture has been his only confident reply in the sequence so far.

In line 21, and in the presence of the teacher's rejection of his mis-interpretation of an offer to 'hug', Ali returns to the question of line 15 and softly replies, “In school.” Note how the teacher’s reprimand in line 20, and his staring in line 21 further invokes institutional roles and obligations, thus giving further resources for Ali to find his reproach. But what Ali finds is further confusion, as evidenced in the uncertainty of his
soft speaking. The teacher latches him in line 23, and asks “Where in school?”, speaking with a quickened pace. Ali ‘thinks through the question’ (line 24), and softly replies, “Inside of it” (line 25). The teacher latches again and questions further, “Where inside?” to which Ali does not offer a reply (line 27). (On consideration, 'Where inside?' is not an easy question; for Ali the referential puzzle only gets more puzzling.) The teacher initiates again in line 28, “What place is this?” as he hits the ground with one foot. Ali says again, “Inside”, speaking even softer, displaying further confusion. Next, the teacher hits the desk saying, “Here, here”, rushing through the turn as he speaks, and Ali replies “De::sk” tapping where the teacher hits. Note how Ali’s “desk” is stretched in its production (marked with “:”), showing his confusion to why the teacher would be asking such a question by offering an “obvious” answer.

Hopefully, the reader can see how Ali only finds referential puzzles, and is seeking to solve them. The teacher latches one more time repeating Ali’s reply, “Desk” (line 34). This is his third latch to Ali's uncertain replies (see lines 23 and 26), and we can note how these latched turns are produced not as familiar third turn evaluations, but rather as placeholders awaiting the teacher's next question. Together with the quickened pace of speaking, the latches show the teacher’s developing impatience for Ali’s not seeing the kind of work the sequence has been doing. What is prompted and driven the sequence is the obligations of individual students within the moral order of the room, and this is what Ali continues not to see.

The teacher asks a next question in line 36, “Where is the desk? What is the place beyond this door,” pointing to the classroom door. Following a (2.0) second pause, Ali
repeats his earlier reply, “Desk” in line 39. This seems to be the only resource he can use to fill his turn. The teacher repairs his question in line 40, “The place beyond this door, around there,” pointing to classroom open areas. But Ali seems to make no further sense of how the teacher is speaking; he finds no other resources to produce a reply, and the teacher explicates further, “The place, we are inside of.” Another duration of 1.5 second follows, but as the teacher orders those third graders watching them to get back to their places (line 45), Ali latches him saying with excitement, “Classroom” (line 46). His excitement is a remark on an understanding that he has finally achieved, though it is only a referential understanding, a solution to the puzzle of the teacher's string of 'place questions'.

The teacher repeats, “Classroom” after 0.5 second duration. This is the first positive evaluation in a teacher's third turn. Speaking with a quickened pace, he reinitiates, “so where were we?” Ali replies “Classroom” (line 49), producing his only on time reply so far, to which the teacher latches in line 50 and says in so many words that what has been unsaid. The teacher explicitly says what kind of behavior he expects from Ali. Note how he uses the understanding achieved so far (e.g. place reference) as an anchor to remind Ali of the occasioned identities, participation rights and obligations affiliated with classrooms. Thus, in the duration of pause in line 51, we observe Ali’s finding the reproach that has driven the sequence so far, in his looking down he shows us his embarrassment and contrition for the affairs that prompted it.

Macbeth (1991) describes how in classrooms pauses following a reproach-initiation works as a second pair part (SPP) of an “address-pause” adjacency pair, and
how the reproach sequence routinely finds its closure in this two-turn structure: The competent students find in the address the affairs prompting their reproach, and defers 'answering'; thus the pause. When students are competent to hear it, the reproach is often not produced in so-many-words at all. Rather than hearing the reproach, we hear a resumption of cohort address in third position. With novices however, things work differently. In our case, Ali sees his reproach and displays his finding of the affairs prompting it in the pause of line 51, only after the reproach is produced in so-many-words (50). The teacher continues to tell Ali in so-many-words (line 52) those things that were unseen by Ali in the sequence so far. Ali assures the teacher in line 53 with his latched agreement. The sequence ends as the teacher taps Ali on the cheek in a friendly manner saying, “I don’t want to see this again” and turns to those third graders who have been waiting for him.

As the sequence developed, there was a series of questions by the teacher about “where we are not”, and “what place is this, and “what’s inside the door.” These became progressively more mysterious for Ali. They were puzzles of reference. He couldn't see his participation in the social order that prompted them. The larger mystery for him throughout the sequence is that he doesn’t see how the teacher is speaking. The teacher is producing an indirect reproach. But Ali doesn’t see himself or his activities in the context of classroom rights, obligations and identities. Unlike Meltem, he can’t see the order of things in the teacher’s comments; he can't find the worlds attached. He is not yet competent to co-produce the sequence of “reproach and contrition” that articulates classroom order in general. Sense, reference and common understanding have words
attached, and while Ali can see those worlds quite well elsewhere, in the room, things are opaque. In so far as he can't find them, he can't achieve common understanding. The first curriculum in the room, the curriculum in 'how we do things here', is for Ali still a lesson to be learned. Yet while we can say he is not yet competent to his classroom contexts, we can also say, and do not want to miss, his disciplined orientation to the problematics of common understanding. Whether his analyses were 'right' or 'wrong', Ali was never not an analyst of his settings and occasions, and the sequential horizons of next turns.

Conclusion

I have analyzed these classroom materials under three major headings, Cohorting, IRE sequences, and the accomplishment of Common Understanding. Although these constructs are treated separately for analytical purposes, in the flow of everyday classroom life, they are inseparable from one another. They are found anywhere and everywhere in a lesson, and together they account for the order of the lesson and the room. Although each can be conceived as an organizational structure, they are practical achievements, and the achievements of common understanding underlies each of them. To say they are achievements is to say they have their local production histories, produced by the parties in the room. At times, they are unproblematic achievements; at other times we find puzzles of understanding, repairs and restoration work across extended sequences. At all times, they are contingent outcomes, and regardless of the outcome, we find the parties relentlessly oriented to these practical organizational
enactments. Students and teacher are continuously engaged in the work of understanding throughout its local course.

To say that these organizations are outcomes of members’ ongoing orientations to their practical tasks of understanding, is to say that their production requires competence from the parties. Indeed, the learning of such competence is first the curriculum in early grades; they underline the students’ engagement in the production of the contents of a lesson. They organize the evidences of contents and the students’ engagement with content. This multi-grade, multi-cohort classroom context, with its complexities unfound in single grade cohorts, makes more visible work of participation, and the competence required for participation, and what the novice’s developing competence looks like.

In this classroom, we not only find three different grade cohorts, but also family cohorts too. Outside of the classroom, the children are family members related to each other as siblings, cousins, and neighbors. But, when they enter the classroom, they are expected to leave the family ties behind and become students, the members to a single party. But, as our materials show, family ties comes into the picture too, as we find the older family members providing assistance, resources, even reproaches for the younger family members. The multiple cohorts are both seen and produced by all parties, and the work of one cohort can become an object for interest or remark by members of another.

As we saw in Chapter 5, our students’ puzzlement and struggles are not so different than those their parents encountered. But our description of them in Chapter 6 is quite different. My purpose in the analysis is to show how these students, knowing
however much or little of classroom life, take their tasks of understanding seriously. They are routinely patient, and methodic in their sense making. Regardless of whether we find them competent to classroom life or not, what we see across the exhibits is both a sequential account of classroom discourse and a description of how its orderly production across all contingencies owes to the interactional competence the students bring to the room. It may be odd to suggest this, but even understanding’s failures show orientations to achieving it. In those orientations, as in the voices of the parents and elders, it is difficult not to see a remarkable good faith among these school children, and this is indeed something that virtually every study of classroom discourse shows us. Though too easily ignored or missed, it is for educators and educating institutions perhaps the greatest single resource. This finding, the finding of their close and sustained analyses of the local history and projectable horizon of the discourse, of how the teacher is speaking, of how they are to speak next, comes into view when we examine the discursive order of the room as a sustained, local and contingent production. One recommendation for working that way is that we not only find a technical description of their organizational tasks and contingencies, as in those of a lesson's construction,' we find an appreciative description of the work of these children, a description that shows us their serious and sustained engagement in solving their puzzles of common understanding. In my view, each description is instructive; each tells us of the organizational life of the room, and the children. Each shows us a field of deeply consequential work that is easily "seen but un-noticed" (Garfinkel, 1967). Such descriptions thus teach us how to see and notice them, and take interest in the work of these occasions as constitutive occasions of early
childhood experience and education.
CHAPTER 7: CONCLUSION

The study has described some of the organizations of village life and classroom life as they are encountered by young children attending a rural village school, and have been experienced by their parents and elders. The village is a small one, located in an isolated part of the Taurus Mountains in the northern Mediterranean region of Turkey, and the one-room, multi-grade school has been in their lives for three generations. There are now grandparents and other elders who were its first students, and experienced the first encounters with compulsory education and modern classroom cohort pedagogy in the village. The study has taken interest in those early encounters, in the accounts of parents and elders. It has taken interest in the classroom encounters of today's village children. And it has attempted to frame those historical and contemporary encounters in the cultural context of rural village life. In the first three chapters, the aims, interests and conceptualizations that have framed this study were developed and discussed.

In chapter one, we briefly reviewed the history of formal schooling in the Turkish context, and saw how, starting in late Ottoman period, modern schooling and its classroom organizations have been part of a national program of modernization. The institution of modern schooling—classroom schooling—was borrowed from Europe and introduced to public, although initially selectively in the major cities. This development
was accelerated in the 20th century Republic of Turkey and expanded to the entire county. Chapter one described the place of schooling and classroom education within a larger project of modernization, a project recognized in the literature, and often expressed in the Turkish national experience, and in village conversations. This village and its school were studied as "distinctive expressions" (Blumer, 1970) of this process and how villagers saw the place of education in their children's lives, and their own.

Chapter one also framed the study as one of the early childhood education and educational experience of these children, and especially a study in this rural context that may be less familiar than others in the contemporary. The interest was to develop a description of village life as a form of life the children know deeply, as context for the treatment of their experiences with classroom life, which they do not know. It was this sense of difference that organized the study. As the study developed, the conversations with parents and elders developed as a topic of its own, i.e., their early childhood education experiences, and their understandings of formal, classroom education in the lives of their children and grandchildren, and in the life of the village.

My aim was to develop the intersection between the competencies of village life and classroom life as different cultural forms of participation, and thus different cultural curricula. If we could understand the differences, we might then understand the sense that all parties make of their encounters. This goal has been constant throughout the study.

Chapters 2 and 3 took up literature reviews and discussions of analytic methods. Chapter 2 focused on two literatures, developing a conceptual review of the history of
early childhood studies and their expressions of cultural tendencies in our thinking about children, childhood, and adults. Those tendencies, towards cognitive metaphors, a forward looking developmentalism, and ever more defined segmentations, show themselves throughout the 20th century. Only in the context of more recent thinking, about culture, interactional order and competence, do we begin to see studies of childhood *per se*, as a distinctive phase of life, possessing its own cultures of competence and sense making.

Chapter 2 then reviewed the development of contemporary studies of "discourse," and the diversity of discourse analytic programs. The review took particular interest in studies of classroom discourse, and concluded with a discussion of what separates two of the contemporary literature's major programs for the study of natural conversation: Discourse Analysis, and Conversation Analysis. There can be many characterizations of how they proceed from different conceptual understandings, and my review relied substantially on Levinson's (1985). Central to my understanding, however, is that sequential analysis brings into view the analytic work of the parties to conversation, wherever we find it. As Macbeth (1991) observes, the parties to conversation, and classroom discourse, are the first analysts on the scene, and their analyses are formative of the meanings constructed. And because they are analysts, there is seldom a deficit of competence. Even when one party fails to 'make sense' of another, the competence to sense making is evident. And this is what we find in chapter 6: Across the transcribed sequences, and across the contingencies of cohorting, IRE sequences and the achievement of common understanding, we see that the students are 'at work' at all times,
without break. Their analyses and the expressions of their analyses are constantly made evident for the participants in the situation, and thus for me as the researcher examining their productions. Even their mis-understandings show this analytic work, and their competence to it. In these ways, the study demonstrates how children are already productive, competent participants as proposed by the qualitative shift in early childhood studies discussed in chapter 2 (and particularly Mackay 1974a, and 1974b).

In this light, a central finding for this study is a clarification of what we mean by formulations of "competence." The term is central to both developmental, early childhood, and early classroom studies. 'Competence' as we usually find it speaks on behalf of the aims and measures of development or educational progress. It is perhaps the central divide of early childhood studies, organizing the familiar 'forward looking' stance. It is the thing we are waiting for, and waiting to certify. And its usage that way is completely recognizable.

But from this study, 'competence' seems more provincial than this familiar use suggests. While it is quite true that many of the village children are not–yet–competent to the understandings and recognitions that constitute the normal organizations of classroom discourse, for example, in our materials it was never the case that their analytic competence to making sense of interactional contingency was not shown, if we are patient enough to notice it.

In these ways, this study suggests that we adults should examine our tendencies when we set out to assess the abilities of children, but fail to see the abilities they demonstrate. We will miss too much of what work they invest in constructing their tasks
and understandings (which in turn are the foundations for the forward looking paradigm itself).

The students in this study were always competent to the puzzles they encountered, meaning that they were competent to seeing them as puzzles, to exploring their possible answers or solutions, to taking the measure of every next turn as a possible resource for understanding it. Their competence to interaction was evident even when the local puzzle solution could not be found. Geertz (1973) advised that we take all the familiar topics of the literature, power, structure, agency, etc., and take the capital letters off of them. This study suggests that we do the same for "competence." Competence to interaction, to the exercise of making sense, is the far more durable and evident exercise. Talk of ‘incompetence’ tends to mask what these children are showing us. Only after we can see their competencies, can we guide their learning without shaking their unassuming trust in us.

Chapter 3 continued the discussion of analytic methods initiated in chapter 2 by turning to the intellectual history of the 'qualitative turn' in social science and then educational studies, and what it means to study meaningful social worlds. This is an inter-generational literature of the 20th century, and the most productive commentaries have turned on the question of what is different about the organizations of natural and social worlds. The question then follows whether the methods and concepts of inquiry for the one are appropriate to the other. The familiar wisdom recommends the 'scientific model' for the study of social worlds. The 'qualitative turn' effectively argues that this is conceptually mistaken. Chapter 3 takes up that argument.
While some may argue instead that these matters are 'settled' or are no longer in question, so that a review of this history and these conceptual differences is not necessary, it seems to my reading that these insights have largely been lost in many communities of the educational research literature. The explicit scientism of the National Research Council recommendations of 2004, and the formal and normative analyses of the Critical Discourse literature, for examples, suggests that understandings about fundamental differences in our settings and forms of inquiry are still contested. (The contest expressed in CDA includes the dismissal of the "natives' point of view"). Chapter three reflects my readings and struggles with these literatures that are often using same words and meaning different or even un-examined things for them. It reflects my best understandings of this consequential and on-going contest both outside and inside the literature of qualitative research.

Perhaps most central to chapter 3 is an argument on behalf of the study of cases. It expresses the rationale of ethnographic study, or how it is that in the lives of actual, local communities we may find what larger formulations about things like culture, childhood, competence or discourse, mean. From Malinowski (1922/1992), through Blumer (1970), Garfinkel (1967) and Geertz (1973), there is a strong consensus on the merits of local study, or in Malinowski's early phrase, "the imponderabelia of actual life" (1922/1992, p.17).

The analytic chapters began with chapter 4. An organizing theme of the thesis has been how it is that organizations of everyday life in every domain of human activity are organizations of competent participation, and how competence is always instructed.
We saw how in both the village and classroom contexts, competence to participation is developed in interaction and lived experiences with others, as novices participate in the most routine everyday activities.

A second theme has been to highlight the different organizational forms of village life, on the one hand, and classroom cohort participation, on the other. The latter is more easily and directly described across the headings of chapter 6. Chapters 4 and 5 offer multiple examples of how everyday life is organized in the village context, and how its production entails participation in the multiple tasks and relations of the village community (as in the 'parable of bread'). We further saw, through our description of Yavuzhan’s experiences, how village children practice and develop competencies starting in early life in interaction with family members. This is their 'earliest' childhood education. In Yavuzhan’s case, we saw how his grandfather was a major cultural and instructional resource for him, supporting his participation through modeling and treating him as an interlocutor in dealings with other adult members. Competence is a cultural curriculum, as it was when we saw Yavuzhan constructing his pretend plays. It is not only that he is taught, but that he seeks instruction.

Through observations and conversations with children and their elders, chapters 4 and 5 developed multiple accounts of early childhood experience both inside and outside of school, its continuities across generations, and from the perspectives of children, and children who had become adults. The rhythms and attachments of childhood experience to family and village life was expressed in an elder’s remarks on the place of her children in her working life: "They are our extended hands." Whereas the literature of early
childhood studies tends to write formal accounts of the membership categories of 'child' and 'adult' (Sacks, 1992) in ever finer detail, and write on behalf of the competencies children do not yet possess, in the village experience, childhood competence is evident in the tasks they do, in their contributions to collective work, and in how they are relied upon to perform them. And as with every communal task, competence to village life is not simply technical or procedural, or cognitive. The child's place in the larger project is only possible because they can see the social landscape that organizes the larger project, as we saw in the case of Meltem and the family's cows. Meltem is a second grader. She is 8 or 9 years old. Yavuzhan is a preschooler, perhaps 4 years old. We can see the distance between them, in the organizations and expectations for their participation in collective life. We can also see the profound transformation that takes place within the span of only a few years. How it takes shape, how the distance is traversed in this village and others like it, is a topic for further study.

By the time they start school, most village children are able to see many organizations of village life at a glance. They can see its rhythms and relationships. I have often thought that it is the texture of those relationships and how village life binds the lives of villagers together, that is missed the most by those of us who have left. We saw Meltem’s competence, for example, in producing not only her part in the village order, but also her understanding of how life works in the village, and what rights and obligations bind it together, and in her attempt to explain all of it to the researcher (as an outsider). Meltem is only a second grader, but finds the organization of the village and her place within it fluently.
How we care about education.

Yaylali village has experienced formal schooling for a few generations already. Elders spoke of the village's resistance to schooling in those early days, and as discussed in chapter 5, the parents and adult relatives of the children spoke of classrooms as strange places whose organizations they never came to terms with to this day. In ways that their children cannot yet say, these parents and elders are articulate about what was strange and uninviting about it. Given their experiences, they saw schooling as something to be over with. Though some regretted this attitude in later years, they had few chances for success while in school, since they could not see how things worked there.

Yet even with this difficult experience early in the village’s exposure to modern education, these parents and elders hoped for their children's success. They could see the value of education, and see it in their own experience. They were not 'oppositional' to schooling.

And yet they did not see village life as a lesser form of life. Their judgments were accommodating, rather than competitive. They saw value in each, the modern and credentialed, and the rural and traditional, and saw each as holding the promise of a fulfilling life. They were, in this sense, multi-culturalists without college degrees. They have a great deal to teach us, and this is a central finding of the study for all those who do not know it already. Their inclusive perspective is seldom found in a literature that tends to divide communities into those that value education as 'we' do, and those who do not. These villagers are offering a corrective to the simplicities of this kind of binary thinking, and ethnographic studies are often engaged in that corrective exercise.
As seen in chapter 6, the classroom presents similar difficulties to many of their children and grandchildren. It shows us a setting where the village child encounters modern organizational forms, and shows us something about the encounter on actual occasions. Both in village and in classroom, children develop their competencies as they participate in the most routine everyday interactions with others. However, while in the village community, children’s development of competence is steady and unproblematic, as they have all the cultural resources available to them as village life presents itself across its endless daily occasions. (Lave [1990] observes the same of traditional apprentice pedagogies; the presumption is that the apprentice will succeed, and they do.) In classrooms, however, the process gets problematic. As in their parents’ experience, they have limited cultural resources for learning the organizations they find there. And they bring already owned forms of participation from home (as we see in the cohort organizations of family relations that they bring to the classroom). As competencies are developed in the most routine everyday interaction in both contexts (village and classroom), the competencies learned, and their learned nature tends to be taken for granted, in both contexts. This taken for granted nature gets problematic when the children encounter a setting that has no particular use for what they already know and can do, and expects differently of them.

The organization of their classroom lessons is analyzed in Chapter 6 under three major headings: “Cohort organization and party structure”, “Initiation-Reply-Evaluation (IRE) Sequences” and the “Achievement of Common Understanding.” We have seen how each of these organizational outcomes requires the joint participation of the teacher
and the students for their production, and requires competence to these classroom organizational forms. It is to these forms that they must develop competent participation, and their work of common understanding underwrites each of the others.

We have seen how in the organization of classroom activities, and cohorting especially, the "occasioned identities" (Payne and Hustler, 1980) of the ‘teacher’ and ‘students’ are constructed, and the relative participation rights and obligations shown and oriented to. We further saw how the competence to these productions develops in the most routine interaction with others, as the students participate in everyday life in classroom. Thus we saw how it is that such learning takes place in unnoticed ways, without any direct instruction provided. Participation in everyday activities itself becomes instructive, and although in the early years their participation to village life is peripheral (Lave and Wenger, 1991), in a remarkably short time the village children become competent for responsible participation. (As we find in the 4 to 5 year difference between Yavuzhan and Meltem in chapter 4).

In classrooms, however, there is little time for ‘peripheral participation.’ Students confront their tasks of participation immediately. Indeed, we could say that the early remonstrations from the teacher are about not treating their classroom participation as peripheral; their identities as students take precedence over their identities as cousins, siblings, or playmates. We have seen how the first graders received guidance from the teacher more frequently (as when we hear their names in the first position of the teacher’s nomination, thus giving them additional resources for orienting to the question as their question), and how the older children in the room also became instructional resources for
them, reminding them of their tasks, or scolding them for not knowing how to do them.
The study contributes a new face to prior studies that have approached classrooms as
social, cultural places within which teaching and learning are organized around situation
specific forms of participation, rather than as culture-free places, wherein knowledge is
transmitted in neutral or informational channels. In particular, it contributes to a
literature that reminds us of the experiences of children who come to the classroom
without the benefits of instruction in the cultural forms of classroom participation. It
shows us another face of that intersection, and its expression in their lives, and those of
their home communities.

In the materials, we see them work to make sense of the setting and what it is
asking of them. We see their competence to those analyses, in the same places that we
see their struggles to competent participation. It is never the case that the students don’t
try to understand these new forms, as we also see in Elvan in fragment 7, Meltem in
fragment 9, and Gozde and Sulttan in fragment 11, and Ali in fragment 12. In every case,
they never give up trying to achieve common understanding throughout their encounters,
and they always orient to the progress of their tasks, trying to see and produce what
comes next. Although not yet competent to classroom forms, they are competent to
interaction, and set out to assess whatever forms they encounter. They show their
orientations to the accomplishment of common understanding and the production of next
turns on time. As we see in Ali, especially, their good faith in orienting to its
achievement is unfailing, even when they fail repeatedly to see how the teacher is
speaking. In the analysis and description of their work, we can find a way to see and
appreciate their engagement, rather than dismissing them as “villagers, who don’t care about education.” By the close analysis of their tasks, we can show the work they invest in their learning, and show it to ourselves, and to others.

Yet, as with children everywhere, in urban as well as rural settings, modern, postmodern and not so modern, we find differential success. Some find more success than others. Some 'get it' more quickly than others. Some are recognized as more able than others. Our impulse, and this is a deeply cultural matter, is to say that some are indeed more able than others.94

But I would like to point to the chart below to suggest grounds for a different understanding. The materials do not settle the matter, but are strongly suggestive, and in that way can be a useful corrective of the impulse to more normative explanations of 'success.' It shows how those children who have the cultural resources of prior experience and success in classroom education at home, excel at school. They fare better in their classroom lessons compared with students who do not have those resources. The students listed below were identified as the ‘smart ones” by the teacher upon my entry into the field.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1st Graders</th>
<th>Musa</th>
<th>Kadir</th>
<th>Umut Can</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Father</td>
<td>High school</td>
<td>High school</td>
<td>High School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mother</td>
<td>High school</td>
<td>Middle</td>
<td>High School</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

94 The 'our' is the literature, and education's professional communities of expertise.
Umut Can lives with his grandmother, who is recognized among villagers to know how to help her children in school.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2nd Graders</th>
<th>Meltem</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Father</td>
<td>Elementary</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mother</td>
<td>Elementary</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Meltem lives with an older brother, who is high school graduate.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>3rd Graders</th>
<th>Sultan</th>
<th>Gozde</th>
<th>Mahide</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Father</td>
<td>High school</td>
<td>Elementary</td>
<td>High school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mother</td>
<td>Middle school</td>
<td>Elementary</td>
<td>Elementary</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Gozde lives with an aunt, who is high school graduate.

*Mahide also lives with an aunt, who is high school graduate.

The chart directs our attention to how success among students may be organized in this rural village. Though there are villagers who are more prosperous than others (as intimated in the interviews with the adults in chapter 5), the income differences of the families in the village are not so great. Nor is social status tied to wealth, or leisure, as it is in the city. In the village, everyone works hard, and in this light, familiar accounts of
'SES' won't account for the association we see in the charts. The association they show is a matter of the instructional resources of a cultural familiarity, rather than wealth. (In other contexts, the two may coincide.)

The study's findings suggest a different kind of association from those that are familiar in the research and professional literatures, where children’s success is associated with the socioeconomic level of their families, or other macro categories. Those studies tend to present individuals, and individual families, as averages, amenable to, e.g., ANOVA measures of variance. But such measures have been developed for a certain kind of world of social organizations where substantial resources are devoted to public records, data bases, and spread sheets. These contexts permit the analytic methods that analyze records of that kind. But this study shows a different context.

Rather than devising aggregate measures to represent lived experience, it recommends the description of cultural curricula in local settings. It recommends the descriptive study of cases, and how in those descriptions, we can see the coherence of their lives in local and inter-generational contexts. To my understanding, this is the ethnographic program, and from it we may then see educational outcomes differently, and perhaps be instructed by the difference.

Significance

As Goffman (1972) remarks, description has the power to change how we see. It stands as an alternative to the more familiar program of scientific explanation. It gives us understandings of how settings are organized and their regular outcomes produced, not as findings of causes or causal relations, but as practical histories. It is their good fortune,
for examples, that Gozde and Mahide live with aunts who are high school graduates, an outcome that is inseparable from the family relations and contingencies of village life. The relevant calculus here is different from an ANOVA. It is a cultural grammar, instead.

On the other hand, 'significance', at least for studies that do not rely on statistical designs, can easily become an argument (as all academic interpretation can become an argument). Outside of normative statistical measures (and even they are less stable than it can seem), its terms aren't settled. In my view, and knowing the Turkish educational literature and professional communities as a former teacher and university student, the potential significance of this study is substantial, in the ways that Goffman suggests. It was in these same ways that the studies of Deyhle (1988), Gallas (1998), McDermott (1974), Mehan (1979), Phillips (1972), Rist (1972) and many other descriptive studies of student lives in and out of classrooms have been instructive. Each offered instructive studies of cases. Each showed us a 'face' that we had not seen before.

Yet it can be asked of this or any local study, "What significance has this case?" In the particulars of my descriptions of what these village children encountered in the classroom, one could ask, for example, "How is the experiences of these village children different from children anywhere else?" Every ethnographic or case study is of course available to comparative questions. Every case is another case, and how one case stands to another would be the question. The mainstream of educational study takes up aggregate tendencies, and handles its data points that way. If that is our standard in matters of significance, ethnographic case study poses a puzzle.
Yet I find three difficulties with questions like these, and I offer this reply on behalf of future students who may take interest in cases. The first is that ethnography, to my understanding, is not a comparative exercise; comparative work is the program of ethnology (Malinowski, 1922/1996). Ethnographic work is not usually seen as a preliminary to a comparative exercise. The rich case, whether among Deyhle's (1988) Native American break dancers, or Gallas' (1998) study of an African American kindergartner in a majority middle class and white classroom, tends to organize ethnographic work. A study of an elementary school principal (Wolcott, 1973) was not measured to questions of whether the practices we find there are like or different from schools elsewhere. The case itself is instructive. It shows us variations on themes we may already possess.

Second, and more difficult for ethnography, the premise of the question about differences from settings and occasions elsewhere seems to be that before we could take interest in actual cases, we would have to write an account of what "all other instances show us." We would have to know or examine "everything else," or what is true for "all children," before we could proceed with our study. Only then could we answer the question or frame our inquiry. But knowing 'anywhere' or 'everywhere' else is too large a task. Every proposal for the study of a next case would be vulnerable to this question. The 'anywhere' of social life is too diverse for a study to be answerable to such questions. No ethnographic inquiry can begin there.

On the other hand, one could agree with these rejoinders, but still say that the question should be answered not before the study, but afterwards: In assessing the study,
has it shown anything that can't be found 'anywhere else'? But this invocation of 'anywhere else' shows the same difficulties. There will be many more case studies than we have seen so far before 'anywhere' has usefully been explored. As we see and assemble cases, there is no doubt that there will be resemblances across them. I think the logic of the study of cases is that we progressively see more of our topics as we extend our knowledge and acquaintance with their diverse expressions. In Blumer's phrase, each case is a "distinctive expression" and an instructive occasion. There is also a second difficulty with the question.

The question about comparative findings quickly becomes the terms of 'significance'. Within this reasoning, a 'significant finding' becomes a finding never found before. In this way, 'significance' becomes measured to 'all that is known'. The expression seems to follow from the culture of natural science discovery. But in social worlds, 'significance' may be a far more local matter. What may be a commonplace in one community, e.g., the effects of racial discrimination on educational success, may be quite significant to another. It may be significant to describe a community's 'point of view' precisely because it is not known elsewhere. Significance can be the importance of a study for the lives of those who have been studied. Their stories or accounts or understandings are descriptions of the local life of their country or region or province, yet they may well be significant to persons in very distant places too. Cases can show us local place we have not known, and thus show us another face on matters we thought we already knew. This study is showing us the circumstances of a rural village school. It is entirely possible that half the world's children who attend school do so in rural village
places. Yet the contemporary literature tells us very little about such places, or their worlds.

Studies that offer alternative ways of seeing the work and contingencies of classroom life may be a very productive curriculum for teachers and policy makers in many places. By implication, 'significance' can always be a future discovery, as the history of science suggests. In this light, 'significance' would be no less contingent than the social orders and meanings we try to describe. It may be as contingent as truth and fact have turned out to be. For such a world, descriptions of cases in their detail may offer a significant curriculum for professional education's adults, instructing them and us in how we might see village children differently. In the Turkish context, this may be especially significant.

In the context of the Turkish educational literature, there is little qualitative research. Test administration and survey studies are the norm in the Turkish educational literature.\(^95\) Familiarity with the logic of case study is newly developing there. In this way, there are places where this study may be quite and even compellingly significant, not only for what it finds, but how it understands education, childhood, or classroom life. The question of 'significance' seems to have no single universal measure. That it does not

\(^{95}\) In applying for permission to conduct my study with the Provincial educational office, I discovered that there was no provision for 'naturalistic observation'. That is, the premise of the form that I had to complete is that educational research consists of administering brief paper and pencil surveys. I had to negotiate permission to spend time in the classroom.
is one of the insights of ethnographic study, or the close study of cases that attends to the meanings of the setting for the participants.

As some evidence of this local significance, I want to note that during the study, I took time to travel to the District center to meet with other professional educators. I was interested to hear how they spoke of schooling and villages and village children. Somehow (it was not surprising), it was known that this woman of the village who had been away for many years, had returned, and was now conducting research and earning an advanced degree at an American university. These educational professionals were of course interested in what I was doing, and their inquiries were always careful and both indirect, and direct. They led to several discussions in which I was obliged to say, "what I was doing." I did my best, speaking about what classroom participation requires, who the village children are, and how, virtually without exception, these children set themselves to the task of understanding an organized setting they had never seen before. And almost to a person, these Turkish educators took interest.

In various ways, they let it be known that they didn't quite understand what I was talking about, and yet, at the same time, they could somehow recognize the importance of what I was talking about. The topics, of course, had no place in the professional accounts of Turkish education. Yet they could hear that in some way I was speaking on behalf of these children, and could recognize what I was talking about as something they had noticed too, though it was outside their authorized ways of seeing and talking about their professional responsibilities. These conversations were, of course, asides to my larger project. But they encouraged me to think that the answer to the questions posed about
significance, or findings different from what is already known will be found in local communities that may be some distance from more familiar educational research communities.

My impression is that the study of cases in their constitutive productions always raises such questions of what is 'distinctive' about them, or what is newsworthy. But, I think there is enough history in the literature now to suggest that not only is news a local judgment, but that the very terms of what is news is itself changeable. The literature of qualitative research has been central to that history. Both for those who know the Turkish context, and those who do not, I think the study will be of interest. I also think it contributes to the on-going conversation about how we take interest in educational worlds and what those worlds can teach us.

*Last note on position.*

Considering the general outcomes of rural education, one can say the villagers are the victims of inequality in the larger society. Most continue no further than compulsory education. And it is a rare village child who enters a college or university. Those who do usually have moved away with their families to an urban center, or arranged to live with an extended family there, rather than transferring to the boarding school in the district center, or using the bussing system to get there. Few if any make it to a highly ranked university. I should note that the Provincial and National governments have some sense for these circumstances, and there are some efforts to address them.

Considering these outcomes, my personal story is an exceptional one. I haven’t heard of anybody in this village, or the surrounding villages, or in the district center who
qualified for a scholarship for international graduate level study. Not even in the next
district center have I heard of a person who has similar experiences. I was honored by
the governor in the district center, and received special congratulations for coming from
such a small place, and accomplishing what I had accomplished on national
examinations. I remember a very high ranking military officer who came to my home, to
offer his congratulations to my parents on my achievements. Not even with the
advantages of private test preparation services, had his children achieved such
distinctions. I had no such advantages.

Of course, he and others who remarked on my achievements were right; it is an
exceptional story. What we tend to make of this exceptionalism is that village children
do not have equal access to educational institutions due to the structural inequality in the
larger society. To find a villager who does achieve is exceptional. We can then say that
her story should be the story of others. *Every* village child should have such
opportunities, and indeed, no child should be denied them.

However, I think there is a problematic conceptualization implicit to what we like
about such stories as mine. It is problematic in several ways. First of all, it assumes a
certain kind of perspective that of a modern, middle class vision of ’equity’. Within this
vision, ’middle class access' is the measure of access, and anything ‘less’ is a failure of
equity. It reminds me of the Whig historians discussed in chapter 2. It implicitly
assumes that village life is a lesser kind in comparison to the lives we find in modern
urban settings, and that every villager is living her life to become "one of us", aspiring to
the modern form. Becoming like 'us' is the measure of both exceptionalism, and equity.
As we have seen in chapters 4 and 5, however, this assumption would lead us to a very simplistic conclusion, about village forms of life and the social relations they have there. Implicit to this vision of equity is that village forms are lesser forms. To live there is to be 'denied' access. This measure of equity is entirely self-referential, and we could see these issues quite differently. A different conceptualization would have us see village forms of life as co-equal with others. This is what the grandmother in chapter 5 is telling us. Life in the village, caring for the lands and family of the forefathers is not a diminished form.

On the other hand, we can argue that seeing village life as equally valued would be an act of further promoting inequalities in the larger society. In a world of modern institutions where schooling and academic achievement are criterial for participation, to dismiss the difficulties village populations face in their encounter with these new organizational forms would be a step in the wrong direction, denying them access to modern life and success in modern institutions. The values of village life, in this view, are perhaps only romantic. But once again, it is the moderns who decide what romance is. In chapter 5 we heard the villager’s accounts, and we saw evidences that they value village life, but not to the exclusion of a modern life. As they find themselves in the intersection, it would be easy to assume that they feel an urge to identify with only one or the other. However, when we pay attention to what they say, we find a more complex picture than the simple ‘either or’ division. The greater sense of 'equity' may be theirs.

Although I would certainly be perceived as an exceptional one who was able to leave the village, gain access to higher education and perhaps a modern, professional
person’s perspective, the other village girls certainly do not live their lives believing they were the unlucky ones. For some I could be seen as that unfortunate who lives a life among strangers. I was recurrently asked the question, "When will you be back?" Or, "Haven't you had enough; come back, nowhere will be like home." Still others see the value of my position, for having left the village and learned of educational matters, perhaps I may be of assistance in the village community’s struggles. For them, leaving the village and being educated is valuable if it assists the village community. Those who are successful, who experience a world beyond the village, can serve as 'right hands'.

The idea of valuing education for personal reward does not occur to them. Village life is connected. It takes care of everyone and leaves no one alone. Urban life may slowly be discovering this wisdom. There is no reason to think that educating the next generation means that we should deny this wisdom. In case studies such as this one, perhaps we can affirm it.

In case studies such as this one, we learn of early childhood education and experience in a rural, village setting. Such settings are relatively rare in the educational

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96 The phrase is from a village age-peer; it is a cultural expression meaning, the right hand is one’s strength as opposed to the left hand. She was talking with others about how they had never experienced air travel. I explained what things looked like from high above, and how one could see both sides of the mountain range. She and they listened attentively. Someone then remarked on how the fares between Adana and Istanbul were now lower, and perhaps they might fly there in the near future. They thanked me for my accounts of things they did not know. She remarked, 'Sister, you are like my right hand extending outside." My opportunities and experiences did not diminish their own; they were a resource instead.
research literature. But they are not at all unusual in the living experience of endless village settings across the continents. Such settings are largely un-examined. The published literature knows little of them. Part of the recommendation of educational field study, the ethnographic study of local communities and the sense of their experience of classroom education, is that it extends our understanding of these encounters. In this village, we gain a sense for these encounters in the contemporary lives of the children, contexted by the encounters and recollections of their elders. It is an unusual setting where we can see encounters with modern classroom education across a handful of generations spanning the second half of the 20th century. It thus offers an unfamiliar perspective on the experience of early childhood education. The measure of familiarity I am referring to is familiarity for the published literature. In terms of actual lived experience, however, village classroom life may be the far more familiar perspective.
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Appendix A: Nasreddin Hoca and the Neighbor

Hoca every evening, would pray, “My Allah, send me a thousand gold pieces. But, let it be exactly thousand. If it is nine hundredth ninety nine, I will not take it.” A neighbor hears his prayers and drops exactly nine hundredth ninety nine gold pieces from the chimney thinking “wait, I will play him a game.” So excited, Hoca takes gold pieces saying, “one is missing but it’s okay.” The neighbor appears next day in Hoca’s asking for his gold pieces, complaining, “eee Hoca efendi, you say you will not take them, but when it comes readily you will take them.” “Are you out of your mind?” says Hoca. “What gold pieces are you looking for?” Seeing that the situation is unworkable, the man offers, “let’s go see a judge then.” Hoca accepts the offer only on one condition, “my donkey has passed away. I had left my fur for mending too. If you lend me a donkey and a fur, I will go.” Desparate, the man accepts it. In the court, Hoca’s neighbor speaks first. When Hoca takes the turn, he says “your honor, this man will claim my ride (donkey) if you give him a chance.” The man throws himself, “sure it is mine. Haven’t I lend it to you?” Hoca says smilingly, “do you see your honor. He even would claim my fur if he has no shame.” Man, “sure it is mine” says. Bothered by the situation, the judge kicks the man out of court saying, “this is enough flippant. This is a court here.” Upon returning to the village, Hoca gives the
man a good lesson saying “don’t ever interfere with the Allah’s business” as he returns both the gold pieces and the borrowed donkey and the fur.
Appendix B: Transcription Notations

Transcript notations are derived from the conventions developed by Sacks et al. (1974).

Punctuations note intonations and associated pauses.

Pauses are noted in seconds, e.g., (2.5); micro pauses are noted by (.)

// A double slash notes the point at which one speaker overlaps another.

= An equal sign notes the ending of one utterance and the beginning of a next without gap or overlap.

– Hyphens indicate a word cut off in its production.

* * Notes soft speaking.

: A colon indicates a sound stretch on a word or word portion, e.g., “no::”

( ) Empty indicates an unheard utterance. Filled parentheses indicate an uncertain hearing.

(( )) Double parentheses contain descriptions of the scene.

The Teacher is shown as T; student speakers are identified by their first name initials. Several students speaking at once is designated Sm.