Articulating Inequalities:

a linguistic ethnographic account of race and class in an undergraduate architecture studio in England

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Abstract

In a political climate that has seen increasingly urgent and often separately articulated claims for social justice on the grounds of racial and class-based inequalities, Higher Education as a whole, and Architectural Education in particular, have consistently reported stark and persistent inequalities based on measures relating to class and ethnicity. Policy responses aiming to address these inequalities have been criticised for employing fixed and separate identity categories and for positioning students of colour as the deficient embodiment of social problems. More recently, these measures have been employed in government-commissioned reports and subsequent policy as justification for the denial of structural and institutional racism. In Higher Education, policy discourse around racial inequality has been displaced by a discourse of individual choice and agency.

Addressing these issues, this thesis presents the findings of a linguistic ethnographic study into race and class in an undergraduate architecture studio. It employs a critical sociolinguistic approach that sees social structures and the categories of inequality they produce as reproduced and resisted in everyday social interaction (Silverstein, 2003; Bucholtz & Hall, 2005). Drawing on anti-essentialist study of race and class in Britain, the study engages Stuart Hall's notion of *articulation*, to treat the discursive construction of race and class as co-constituted articulations in material conditions of inequality produced by specific histories (Hall, 2021 [1980]). Accordingly, the study is situated in specific histories of race and class in England (Shilliam, 2018; Virdee, 2014; Kundnani, 2021). The thesis finds the discursive and ideological conditions navigated in the architecture studio to be characterised by three interrelated centres of authority: racially hegemonic whiteness, self-responsible deservedness, and conviviality. In showing *how* Higher Education is hegemonically white, the findings suggest the importance of avoiding neoliberal meritocratic framings of choice and agency and of fostering the potential of convivial relations amidst racism.

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Table of Contents

1 Introduction 9
1.1 Personal and professional context 11
1.2 Focus of the study 17
1.3 Significance of contribution 20
1.4 Thesis Outline 26
2 Research Context 28
2.1 Introduction 28
2.2 Race and class in neoliberal England 29
2.3 HE Policy Discourse on Race and Class 38
2.3.1 The Political Case for Equal Opportunity in Education 38
2.3.2 Increased Attention to Racial Inequality 40
2.3.3 HE Equality Policy and its Critique 42
2.3.4 From racial inequality to a discourse of choice 46
2.3.5 Responses to inequality in architectural education 53
2.3.6 The School of Architecture and Policy Implementations 58
2.4 Conclusion 62
3 Theoretical Framework and Review of Literature 65
3.1 Introduction 65
3.1.1 Outline of Theoretical Framework 66
3.2 Critical sociolinguistics 68
3.2.1 Undoing fixity and essentialism 68
3.2.2 Indexicality 71
3.2.3 Playful talk, teasing and identity work 78
3.2.4 Raciolinguistics: language, ideologies and structures 80
3.2.5 Race and class 84
3.2.6 Whiteness 89
3.2.7 Neoliberal governmentality 94
3.2.8 Conviviality 100
3.3 Articulation 104
3.3.1 Identity 110
3.4 Conclusion 115
4 Methodology 116
4.1 Introduction 116
4.2 Methodology 116
4.3 Positionality 120

4.4 Research Design 125
4.4.1 Overview: 125
4.4.2 Research Questions 128
4.4.3 Data Collection 130
4.4.4 Data Analysis 139
4.5 Ethics 144
4.5.1 Minimising Harm 145
4.5.2 Respecting Autonomy 146
4.5.3 Preserving Privacy 147
4.6 Conclusion 148
5 Briefings: subverting and reproducing racialised academic space 149
5.1 Introduction 149
5.2 Subversion and reproduction of racialised academic space 150
5.2.1 Convivial subversions of racially hegemonic space 151
5.2.2 Self-responsible deservedness 163
5.3 Conclusion 176
6 Studio talk: student constructions of self-responsible deservedness and conviviality ... 178
6.1 Introduction 178
6.2 Convivial studio space 179
6.3 Competitive and convivial constructions of studio space 181
6.4 Navigating racially hegemonic discursive space 187
6.4.1 Aligning with dominance in a racialised order of class relations 188
6.4.2 Indexing whiteness 193
6.4.3 Convivial resistance and reproduction of racial hegemony 206
6.5 Conclusion 221
7 Stratified studio space: conviviality amid racially hegemonic perceptions 224
7.1 Introduction 224
7.2 Convivial resistance to racial hegemony (Jasmine) 224
7.3 Convivial resistance to racial hegemony (Archer) 257
7.4 Conclusion 281
8 Conclusion 283
8.1 Findings 283
8.1.1 Theoretical Contribution 296
8.1.2 Methodological Contribution 299
8.1.3 Policy Contribution 301
8.2 Directions for Future Research 304

9 Bibliography 307
10 Appendices 331
Appendix 1: Presentation to Cohort 332
Appendix 2: Information sheets and consent forms 334
Appendix 3: Year Convenor Professional Project Slide 343
Appendix 4: Self Directedness Induction Slide 344

List of Figures

Figure 1	Diagrammatic Outline of Theoretical Framework………………………	66
Figure 2	Example of interactional map: Jasmine……………………………….	136
Figure 3	Year Convenor Introductory Slide……………………………………	159
Figure 4	Hip-hop Introductory slide……………………………………………	160
Figure 5	Attendance Slide……………………………………………………	164
Figure 6	Final Induction Slide………………………………………………..	174
Figure 7	Interactional Map: Gary…………………………………………….	186
Figure 8	Interactional Map: Jasmine…………………………………………	249
Figure 9	Interactional map: Archer…………………………………………..	270

List of Tables

Table 1	UniX Attainment Figures 2021………………………………………..	61
Table 2	Overview of Data Collection Involving Student Participants…………...	133
Table 3	Quantity of Data Collection by Type…………………………………	134
Table 4	Dates and length of audio data recordings collected by participants…….	139

Transcription Conventions

Emphasis	underlined
Author's comments	(( ))
Inaudible	(???)
Pause of 0.5 seconds	(.)
Longer pause length (seconds)	(1.5)
Overlapping speech	[
Smile voice	£
Questioning intonation	?
Elongated words	e.g. y:e:a:h
Soft speech	° °
Fast speech	> <
Raised intonation	↗
Lowered intonation	↘

1 Introduction

This study sets out to establish the conditions in which race, ethnicity and class are discursively constructed in the educational context of an undergraduate architecture studio in a university in the South of England. The thesis is underpinned by the theoretical and methodological assumption that race, ethnicity and class are not fixed social categories that inhere in individuals but are negotiated and discursively constructed in ways that cannot be divorced from context and historically specific material conditions. These conditions are currently marked by political tensions with race and social class often articulated as separate but increasingly urgent questions of social justice. In recent years the UK, along with the US and much of Europe has seen a resurgence of populist right-wing politics that has appealed to a 'native' 'left behind' white working-class constituency whose culture has been eroded, forgotten or ignored in the context of demographic change and/or migration (Kundnani, 2021; Shilliam, 2021; Virdee, 2019). Alongside these developments, increasing calls for an end to racial injustice and action to address the historical and contemporary effects of colonialism have been amplified following worldwide protests in the aftermath of the murder of George Floyd, a black[1] American, by a white police officer (Strong et al., 2023).

It is in this context that universities have been faced with addressing stubborn racial, ethnic and class-based inequalities in outcomes for students racialised as Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME[2]), and from lower socioeconomic backgrounds (Mountford-Zimdars et al., 2015). These inequalities are revealed by state-mandated monitoring with roots in two distinct but related areas of policy. The first concerns 'widening participation' policies aimed at increasing access to Higher Education (henceforth HE) as part of a movement towards a

[1] Throughout the thesis I follow Gilroy (2021) in using lower case for the term 'black'. Where paraphrasing or quoting other authors, I follow their usage.
[2] This grouping of ethnicities was used at the outset of the study but has since been abandoned. See Chapter 2 for more detail.

mass system of HE in the UK that became a 'key concern of government policy' from 1998 onwards (Pilkington, 2009:16). The second policy area concerns anti-discrimination legislation (Race Relations Amendment Act, 2000; Equalities Act, 2010) that originated in responses to judicial findings of institutional racism in public bodies following the police and Crown Prosecution Service handling of the racist murder of a young black man, Stephen Lawrence (Macpherson, 1999). This monitoring has revealed significant and persistent inequalities around measures of social class and ethnicity. When measured in this way, inequalities are markedly greater in relation to ethnic categorisations than in those relating to social class. In terms of access to university, however, while significant issues with access to more prestigious institutions remain (Boliver, 2016), students whose ethnic backgrounds are minoritized in the UK context are now more likely to access university education than the white population (Lammy, 2015:3). Despite these developments, the most recent published statistics show an 18.3% gap between Black students and White students and a 7.7% gap between Asian students and white students' attainment of 'good' (1st class or 2:1) degrees (OfS, 2021). This policy context will be discussed further in Chapter 2. The study aims to account for inequalities of race and class without reliance on fixed and separate framings of class and ethnicity as attached to individuals. Instead, it aims to address them as discursive and material conditions that are navigated in the course of everyday interactions in specific institutional settings.

Some definitions of race, class and ethnicity should be made clear at the outset. In line with Madsen and Svendsen (2015, p. 228), these social categories are treated as "sociopolitical (and political) interpretations signified by certain cultural and linguistic practices, rather than as existing bounded groups reflecting biological, place-related or socioeconomic facts." At the same time, their continued existence as social realities for those subjected to racialized and classed oppression is emphasised (Alim, 2016a, p. 6).

The study treats 'race' as the product of a process of racialization which is understood to be effected through the continued rearticulation of colonial distinctions between Europeanness and non-Europeanness—and, by extension, whiteness and nonwhiteness' (Rosa & Flores, 2017:622). 'Ethnicity' is understood as the product of processes of 'situated discursive processes by which ethnic subjectivities are constructed in relation to language, history and culture (Hall, 1996a 446). While the study is concerned with the conditions in which race, class and ethnicity are navigated, where ethnicity is implicated in the reproduction of racialized distinctions and hierarchies, this will be referred to as an issue of race or racism (see Chapter 3 for detailed discussion).

1.1 Personal and professional context

I first encountered the issue of racializing policy framings of educational inequality in my role as a Learning Development Tutor at a specialist Arts University in the South of England. As a white man in his late thirties who had always lived in the UK, this was the first time I had encountered a situation in which I was confronted with my own role in reproducing racial inequality. The position from which I tried to make sense of this owes something to my own educational trajectory, which had itself been shaped by the massification of HE in the UK. I was the first person in my family to attend university. My dad had been forced to leave school without formal qualifications at the age of 14 to contribute to the family finances. I was born 12 years later, by which point he had worked his way through a string of manual jobs to the position of superintendent in the cleaning department of the local council. By the time I was able to go to university, his hard-working commitment had taken him to a senior management position in local government. Although I was not particularly enthusiastic about education, to spurn the opportunity to go to university felt like it would have been an affront to his efforts.

I attended my local university in Preston, Lancashire, which had gained university status just four years before I joined owing to a policy of ‘opening up’ HE by designating such status to former polytechnics. The university was just 20 miles away from my parental home on the outskirts of the deindustrialised coastal town of Blackpool: now a byword for British deprivation (Telford, 2021) often implicated in the aforementioned narratives of the ‘left-behind’ ‘white-working class’ constructed by Britain’s populist political right (Shilliam, 2021). I began my studies as a commuter, living with my parents and spending most of my time with peers who had not gone to university and had begun work at 16 or 18. It seemed to me that ‘my people’ were not ‘uni people’. ‘My people’ were my peers in my hometown. The space of the university did not feel like one I belonged in. My local pub where I both worked and drank did. I spent my student loans on designer labels, occasionally became embroiled in the macho, sometimes violent, heavy-drinking culture of my hometown and treated my studies as a necessary inconvenience.

I had met some of 'my people' on my course. They were also commuters from Preston and surrounding post-industrial towns. They were mostly Muslim guys of Indian and Pakistani heritage who had a similarly instrumental approach to university and like me seemed to be there on their parents' expectations and a sense that we had an opportunity they had not. We shared a similar dress sense – a liking for expensive trainers and prominently displayed designer labels - and perhaps a more 'streetwise' sensibility than I would have associated with the majority of our peers on the course. I had also met a pony-tailed, gregarious, hip-hop-loving white guy, Jim. Trainers and labels were his thing, too. He lived in a huge dilapidated, 3-storey converted Tea Rooms with 10 other guys. I had met most of them a couple of times and been to a raucous party hosted by them. These guys did not feel like typical 'student types' and when Jim asked me if I wanted to rent a room that had come up, I moved in. We were and still are a close-knit, multi-ethnic, multi-classed group. At university,

we were known to others as 'the Borg', a reference to the indivisible hive-mind collective of Star Trek cyborgs, because of our perceived inseparability. Twenty-five years later we still are and likely always will be 'the Borg' having appropriated the name and brought our children up on it.

Another moniker bestowed on us was ‘the United Colours of Benetton’ in racializing reference to the company’s advertising campaigns, which were emblematic of the late 90s mood of neoliberal multicultural consumerism, featuring smiling multi-ethnic groups of models to sell clothes. However, the cultural resources and sensibilities that we coalesced around were not those exploited by Benetton branding but owed more to what Gilroy (2004:132) has described as a 'spontaneous and ordinary hybridity' amidst metropolitan conditions of economic inequality, which are associated with electronic dance music and recreational drug use. They were projected in large part at that time by the UK garage and drum and bass that would fill the house and the more discerning of the dancefloors we would frequent.

After university, most of the Borg began careers in London. Four of us moved in together. We met our female equivalent in an internationally mobile, multi-ethnic group of driven but hard-partying young women who had also just graduated from a more prestigious university. Some had studied subjects I had never heard of, like Anthropology, Development Studies and History of Art. Much of the next decade was spent together in the nocturnal spaces of 'ordinary hybridity' provided by the nightlife offered in London's post-industrial spaces. Meanwhile, post-university, on the recommendation of a friend, I had secured a well-paid job working in the City of London for a firm of investment managers who provided private client stockbroking to high-net-worth individuals. Perhaps as a result of a productive dissonance between my social life and my working life and growing political awareness, I eventually decided I could not devote the next few decades to making the already very wealthy slightly

wealthier. I left the City without much of a plan and found work as a teacher of academic and business English to international students at a privately owned business school. I enjoyed the work and with the 'headspace' afforded by my new job I began to study in the evenings. I studied for an MSc in Social and Political Theory. Towards the end of the course, we engaged with the 'cultural turn' in political sociology (Nash, 2000:xi) and 'new social movements' around issues of race, gender and sexuality. I argued at the time that without freedom from capitalist oppression, the emancipatory potential of such movements would be limited by the effects of class. The arrogance of my position was pointed out by a friend on the course at that time. On reflection, my starting point, as a white, straight, cis-gendered man, was with class as the only aspect of systemic social exclusion I knew intrinsically, albeit without much certainty of position or claim to personal material disadvantage. My friend's critique led me to study the interrelation of social injustices more deeply in my Master's thesis, which drew on the dual Marxian and Weberian understandings in Frankfurt School critical theory and its relation to politics of identity and questions of redistribution and recognition through the work of Nancy Fraser. The thesis also touched on questions of identity as discursively constructed, as detailed in the work of Stuart Hall.

Following my Master's degree, I continued to work in Higher Education but had begun teaching study skills and Academic English at a more upmarket corporate law and business school in the City of London. The company had recently been granted degree awarding powers having been bought by a large US corporation for £303 million (Ball, 2012:21). I was tasked with designing, teaching and leading Academic English and Study Skills modules for a new undergraduate foundation year in Law. To my surprise, the course was not to be aimed at 'international' students but local 'home' students who had not followed a traditional academic route. I have since learned that my recruitment to develop these courses followed indications from the British government that private providers were seen as a way of driving

down the cost of expanded participation in HE (Ball, 2012:22). In contrast to colleagues, I enjoyed teaching these courses. Many of the students seemed to share the slightly resentful attitude I once had toward education, and this led to some unruliness in class. Nonetheless, once I had adapted to my teaching positionality in the context, I found the students engaged and engaging. They were successful in their outcomes and my courses received very positive feedback. The students were from London and almost exclusively from minoritized ethnic backgrounds. To develop my career, I took advantage of a company policy providing an opportunity to obtain funding for work-related study and began an MA in English Language Teaching and Applied Linguistics. I found critical sociolinguistic approaches very useful in understanding the context in which I was teaching and in highlighting the broader social context of institutional norms and assumptions and questions around language and identity and education.

By the end of my MA, I had taken up a learning and teaching position in the specialist arts university in which the current study takes place. The university is located in a provincial city in the South of England within commuting distance of London. Part of my role involved working with course teams on issues of inclusivity. When a couple of years into my role I was made aware of the racial inequalities highlighted by ethnic monitoring within the institution, I raised it with the Head of the School of Architecture, who explained that he was aware of the problem as he had noted the diminishing proportion of students of colour in his cohorts from enrolment to graduation. It was true. Architecture cohorts got significantly whiter and smaller over the three years of the undergraduate degree. He explained that this was part of a wider problem within architectural education and the profession as a whole. This is borne out by statistical measures of inequality. For example, the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA, 2022) shows the Black British percentage of the student population at entry to undergraduate study to be 9.3% dropping to only 3.5% on full qualification (RIBA

2022). Meanwhile, the proportion of white students increases from 60% of the population at entry to just under 80% on full qualification. To take the profession as a whole, in Britain currently, 4% of registered architects are Asian or Asian British, 1% Black or Black British, 2% mixed or multiple groups and 94% white, the proportion of white architects having 'remained unchanged at between 92 and 94% over the past 20 years' (Mirza, 2023:68).

While monitoring of attainment by ethnicity in the university provided a useful indicator of inequality on which to base action, the categories it employed seemed to suffer from constructing ethnic groups as fixed, bounded, homogenous entities that are amenable to policy interventions at a national and institutional level (Da Costa et al., 2021). These assumptions seemed to make little sense from both my experiences inside and outside of the university. They also ran counter to the understandings of identity as discursively constructed (Hall 1996c) and the interrelated nature of social injustices (Fraser, 1995) that I had encountered in my studies. As I began to attend events related to barriers faced by students, I started to question the essentialising categorisations being used to refer to specific student needs or characteristics.

In my professional role, I was made aware of funding for Teaching and Learning projects addressing inclusion. With the sponsorship of the Head of the School of Architecture, I put forward a university-wide research project 'co-researching beyond the category' to work with student co-researchers who self-identified as coming from ethnically minoritized groups. The findings suggested the importance of everyday identity negotiation in student-to-student interactions. Similar issues had also been highlighted in a critical review into causes of differences in outcomes (Mountford-Zimdars et al., 2015:ii) commissioned by the Higher Education Council for England (HEFCE) and in a study into experiences of students referred to as Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) in Architecture conducted by the Chartered Association of Building Engineers (CABE, 2005a:74). I began to consider ways in which

such issues might be addressed through a combination of critical sociolinguistic and social theoretical perspectives. Those initial considerations ultimately resulted in this study.

1.2 Focus of the study

The problem I had noted with monitoring inequality through ethnic categorisations has been described by Wetherell (2009:9) as employing 'an outdated sociological lens' through which ethnic groups are seen to 'act like a set of mini-states or uni-minority cultures against the backdrop of the majority uni-culture.' Through this lens, ethnic identity is usually presented as an unambiguous, singular and reliable predictor of behaviour, attitudes and values (Wetherell, 2009:10). This approach can be seen in the title of a report detailing a large-scale quantitative survey by the UK public body which was responsible for funding research into ethnic inequalities in Higher Education (HEFCE, 2018): *Differences in Student Outcomes: The Effect of Student Characteristics*. The use of the word 'effect' here presents differences in outcomes as causally related to student characteristics with these characteristics defined by reference to broad social and ethnic categories. I have often experienced such problematic framings in my practice. Scholars of race have criticised such 'deficit discourses' for constructing students of colour as deficient (Bhopal and Pitkin, 2020:543) and for reifying them as racial Others who are 'the pathological embodiment of social and racial problems' (St Louis, 2009:568).

Such problematic understandings of ethnic identity within a racialised social formation have long been highlighted in the work of social theorists of race and class in the UK, such as Stuart Hall and Paul Gilroy who have argued that such policy framings imply and reproduce essentialist (Hall, 1996a), ethnic absolutist discourses of cultural homogeneity (Gilroy:1987:66). Furthermore, it has been argued that racism cannot be analysed in isolation from class and capitalist structures in specific historical conditions (Hall, 2021[1980]).

To overcome the shortcomings of such framings of racialised and classed inequalities, the current study sets out to analyse the (re)production and subversion of race and class through everyday interaction in the university architecture studio and the wider institutional and social structures of which it is a part. Its theoretical underpinning comes from the field of critical sociolinguistics, which has been chosen for its capacity to focus on how subject positions are reproduced, resisted or appropriated through discursive practices. This theoretical approach is used to analyse the discursive practices of the first-year convenor and four key participants in ways that are interrelated with the 'socio-historical, political and economic conditions that produce them' (García et al, 2016:5) (See Chapter 3 for a detailed discussion).

The study takes Linguistic Ethnography (LE) as its methodological approach to track these discursive practices empirically through linguistic micro-analysis in order to ascertain the nature of the socio-historical, political and economic conditions that are being navigated by participants as they mobilize, construct and acquire their communicative repertoires (Pérez-Milans, 2016a:87) in the studio. The ethnographic analysis treats this learning environment as a 'cultural context with its own sites of struggle, local institutional imperatives and affordances' (Creese, 2008:235) which feed off and into wider socio-historical structures (See Chapter 4 for a detailed discussion). A key orientation of the study is its attention to these wider structures as they relate to race and class. The study makes use of raciolinguistic perspectives to highlight the ways in which the flexible discursive practices of individuals can 'involve the reproduction and rearticulation of broader racial and linguistic structures within emergent contexts' (Rosa & Flores, 2017:636).

The thesis sets out to answer the following research questions:

> *1. What are the discursive conditions in which race, class and ethnicity are negotiated in the 1st year undergraduate Architecture studio?*

1.1 What are the discursive practices through which subject positions are negotiated in the course of studio interaction and in narrative accounts?

2. How do these discursive conditions relate to material conditions of inequality in HE?

2.1 How do discursive processes interconnect with institutional practices and broader social orders in ways that relate to inequalities in educational outcomes in HE?

To answer these questions, it is important to set out firstly how links are made between everyday interaction and the social structure, come to be connected and secondly, how the relationship between *the material* and *the discursive* is conceived. Two concepts are key to the way in which the study treats these issues. The first is the sociolinguistic concept of *indexicality* coined by Michael Silverstein (2003). The second is the concept of *articulation* as it is found in the work of Stuart Hall (1996b; 2021 [1980]).

In order to connect what is said in everyday interactions with racialised and classed identities that relate to wider social structures of inequality, I will rely on the concept of *indexicality.* The sociolinguistic account of the process is set out by Silverstein (2003) in his concept of 'indexical order' in which he theorises the dialectical relationship between micro-interactional and macro-sociological concerns addressed in interaction. The analysis of indexical processes in interaction provides an account of the 'sociocultural reality manifested in-and-by discursive interaction' (ibid:227) (see Chapter 3 for a detailed discussion).

The concept of *articulation* provides a way of understanding how discursively realised sociocultural realities connect with the material conditions of a historically produced present (Hall, 1996b:147). For Hall, the study of race and its connection to class and capitalist structures cannot be apprehended in the abstract and requires historically specific accounts of

context (Hall, 2021 [1980]:235-236). This means that the ways in which race and class will be articulated to 'certain political subjects' (Hall, 1996b:142) cannot be guaranteed. It is the aim of this study to provide a situated account of these processes of articulation. That is, by taking a critical sociolinguistic approach to analysing the indexical processes at play in the discursive practices analysed, it aims to make visible the sociocultural realities navigated by interactants and to set out their relation to the specific histories that produce present material conditions. These theoretical underpinnings and related theories and concepts are further set out in Chapter 3. I will now move on to explain the significance of the contribution made by the study.

1.3 Significance of contribution

Sociological studies of race in education in England have long highlighted the navigation of race and class in English schools emphasising heterogeneous identities in the context of dominant discourses of homogeneity and fixity (Archer, 2003; Mirza, 1992; Rollock, 2012; Rollock et al, 2015; Shain, 2003). Youdell (2003) has highlighted the role of discursive practices in this process. In an article on the discursive construction of the white working class in education, Gillborn (2010:5) has argued that serious critical work on intersectionality requires us to 'detail [its] complexities and account for how categories and inequalities intersect, through what processes, and with what impacts. The approach taken in the current study draws on that taken in previous studies addressing race, ethnicity and class in English schools (Rampton 2005; Rampton, 2006; Harris, 2006; Pichler, 2006) and in a university context (Preece, 2014) in applying theoretical perspectives from Critical Sociolinguistics for their capacity to detail the complexities Gillborn (2010:5) describes. The present study uses this capacity to ethnographically capture and describe the dialectic processes involved in the co-construction of linguistic meaning and the social order through the discursive construction of identities in everyday interaction (Bucholtz & Hall, 2005). Stuart Hall has noted the

potential of such approaches for 'methodologically exemplifying the conceptual complexity' of his anti-essentialist theories of ethnicity (Hall, in Harris & Rampton, 2009:118). However, he also questioned how such approaches could deal with the unequal distribution of symbolic and material resources that necessitate their study in the first place (Hall, 2006, in Rampton, 2007a:9). Hall's (2021[1980]) notion of *articulation* has been incorporated for its capacity to engage with the material impacts of discursive constructions within specific historical contexts. Using this combination, the thesis provides an empirical account of the sociocultural realities in and through which race and class are navigated discursively in everyday interactions in Higher Education. It makes five key contributions. The first is to show *how* whiteness is central to these realities. Secondly, it demonstrates empirically *how* race and class are navigated as 'co-constituted' (Rosa & Flores, 2017:635) or 'interanimating' (Chun, 2019:335) hierarchies in this context. That is, they are not treated as distinct axes of social oppression that come to meet at the individual, but as historically produced and reproduced in articulation with one another in conditions of racialised neoliberalism. This relationship between individuals and social structures is not assumed but is traced empirically and ethnographically through contextually specific discursive practices using the concepts of *indexicality* and *articulation.* A third contribution is made by providing a sociolinguistic account of the racializing processes of the construction of neoliberal subjectivities. Fourthly, the thesis documents the conditions of conviviality that exist alongside and against racialised nationalist articulations of race and class in Britain (Gilroy 2004:154; de Noronha, 2022:160). Finally, a methodological contribution is made in following LE research that uses fine-grained linguistic analysis that draws on theory from Cultural Studies (Harris 2006, Rampton, 2005; Rampton, 2006;) to provide accounts of real existing non-essentialised identities. Such approaches have been considered to be missing in earlier Cultural Studies accounts that have been subject to critique for centring analyses on

the textual (McRobbie, 1992:730, in Harris, 2009:499), the spectacular and the visual (Harris, 2006:5; 2009:499).

In the context of current political tensions around race and class in the UK, the question of accounting for sociocultural realities of race and class is an important and contested one and, as such, the contributions of the study are timely. At the outset of this study, the issue of racial inequalities was accepted as a central policy concern in Higher Education (Mountford-Zimdars et al., 2015). However, in more recent communications from the regulatory body for Higher Education in England, the Office for Students (OfS henceforth), on attainment, racial or ethnic inequalities are not mentioned (discussed in detail in Chapter 2). This change in approach followed the findings of the Commission for Racial Equality and Disparity (CRED) 2021 selected by the Conservative government to review inequality in the UK. The commission was established following multi-ethnic protests across the UK in the aftermath of the murder of George Floyd, a black American by a white police officer. The report it produced was politically divisive, generating praise from the UK right-wing press (Tikly 2022:470) and widespread condemnation from anti-racist organisations and a wide range of public bodies including the UN Human Rights Council, for its denial of structural and institutional racism in the UK and its misleading use of data (OHCR, 2021).

Education features prominently in the report. In relation to the present study, its findings were significant for its construction of racism(s) and of social class as a factor that is understood to downplay its significance. It also briefly addresses the issue of HE attainment gaps in ways that prefigure later developments in the approach of the OfS to the issue (see Chapter 2). The report as a whole frames individual agency as key to overcoming racial disadvantage. This is addressed in the foreword to the report:

> *As our investigations proceeded, we increasingly felt that an unexplored approach to closing disparity gaps was to examine the extent individuals and their communities could help themselves through their own agency, rather than wait for invisible external forces to assemble to do the job* (p.7 – foreword).

The foreword goes on to disassociate the 'impediments and disparities' faced by ethnic minorities from systemic issues and suggests that they have been misidentified as caused by racism:

> *Put simply we no longer see a Britain where the system is deliberately rigged against ethnic minorities. The impediments and disparities do exist, they are varied, and ironically very few of them are directly to do with racism. Too often 'racism' is the catch-all explanation, and can be simply implicitly accepted rather than explicitly examined.*
>
> (CRED, 2021:8)

The report ignores a wealth of research into racism in education as lived experience, focusing instead on problematic interpretations of quantitative data on attainment gaps (Tikly, 2022:473). It uses this approach to deny and diminish the existence of institutional and systemic racism in a discursive move described by Warmington (2024) as 'facile post-racialism.' As previously discussed, the present study problematises the essentialist assumptions upon which such quantitative data relies. Furthermore, it denies distinctions between the structural and the individual by exposing through sociolinguistic analysis of 'already constituted framework of semiotic value' (Silverstein, 2003:194) that structure and stratify the discursive and material conditions of institutional life in the architecture studio.

In its efforts to challenge 'the narrative' (CRED, 2021) of racial injustice in the UK diminishing the Commission report (CRED 2021) decouples race from class, which is

considered alongside other factors presented as isolated variables that are considered to be more impactful than racism.

> *The evidence shows that geography, family influence, socio-economic background, culture and religion have a more significant impact on life chances than the existence of racism. That said, we take the reality of racism seriously and we do not deny that it is a real force in the UK.*

Tikly observes a problem with the report's treatment of race and class that is central to the aims of the present study. Drawing attention to Hall's (2021 [1980]) insistence that racism needs to be understood in articulation with other social relations of inequality (See Chapter 3 for detailed discussion), he argues that '[i]t is not possible to simply control for class through the use of multivariate analysis as the authors of the report wish to do'. He goes on to state that '[t]he existence of a strong association between class and attainment does not mean that the experience of racism has not also played a significant role in the way that class advantage is itself constituted and reproduced through education' (Tikly, 2022:475). By treating race and class as articulated aspects of the social formation that are reproduced in everyday interaction, the study provides a detailed and situated account of the processes Tikly describes.

A further point of relevance to the present study is the Commission's recommendation to disaggregate the BAME to 'better focus on understanding disparities and outcomes for specific ethnic groups' (CRED, 2021:26) arguing that '[u]sers [of data] should avoid, unless it is absolutely necessary, binary analysis for example comparing White and 'Other than White' because of the lack of analytical value this gives. This position is in line with the Commission's rejection of the term 'white privilege', which it considers to be 'counterproductive and divisive' (CRED, 2021:36). Nonetheless, the report makes exactly

this white/non-white distinction numerous times to illustrate instances of white disadvantage notably describing how 'stuck some groups in the White majority are' in the foreword to the report (CRED, 2021). In contrast to the position taken by the commission, many scholars of race in UK HE have pointed to the need to address its whiteness (Bhopal, 2018; Back, 2004; Pilkington, 2018). By engaging an understanding of whiteness that responds to specific histories of race and class in England, the present study shows empirically *how* whiteness is constituted and navigated in the context of the architecture studio through an 'already constituted framework of semiotic value' (Silverstein, 2003:194)

The thesis finds that incoming architecture students are positioned in educational policy, and in institutional practices of induction and project briefings as enterprising, self-capitalising subjects with responsibility for active and competitive participation in their own success within a meritocratic system of education. However, analysis of interactions shows that everyday social calculations involve the negotiation of whiteness (as a structurally dominant position in a racialised order of class relations). That is, the discursive construction of whiteness is ideologically hegemonic in the studio. While convivial interactions provide opportunity for challenging and subverting the discursive norms of racially unmarked whiteness, its hegemonic position ultimately places an unequal sociolinguistic burden on students of colour. As such, constructions of students as deserving/undeserving participants in meritocratic competition reinforce whiteness by obscuring the racialised and classed hierarchies of the discursive space (See Chapters 5 and 6). The policy implications of these findings are discussed in the concluding chapter.

While the study attends to racialised and classed hierarchies, a limitation is its lack of attention to the place of gender in social categorisation and inequality. This resulted from its focus on observed statistical inequalities in HE. However, the everyday discursive construction of race, ethnicity and class involved articulations with gender. While these are

noted in the analysis, a full development of the ways in which race and class articulate with gender is beyond the scope of the current study due to its emphasis on race and class.

1.4 Thesis Outline

The following chapter (2) provides the research context for the study by setting out the specific histories and conditions in which the study takes place. It details the specific historical context of race and class in England in which HE policy and the study is situated. It then documents responses to observed inequalities in HE and in architectural education before outlining how these policies are implemented at the university in which the study takes place (UniX). This is followed by Chapter 3, which reviews relevant literature and sets out the theoretical framework that underpins the study. The framework brings together critical sociolinguistic approaches to the study of everyday interaction with Hall's theory of articulation. Chapter 4 discusses the linguistic ethnographic methodology employed and the approaches taken in the collection and analysis of data. The following three chapters (5-7) provide analysis of data and discussion of findings.

Chapter 5 analyses the discursive practices employed in institutionally significant moments of induction and project briefings, detailing how the white first-year convenor engages with racially marked black cultural resources in the space of the crit room in which briefings take place. It is argued that through these practices, racialised neoliberal discourses are both reproduced and subverted through appeal to relations of conviviality found in urban multicultures.

Chapter 6 analyses interactions that take place within the studio during group work. It focuses on the discursive resources of humour used to develop relational identities in groups where interactions were dominated by white students. The first identifies the use of 'superstandard' discursive and linguistic resources that distinguish the students as 'extreme white' in the

studio. In the second, it identifies a multi-ethnic conviviality that recycles and reproduces racist discourse. It is argued that each of these strategies of relational identity development responds to discursive conditions in which whiteness occupies a position of dominance in a racialised order of class relations alongside unruly convivial multicultures.

The final chapter of data analysis details how two student participants of colour with different class positionings navigate the discursive whiteness of the studio. It shows how each finds spaces of resistance through discursive practices of humour and jocular mockery but highlights the sociolinguistic labour this requires of them in the stratified sociolinguistic space of the studio.

Chapter 8 provides a concluding summary of the study, setting out the findings and contributions it has made. Policy implications and directions for future research are suggested.

This chapter has provided an overview of the study by setting out the personal and professional context in which it was conceived, its focus and contributions, and an outline of the chapters that will follow. The next chapter provides discussion of the research context.

2 Research Context

2.1 Introduction

As set out in the previous chapter, this study was motivated by framings of identity and inequality that I encountered in my professional role as a Learning Development Tutor at a specialist arts university. The autobiographical account in the introduction details my sense of being an unlikely participant in Higher Education both as a student and as a practitioner, but in fact, the participation of people without a family history of participation has undergone a huge shift in recent decades. While historically university education was the preserve of elites, by 2021 a record 37.9% of the entire UK 18-year-old population were due to start a full-time undergraduate degree course (UCAS, 2021). Nonetheless, as the previous chapter outlined, these shifts are accompanied by racialised and classed inequalities noted in equality monitoring.

The present study aims to address these inequalities by making sense of the connections between discursive conditions, institutional practices and broader social orders in which race, ethnicity and class are negotiated. It analyses the discursive practices engaged by participants as they navigate these conditions in the context of the architecture studio. To do so it combines critical sociolinguistic approaches and Stuart Hall's notion of *articulation* (See Chapter 3 for detailed discussion). *Articulation* has been described as a 'theory of contexts' (Slack, 1996:112) and requires that elements of the social structure such as race and class cannot be assumed but must be accounted for in historically specific contexts.

For this reason, the current chapter locates the context for developments in HE policy concerning race and class in the specific histories of race and class in neoliberal Britain. It sets out the policy context of New Labour's approach to inequality and goes on to detail the emergence of measures to address racial inequality in HE policy, before outlining critiques of these approaches. It then documents a recent retreat from racial inequality as a policy

concern, both in HE and in the approach of public bodies responsible for architectural education. Lastly, drawing on my involvement in these issues in my work role, the chapter provides a contextual account of the school of architecture in which the study took place and the implementation of HE policy in the university within which the school is based.

2.2 Race and class in neoliberal England

Ethnic monitoring in Higher Education and its relationship to race and social class needs to be seen in the context of the part played by education in a 'third-way' compromise between embracing neoliberal economic policy and social reform (Back et al., 2002:450) attempted by the New Labour government elected in 1997. In the period that has followed, Britain has seen a continuation of neoliberal governance and economic policy alongside a rise in racist populism. This has been accompanied by a revival of class politics instigated by the political right that was evident at the time of the study which was conducted in the period between the Brexit referendum in 2016 and Britain's eventual withdrawal from the European Union in 2020.

Neoliberalism has been defined as a 'theory of political economic practices' that involve a shift in the role of the state from being a provider of public goods to providing an institutional framework that liberates individual entrepreneurial freedoms and skills. This framework includes 'strong private property rights, free markets and free trade' (Harvey, 2007:2). With its roots in the political economy of Friedrich Hayek, this theory was put into practice in Britain with the policies of the Thatcher Government in the 1980s (Dardot & Laval, 2013:141). Alongside these changes in approach to economic and social policy through deregulation, privatisation of state functions emerged a mode of governance through which individuals are indirectly conducted to conduct themselves like entrepreneurs and to take agentive responsibility for the management of social risks (Dardot & Laval, 2013:296). In terms of subjectivity, according to Rose (1999:11), subjects under neoliberal governance are

obliged to be free to choose. That is, it is a strategy of neoliberal governments that individuals are obliged to exercise 'freedom, as choice, autonomy, self-responsibility, and the obligation to maximize one's life as a kind of enterprise' (Rose et al, 2009:13).

While acknowledging the shift to neoliberal strategies of economy and governance, scholars concerned with race have noted that explanations of neoliberalism have neglected to fully account for the ways in which race is central to its political economy (Kundnani, 2021; Shilliam; 2021; Bhattacharyya, 2018; Goldberg; 2009; Kapoor, 2013) and have provided accounts of racialised neoliberalism. Kundnani (2021) and Shilliam (2021) in particular, are concerned to account for the prevalence of ethnonationalist racist populism alongside neoliberalism in Britain around the period in which the study was conducted. According to Kundnani (2021:58), this neoliberal context 'does not only conceal and fail to remedy older racisms' but produces new structures within which racial inequalities are 'actively reworked'. Through a detailed analysis of Hayek's political economy, Kundnani (ibid:59) argues that the neoliberal thought of Hayek, which has informed British politics from the 1980s onwards, can be seen as a 'racial civilisational project.'

Kundnani (ibid) explains that Hayek's thinking centres around the idea of the market as a self-organising system that has 'emerged through a process of cultural evolution' that is rooted in European colonialism. As a system, the market is considered to integrate the values and desires of individuals to co-ordinate the impersonal exchange of property among multiple autonomous actors. It is the nature of the market as a complex evolved, self-generating system of spontaneous order, that provides its superior ability to distribute goods than individual actors or governments seeking a more just distribution (Hayek, 1966:611, in Kundnani, 2021:59). Such distributive efforts are seen as leading to totalitarianism (ibid). In neoliberal political economy, it follows that the role of government intervention should be limited to ensuring the unhindered functioning of markets and the protection of private

property. Kundnani draws attention to Hayek's insistence on the inseparability of market order from the 'common cultural tradition' that undergirds it (Hayek, 1982:45-55, in Kundnani, 2021:60). Hayek grounds this cultural tradition and the development of market order in a history of western civilisation with the universal principles of the world system provided by 'the genius of the West' (Hayek, 1971:164 in Kundnani, ibid), which is imitated elsewhere as a result of increased human interaction and communication technologies (Kundnani, 2021:60). While the West, in Hayek's conception, is uniquely placed to have discovered these values, the values themselves are considered universally applicable. Because individual freedom from state coercion is central to neoliberalism, the means by which the values will spread is 'competition', which 'if allowed to do its work, will make irrational populations act rationally and civilise the 'tribal' (Kundnani, 2021:60). Kundnani points out that what is missing from Hayek's account is the imperialist violence that, 'in practice,' has been necessary to secure neoliberal globalisation (Kundnani, 2021:53).

Hayek is argued to see 'western civilisation' as 'threatened from within and without'; from within, by labour movements, social democratic parties, and from without by 'anti-colonialist nationalisms' (ibid.:61). At home, socialist or radical left claims for distributive justice are seen as threats to freedom that appeal to 'the savage in us' with 'natural' conceptions derived from tribal society' (ibid.). These are associated with 'earlier stages of cultural evolution and so deemed 'un-western or anti-western.' The threat from without comes firstly from 'calls for redistribution of wealth from the West to poorer parts of the world. These are seen as attempts to apply to humanity as a whole obligations which were 'appropriate only to the fellow members of a tribal group'(ibid). The threat from without is immigration, so Hayek argues that 'limitations on the free movement of men across frontiers' are necessary because 'liberal principles can be consistently applied only to those who themselves obey liberal

principles, and cannot always be extended to those who do not' Hayek, 1982, in Kundnani, 2021:61).

Despite Hayek's neoliberal philosophy prohibiting designated privileges that would undermine the market order, immigration controls which tamper with access to labour markets, are considered necessary in order to defend the integrity of the Western values upon which the universal order is based. For Kundnani (2021:66) this has the effect that 'race is a material feature of the division of labour that neoliberalism produces.' Accordingly, the recent surge in electoral successes of racist populist politics, as seen in Trumpism, Brexit and the election of the populist right in Europe, cannot be understood as masking the 'non-racial economic core of neoliberalism.' Instead, Kundnani (2021:66) argues that these political manifestations make explicit the 'racial ordering through which neoliberalism has always worked.'

Shilliam (2021) provides an analysis of the rise of the populist right in Britain and the apparent paradox of a politics that promotes a neoliberal individualising of risk and responsibility alongside state intervention that calls for redistribution on behalf of the white working class through a 'levelling up' agenda. He locates the antecedents of these political manifestations of neoliberalism in the racist populism of British Conservative Politician, Enoch Powell, in the 1960s. Powell was heavily influenced by Hayek and was involved at the formative stage in the development of a key neoliberal think tank, the Institute for Economic Affairs (Shilliam, 2021:242; Kundnani, 2021:65), which was and still is engaged in the promotion and political take up of Hayek's theories of political economy.

Rather than the conventional reading of British neoliberalism originating in the politics and economic policies of Margaret Thatcher in the 1980s, Shilliam asserts that the political case for neoliberalism was being made through an articulation of principles of free-market

economics with ideologies of race, nation and empire in the rhetoric of Powell in the 1960s. Seen in this way, post-war neoliberalism in Britain is a response to the end of empire and an attempt to redeem the Anglo-Saxon race from its imperial-socialist degeneration (2021:247). Powell is infamous for his incendiary 'rivers of blood' speech, which framed the Commonwealth settlement of Black and Asian citizens in Britain as a 'fundamental threat to the preservation of an English way of life in a postcolonial era' (Shilliam, 2018:96; Shilliam, 2021:244). However, Shilliam highlights his foundational role in the neoliberal project by describing how Powell's support for the economics of free enterprise was rooted in an understanding of the white English subject as possessing heredity of orderly independence, which was sullied by both the indulgences of empire and 'state-socialism' of the Keynesian post-war national compact (Shilliam, 2018:99). This framing is familiar from Kundnani’s (2021) account of Hayek’s concern for the retreat to tribal tendencies and in the threat of cultural degeneration from without and within. From this point of view, the subject position advanced by Powell can be seen to inform the subject position associated with neoliberalism as a ‘racialised and popularised one’ (Shilliam, 2021:240; see also Cohen, 1988:38/39).

Employing a model of subjectivity that accounts for such a position means acknowledging its foundation in race thinking. Ideologically speaking, this means the whiteness of the successful neoliberal subject whose deservedness is attributed to their hard-working orderly independence. The corollary position is the 'blackening' of the unsuccessful neoliberal subject and the attribution of laziness, immorality and unruliness. Shilliam (2018) shows how such constructions have their historical roots in distinctions between the deserving free labouring Englishman and the undeserving unfree African slave that were fundamental to colonialism. A central notion in the construction of these deserving/undeserving distinctions associated with the English genus has been the notion of England as governed by ‘little platoons’ of ‘paternalistic hierarchies’. Shilliam notes the inception of this notion in the political thought

of Edmund Burke (1910:44, in Shilliam, 2018:17) as a defence against revolutionary activity of the kind that had recently been witnessed in France and Haiti. He documents how these racializing deserving/undeserving distinctions have been applied and reapplied throughout history to ‘Irish, South Asian and even white subjects’ deemed disorderly and underserving (Shilliam, 2018:173).

Shilliam’s account of how these distinctions were mobilised politically through the neoliberalisation of the British economy involves the 'blackening' of sections of the white working class deemed undeserving and the subsequent appeals to this constituency as the 'left behind' in the lead-up to Brexit. To understand this development, it is necessary to first detail how Black and Asian workers had become a racialised fraction of the working class in post-Second World War Britain (Virdee, 2014:112). Shilliam (2018) documents how an informal colour bar operated through trade union arrangements that excluded Black and Asian workers creating a racialised division of labour that disproportionately placed them in the low-skilled sectors of the labour market, thus preserving the integrity of the post-war national compact as an 'arrangement between state, business and labour necessitated by postwar recovery' (Shilliam, 2018:83-89; see also Virdee 2014:111). The unwitting effects of loosening union power through neoliberal reforms of the Conservative Thatcher government meant the removal of the protections that the informal colour bar afforded to white workers, exposing them to the full effects of competition in the labour market alongside those of the rapid de-industrialisation that followed (Shiliam, 2018:156).

Shilliam uses his historical account to argue that neoliberal subjectivity is undergirded by an articulation of the logically complementary discourses of racist populism and entrepreneurial individualism, arguing that the neoliberal subject needs to be understood in the context of its relations with race, nation and empire (Shilliam, 2021:240). He suggests that the actual politics of neoliberal subjectivity is lost in accounts that have centred on its economic

antecedents, seeing the subject as internalising market logics (ibid). This intervention is important for the present study in two ways. Firstly, it informs the specific historical conditions in which the study takes place and in which subjectivities are constructed: a conjuncture in which neoliberalism articulates with racist (ethno)nationalist populism. If neoliberal subjectivity incorporates racist populism, the neoliberal subject calculating their gains and losses and working on themself to make themself ever more efficient, must also negotiate racialised dichotomies of deservedness: that is, of Black (racially marked) undeservedness and white (racially unmarked) deservedness with which such discourses are and have historically been entangled. Secondly, and relatedly, these dichotomies inform the neoliberal subjects assumed in constructions of policies of equal opportunity around race and class in Higher Education.

Shilliam (2018:121) has argued that the limited redistribution offered by expanded equality of opportunity in the neoliberal compromise between the freedom of the market and the provision of social goods adopted by New Labour put the deserving/undeserving distinction at the heart of social policy. This put a meritocratic understanding of education at the centre of the neoliberal/social democratic compromise of New Labour policymaking. Under this formulation, those deserving of success and the social advancement required for redistribution will attain it, while those who fail are constructed as undeserving.

In respect of race and class, Shilliam (2018:125) notes two distinct policy niches and problematisations adopted by New Labour that can be seen to correspond to the separate treatment of race and class in HE equality initiatives. The first, *national cohesion,* was dealt with by anti-discrimination legislation which initially sought to address the historical legacies of racism as part of a move toward a multi-cultural national identity that could support their global economic vision for the British economy. While in this sense the New Labour government adopted the language of diversity, their approach following 9/11 and uprisings in

the deindustrialised North of England in 2001 has been argued to amount to the racialised management of outsiders with Home Secretary, David Blunkett contending in 2003 that institutional racism had ‘missed the point’ (Shain, 2013:72; Shilliam, 2018:134). This was accompanied by stringent immigration policies that have been argued to constitute a new institutionalised ‘xeno-racism' (Back et al., 2002). These policies were justified by Blunkett through an emphasis on 'national cohesion' and the need for 'us' 'to be secure within our sense of belonging and identity' around 'British Values' (Home Office, 2002, in Shain, 2013:73). While these values were generally ill-defined, in comments that evoke Hayek's neoliberal notion of the spread of cultural evolution of through market economies, Chancellor of the Exchequer, Gordon Brown, in a speech in 2006, defined them as 'hard work, effort and enterprise' (Shain, 2013:73) and linked them specifically to imperialism and internationalism (Lee, 2006, in Shain, 2013:78).

The second problem, *national degeneration,* was oriented toward a population who had suffered the effects of the deindustrialisation of the 1980s and the long-term unemployment it generated. This largely white constituency was constructed in political discourse as welfare-reliant broken families characterised by anxieties around the figure of the single mother, noted by Skeggs (2005:965) as a stigmatised symbol of working-class amorality associated with narratives of family breakdown since the 1980s. This constituency was also demonised in public and media discourse as 'chavs' (Shilliam, 2018:126). In Shilliam’s terminology, were 'blackened' having been judged not to exhibit the deserving English characteristics of hard-working orderly independence. The New Labour response aimed to nurture these 'deserving' characteristics through a combination of discipline through welfare reform[3] and

[3] This took the form of the Welfare Reform Act 2009

encouragement through expanded equality of opportunity in education and investment in public services (Shilliam, 2018:120-121).

Following the global financial crisis of 2008, the incoming Conservative/Liberal Democrat coalition government in 2010 led by David Cameron retained a focus on encouraging equality of opportunity, especially in education, pledging to fix 'broken Britain' (UK Parliament, 2023), which Cameron argued to be the result of state control eroding personal responsibility and moral choice (Shilliam, 2018:127/128). Alongside this encouragement came a neo-liberal programme of 'reform' and 'choice' (Hall, 2011:719). The implementation of 'austerity' measures imposed severe cuts to public spending through welfare 'reform' targeting the less well-off (Hall, 2011:719) and was coupled with a form of 'libertarian paternalism' in which citizens were to be nudged by policymakers acting as 'choice architects' in directions that would promote self-help and personal responsibility (Shilliam, 2018:128). The target for these policies was cast as the 'troubled families' of a largely white underclass (Shilliam, 2018:132). Shilliam charts how this narrative of 'blackened broken families', with its origins in 'slave analogies of the abolition era' and late nineteenth-century connections between motherhood and degeneration, reached a high point following the riots and uprisings in 2011 across London and Britain in response to the police killing of a young Black man in Tottenham, London (ibid:125-130). This constituency in the formulations of Hayek and Powell would have represented the effect of the internal threat of socialist indulgence and degeneration (Kundnani, 2021:61; Shilliam; 2021:99).

With the 2015 election of a Conservative DUP-backed government with a manifesto commitment to an in/out EU referendum and the referendum that followed, the interests of a 'left-behind white working-class' became a central political issue (Shilliam, 2018:136). This construction is recognizable in the political discourse of the populist right across the Western

world, as ‘a constituency unfairly left behind and now deserving of redemption from the vicissitudes of globalization including competition from non-white and/or migrant labour’ (Shilliam, 2020:224). In conservative governments that have followed the vote to leave the EU, they have been addressed as ‘the ordinary working class’ by Theresa May (Shilliam, 2020) or the beneficiaries of the 'levelling-up' (HMG, 2023) promises made by Boris Johnson and subsequent Conservative Prime Ministers. Immigration has been held responsible for the loss of the social security and welfare provision as well as the benefits that once accrued to whiteness through the informal colour bar of the national compact (Shilliam, 2018:156/162). As Virdee argues, these political discourses ‘recast the real injuries of class through the politics of racist resentment’ (Virdee, 2019:24).

In terms of policy responses, Shilliam (2018:180) has argued that ‘ever since New Labour, race is only supposed to make sense as political discrimination; while economic inequality is a class issue proper, [ ] which race is safely derivative of’. This separation of the politics of ‘redistribution’ as a class issue from ‘recognition’ as an issue of race (Fraser, 1995) masks the mutually constitutive, interwoven relationship of race and class highlighted by Shilliam’s account of the ‘racialised and re-racialised […] distinction between the deserving and undeserving poor’ (Shilliam, 2018:180). Such an approach can be seen in the New Labour government's approach to HE policy on inequalities, described in the following section, which documents developments in HE policy discourse over the period described above.

2.3 HE Policy Discourse on Race and Class

2.3.1 The Political Case for Equal Opportunity in Education

Although the move from a largely elitist to a mass system of education was underway in the 1980s and 1990s, inequalities in HE, and education more broadly, can be seen to become more acutely politicised with the election of the New Labour government in 1997 (Bhagat & O'Neill, 2011:25; Thompson, J, 2000). This formed part of a programme of educational

reform that employed market mechanisms to pursue the twin goals of the New Labour project: economic competitiveness and social justice (Wilkins & Burke, 2015, Thompson, 2000). The Blair government was elected on a manifesto commitment that placed education at the heart of its strategy for addressing economic and social challenges:

> *Education will be our number one priority, and we will increase the share of national income spent on education as we decrease it on the bills of economic and social failure*
>
> (Labour Party, 1997)

The faith placed in the power of education to tackle social and economic inequality can be seen in the context of the following manifesto commitment not to pursue these goals through redistributive taxation, stating:

> *There will be no increase in the basic or top rates of income tax* (Labour Party, 1997).

This meant that equality of opportunity in education would be required in order to address social inequalities. As incoming Labour Prime Minister, Tony Blair is quoted as saying 'Education is the best economic policy we have' (Eccleston, 1999, in Thompson, 2000:3). Thompson (2000:1) cites a speech by then Secretary of State for Education and Employment, David Blunkett, in which he set out the central role of higher education in the twin goals of competitiveness in the global economy and social justice with higher education becoming 'a powerful instrument of social justice since it serves, not only as a driver of wealth creation, but as a critical determinant of life chances' (Blunkett, 2000, in Thompson, 2000:2). Blunkett goes on to redefine the once elitist function of universities to construct them as institutions whose ' [s]uccess must be understood and measured by how far [they] serve the population as a whole – and that means people from all social class backgrounds and ethnic groups, and those with disabilities, at whatever stage of their lives'(ibid). Delivered in 2000, Blunkett's

speech reflects a concern with race and ethnicity that had hitherto been largely absent from efforts to widen participation in HE. [4]

The New Labour government commissioned the Dearing Inquiry of 1997 and subsequently adopted 'widening participation' (WP henceforth) in HE as a 'key concern of government policy' from 1998 onwards (Pilkington, 2009:16). Pilkington (2009:17) points out that the widening participation agenda was primarily concerned with class, with its success evaluated wholly by class-based indicators (ibid:17). The Dearing inquiry (1997) had found that specific ethnic groups such as Bangladeshi women and Afro-Caribbean men were under-represented in HE and that BME student participation was concentrated in less prestigious post-1992 institutions, with these students experiencing isolation and a 'lower rate of return on their HE qualifications than White students' (ibid:17). However, a focus on the relative over-representation of ethnic minorities in the HE sector as a whole (if not in more prestigious institutions – see Boliver, 2016) led to what Pilkington (2009:15) describes as a 'colour blind' WP agenda.

2.3.2 Increased Attention to Racial Inequality

Despite the initial class-focused, colour-blind approach, race and ethnicity in HE gained salience following the findings of the Macpherson inquiry (1999). The judge-led inquiry found that major British institutions were institutionally racist (ibid:15) and the legislative response came from the New Labour government in the Race Relations (Amendment) Act, of 2000, which placed a statutory duty on public authorities to eliminate racial discrimination and led to specific duties for HEIs. These duties were the first to require HEIs to take specific action in relation to students with minoritized ethnic heritage, they include the following:

[4] It is important to reiterate here Blunkett's instrumental role as Home Secretary, in implementing New Labour's shift away from multiculturalism (Shain, 2013) and 'xeno-racist' immigration policies (Back et al., 2002)

Prepare and maintain a written race equality policy and implementation plan;

- Within the policy and plan assess the impact of institutional policies on staff and students from different racial groups
- Within the policy and plan monitor the applications, admissions and progression of students[5]

While the monitoring aspect of these policies has drawn attention to the issue of racial inequalities for students in HE, universities have been criticised for a lack of attention implementation and for introducing an approach which is more about policy, documentation and audit culture than about students with negative experiences and taking action (Pilkington, 2009, Ahmed, 2012). In the New Labour government's third term, the provisions of the Race Relations (Amendment) Act (2000) were replaced by The Equalities Act 2010 aligning Race with 7 other 'protected characteristics' to be protected from discrimination or victimisation. Pilkington (2015:9) argues that the implementation of the Equality Act 2010 eroded the requirements of the legislation, replacing 'the requirement to have in place an equality action plan and conduct equality impact assessments with 'the need […] to publish limited data and set one or more objectives.' [6]

Despite this watering down of legal obligations, in the year following the enactment of the Equalities Act, with the incoming Conservative/Liberal Democrat coalition government there was explicit mention in the Secretary of State's Grant Letter to HEFCE of the need to 'take into account issues faced by ethnic minorities.' (Cable & Willets, 2011). In more recent years,

[5] In Higher Education oversight of these plans was provided by the Office for Fair Access (OfFA), whose responsibility entailed 'safeguard[ing] and promot[ing] fair access to higher education by approving and monitoring access agreements.' It closed on 1 April 2018 with responsibility for this function passing to the Office for Students.

[6] These plans took the form of Access and Participation agreements, which monitored for protected characteristics alongside measures of socioeconomic status required by existing WP measures

high-profile initiatives such as the student campaigns 'We Too Are Oxford' and 'Why isn't my Professor Black?' and 'Why is my Curriculum White?' have focused greater attention on issues of racial and ethnic inequalities in HE. In 2015, the Runnymede Trust (Alexander & Arday, 2015:4) noted a 'strong appetite for change from within and without the university system from staff and students, organisations, institutions, […] policymakers and (some) politicians.' I detail below (Section 2.3.3) how this growing appetite for change coincided with the commission of a paper into the causes of differences in outcomes by the Higher Education Funding Council and a £7.5m investment into projects addressing barriers to student success, with ethnic inequalities and socioeconomic status featuring prominently in both.

2.3.3 HE Equality Policy and its Critique

The approaches taken to addressing inequality have had qualified success in providing greater access to HE for students of colour. That is, while proportionately higher numbers of ethnically minoritized now access HE overall, this is skewed towards less prestigious 'post-1992' universities with access to prestigious institutions (Boliver, 2016; Pilkington, 2018; Ball et al, 2003) remaining disproportionately white. However, in terms of attainment, the result of New Labour's combination of neoliberal economic policy with social policy aimed at promoting equality of opportunity, while bringing about increased participation in Higher Education, was ultimately to increase gaps between groups defined by class and ethnicity leaving patterns of structural inequality intact (Shain, 2013:69; See also Bhopal, 2018:4). The individualising neoliberal framings of the problem within HE equality initiatives has been argued to be part of the problem. As Burke (2013:110) has argued 'the right to higher education is understood in terms of individual ability, potential and hard work rather than as shaped by structural, cultural and institutional inequalities and misrecognitions' (Burke, 2013:110). Burke (2013:110) notes that the meritocratic framing of WP strategies locates

disadvantage in individuals and implies a social Darwinist discourse of success through evolved abilities and merit. Such discourses echo Hayek's neoliberal understandings of the spread of cultural evolution from the West through exposure to competition (Kundnani, 2021:59). In terms that evoke the hard-working deserving/idle undeserving distinctions noted by Shilliam (2018), Bhopal (2018:5) observes that the Whiteness of HE operates according to a meritocratic ideology that combines ignorance of white privilege with belief that 'those who rise to the top have done so because they have worked hard and deserve to be there, in comparison to those who have not – who are lazy. The location of disadvantage in individuals through a meritocratic approach towards educational inequalities can be highlighted by examining the approach taken to addressing inequalities differences in degree outcomes by the public body responsible for funding research into equality in this area, the Higher Education Council for England (HEFCE) [7].

In 2015, HEFCE published a critical review it had commissioned into the causes of differences in student outcomes to explore patterns such as:

> *the tendency for socio-economically disadvantaged groups to do least well at university, even when prior attainment is controlled for, and the tendency for white students to achieve better outcomes (in relation to completion rates, attainment and employability), and to report the highest levels of student satisfaction.*
>
> (Mountford-Zimdars et al., 2015:ii)

In establishing an overall framework for addressing the causes of inequalities, the report states that '[f]or the purposes of this report we take causation to be not only contained in individuals but also in the social relations and structures that they form (Mountford-Zimdars et al., 2015;25).' While this framing acknowledges the role of social relations and structures, it locates part of the cause of racialised and classed inequalities in the populations it monitors.

[7] HEFCE was replaced by the Office for Students in 2018

The previous chapter detailed how the title of a report on a more recent large-scale quantitative survey of these inequalities in Higher Education *Differences in Student Outcomes: The Effect of Student Characteristics* (HEFCE, 2018) located the cause of differences in outcomes wholly in students' characteristics with the role of social relations and structures absent. The legislative origins of monitoring attainment on the basis of ethnicity lie in the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000, which introduced it with a view to highlighting imbalances caused by institutional racism. However, reporting on these imbalances can now be seen to construct the cause as the racialised characteristics of those monitored.

This deficit perspective taken towards racialised students is underscored when the treatment of ethnicity in the report is compared with that of social class in the 2018 report (HEFCE, 2018). The most recent HEFCE (2018) report no longer refers to 'low higher education participation, low household income and/or low socioeconomic status' as defined in the 2015 paper *Causes of Differences in Student Outcomes*. Instead, it used only the category 'educational disadvantage' measured by the proportion of participation in Higher Education in local areas (POLAR). POLAR[8] was used as a substitute for social class because reliable corresponding figures for socio-economic classification were unavailable due to high percentages of missing data (Woodfield, 2014:22). Student characteristics here, then, in the case of class are defined as relational measures of structural disadvantage. Student characteristics that relate to ethnicity, on the other hand, are treated as personal characteristics of an individual. This affirms Shilliam's argument that ever since New Labour, race is only supposed to make sense as political discrimination; while economic inequality (or its POLAR

[8] Despite the difficulties in data, the POLAR proxy for class position is understood to confer (structural) stratified (levels 1-5) educational disadvantage. https://epi.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/EPI-Annual-Report-2018-Lit-review.pdf

proxy) is a class issue proper, [ ] which race is safely derivative of' (2018:180). The example illustrates what has been referred to as a deficit discourse that constructs racialised minorities as problems to be managed and contained (Bhopal & Pitkin, 2020; Shain, 2013:64). St Louis (2009:568) argues that such policy discourses reify [people of colour] as racial others who are the embodiment of social problems.

Part of the problem lies in the nature of the categories of identity employed in these initiatives. Burke (2015:23) highlights some of these tensions succinctly:

> *Categories help us to redistribute resources whilst simultaneously categorisations require interrogation of the ways they become mechanisms to homogenise, standardise and pathologise. The category of 'Black and Minority Ethnic' is both a useful device to identify an appropriate target group for the redistribution of resources but it also contributes to the perpetuation of social divisions and hierarchies through reducing that person or group to one aspect of identity*
>
> (Burke, 2015:23).

Burke's (ibid) proposed response to the tension is that 'we must make visible the ways such constructions are entangled in cycles of exclusion and unequal power relations and devise inclusive, reflexive and participatory frameworks that challenge misrecognition.' In order to draw attention to the ways in which racialized categories are entangled in unequal power relations, it has been argued that the whiteness of the university needs to be addressed (Bhopal, 2016; Back, 2016; Pilkington, 2018). The present study aims to make a contribution in this area.

It was noted above that despite locating some of the causes of differentials in individuals, the HEFCE report (Mountford-Zimdars et al., 2015) did, in part, see causation as 'contained in […] social relations and the structures they form (HEFCE, 2015:25).' In 2016 HEFCE launched an initiative to address unequal outcomes by providing £7.5 million to help higher

education providers address barriers for their students. This involved '[a] total of 17 different projects […], including 59 different providers and 28 other organisations such as charities, employers and local enterprise partnerships' (OfS, 2019).

Independent evaluation of the projects was commissioned by OfS/HEFCE and published in 2020 (OfS, 2020). Recommendations for the OFS included the implementation of ‘a more coherent, proactive approach across the sector including the possible application of regulatory powers and also guidance and funding support for the whole [HE] sector' (Sec. 6.16). Targeting funding towards specific ethnic groups within the BAME category was recommended as 'some educational outcomes for some groups of students remain comparatively low (Sec. 6.16).' It was noted that '[w]ithin a HE setting there is a raft of activities and interactions that have the potential to impact upon student development (academic, social, cultural and, potentially, financial and economic).’

Despite these recommendations suggesting funding for targeted interventions focusing on ethnicity in universities, in more recent OFS communications on attainment ethnic inequalities are not mentioned (OfS, 2022). Interventions are now targeted towards schools, which are seen to be the cause of the attainment gaps and efforts to address this at university level are embedded in discourses of choice. This change in approach followed the findings of the Commission for Racial Equality and Disparity (CRED, 2021), which emphasised the need for individual agency and disassociated ‘impediments and disparities’ faced by ethnic minorities from systemic issues, as discussed in Chapter 1.

2.3.4 From racial inequality to a discourse of choice

The commission provided some findings on racial inequalities in HE, providing the following two sentences:

> *Black students also struggle when it comes to degree class: the most recent data (2018 to2019) shows White students with the highest percentage of first-class degrees at 31.5% and Black students with the lowest percentage at 14.5%. Asian students (23.0%) and those with Mixed ethnicity (26.2%) came in the middle.*

No explanation is offered for these differences but it is suggested that:

> *Measures to reduce attainment gaps need to be tackled early by engaging young people while their expectations are still forming, engaging teachers and parents, providing them with career guidance, and removing the academic, financial and cultural barriers to meeting their ambitions, rather than assuming that ambitions themselves are low. This requires targeted and sustained engagement with young people, schools and families to create pathways into higher education, rather than one-off interventions, and this is best delivered in or close to schools and colleges.*

These measures appear to be aimed at inequalities of access to university since 'attainment gaps' in HE emerge *within* HE institutions once students have already achieved their ambitions to enter HE, so cannot be meaningfully addressed by schools. The measures suggested here seem to be motivated by the report's stated aim to explore how 'individuals and their communities could help themselves through their own agency' (CRED, 2021:7) to close disparity gaps. Under the heading *Create Agency,* recommendation 15 of the report is to '[e]mpower pupils to make more informed choices to fulfil their future potential (ibid:23) through careers support in schools.'

This discourse of choice and interventions in schooling in order to address differences in outcomes is apparent in the approach now taken by the OfS, who in 2022 launched a consultation on regulating equality of opportunity in education with an announcement on its webpage titled: 'OfS sets out plans to ensure 'choice and not chance' determines success'.

This would mean the establishment of a ‘new equality of opportunity risk register, which will be regularly updated, will set out the sector-level risks to equality of opportunity in higher education – which could include:

1. *Few disadvantaged students being admitted, particularly to selective universities.*
2. *Attainment gaps between different school pupils.*
3. *Not enough non-traditional routes in higher education, such as degree apprenticeships.*

(OfS, 2022a)

The issue of ‘ethnicity attainment gaps’ in HE is absent from this list of possibilities, representing a substantial departure from their central placement in the HEFCE era.

The communication goes on to say that:

> *This new approach follows the priorities John Blake, Director for Fair Access and Participation at the OfS, set out in February 2022.*

This February communication sets out the issue of attainment gaps in the following terms:

> *Challenges and gaps*
>
> *Just 27 per cent of students who are Free School Meal eligible go on to university, compared to 46 per cent of their better-off peers. For those students who beat the odds to get into higher education, the challenge is only just beginning.*
>
> *We know that disadvantaged students are more likely to drop out. They are less likely to come away from their studies with a first or 2:1. And they are less likely to find graduate-level employment which – for many – was the most important factor in starting a course in the first place. These profound gaps in access and participation should trouble us all.*
>
> (OfS, 2022b)

While there is reference to class in the disputed measure of ‘Free School Meal’ eligible students[9], the ‘disadvantaged students’ referred to in the second paragraph appear to be those referred to in the first and defined by social class. There is no mention here or in the provisional priorities of the ‘equality risk register’ of racial inequality in HE. This is despite the centrality of such inequalities to the findings of the HEFCE commissioned 2015 report on *Causes of differential outcomes*; the recommendations stemming from the evaluation of the £7.5 million investment into projects on *Barriers to Student Success*; and despite the latest 2020/21 OfS figures for the ‘attainment gap’ between the highest and lowest groups on the proxy measure of social class showing as less than half (8.6%)[10] that of the Black/White attainment gap (17.4%) (OfS, 2022).

In 2022, the incoming Director of Fair Access and Participation gave a speech outlining his priorities. There is no mention of racial inequality or ethnicity in the speech or accompanying slides from the Director for Fair Access and Participation. The part of the speech addressing attainment gaps is provided below:

> *The attainment gap between disadvantaged pupils and their peers opens almost as soon as they are born – it manifests in words learnt before children enter nursery, the speed of achieving fluency in reading in early primary, then vocabulary, numeracy, oracy and more in upper primary, and secondary, manifested in statutory assessment and especially GCSE outcomes.*
>
> *And despite clear and in some cases remarkable improvements in the quality of schooling in the past twenty years, that gap remains wide open throughout life.*
>
> *And, of course, that affects who goes into higher education - which institutions they can attend, what support they will need, what academic outcomes they achieve, and what lives and careers they go on to.*

---

[9] See Gillborn (2010) and Crawford (2018) for a critique of this measure and its tendency to overstate disadvantages faced by the white working class

[10] Using POLAR

> *If we are at all concerned with equality of opportunity in accessing higher education, we must be concerned with improving attainment much, much earlier in life.*
>
> (OfS, 2022d)

The approach here reproduces that of the CRED (2021) report, similarly prescribing interventions at school level despite the emergence of such gaps within HE. The root of the problem is not located in the structural and social relations suggested, albeit as contributing factors, in the HEFCE 2015 report into *differences in student outcomes.* Neither is it attributed to the lack of strategic approach and funding for HE interventions identified in recommendations following the barriers to student success projects. Instead, it is found in deficits that attend individuals 'almost as soon as they are born', which, despite the efforts of education to fix, remain throughout the student journey into Higher Education. On this account, the body responsible for equality in HE appears to understand 'attainment gaps' as inherited from earlier stages of education despite students having met the selective entry requirements set by universities. Such elision of structural factors has been identified by Bhopal and Pitkin (2020:543) as a feature of 'a deficit discourse attributed to people of colour [that] is characterised in policy making by identifying them as being disadvantaged *before* they enter HEIs and *once in* HEIs'.

The discourse of choice (not chance) within which the new approach was set out can be seen in earlier OfS blog posts: One titled, *Choice Decisions* states:

> *With parents and teachers playing such a crucial role in their decision-making process, we need to think about how to help them become better informed too. Otherwise there are two dangers. The first is that the information is both subjective and out-dated, limiting potential choice.* (OfS, 2018a)

Another post (OfS, 2018b) titled, *Better support, better decisions, better outcomes* says:

> *As a new organisation, we're still developing our approach, but we have a clear mission: to ensure that every student, whatever their background, has a fulfilling experience of higher education that enriches their lives and careers.*
>
> *High-quality, impartial information, advice and guidance is critical if students are to find a course that is right for them. Better informed choices have the potential to result in more students completing their studies and achieving positive outcomes.*

The suggestion here is that potential students achieving lower outcomes need to be supported in making better choices in order to 'help themselves'. Responsibility for guiding this lies with parents, teachers and career advisers. The government response to the CRED report (HMG, 2022) dealing with attainment in education takes up its mutually exclusive framing of race and class as independent variables to state that 'when taking socioeconomic status into account, the predominant picture in education is of most ethnic minority groups outperforming the white British group.

Under the heading *4.9 Career advice that expands choice and enhances social mobility*, the response says *that:*

> *most ethnic minority pupils outperform their white peers at school, but once they get to university (with the exception of Asian students) ethnic minority students are more likely to drop out and have lower levels of attainment.*

The then Minister of State for Equalities, Kemi Badenoch (ibid:74) goes on to express frustration at such measures of inequality, saying 'as a country, we pride ourselves on meritocracy and aspiration.' The response goes on to suggest these problems are caused by students making the wrong choice of university course. She goes on to set out a number of actions designed to address this in schools and through measures to ensure universities provide more information on which to base their choices.

The approach taken by the OfS corresponds to that described in research on class inequalities in Higher Education, which has identified within WP discourses 'canonical concepts' such as

‘choice, empowerment, aspiration and achievement’ that are ‘sometimes abridged through government texts and policies into a single government norm: the creation of students as consumers’ (Wilkins & Burke, 2015.) Through an analysis of policy documentation, Wilkins and Burke (2015:439/440) show how policy initiatives are constructed around the student as a ‘citizen consumer’, emphasising choice as providing freedom and opportunity to be exercised by ‘well-informed’ ‘self-responsible, independent and calculating agents.’ They suggest this corresponds to an active/passive dynamic which positions the discriminating as deserving and the inert as undeserving neoliberal subjects.

Studies into the process of choosing a university for 'non-traditional' applicants, (Reay et al., 2001:871) have noted significant inequalities in respect of the impacts of race and class. They report that a very different landscape of higher education is confronted and anticipated by middle-class and working-class students. In respect of students 'fitting in' at university, they note that race is enmeshed in wider issues of culture which include class (Reay et al. 2001:870). In findings from the same study, Ball et al, (2003) note the importance of 'ethnic mix' to London-based working-class students' choice of university in many cases this was attached to navigating the risk of ethnic othering at potential choices of university. For many such students, choosing a university means 'becoming a different person from the rest of their family and many of their peers' and leaves them feeling 'out of place' (Ball et al., 2003:232).

Taken together, these studies suggest that educational choices in a neoliberal context locate responsibility for negotiating a landscape stratified by interrelated disadvantages of race and class in the subject position of student citizen-consumers who are positioned as deserving or undeserving by virtue of their active or passive engagement with this process. The policy direction taken by the government and the OfS since the publication of the CRED report suggests that persistent attainment gaps relating to racial inequality and Higher Education are now understood in this way. The present study aims to detail the ways that discursive and

material structures of race and class are navigated and reproduced in the institutional context of the university. In this way, it offers an insight into the shortcomings of this policy direction. In addition, it reveals the racializing nature of neoliberal policy discourses that situate the responsibility for negotiating unequal conditions in individuals.

2.3.5 Responses to inequality in architectural education

A retreat from engaging with issues of racial inequality can also be seen in the work of professional bodies responsible for architectural education. In the early 2000s impetus for research came from the under-representation of minority ethnic groups in the architectural profession. The first study into the experiences of students referred to as BME in Architecture was conducted by the Chartered Association of Building Engineers (CABE). It combined quantitative and qualitative methods. Using quantitative data from the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA), Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS) and the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA), the study provided a descriptive analysis around ethnicity and class in architectural education both in universities and through work-based practice stages of architectural training. In contrast to the reports on inequalities in HE, the CABE report sets issues of inequalities for groups described as BME alongside those of social class. A section on Social Class and Ethnicity reports that:

> *Within architecture, building and planning, there are sharp differences between white and minority ethnic students. White students are substantially more likely to come from social classes I and II compared to black and Asian students; about twice as likely compared to Asian students and three times more likely compared to black students. Black and Asian students are also over-represented among those with unknown social class and caution is needed in drawing conclusions about the social class profile of minority ethnic students.* (CABE, 2005b:32)

Despite these caveats, the summarised findings of the report make frequent reference to the relationship between ethnicity and social class. However, the issues tend to be stated in vague

terms, with relationships between the two groupings carefully hedged and sometimes implied rather than directly stated. For example, the report states that:

> *White students are four times more likely to obtain first-class architecture degrees than BME students. White students in architecture are more likely to come from social class 1 ('professional').*
> CABE (2005a)

The qualitative aspects of the CABE study involved the analysis of 40 student interviews from a range of ethnic backgrounds across 23 different UK schools of architecture (CABE, 2005:9). This provided some insight into the effects of some of the particularities of the undergraduate stage of Architectural Education, known as Part 1. In a section on applying to architectural school (ibid: 47), it is reported that the reputation and standing of schools played a large part in selection processes but that overall non-white students are more likely than white students to remain in the parental home. Only one student cited 'diversity issues' as affecting choice but the authors suggest this might also have been implicit in decisions to study in London, noting that '[c]ost of living put some students from less well-off backgrounds from studying in London'(ibid:48).

In relation to working practices in architectural schools, the study found that while some students felt there was a 'Euro-centric focus on Western traditions of architecture', this was 'not a strongly expressed theme' and students were generally happy with the curriculum (ibid:49).

Of particular relevance to the present study are the report's findings on working practices in architectural schools (CABE:2005a:49). Noting the centrality of studio working to the study of architecture, the report states that:

> *The ways in which studio space is inhabited by particular individuals and groups is likely to be indicative of their overall integration and comfort within the institution, and even the discipline as a whole.*

(ibid:49)

A number of students were found to have enjoyed the 'culture of long working hours' and relished the opportunities for interaction with fellow students and the exchange of ideas that this afforded. Subtle patterns of exclusion were alluded to with gender identified as grounds for exclusion with reference to a 'competitive', 'macho' and 'laddish' culture. Ethnicity, though, was not explicitly identified as an aspect of such exclusions nor was class.

In a section on *Factors Influencing Drop-out and Lack of Progression*, the report states that students reported lacking the 'financial or social resources to cope with the demands of architectural training (CABE, 2005a:70) with large dropout rates treated as unproblematic and attributed to the intense commitment required by an architectural degree (ibid.). The idea of 'social resources' is addressed in a section that identifies the specific teaching systems as posing difficulties for students, which emphasises the importance of establishing good relations with tutors and highlights:

> *the expectation that students should work in tutorial groups, their success in which hinged upon their forging strong social networks and learning particular presentational techniques which were likely to impress their tutors or tutor, sometimes worked to heighten the sense of difference between more deprived students and what they regarded as the privileged norm. It sometimes appeared to be assumed that students were aware of the rules by which these interactions were governed (which might indeed be the case if they came from architectural backgrounds or had benefited from the confidence-enhancement of a private-school education). However, many of those we interviewed reported experiencing this style as alien and found that communication about these expectations was lacking and privileged* (ibid.74).

The place of privileged communicative norms in the context of the studio will form a key part of the present study. The report found that '[i]ntegration into social networks during training was a critical issue for students, and impacted upon their qualitative enjoyment of their courses, but also played a significant role in the extent to which they were able to succeed at

schools. However, inappropriate behaviour such as aggression or cultural insensitivity could sometimes lead to students withdrawing from these networks' (CABE, 2005:84). This finding raises important questions around who is required to integrate to what and by whom. These questions will be addressed in the data analysis chapters (5-7).

The relevance of integrating to the social space can be seen in the fact that several interviewees in the CABE study described the isolating effect of being the only or one of a few students from a minority ethnic background in their year (ibid: 74). In terms that suggest exclusory norms, one overseas male described:

> *the issues with just the treatment of black students being different in schools where people give you enough time, give you enough of their time to have a fair deal and understand where you are coming from… It's not always the case.'* (p.74)

The authors note that they had only interviewed those who had gone on to successfully complete parts 1 (undergraduate degree component) and 2 (industry-based component) so had likely only 'uncovered the tip of the iceberg' (ibid.:75).

The CABE report was followed a year later by a Centre for Education in the Built Environment (CEBE) *Guide to supporting student diversity in UK Schools of Architecture.* The report details measures Schools should take to deal with inequalities. These are provided as bullet-pointed lists under the headings *Recruitment and Admissions*; *Induction, retention and achievement*; *Teaching & learning methods*; *The curriculum; and Assessment and feedback.* The guidance provided in these sections takes the form of practical pedagogical advice although much is addressed to the specific language or cultural needs of overseas students as the report, like the CABE report, does not focus on only UK-domiciled students as reported in awarding gaps for ethnic monitoring in HE.

The advice often suggests institutional changes to ameliorate the stresses of adjusting to the demanding and isolating aspects of architectural education described in the CABE report, advising, for instance, that schools:

> *[e]xtend the typical notion of 'induction week' to include the whole of the first term or semester. Recognise that this period can be extremely stressful and isolating, with students feeling alienated in an unfamiliar learning environment and cultural setting*.

The section on *induction, retention and achievement* addresses *staff issues,* advising:

> *Provide more diverse role models through the development of a greater diversity of staff profiles*

Although class is referred to in a section on recruitment and admissions advice, there is no mention of class in sections on *induction, retention and attainment*, which focuses on issues of 'culture.' Neither is class referred to in the section on *Teaching and Learning Methods* despite reference to 'ability, age, gender, sexuality, race or culture'.

The CEBE report in 2007 appears to be the last publication on the issue by bodies with responsibility for education across the profession. Nonetheless, the latest RIBA (2022) equality and diversity figures presented in Chapter 1 (Section 1.1) show stark racial inequalities remain.

The RIBA Equality and Diversity webpage no longer provides details of the two reports mentioned above, nor does it provide statistics relating to current levels of diversity in the profession. In 2018 the webpage had a section titled 'Resources for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion', inviting visitors to '[v]iew all resources the RIBA has produced to support our vision of a diverse profession representative of society as a whole'. It referred to mentoring and role model programmes set up with the assistance of Architects for Change, who describe themselves as 'a completely voluntary group which was established in 2000 to challenge and support the RIBA in developing policies and activities aimed at promoting diversity and

equal opportunities in the architectural profession (Architects for Change, 2018).' In 2023 (16.02.2023), there is no longer any reference to equality, diversity and inclusion on the RIBA webpage or the dropdown menus provided. The statistical figures shown above are stored on the RIBA website but could only be found by a web search.

Despite the apparent retreat from issues of racial inequality in the activities of public bodies, there are a number of important initiatives and organisations that seek to highlight and address the issue. These include *The Stephen Lawrence Charitable Trust, Black Females in Architecture, Decolonise Architecture,* and *Built by Us.* Having reviewed the policy context in HE generally and in architectural education more specifically, discussion will now turn to the local context of the study in the School of Architecture and UniX to consider policy implementation. It draws on my experience as a Learning and Teaching practitioner in the university.

2.3.6 The School of Architecture and Policy Implementations

The School of Architecture in which the study takes place engages with many of the current initiatives for racial equality in different capacities and is attentive to the kinds of pedagogical and institutional change suggested in the CEBE report. Its small pool of permanent staff remains almost entirely white, relatively young and successful architects and academics. In recent years, the school has actively sought to address the ethnic diversity of teaching staff and now employs a more ethnically diverse team of successful practising architects as sessional studio design tutors and lecturers. It was through my work role in supporting inclusive learning within the curriculum and resulting discussions with the Head of School about addressing racial inequality that the present study came about.

The school is part of a specialist Arts university located within commuting distance from London. The university attracts students from a range of educational backgrounds including

those who have studied art foundation courses, A-Levels and international qualifications. Geographically, the school attracts students internationally and from locations across the UK, but a large proportion of the student body comes from London and from areas local to the campus. The city and surrounding areas in which the university is located are predominantly white, but its university campuses attract greater ethnic diversity to the area. As part of a specialist Arts university with an 'Art School' heritage, the School of Architecture's approach to research and design is about hands-on experimental approaches in the studio setting. In discussions within my job role, incoming lecturers have commented favourably on the school's relative social and cultural diversity and its cooperative rather than competitive atmosphere when compared with other London-based institutions in which they have taught and studied.

In my working role, I have collaborated closely with the school in the development and delivery of history and theory components of the course, in developing peer-learning networks and in advising on issues of inclusivity for course validations. The undergraduate Architecture course is popular and is the largest of all the courses in the school. The course team embrace an activist approach to architecture that engages with the social and cultural contexts of architecture and aims to challenge existing thinking in the profession. At the time of the study, the course had experienced a recent rise up the Architecture subject-specific university league tables and had a particularly high intake of students (120), which was attributed to league table success. My impression of the course and the school is that they are not 'stale' or 'stuffy' but feel vibrant and energetic.

From my working knowledge of the course and observations from the study, I know that the purpose of the first year of undergraduate study here is to encourage creative experimentation, independent learning and risk-taking. There is a sense among teaching staff that prior schooling needs to be untaught and that students need to be encouraged to take

creative risks, but also be introduced to the greater academic rigour expected at university and the demanding workloads experienced in the profession. The approach to studio teaching might be described as 'tough love' – the Year Convenor plays a strong role in directing the students through the course and does so with a good amount of humour and personal investment in students (see Chapter 5). Students are challenged to broaden their thinking around architecture at a very early stage with the first project being based around wearable architecture in which students must produce a device that allows the city to be experienced through one of four senses and are teasingly encouraged to 'go out and lick some walls' (pilot study participant observations). Students are randomly placed in project groups from the outset of the course and must take part in two critical reviews of their work in front of a panel of tutors and architecture professionals, and a larger group of their peers. The school has notably successful Black and Asian alumni who have won national awards for their work. However, it suffers from the inequalities seen throughout the sector in terms of attainment.

As noted earlier, at the level of individual providers of HE, issues of racial and class-related inequalities are dealt with in Access and Participation Agreements. These are required by universities charging beyond the basic tuition fee cap. In the most recent plan, the university's figures for attainment show the following:

Table 1: UniX Attainment Figures 2021

2021 Attainment figures: Access and Participation Plan					
	Higher education participation, household income, or socioeconomic status		Ethnicity		
	POLAR4 (Q1-Q5)[11]	IMD	Black/White	Asian/White	Mixed/White
UNIX	+2	-5	-14	-12	+2
SECTOR	-8	-15	-18	-6	-3
DIFFERENCE	+10	+10	+4	-6	+5

The table shows that the university has negative attainment gaps in all but POLAR 4 Q1/Q5 measures where the least advantaged students outperform the most advantaged and Mixed/White where students described as 'mixed' outperform white students. However, on both measures connected with social class, the university strongly outperforms the sector. On ethnicity, the picture is more mixed, with the Black/White gap around a quarter under the average for the sector but the Asian/White gap double the national average. The plan sets out *Strategic aims and objectives.* Within this section, target groups are identified; among others, these include: 'POLAR Quintile 1 students (access, attainment and employment)' and 'ethnic minority student attainment and employment.' Of course, any attainment gap should be considered a concern, but the identification of POLAR Quintile 1 students' attainment is surprising given that these students outperform the most advantaged Quintile 5 students.

The strategy aims to address the issue of ethnic minority attainment and places responsibility for this with the BAME Attainment Working Group, which was disbanded more than a year

[11] POLAR classifies local areas into five groups - or quintiles - based on the proportion of young people who enter higher education aged 18 or 19 years old. Quintile one shows the lowest rate of participation. Quintile five shows the highest rate of participation (OfS, 2022)

prior to the writing of the plan. It appears through my professional involvement with these issues that targeted action to address racial inequalities has been abandoned and is now subsumed under an 'every student counts' approach. Nonetheless, it is stated in the report that the BAME Attainment Working Group will 'identify and implement evidence-based and coherent strategies to eliminate the unexplained gap in Black and Asian student attainment.' The strategic aims addressing Q1 and Q2 students centre on initiatives around career planning and advice.

In a section titled *Strategic Measures*, the plan details how the curriculum has been changed by 'embedding a particular approach to ***personalised learning*** (original emphasis) within the redesign of the entire undergraduate curriculum. It goes on to state that '[a]t the heart of a theory of change is the broadening of choice, opportunity, and access for our students to the portfolio of experience and teaching the University can offer them.' This commitment to 'choice' as a means of addressing longstanding inequalities is made explicit in reference to the 'intended successful outcome' of these changes, which are defined as 'to close equality gaps wherever they exist through student-led choice and a deep and visible commitment to fairness.' We can see here, at the level of implementation, the same discourse of individual student agency and choice to overcome inequality as that in the CRED report and OfS policy briefings. The neoliberal construction of individuals obliged to exercise 'freedom, as choice, autonomy, self-responsibility, and the obligation to maximize one's life as a kind of enterprise' (Rose et al, 2009:13) appears to be driving institutional policy in line with the recent developments in national OfS policy that followed CRED (2021).

2.4 Conclusion

This chapter has noted how such neoliberal policies themselves are underpinned by specific histories of race and class rooted in colonial distinctions and logics. It has shown how the British route to neoliberalism is one that is underpinned by concern about the dangers of

socialist redistribution and Britain's relationship with its former colonies and their emigrant populations, who are constructed as threats from within and without (Kundnani, 2021 and Shilliam, 2018). With New Labour's compromise between market freedoms and the provision of social goods, the poor and racialized populations associated with these threats were to be provided with equal opportunity to occupy deserving status through hard-working, orderly independence and competition. Education is conceived as central to a meritocratic system of redistribution and attended by policies that prohibit discrimination on the grounds of race. Class, in these framings, is understood as structural disadvantage, whereas race is separately conceived as an issue of recognition understood through a lens of individual or institutional discrimination. Efforts to quantify institutional racism through monitoring coincided with growing awareness and calls for change in Higher Education. A £7.5 million initiative was launched to address unequal outcomes and resulting policy recommendations suggested the need for a more coherent and proactive approach across the HE sector alongside targeted funding for specific ethnic groups. This movement towards addressing some of the institutional obstacles to racial equality dissipated when in the midst of growing concern around structural inequalities of race and high-profile black and white protests against racism, the Commission on Race and Ethnic Disparity responded with a strong emphasis on education and the need for individual agency and the exercise of choice to close disparity gaps. The answer to racial inequalities in attainment at universities was understood to lie in addressing them, not in universities but in schools through engagement with families and careers support (CRED, 2021:23), notwithstanding the stated absence of such gaps in school-level attainment. Following the Commission report, the OfS has taken up an approach that emphasises choice as the determining factor in success, foregrounding class and no longer referring to racial inequality as a priority. It similarly locates the need for intervention in schools. These approaches are also taken up in the government response to the

Commission report in which class and race as independent variables are used to suggest that class outweighs race as a cause of educational inequality and prescribes career advice to lead to greater choice and social mobility.

A similar retreat from issues of racial inequality can be seen in the approach of bodies responsible for architectural education with research in the early 2000s suggesting a need for institutional change but little recent acknowledgement of the problem despite monitoring continuing to show large disparities being recorded around ethnicity and entry into the profession. At the level of the institution in which the present study takes place, the same pattern can be seen. Commissioned research identifying structural factors and the need for institutional change has been followed by a retreat from issues of racial inequality, a disproportionate focus on class and redirection towards Access and Participation initiatives that focus on developing choice and individual agency through career advice and curricular choice, which are seen as the answers to longstanding inequalities. While monitoring reveals widespread consistencies in racial inequalities across HE that suggest structural and institutional causes, we have seen how the responses to these inequalities take an individualising deficit focus that also fails to account for the mutually constitutive nature of race and class.

The present study treats race and class not as independent variables attaching to individuals, but as mutually constitutive social and institutional structures navigated in the course of everyday interaction. Studies into racialised disadvantage in studio settings described above (CABE, 2005; CEBE, 2007; See also Sabri, 2017) suggest the importance of identity and social interaction in navigating these structures. The present study takes this as its focus in order to ask how the discursive conditions of neoliberal racialised capitalism are navigated in the studio. The next chapter sets out the theoretical underpinning for the approach taken.

3 Theoretical Framework and Review of Literature

3.1 Introduction

This chapter provides the theoretical underpinning for investigating the relationship between everyday interaction in the architecture studio and the broader social structures of race, class and ethnicity. It reviews the critical sociolinguistic literature on identity, ideology, race, class and ethnicity and draws out key concepts to be applied in the analysis chapters. Chapter 2 provided an account of historically specific conditions in which race and class are (re)produced. In doing so it resisted the idea that structures of race or class can be assumed, but still, these accounts of racialised neoliberalism are reliant on macro-level framings of the social structure that may not be fully predictive of individual everyday experience. Indeed, the previous chapter argued that the existence of racial structures has been denied in a recent government-commissioned report (CRED, 2021) and subsequent policy on race and ethnicity on the basis that it fails to account for the efficacy of individual agency. The question of how structures of race and class are navigated by individuals requires an approach to the analysis of everyday interaction that can address this tension without recourse to a reductive or deterministic resolution in either the social structure or individual subjects. I will argue that such approaches can be found in critical sociolinguistic approaches that engage with social theory that situates 'macro and micro social orders within the same frame of analysis' (Coupland, 2001:15; see also Heller, 2013:197 and Chapter 4 for detailed discussion). The notion of *articulation* in the cultural studies approach of Stuart Hall is an example of such social theory. It draws on Foucauldian understandings of the subject and discourse to understand the relationship between race and class in the social formation. I argue in this chapter that the combination of Hall's *articulation* and theories drawn from critical sociolinguistics is complementary because of a compatible theoretical position on the

relationship between the subject, discourse and social structure. The diagram below (Figure 1) shows schematically how the study uses the theoretical positions set out in this chapter.

3.1.1 Outline of Theoretical Framework

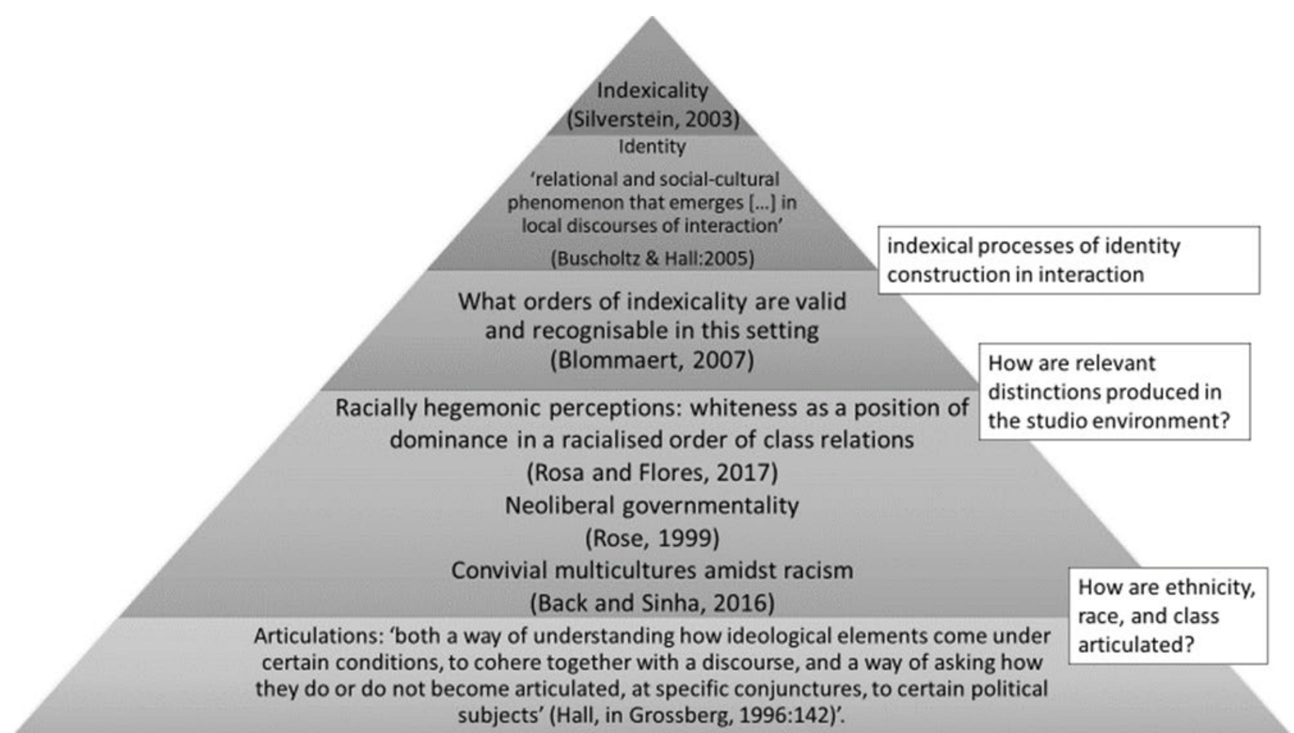

Figure 1. Diagrammatic Outline of Theoretical Framework

I begin by reviewing critical sociolinguistic approaches that have provided accounts of race and class that do not rely on fixed or essentialised identities before setting out the central linguistic concept of *indexicality* (Silverstein, 2003) that occupies the tip of the diagram in Figure 1. I then work down the diagram to encompass theoretical positions providing a greater scale of contextualisation. This begins with the role indexicality plays in identity work (Bucholtz and Hall, 2005) through everyday discursive practices. The relationship of indexicality to inequality is then explored through the concept of *orders of indexicality* (Blommaert, 2005). I set out the how these orders will be used to analyse the discursive conditions of the studio as sociolinguistic space. The analysis of participants' navigation of

these conditions in Chapters 5-7 engages with discursive practices of humour. I show how critical sociolinguistic studies have documented and noted the centrality of such practices to navigating ideologies of race and class in educational settings. I then turn to recent raciolinguistic research, primarily in the US, that has focused on the need to foreground the historical, structural and ideological in linguistic analysis concerned with race. This is followed by an overview of European approaches, which have tended to focus on ethnicity. I argue that a raciolinguistic perspective best accounts for the mutually constitutive constructions of race and class that have been noted in historical accounts to position whiteness as dominant in a racialised order of class relations. I then address how the study theorises whiteness and set out how the discursive construction of white identities in education has been addressed in the US, identifying a gap in the critical sociolinguistic research relating to accounts of the everyday negotiation of whiteness in UK HE. To support the understandings of whiteness in this study I go on to review accounts of whiteness in work on race and class in the sociology of education and its relationship to the negotiation of race and class.

To take account of critical sociolinguistic approaches to the historically specific conditions in which these negotiations take place, I detail how such studies have addressed neoliberalism in education and identify a gap in studies dealing with the racialised neoliberal subjectivities suggested by the accounts provided in Chapter 2. I then set out the notion of conviviality (Gilroy, 2004), which is central to the analysis provided in the current study and review empirical sociological studies that have engaged with this concept. Finally, I move to Hall's concept of articulation, which accounts for the structural relationship between race and class, the relationship of the everyday interactional with the social structure and connects the discursive construction of meaning with material lived conditions.

3.2 Critical sociolinguistics

3.2.1 Undoing fixity and essentialism

Much research into attainment gaps in HE has focused on ethnicity and adopted a quantitative approach, problematically identifying student characteristics as explanatory factors (Cotton et al., 2015:475) in relation to the state-sponsored (BAME) identity categories discussed in Chapter 2. Qualitative studies of students' experiences have avoided such deficit approaches, instead highlighting deficit discourses with which students must contend in their learning environments (Bernard et al, 2014:1939) and locating responsibility for the meeting of individuals' needs within institutions and structures (Bunce et al., 2019). Nonetheless, such studies are reliant on these same static and separate identity categories. While suggesting the need to focus on the discourses and structural contexts in which these inequalities are (re)produced, they do not engage with questions of how racialised identities are constructed in and by these contexts and discourses.

The critical sociolinguistic approaches adopted in the present study see identity as relational, emergent and negotiated in interaction with others in local contexts (Bucholtz and Hall, 2005:585). These approaches are used for their capacity to dislodge fixed and separate framings of race, class and ethnicity. In that sense, I follow Harris & Rampton (2009), who have challenged such static framings of identity by providing empirical support, through linguistic analysis of everyday life, for the theoretical understandings of ethnicity put forward by Stuart Hall and Paul Gilroy. Harris and Rampton chart how Hall's (1996a) concept of *new ethnicities* and Gilroy's (2004) *ethnic absolutism*, constituted a break with essentialising racial and ethnic categories employed throughout in monitoring by UK policymakers since World War II (Harris & Rampton, 2009:98). Chapter 2 detailed how such categorisations have been employed in HE. Hall and Gilroy's work in this area will be unpacked more

thoroughly in sections 3.4 and 3.5 of the current chapter, but for the purposes of discussion here a short description of these two key terms is provided.

In his ‘new ethnicities’ perspective, Hall (1996a: 443) asserted the need to recognize ‘the extraordinary diversity of subjective positions, social experiences and cultural identities which compose the category ‘black’. This necessitates a further ‘recognition that ‘black’ is essentially a politically and culturally constructed category, which cannot be grounded in a set of fixed transcultural or transcendental racial categories […].’ Similarly, Gilroy (2004:8/9) warns that framings of identity-based on ethnic categorisation can encourage an ‘ethnic absolutism’ that serves to deflect from a focus on racism and foster understandings of ethnic difference as untranslatable and ‘incommensurable otherness’.

These theoretical perspectives are embraced by Harris & Rampton (2009:115-117) in an analysis of everyday interactions in a London classroom in which they argue that race and ethnicity can become subsidiary incidental issues in an ‘unruly convivial mode of interaction’. Harris and Rampton (ibid) point out the need for close attention to the ways in which negotiation of ethnic issues is embedded in and amongst other contextually specific local concerns. Research that fails to adequately take account of this in its methodology, by for example relying on interviews, is considered to risk over-dramatizing issues of race that are made available in the ‘dominant idiom’ and thereby overstating the extent to which people are troubled or preoccupied by particular ethnic identifications. The analysis and argument provided by Harris & Rampton (ibid) is directed towards Gilroy’s (2004:9) insistence that we need to recognise the potential of multi-ethnic conviviality (discussed in greater detail in section 3.5) and avoid the reification of difference in ethnic absolutist formulations.

In separate studies, Harris (2006) and Rampton (2005) have successfully detailed, through sociolinguistic analysis, the inadequacy of such fixed notions of cultural and ethnic difference in accounting for the everyday negotiation of race and ethnicity. Rampton's (2005) seminal study of multi-ethnic crossing amongst young people in an urban school shows empirically how 'ethnic absolutist' understandings of cultural difference as untranslatable otherness provide an inadequate representation of the participants' lived experience. Rampton finds parallels with Hall's concept of *new ethnicity* in his documentation of language practices of group identity that '*traversed* (original emphasis) the boundaries of biological descent' (Rampton, 2005:285). Harris' (2006) study, *New Ethnicities and Language Use* analysed everyday language use among a group of 30 young people of South Asian descent in a secondary school in the suburbs of London. He argued that this sociolinguistic approach moved beyond a tendency in studies of youth in British Cultural Studies towards a focus on the spectacular. Harris (2006) sees a further advantage of approaching issues of race and ethnicity through analysis of language practices as its avoidance of the essentialism and fixity he associates with studies concerned with the visual emphasis on black and brown subjects. Harris's study, inspired by the 'anti-essentialist' current of British Cultural Studies, aimed to dislodge colonial discourses of ethnic fixity he was subject to and observed in the British context by providing an empirical account of new ethnicities as lived experience (Harris, 2006:10). He shows how his participants, 'simultaneously inhabit a number of ethnic and cultural subcommunities whose practices draw on a mixture of local and traditional elements alongside diasporic influences, which are realised through 'different emphases dominant at contingent moments (Harris, 2009:12).'

The analysis of race and ethnicity provided by Harris and Rampton provides important correctives to accounts of racial fixity of the kind suggested by ethnic monitoring in Higher Education. However, their account also recognizes the need for strategic essentialism and the

generalisations of 'big concepts' in order to address contemporary racism (Harris and Rampton, 2009:116). Nonetheless, they consider that these generalisations need to be made accountable to the kinds of 'lived experience' that is documented in their research. This approach is compatible with aspects of raciolinguistic scholarship that has emerged from a US context, in which Alim (2016a:8) urges a move from a politics of racial belonging to one that problematizes the process of racial categorisation. For Alim, the role of the 'transracial subject' is key in disrupting the ontological definitions of race. Alim argues for transracialization as 'the transgressive practice of not only resisting racial categorization but also employing it loudly in struggles for racial justice.' Through an autoethnographic account of different ways he was racialized over a five-day period, Alim (2016b:35) shows how 'racial identities can shift across contexts and even within specific interactions.' The raciolinguistic perspective adopted by Alim will be set out in Section 3.2.4.

3.2.2 Indexicality

As noted in the introductory chapter, the concept of indexicality is central to the study as it explains how meanings of racialised and classed identities rely on a dialectical relationship between macro-level social structures and more immediate concerns of interactants. The process by which this happens is described by Silverstein's (2003) concept of 'indexical order.' This describes how speakers draw on presupposed schematizations of what is appropriate to the context of interaction. These include pragmatic micro-level considerations of local concerns relevant to the immediate interactional situation as well as metapragmatic associations drawn from the wider macro-level social order. Silverstein proposes that considerations of what is appropriate to context, rest neither in the micro nor the macro-sociological but in the dialectic relationship between the two (2003:227).

In the interactions analysed in the thesis, for example, participants often position each other ethnically and racially in the course of teasing. When they do this, they are motivated by any

number of possible local considerations which might include a desire to make each other laugh. However, ethnic and racial positionings draw on associations that extend far beyond the immediate context and relate to macro-level framings of the social order as understood by the participants locally. The fact that the teases are meaningful, or at least not incoherent as teases to participants in the interaction, provides empirical evidence of 'an already constituted framework of semiotic value' (Silverstein, 2003:201).' This framework can be made visible through analysis and constitutes 'sociocultural reality manifested in-and-by discursive interaction' (ibid:227). I aim, through the analysis of discursive practices, to make these sociocultural realities visible.

Bucholtz & Hall (2005:592-594) see indexicality as central to the construction of identity, describing it as the process by which participants create 'semiotic links between linguistic forms and social meanings' and 'the mechanism whereby identity is constituted'. Its relevance to the study of an unequal social world comes from its reliance on 'ideological structures for associations between language and identity [that] are rooted in cultural beliefs and values – that is, ideologies – about the sorts of speakers who (can or should) produce particular sorts of language' (Bucholtz & Hall, 2005:594). This link to ideological structures, provides an opportunity for the analysis of the ways in which ideologies surrounding race, ethnicity and class are negotiated in the studio as 'speaker[s] agentively work […] the boundaries of sociolinguistic space, navigating from one footing to another in pursuit of local concerns (Rampton, 2015:28-39).'

As participants navigate the sociolinguistic space of the studio or narrate their experiences to me in interviews (Chapters 5-7), they engage in stance-taking by taking up positions with respect to what they say and how they say it (Jaffe, 2009:1), positioning themselves and others as particular kinds of people (Bucholtz and Hall, 2005:596). This means saying something about themselves, but also making judgements about others and taking a view of

the world around them. In this sense stance taking is inherently ideological (Jaworski & Thurlow, 2009:220). This means that analysis of stances taken can reveal something of the ideological make-up of the social worlds interactants are navigating. Because the stances and positionings taken up in interactions rely on 'already constituted framework[s] of semiotic value' (Silverstein, 2003:194) to be meaningful, they are constrained by the dialectical relationship between the macro-level social order and local pragmatic concerns. As Svendsen (2015:14) puts it, identity work is 'restricted or influenced by the […] indexical order of signs which link the micro-interactional instantiations to the macro-societal ideological level'.

The restrictions *within* indexical orders are taken a step further by Blommaert (2007:117), who considers the relations *between* indexical orders. Building on Silverstein's 'concept of indexical order, Blommaert (ibid) suggests that such orders 'relate to others in relations of mutual valuation – higher/lower/better/worse.' He provides the example of the English spoken by a middle-class person in Nairobi being valued differently in London (ibid:118). Invoking Foucault's 'order of discourse', Blommaert argues that the uneven and systemic stratification that indexical orders embody corresponds to 'patterns of authority, of control and evaluation, and hence of inclusion by real and perceived others.' Looking at this stratification, he argues, can highlight 'important aspects of power and inequality in the field of semiosis'.

In chapters 5-7 I analyse the restrictions both within and between indexical orders at play in the studio in order to establish the discursive conditions in which participants negotiate race, class and ethnicity. To do so I use the concept of polycentricity.

Polycentricity refers to the many 'real or perceived "centres" to which people orient' when they make meaning through indexicality (Blommaert, 2007:118). These 'centres' are the 'evaluating authorities' that we attend to in interactions with others. They might be

individuals, such as teachers, or the coolest guy in the class; collectives, such as peer groups, or subcultural groups; or abstract entities or even ideals, such as democracy, the nation-state or particular fashions of consumer culture, that make up the 'macro and micro-structures of our everyday world' (ibid). These ideals are connected to systemic inequalities because the impact of certain centres of authority is bigger than that of others (Blommaert, 2007:120). Explaining the relationship of polycentricity to ideology and inequality, Blommaert (2005:173) argues that 'ideological processes operate in and through polycentric and stratified systems' and that through analysis of indexical processes, a 'single, unique discursive form' can be understood to comprise layers of socially meaningful elements deriving from 'different ideologies that operate at different levels of historicity' (ibid:174/175). In Section 3.3 below, I argue that the analytical tools provided by this understanding of polycentricity and 'layered ideologies' (ibid:173) are complementary to those provided by Hall's (2021 [1980]) notion of articulation with its emphasis on the need for historical specificity in the analysis of racism.

In polycentric environments, multiple sets of localised behavioural norms emerge as interactants orient towards particular centres. That is different groups of students establish different sets of behavioural expectations around behaviour, physical conduct and language according to the multiple evaluative authorities they orient towards. These might involve, for example, sets of interactional expectations of toughness, flirtatiousness, or competitiveness. Blommaert et al. (2005:207) refer to such sets of expectations as *interactional regimes*. While different spaces and activities can impose interactional regimes on interactants (Blommaert, 2005 et al., 213), there are always multiple centres to which participants can orient (Blommaert, 2007:120). As a result, analysing the interactional regimes at play in the studio

will help to identify their relationship to the systemic inequalities of resources and power attached to these centres of authority.

For Blommaert (2007:128), 'difference goes hand in hand with inequality because every difference can become distinction – valued, hierarchized emblematicity of categories and identities.' In polycentric environments, such as multi-ethnic educational settings, multiple orders of indexicality are at play, each with a particular 'scope of communicability' relating to the spread of its recognizability, for example, this scope might be local or global. In addition, they can be stratified by value, which might accord with access to resources or political or sociocultural uptake. The intersection of this scope and value is referred to as sociolinguistic scale (Blommaert, 2020:2). Singh & Spotti (2021:372) point out that the metaphor of scales is not intended to produce simplistic cause-and-effect relationships but to draw attention to the complexity of the 'multiple interrelated levels of spread and influence' across which social life operates. In the context of the analysis in the present study, for example, it will be important to establish the extent to which, in the navigation of emblematic categories and identities in the studio, participants orient to the ways those constructions are employed 'further up the scale' in accounts of racialised neoliberalism or equality policies. However, it will not be suggested that the existence of such correspondence between these constructions suggests a direct causal relationship.

The concepts of *orders of indexicality*, *polycentricity*, *interactional regimes* and *scale* inform my analysis of discursive practices in Chapters 5-7 to establish how participants' orientations in the spaces of the studio and briefing room respond to issues of power and inequality. Blommaert et al., (2005:203) argue that space 'organises and defines […] orders of indexicality' and has effects on:

> *(a) what people can do or cannot do (they legitimize some forms of behaviour while disqualifying or constraining other forms);*

(b) the value and function of their sociolinguistic repertoires;

(c) identities, both self-constructed (inhabited) and ascribed by others.

As well as space affecting people's interactions, people's interactions are seen to modify and semiotically create space (ibid). These acts of creation and modification are captured in Pennycook & Otsuji's concept of *spatial repertoires* (Pennycook & Otsuji, 2014), which links the communicative 'repertoires formed through individual life trajectories to the available linguistic resources in particular *places*' (Pennycook & Otsuji, 2014:165). *Places* here are understood to be made in the encounter between such social spaces and the communicative repertoires brought by people with their own life trajectories. In terms that echo Hall's theory of articulation (discussed in Section 3.3 below), Massey describes *places* as 'articulated moments in networks of social relations and understandings' that are constructed 'out of a particular constellation of social relations, meeting and weaving together at a particular locus' (Massey 1991:28, in Pennycook & Otsuji, 2014:165).

The concept of *spatial repertoires* is applied in Chapter 5 to analyse how the social and institutional norms that attend the space are negotiated by the year convenor, Joe, who brings his communicative repertoire to it. I understand *communicative repertoires* as 'conventionalized constellations of semiotic resources for taking action that are shaped by the particular practices in which individuals engage' (Hall, Cheng, & Carlson, 2006, p. 232, in Otsuji & Pennycook, 2010:248). I take a broad interpretation of semiotic resources and, following Blommaert & Backus (2011:7), include 'anything that people use to communicate meaning' such as those outlined by Rymes' (2010: 216) encompassing "the array of languages, 'gestures, dress, posture' and 'accessories' individuals use 'to function effectively in the multiple communities in which they participate."

In the understandings of space and place advanced above, the interactants rely on understandings drawn from scales that exceed the particular location in which they are

communicating (Blommaert et al., 2007:204; Massey, 1991:28). As interactants take stances to position themselves and others as particular kinds of people (Bucholtz and Hall, 2005:596), they often rely on axes of differentiation from contexts beyond that of the immediate interaction. The semiotic process by which such axes of differentiation are made iterative across these different scales has been termed *fractal recursivity* (Gal & Irvine, 2019:20). The process involves 'the projection of an opposition, salient at some level of relationship onto some other level (Irvine & Gal, 2000:38) so that the *principle of contrast,* once established, can be used to establish cascades of differentiation, which can be indexically invoked in specific situations (ibid:2019:127-130). In relation to identities, Irvine and Gal (2000:38) explain that:

> *[t]he myriad oppositions that can create identity may be reproduced repeatedly within each side of the dichotomy or outside of it they provide actors with the discursive or cultural resources to claim and thus attempt to create shifting communities, identities, selves, and roles, at different levels of contrast within a cultural field.*

The concepts and theoretical positions set out in this section will be applied to make sense of how participants navigate the constraints and affordances of the contours and boundaries of sociolinguistic space (Rampton, 2015: 28-39; Svendsen, 2015:14; Blommaert, 2007:128;). In this way, they inform my analysis of how subject positions are negotiated and discursive conditions navigated as participants interact in the studio. Empirical studies of interaction have shown how in these negotiations and navigations interactants can also find fleeting spaces for 'wiggle room' (Erickson, 2001, in Rampton, 2015:42) – 'just a little bit of space for innovation within what is otherwise experienced as the compelling weight of social structure/expectation' (Rampton, 2015:42).

3.2.3 Playful talk, teasing and identity work

Research has shown how humour can often play a role in finding space for innovation against the constraints of the social structure. Lytra (2017:164) notes that 'educational and sociolinguistic studies of schools and classrooms from an ethnographic perspective have repeatedly shown that playful talk is an enduring feature of classroom talk and learning (e.g., Lytra, 2007; Maybin 2006; Poveda 2011; Rampton 2006). Studies into such talk have shown 'the different ways playful talk and identity construction are embedded in broader social, historical, political, and ideological contexts and discourses and can be mobilized to contest but also reproduce dominant linguistic hierarchies and social stratification' (ibid: 168). Lytra concurs with Blackledge & Creese (2010:125, in Lytra, 2017) that such studies allow us to "go beyond a simple dichotomy of 'micro and macro,' or 'structure and agency,' to understand the structural in the agentic and the agentic in the structural; the ideological in the interactional and the interactional in the ideological; the 'micro' in the 'macro' and the 'macro' in the 'micro'" (ibid:168).

In particular, much of the playful talk analysed in this study exhibits the features of 'teasing' as defined by Boxer & Cortez-Conde (1997). That is, the talk is directed at an addressee or hearer who is present and 'becomes the center of an interaction in which a humorous frame has been set up.' Boxer & Cortez-Conde (1997) describe a continuum from 'bonding to nipping to biting' that refers to the effects produced by teasing. It is through this 'biting and bonding' that participants in interactions negotiate 'relational identity with others and through others' (Boxer & Cortez-Conde, 1997:279). As such, they can be seen as central to the processes by which identities are discursively co-constructed in interaction.

As Lytra (2007:393) points out, teasing is highly ambiguous and context-dependent. It relies heavily on shared schema and contextualisation cues that signal the intent of an utterance as playful and therefore at the bonding, rather than biting, end of the continuum. This carries

with it a high risk of misinterpretation, which leads Boxer & Cortez-Conde (1997:282) to ask why people are willing to take this risk. They conclude that the incentive is the bonding provided by successful relational identity development. Furthermore, the analysis of joking and teasing provides an opportunity to observe with clarity the 'negotiation of identity with and through others' because it is in such interactions that 'we can display the intimacy of our identities as friends, family members, and members of an in-group' (ibid). A number of studies in educational settings have shown that race and ethnicity can be reworked through humour, enabling potentially hurtful othering discourses to be recontextualised as objects of ridicule to be laughed at (Lytra, 2017; van de Weerd, 2019; Winkler Reid, 2015), Lytra (2017) notes the role of humour in precarious processes of 'boundary levelling' between minority Turkish-speaking children and their majority Greek counterparts in an Athens primary school. Winkler Reid (2015) identifies 'ironic racism' and 'piss-taking' around ethnicity as strategies for making fun and generating conviviality in a London school where dominant categorisations of ethnicity tended towards the reification of difference. Van de Weerd (2019) found that classroom humour was used to pass comment on negative discourses surrounding their migration backgrounds and to interrupt the serious business of school work. The use of humour in opposition to academic expectations of education is also documented in Willis' (1997 [1979]) sociological account of the response of working-class males to the middle-class institutional settings of education. Willis' participants find ways to escape lessons and use this resource for the purposes of 'having a laff' in order to develop these 'particular cultural skills' of vital importance in a counter-school culture (ibid:28-29). Pichler (2006) shows how teasing is employed in her analysis of interaction among a group of Bangladeshi girls at a comprehensive school in East London. She argues that this indexes toughness through pointing to 'contemporary stereotypes about British working-class youth culture' (ibid:227). Pichler argues that such stereotypes are 'carriers of ideologies about

culture/ethnicity, class and gender that play an important role in the construction of identities within the group (ibid) (see also Rampton, 2005 discussed in next section). Such ideologies and their relationship to social structures of inequality are considered next.

3.2.4 Raciolinguistics: language, ideologies and structures

In this section, I explain how the focus on indexical processes described so far supports recent scholarship on race, ethnicity and class that signals a need to foreground the historical, structural and ideological in empirical linguistic analysis. Recent research in linguistic anthropology in the US has been observed to prioritise three assumptions about the relationship between language and race:

> *(1) that racialized language is an ideological construct, produced as much by perceivers as by producers; (2) that racialization is a discursive process that takes place over various scales of time and place; (3) that processes of racialization are embedded in structures of power.*
> Lo and Chun (2020:32)

These three assumptions apply to the approach taken in this study. I will address each in turn. Firstly, the study takes Bucholtz and Hall's (2005) approach to disrupt fixed notions of identity through an understanding of identity in interaction, as relational, emergent and discursively constructed in interaction. This approach has been seen to risk unwittingly reaffirm neoliberal notions of identity as an attribute of agentive selves, who determine how they are read in social encounters through the use of particular resources (Lo and Chun, 2020:30). An approach which avoids such risks can be found in a raciolinguistic perspective, which 'theorizes the historical and contemporary co-naturalization of language and race'(Rosa and Flores, 2017:636). In an approach that is less concerned with the linguistic practices of individual agentive selves, Rosa & Flores, (2017:636) have sought to refocus attention from documenting the 'empirical linguistic practices of racialised subjects', towards 'interpretive and categorizing practices of racially hegemonic perceiving subjects.' (Rosa and

Flores, 2017:628; see also Flores and Rosa, 2015; Rosa, 2019; Corona and Block, 2020). Instead, their focus is the structural constraints faced by speakers. They see this as necessary because:

> *[w]hat might appear as racial and semiotic flexibility at the level of individual bodies and practices, can in fact involve the reproduction and rearticulation of broader racial and linguistic structures within emergent contexts.*
>
> (Rosa & Flores, 2017:636).

Although engaging with the discursive practices of individuals into which racial and semiotic flexibility may be read, the current study is oriented towards the discursive conditions in which these practices are produced. It engages a raciolinguistic perspective and aims to avoid overstating individual agency by centring the constraints operating both *within* and *between* indexical orders under which participants are operating as they engage in identity construction. By directing attention to the *orders of indexicality* that are navigated in the course of interactions, the study aims to document the racial structures and ideologies that are emergent in the context of the studio. As discussed above, the analysis in this study aims to establish the evaluative authorities to which participants orient in the course of interactions and the issues of power and inequality this raises. As such, it is capable of identifying racially hegemonic perceptions that might constitute evaluative authorities. That is, rather than centring empirical linguistic practices of producers, it is sensitive to the interpretations of ‘real and perceived others’ (Blommaert, 2007:117) addressed by these practices.

Numerous recent studies have documented students negotiating race in interaction in educational contexts. Rosa (2019) provides an account of Latinx school pupils’ use of ‘inverted Spanglish’ to challenge racializing linguistic ideologies to which they were subjected. Corona & Block (2019) take a raciolinguistic perspective on racial microaggressions in order to document how school pupils are racially positioned in the

course of everyday interactions in a Catalan School and the ways in which these invoke 'colonial distinctions within and between nation-state borders' (Flores & Rosa, 2017:623, in Corona & Block, 2019: 781). Although not explicitly attending to raciolinguistic ideologies, Van de Weerd (2019:252) details how Dutch school pupils respond to such distinctions by employing ethnic labels in jocular interaction to negotiate relationships to labels they see as central to their own group categorisations. These interactional moves are seen to mitigate the potentially hurtful effects of stigmatizing discourses, making them laughable (ibid:258). Similarly, Winkler Reid (2015) provides an account of pupils in an 'ethnically and racially diverse' London school ironically invoking racist discourses to 'make fun' out of differences. In these accounts, humour emerges as a key resource by which to negotiate race in educational contexts.

Turning to Lo and Chun's (2020:32) second assumption, that racialization is a discursive process that takes place over various scales of time and place, the application of *articulation* means that the study of race in interaction is treated as connected across time and place with contextually and historically specific racisms detailed in Chapter 2. The use of Blommaert's framework for analysing inequality across orders of indexicality allows for an interscalar polycentric analysis of ideologies that operate at different levels of history (Blommaert, 2005, 174/175). In other words, the approach documents how racializing distinctions at the level of the interaction articulate with larger-scale political constructions that can be seen in the specific colonial and postcolonial histories of race and class in England. In this way, the study can be said to take a raciolinguistic perspective by analysing processes of racialization that take place through 'the continued rearticulation of colonial distinctions between Europeanness and non-Europeanness—and, by extension, whiteness and nonwhiteness (Rosa & Flores, 2017:662).' These connections are more fully theorised in relation to the social formation in the discussion of *articulation* in Section 3.3.

Thirdly, it follows from the above that the study treats processes of racialisation as embedded in structures of power. Raciolinguistic perspectives call for a focus on the hearing practices of white listening subjects to understand the overdetermination of racialised subjects' language practices by colonial histories. Whiteness here is understood as 'an historical and contemporary subject position that can be situationally inhabited both by individuals recognized as white and non-white' (Haney-Lopez 1996, in Rosa & Flores,2017:628) and can take various forms, including assessments, classifications, and modes of authority' (Rosa and Flores, 2021:1164). By engaging with the historically and contextually specific racisms through which whiteness as an evaluative authority has been constructed in an English context, the study engages with the *orders of indexicality* that these authorities continue to reproduce in the institutional setting of the studio. In doing so the analysis can draw attention to the sociolinguistic labour required of racialised individuals in navigating them and the unequal burdens this places on them (Lo and Chun, 2020:35). By treating race as structural in this way, the study resists an approach identified by Lo (2020:297) in linguistic scholarship in which the study of language, race and class in which 'race is often understood in terms of *racists*- those who harbour bias or inflict harm upon others- while class is framed as more immanent within a system.' Chapters 1 and 2 detailed how this understanding is present in educational policy and recent developments in government policy more generally (CRED, 2021; Warmington, 2024). Raciolinguistic perspectives, while foregrounding race in their analysis, see race as intersecting with class and other modes of social differentiation and racism as 'part of a global system of capitalist oppression' (Alim, 2016a:6) with race and class understood as co-constituted hierarchies (Rosa & Flores, 2017:638) in racial capitalism. Recent research on education policy around language in English schools has applied a raciolinguistic approach that understands race and class in this way. Cushing & Snell (2022:5) argue that while the standard language ideologies that inform educational policy in

England are widely understood to be a classed concept in England, they need to be understood through the prism of race with race and class seen as intersectional axes of discrimination. In a raciolinguistic study of deficit ideologies surrounding the language practices of low-income and racialised speakers in educational policy, Cushing (2022) draws on the role of the deserving/undeserving distinctions in Shiliam's historical account of race and class in England to understand them as mutually constitutive hierarchies.

Chapter 2 presented accounts of how the specific historical conditions of racial capitalism in England have been shaped by this mutually constitutive relationship between race and class (Shilliam, 2018; Virdee, 2014). On Shilliam's account 'there is no politics of class that is not already racialized'(Shilliam 2018:180). The present study uses Stuart Hall's notion of articulation to theorise this relationship (See Section 3.3 for detailed discussion).

3.2.5 Race and class

Rather than addressing race and class as mutually constitutive, sociolinguistic studies into educational inequalities in a European context have tended to focus on ethnicity and class, treating them as separate but interrelated axes of differentiation. These are conceived as 'vertical' class-related high/low dualisms and 'horizontal' inside/outside dichotomies relating to migration and ethnicity (See Madsen, 2013 and Rampton, 2011a). Madsen and Svendsen (2015:212) observe that categories of class and ethnicity are interrelated in contemporary societies and suggest a need to take account of this in sociolinguistic research on linguistic variation that has undergone a 'cultural turn' towards emphasising ethnic differentiation. Sociolinguistic research in educational settings has often shown this interrelation through interlinked sets of binary distinctions in the language practices of participants.

In a paper that provides a detailed examination of the interrelation between class and race/ethnicity that will be unpacked shortly, Rampton (2011a) analyses datasets from two

urban schools in which young people employ style contrasts and high/low dualisms to position themselves in a muti-ethnic class society (Rampton, 1995/2005; 2006, reported in Rampton, 2011a). Similarly, Preece (2010; 2014) has documented the stigmatisation of the language practices of minority ethnicity working-class bi/multilingual use(rs) of 'London English' in a London university and the use of a posh/slang dichotomy among minority ethnic students to contrast the language practices used with their peers and those of the academic community. Madsen (2013) highlights a similar trend among young people in Copenhagen in the metapragmatic reflections of students in which speaking 'integrated' is counterposed to the use of slang or street language in a high/low binary distinction that orients to academic success and shows the salience of social class. Jaspers (2011) also points to the negotiation of a high/low axis of socioeconomic status alongside insider/outsider dichotomies in documenting the stylised use of Antwerp dialect at a multi-ethnic school in Belgium.

Noting the incorporation of class (and gender) to constructions of race documented in ethnographically informed work taking place in educational settings in the US, Madsen (2013) points out that there are ethnographic studies in several countries mapping linguistic styles once associated with migration and minorities onto stratifications associated with social class. These include Chun (2011) on classed and gendered stereotypes invoked in strategies of reading race; Bucholtz' (2011) study of white identities and youth culture, and Mendoza-Denton's (2008) account of the language and cultural practices of Latina gang girls.

In a detailed discussion that preceded recent accounts of racialised capitalism in Britain, Rampton (2011a) describes separate horizontal and vertical axes of interrelation between ethnicity and class. Nonetheless, his findings appear compatible with, and can perhaps be seen to reinforce, accounts that see the operation of class hierarchies as inseparable from those of race. Rampton's paper is a response to claims from within critical sociolinguistics

(Hill, 2004:193; Heller, 2007:341, in Rampton, 2011a:1236) that dynamic agentive accounts of identity of the kind documented by Rampton can fail to fully account for structural or systemic constraints. In order to engage more fully with these constraints, Rampton provides an analysis that draws on data from two previous studies. The first of these involved style polarisation between Creole and Asian English; the second analysed posh/cockney stylisations. Using the two datasets, Rampton argues that both instances of stylisation draw on a high/low dualism that is ultimately central to class stratification (2011a:1237).

To account more fully for the systemic and structural, Rampton (2011a:1237) distinguishes between two types of systems in his analysis: semiotic and socio-economic. Semiotic systems refer to binary contrasts between contrastive pairs such as posh/cockney and Creole/Asian English. In respect of the socioeconomic, Rampton acknowledges the role of immigrant labour in post-war Britain, but describes this system as a stratified class society in which wealth and opportunity are unequally distributed. While the paper focuses on 'adolescents positioning themselves in a multi-ethnic class society through their active involvement with two binary style contrasts, posh and Cockney, Creole and Asian English', the analysis of systemic constraints applies only to the posh/cockney contrasts, with ethnicity and migration considered separately as part of an 'inside/outside' dichotomy.

The argument for the centrality of class rests upon treating the 'vertical' distinctions of class as distinct from 'horizontal' inside/outside distinctions of ethnicity before drawing connections between the two axes. Firstly, Rampton's argument states:

> *The posh/Cockney binary was intimately tied to social class, and it permeated the ordinary urban English habitually spoken by my British-born informants. But when, agentively, they put on stylised posh and Cockney voices, adolescents accentuated and denaturalised class stratification*

In this formulation, class, separately from ethnicity, is structurally stratified. Moving on to the ‘horizontal’ axis, Rampton argues:

> *The Creole/Asian English binary was related to ethnicity and migration, and in their agentive stylisations of Creole and Asian English, youngsters actively reworked the ethno-linguistic imagery circulating in the dominant ideology, adapting it in ways that made much better sense of their multi-ethnic lives together.*

Here, race/ethnicity is located within the sphere of representation as a matter of ideology and imagery. Working across the two data sets, Rampton argues that:

> *These reworkings of the Creole/Asian English binary were actually grounded in a shared working-class position, and the Creole/Asian English binary was also influenced by the high/low dualism central both to posh and Cockney and to social class. So although migration and ethnicity certainly mattered a great deal, the structuring processes associated with class seemed to be more fundamental.*

The centrality of the high/low binary to both sets of data leads Rampton to conclude that: ‘ethno-linguistic emancipation means integration into the stratified sociolinguistics of social class’

Rampton’s argument for the primacy of class distinctions over race draws on Cohen’s (1998) account of class-racism in which high/low distinctions are invoked by discourses ‘strategically employed in British class society, [and] from the very outset [ ] applied across a range of sites of domination, both to the indigenous lower orders and ethnic minority settlers as well as to colonial populations overseas” (1988: 63). While Cohen’s account provides a detailed history of the relationship between race and class, more recent analyses (presented in Chapter 2), that have drawn on histories of political economy point to a more mutually constitutive relationship in racialized capitalism (Shilliam, 2018; Virdee; 2014; Bhattacharyya, 2018, Kundnani, 2022).

As Shilliam has argued, the racialization of the undeserving poor and the undeserving racialized outsider are constructions that are mutually constitutive and are mobilized in distinction to the integrity of the hard-working, orderly independent, white English genus in order to protect its integrity. Seen from this point of view, where whiteness is taken as a position of dominance in a racialized order of class relations, 'posh' is also 'white' and 'deserving'. This alters the cross-ethnic solidarity and 'shared working-class position' Rampton observes in his study of style contrasts in the use of Asian English and Creole, making it a matter of solidarity between those positioned outside of whiteness.

On this basis, when Rampton observes that the 'high, polite, proper' orientation of non-stylised Asian English linked to the English high side of the class binary is deemed comical, 'its aspirations hopelessly marred by foreignness' (Rampton, 2011a:1244), it is not simply an elevated class position but its incongruity with the whiteness with which such positions are associated that serves as the basis for humour. Similarly, at Central High the use of Asian (or Indian) English was seen to project a 'very non-cool, school-enthusiastic persona oriented to the high and polite' (ibid:1247), and therefore to be comical. It is perhaps the awkward combination of the class position indexed and the racialised status of the speaker that provides the comedy. That is, to the multi-ethnic working class, these speakers are laughable because they are neither authentically 'one of us', nor 'one of them' (members of the white elite). While Rampton's (2011a) analysis of structural constraint serves to document everyday multi-ethnic working-class solidarity and conviviality of direct relevance to this study, its theorizing of class relations appears to understate the role of race in the political economy and socioeconomic history of Britain.

Chun (2019) has argued for a linguistic approach to class identifications that pays less attention to static positionings and more to the emergent, relational processes of discursive identity construction described by Bucholtz and Hall (2015). He proposes seeing class as

'interanimating' with sexuality, gender and race (Chun, 2019:340). This process of interanimation draws on Althusser's notion of *overdetermination* and *mutual intereffectivity* and would involve a relationship in which race does not simply *affect* class but *effects* it, constituting it and participating in determining the nature of it (Roberts, 2018, in Chun, 2019:335). The same would be true of the relation of class to race. This approach appears compatible with Shilliam's (2018:180) claim that 'class is race' and that 'there is no politics of class that is not already racialised'. As we shall see in section 3.3, it is also compatible with Hall's notion of *articulation* (Hall, [1980] (2021). Chun (2019:340) argues for a sociolinguistic approach that conceptualizes the interanimating dynamics of class identifications across multiple domains and scales through processes and forces that are social, personal, historical linguistic and discursive. In respect of the interanimation of race and class in the studio, it is hoped that analysis combining orders of indexicality and articulation will provide something of the approach Chun suggests. Following the historical context set out in Chapter 2, this study treats the racialised order of class relations as a product of white dominance. The discussion will now turn to whiteness as it is conceptualised in the study.

3.2.6 Whiteness

The previous section presented critical sociolinguistic accounts of everyday interaction in UK education have tended to focus on ethnicity, migration and multilingualism of participants rather than issues of race and whiteness (Rampton, 2005; Preece, 2010; Harris, 2006; Pichler, 2006). This is not to say that such studies are not engaged in addressing race, but that the focus of this work is addressing racializing essentialism, ethnic absolutism and negative evaluations of racialized language practices.

While drawing on these approaches to account for shifting positions adopted in navigating race and class in the studio, I follow a raciolinguistic perspective that centres race and

whiteness as that which is navigated. This means treating whiteness as 'an historical and contemporary subject position that can be situationally inhabited both by individuals recognized as white and non-white' (Haney-Lopez 1996, in Rosa & Flores,2017:628). In treating whiteness as a position of dominance in a racialised order of class relations through an understanding of class and race as mutually constitutive or co-dependent (Rosa & Flores, Cohen, 1988; Virdee, 2014; Shilliam, 2018; Hall, [1980] 2021) in this study, it is important not to collapse race into class and to acknowledge, as Lewis (2004: 627/628) does, that:

> *White [people] in all social locations are relatively privileged in regards to similarly located racialized minorities in ways that predict the relative constraints and expectations with which a person must deal*
>
> (Lewis, 2004:627/628).

By analysing whiteness through a sociolinguistic lens which sees constructions of race, ethnicity and class not as fixed and stable categories but as constructed, and reconstructed in everyday talk (Harris & Rampton, 2009; Alim, 2016a), I hope to illuminate historically and institutionally situated processes of racialization as 'the continued rearticulation of colonial distinctions between Europeanness and non-Europeanness—and, by extension, whiteness and nonwhiteness' (Rosa & Flores, 2017:662). In line with Trechter and Bucholtz (2001:5), whiteness is understood ideologically as racially unmarked, as 'absence, not presence: the absence of culture and color.' Through an ethnographically informed approach to the analysis of the way whiteness is subverted and reproduced in local discourse, the study aims to 'unmoor whiteness from its unmarked position', bringing it 'into seeing (and hearing) range' (Trechter & Bucholtz, 2001:5).

Bucholtz (2001) produced such an unmooring effect in her ethnographic study into multi-ethnic relations in a US High School where the dominant youth culture draws on Black cultural resources. She documented the use of 'language as a resource for production of an

intelligent non-conformist identity' (Bucholtz, 2001: 87) among a group of students that identified as 'nerds.' This was achieved through the use of a 'superstandard' as a 'stylistic resource (Bucholtz, 2011:151) which elevated the status of a prescriptive standard and was marked in distinction to both the colloquial standard generally applied in the multi-ethnic setting and against non-standardised varieties. Bucholtz (2001:88) defines the superstandard as 'a variety that surpasses the prescriptive norm established by the standard available to some standard and non-standard speakers as a special formal-and often written-register', arguing that in this context it was indexical of 'extreme whiteness'. She notes that the usage observed among 'nerds' as a 'social rather than situational variety' was restricted to neither formal contexts nor to written language (ibid.). These students were found to prize intelligence and 'eccentric non-conformity' as well as a 'zany brand of humour' (Bucholtz, 2011:139).

In a UK context, whiteness has recently begun to emerge as a category of analysis in critical sociolinguistic approaches to the study of educational settings at the level of policy. Cushing (2023) has used a raciolinguistic analysis to argue that national policies legitimise language oppression contributing to the whiteness of teacher education through a failure to retain marginalised teachers in England. Cushing and Snell (2022) have shown that policies of the UK schools inspectorate, OFSTED, operate according to the logics of a white perceiving subject while rooting their analysis in close intersections with social class. However, sociolinguistic studies of Higher Education and the everyday reconstruction of whiteness in interaction in these settings have yet to emerge. This study aims to address this gap. The need for such research is suggested by scholarship in the sociology of education.

3.2.6.1 Sociological accounts of race, class and Education

Sociological studies in education in England have consistently drawn attention to the need to address whiteness and its intersections with social class. In a study that responds to deficit

framings of Black educational performance and a lack of attention in educational research to the experiences of the Black middle class, Rollock et al. (2015) take an intersectional approach to understanding the study of the educational strategies of parents from this group. The study found that dominant notions of class within the British context are racialised. They are shaped and informed by Whiteness even when Whiteness is not explicitly named (p.171).' Furthermore, the findings suggested the need for 'more sophisticated analysis of the ways in which race intersects with class status not just to the *disadvantage* of the Black middle classes but to the *advantage* of their White middle-class peers' (ibid:3). The present study aims to address this need.

Taking an intersectional approach to race, and class in Higher Education, Bhopal (2018:157) identifies the academy as a space which privileges White middle-class identity above all others. Through an analysis of policy and the experiences of Black academics, she argues that this privilege is underpinned by a principle of meritocracy, which she defines a belief that 'those who rise to the top have done so because they have worked hard and deserve to be there, in comparison to those who have not – who are lazy' (ibid:5). Drawing on the Critical Race Theory of Bonilla-Silva and Forman, Bhopal suggests this is facilitated by a liberal free market and pragmatic colour-blind racism, which allows whites to defend white supremacy in an apparently non-racial manner (ibid:25).

Gillborn (2010) also draws on Critical Race Theory in an analysis of discourses of educational inequalities following the 2008 global economic crisis. This analysis shares much with Shilliam's (2018; 2020) account of the construction of the white working class as both a source of national degeneration *and* a 'left behind' constituency. Gillborn's (2010) intersectional analysis of discourses of race and class employs the concept of *interest convergence,* which suggests that 'race equality can only come about when White elites see the changes as in their own interests' (Bell, 1980 in Gillborn, 2010:6), to argue that the

[white] working class are presented as both ‘victims of unfair racial competition and, on the other hand, degenerate threats to social and economic order’ in such discourses (Gillborn, 2010:3/4). He notes how, in the context of the global financial crisis of 2008, the deserving/undeserving poor distinctions were activated to construct the white poor as a welfare-dependent, irresponsible underclass associated with historical tropes of sexual promiscuity, laziness and criminality in popular media and cross-party political discourse. Alongside these constructions, Gillborn (2010:7) notes a discourse of white working-class boys as race victims of educational failure and the emergence of their construction as a ‘left behind’ constituency. These discourses are argued to reassert a neoliberal worldview in which state aid is seen as dangerous and corrupting. The worldview shows strong affinities with that put forward by Powell in his arguments for a free economy in which the orderly independence of the English genus would be allowed to thrive (Shilliam 2021; Kundnani 2021).

Gillborn’s analysis aims not merely to ‘cite the difficulties and complexities of intersecting identities and oppressions but to ‘detail these complexities and account for how categories and inequalities intersect, through what processes, and with what impacts’ (Gillborn, 2010:5; Gillborn and Youdell, 2009). Shain (2011) details a number of studies in which sociologists of youth and education have taken such an approach by drawing on the notion of articulation to emphasise the complex interrelations between structures of power in order to move away from fixed conceptions of culture found in policy and academic literature that position ethnic minorities as passive victims. In one such account that uses the ways in which Asian girls make sense of schooling to understand schools as sites of societal power relations, Shain (2003:132) uses the theory of articulation to disrupt these fixed conceptions in relation to Asian girls to ask *how* and *why* racialised, classed and gendered social relations ‘have been shaped in a complex historical process of articulation – that is how their lives intersect with

economic, political and ideological relations of subordination and domination' (emphasis added). It is these questions of *how* and *why* that the current study aims to address. It uses critical sociolinguistics to provide a detailed account of *how* social relations of subordination are reproduced, resisted and reworked in discourse through everyday interaction. The account is theoretically underpinned with the concept of *articulation* to account for the interplay between historically and contextually specific combinations of structural forces and the discursive practices of interactants in the studio. Such a combination of sociolinguistics and Hall's *articulation* has been suggested by Thurlow (2020:356) as a means of critical intervention that is capable of connecting the analysis of 'hegemonic discursive practices […] with structural forces at work in the here-and-now'. Before dealing in detail with the theory of *articulation,* the following two sections set out two concepts that have been used to explain the structural forces and discursive practices of the 'here and now' of 21st-century England in which the study took place: *neoliberal governmentality* and *conviviality*.

3.2.7 Neoliberal governmentality

In the previous chapter, I reviewed literature that posited that neoliberalism has been central to constructions of whiteness as a position of dominance in a racialised order of class relations both in terms of its origins in the political economy of Hayek (Kundnani, 2021) and in its manifestations in the racist populism of UK politics (Shilliam, 2021; Kundnani, 2021). I also discussed how educational policy in the UK has centred around discourses of choice and individual autonomy (Burke & Wilkins, 2015:440), which has recently come to inform both national policy around race (CRED, 2021) and educational policy both nationally (OfS, 2022a) and at the local institutional level of the study. The data analysis chapters (5-7) detail how this context is navigated by individuals as they go about their everyday interactions in the studio. As such they make use of the concept of neoliberal governmentality as set out by Rose (1998;1999). Rose takes Foucault's (1986) notion of governmentality as 'the conduct of

conduct' (Rose, 1999:xxi) to understand the 'enterprise culture' of neoliberalism, arguing that neoliberal theorists of political economy such as Hayek and Friedman saw the social and political well-being as a product, not of effective state planning and bureaucracy, but, as ensured through the 'enterprising activities and choices of autonomous entities, businesses, organisations and persons' maximising their advantages through 'individual local calculations of costs strategies and tactics, costs and benefits' (Hayek, 1976; Friedman, 1982, in Rose, 1998:153). In ways that recall Shilliam's (2018:65) notion of 'orderly independence' and its centrality to constructions of the white English genus, this mode of governance relies on enterprising selves and the 'self-steering capacities' of subjects themselves (ibid:154). Enterprising conduct provides the model for everyday existence through 'energy, initiative, ambition, calculation, and personal responsibility.' In this way, neoliberal governmentality is described as a mode of governance in which individuals are 'obliged to exercise freedom, as choice, autonomy, self-responsibility, and the obligation to maximize one's life as a kind of enterprise' (Rose et al, 2009:13). This 'conduct of conduct' is exercised through acting on the choices and self-steering properties of individuals, families, communities, organisations' through 'a twin process of autonomization plus responsibilization – opening free space for the choices of individual actors whilst enwrapping these autonomized actors within new forms of control' (Rose, 1999:xxiii). Importantly, though Rose points out that while this 'government through freedom' multiplies the points at which the citizen has to play [their] part in the games that govern [them]' it also leaves space for resistance by multiplying 'the points at which citizens are able to refuse, contest, challenge those demands that are placed upon them.

Block (2017:42) notes a 'timid' turn towards political economy and the study of neoliberalism in applied linguistics and gives an overview of its economic history and development. In an edited volume on *Language and Neoliberal Governmentality*, Martín

Rojo & Del Percio (2020:2) introduce approaches to 'neoliberal governmentality' from 'critical, sociolinguistic and discursive standpoints with the aim of grasping 'how neoliberal subjectivity is constructed, reproduced, strengthened, and disseminated via discourse by means of daily institutional practices.' One such approach is provided by Sunyol and Codo (2020:135), who detail how, in an educational context characterised by the uncertain conditions of neoliberal capitalism, the conduct of students making educational choices is governed by appealing to them as self-responsible actors. Describing class as a key construct in any discussion about capitalism, Block calls for its intersection with well-established identity dimensions such as race and ethnicity in the lives of individuals and collectives to be accounted for.

Approaches addressing such intersectional dimensions can be found in the studies of Urciuoli (2020) and Del Percio and Wong (2020), who both touch on the racialised realities of engaging in white elite environments as experienced by working-class people of colour participating in aspirational programmes aimed at 'skilling up' for the corporate world. Urcioli (2020) documents how undergraduate students enrolled in para-curricular leadership courses at a US university are encouraged as 'future employee-leaders' to acquire communication skills as part of an effort to cultivate the neoliberal agency to run oneself as a business. Del Percio & Wong (2020:190) focus on a job centre employability programme as the site for 'the making of neoliberal subjects.' They situate these practices historically within a UK context in which institutions such as the workhouse and legislative apparatus such as the poor laws and benefits systems have been responsible for exercising state control over the unruly, immoral poor using the kind of deserving/undeserving distinctions detailed by Shilliam (2018). These initiatives share similarities with those observed in an Indian context by Del Percio and Highet (2021) in which hard work and 'growth mindsets' are presented as the answer to deep structural inequalities. The meritocratic outlook and the focus on choice

and agency highlighted in these sociolinguistic studies is familiar from the policy directions (HMG, 2022;CRED, 2021; OfS, 2018a) detailed in Chapter 2 (Section 2.3.4) and UniX strategies that centre on 'student-led choice' as the solution to 'closing gaps' (Section 2.3.6). There is a commonality in the way these interventions employ 'techniques of the self' (Rose, 1999:11) in which participants are conducted to act upon themselves to address the problem of inequality by making self-responsible choices.

In their sociolinguistic study of how governmentality is done, Del Percio and Wong (2020) follow Rose's insistence that such research should focus on its effects 'on the ground' for the subjects governed by and through it (Rose 1999, in Del Percio & Wong, 2020:192). Taking an ethnographic approach, they 'assume that documentation of the communicative practices observed during training activities enables [them] to study government not as an institution, nor as a mode of reasoning but rather as a set of activities operating at the intersection between technologies of self and technologies of power. Rose et al. (2009) explain how this 'English' approach to governmentality engages Foucault's observation that 'technologies of the self were formed alongside the technologies of domination such as discipline', creating subjects who would 'produce the ends of government by fulfilling themselves rather than being merely obedient', obliging them to 'be free in specific ways.' I will draw on this understanding of neoliberal governmentality in the analysis provided in this study but it is important to acknowledge a tension in this approach. Rose rejects an analysis that he considers present in certain understandings of cultural studies that realities and identities are created by discourses themselves. Instead, he argues that language and signifying systems are one among many elements that make reality governable. Despite this qualification, Rose argues that language should be analysed as a key element in the assemblage of networks that make possible 'governing at a distance' by enlisting 'authorities, groups, individuals and

institutions […] to identify their own desires and aspirations with those of others so that they could become allies in governing.' (1999:xix)

While language is central to this study, I will follow Del Percio & Wong (2020) in undertaking what Rose et al. (2009:24) refer to as an empirical mapping of these contingent governmental rationalities and techniques as they are contextually relevant. The rationalities and 'techniques of self' noted in policy in Chapter 2 to appeal to self-responsible choice-making in the face of inequality will inform the analysis of induction practices, project briefings and accounts of interaction in Chapters 5 and 6.

As detailed above, Urcioli (2020) and Del Percio & Wong (2020) engage with issues of race to the extent that they acknowledge the disproportionate effects of neoliberal governmentalities on racialised populations. However, Flores (2020) provides a sociolinguistic analysis of neoliberal governmentalities in bilingual language policy in the US that is rooted in racialised capitalism. Flores' account describes convergent but separate governmentalities of two kinds: *nation-state/colonial governmentality*, which 'seeks to produce governable national and colonial subjects', and *neoliberal governmentality*, which 'seeks to mould populations to fit the needs of transnational corporations.' Flores argues that it is the processes of racialisation produced through *nation-state/colonial governmentality* that allows for the maintenance of the status quo through *neoliberal governmentality* (Flores, 2020:56). I follow Flores (2020) in treating race as fundamental to the political economy of neoliberalism but adopt Kundnani's (2021) account of its centrality to Hayek's political economy and Shilliam's account of its specific history in Britain (Chapter 2). As such, accounts of neoliberal subjectivity that centre entrepreneurial individualism need to be accompanied by the logically complementary discourses of racialized populism that underpin them (Shilliam, 2021). In this way, I acknowledge the logics of white deservedness and colonial constructions of cultural evolution that are inscribed in governing neoliberal

subjectivities through discourses of choice and meritocratic competition that articulate with the construction of hard-working, orderly independent subjects.

Neoliberal subjects are understood by Block (2018:577) to be seen to be 'free, calculating and rational agents who are out to better themselves by making themselves more saleable in the job market'. In line with Wilkins & Burke's (2015) analysis of university choices (Chapter 2, Section 2.3.4), the neoliberal political citizen is assigned social rights and duties that 'progressively revolve around a conformity with the 'choices' that neoliberal regimes offer, such as increasingly precaritized jobs, flexibility imposed from above, being a good consumer and so on' (Block, 2018:578). Education is seen as a key site for the development of neoliberal subjectivities and the production of workers for the neoliberal economy and the precarious conditions such workers navigate. Block argues that 'education in many countries is now a site for the development of the homo economicus, the 'entrepreneur of himself, being for himself his own capital, being for himself his own producer, being for himself the source of [his] earnings' (Block, 2018:577; see also Martín Rojo & Del Percio, 2020:12-13). The discussion in the previous chapter detailed how these subjects are assumed by equality policies at a national and institutional level and are now invoked as a means of addressing inequality.

The body of literature on neoliberal governmentality that is employed in sociolinguistics provides important insight into the discursive processes by which neoliberal subjectivities are negotiated but does not currently incorporate the perspectives on racialised neoliberalism discussed in Chapter 2. The current study aims to combine these persectives in order to provide a historically specific account of the discursive conditions in which race and class are navigated.

3.2.8 Conviviality

In his account of contemporary racialised capitalism, Virdee (2019:24) raises concerns about the way in which race and class are politically decoupled in the efforts of reactionary populists in post-2008 austerity to 'recast the injuries of class through the politics of racist resentment' through the notion of a left-behind white working class. However, Virdee suggests that radical responses to such politics need to be rooted in hope rather than despair. He sees some potential for such hope in the lived realities of multi-ethnic life in urban Britain as documented by Valluvan, (2016) and Jackson (2018, in Virdee, 2019) if this can find a more organised political form. Central to these accounts of muti-ethnic life is Gilroy's concept of conviviality.

Gilroy's argument for the importance of conviviality rests on his claim that orders of racial difference need ultimately to be broken, and the reification of race challenged in order to accomplish effective work against racism (Gilroy, 2004:167). Gilroy takes issue with fixed conceptions of culture in essentialist accounts (Gilroy, 1987:66), which he sees as central to the persistence of race-thinking through its emphasis on cultural homogeneity following the decline of biological notions of race. While acknowledging the persistence of widespread racial violence and oppression, Gilroy (2001; 2004) has argued that the potential for undermining race-thinking can be found in spaces of everyday interaction where convivial interaction renders racialized difference banal and unremarkable. The convivial multiculturalism Gilroy refers to is rooted in his claim of a 'self-evident sameness of suffering of humankind.' He claims that the 'dissident value' of this conviviality 'is confirmed everywhere in the chaotic pleasures of the convivial postcolonial urban world.' (2004:167). In such environments, Gilroy (ibid:105) suggests:

> *Racial difference is not feared. Exposure to it is not ethnic jeopardy but rather an unremarkable principle of metropolitan life. Race is essentially insignificant.*

Empirical accounts of such convivial multicultures engage with the mundane everyday lived experiences of people living in multi-ethnic spaces. Valluvan (2016:207) provides two such ethnographic accounts of London life. The first details the everyday life of Farina, a young woman of Iranian background in an ethnically and religiously diverse area of Northwest London as she shopped, stopped for coffee and met a friend for an after-work meal at Nando's. Farina describes her local area as one in which racialised difference is presupposed but is rendered unremarkable. She describes the white people in her area by reference to her after-work meal partner, Claire as 'know[ing] how to behave' and 'knowing they shouldn't joke about some things'. She contrasts her local area with other neighbourhoods nearby and with university where 'there were so many people who didn't seem used to being with other people.' Valluvan describes this context as one in which 'race is 'essentially insignificant' (Gilroy, 2004:105, in Valluvan, 2016:105) but he emphasises that it is 'an 'insignificance' which emerges from well-accustomed 'indifference', not 'non-difference'.

The second site of Valluvan's ethnography is a South London social housing estate, suffering from poverty, where he identifies 'ambivalent hybrid culture' amongst the mostly black inhabitants attending a street party nominally marking the 2011 Royal Wedding. He notes the 'indifference to difference' displayed as older generations of Caribbean men sip beers and play dominoes while listening to reggae and dub alongside East African women dressed in hijab or burka. He describes young muti-ethnic congregations, including an 'ample white contingent' (ibid:212) collectively engaging in black diasporic cultural vernacular, listening to grime music as others return from mosque dressed in kameez. Valluvan distinguishes the conviviality on display from 'mere recognition (multiculturalism), overarching identity

(integration) or post-racial transcendence (liberal universalism).' He argues that the confidence displayed in 'everyday renditions of difference' constitutes a more radical 'disengagement with ethno-national 'community' as a legitimate principle of social organisation (Valluvan, 2016:214).' Valluvan argues that the party seemed to involve a sardonic flirtation a narrative of imperial Britain with its array of cultural symbols and practices 'best characterised as black' including Jamaican and Ghanaian flags, and "'inappropriate' selection of music (grime, more grime followed by deep rumbling reggae) (ibid:213).

In a final account of life on the same estate, Valluvan observes an incidence of racializing conflict involving the breakdown of a joke between a young Turkish shop assistant, Mehmet, and a young black couple. In his explanation of the event, Mehmet raises racializing scripts about black people held within the Turkish community but dismisses these on the basis of his everyday shared experiences with black residents of the estate. Valluvan (2016:218) draws from this evidence of:

> *a duality [...]central in any negotiation with racial difference. Being embedded in quotidian multicultural routines, whilst, simultaneously, being exposed to the conflict paradigms which can often situate discussions around race and pluralism – both privately through family and other intimate contacts amongst whom ideas circulate and at the level of general discursive engagement (e.g. news media and other racialized popular culture images).*

Data analysis chapters will be attentive to engagement with such discourses in participants' everyday interactions.

Jackson's (2019) study of a North London bowling alley follows Valluvan in providing an account of spaces of everyday multiculture as providing a 'radical and complex ability to be

at ease in the presence of diversity but *without* restaging communitarian concepts of selfsame ethnic and racial difference' (Valluvan, 2016:205, in Jackson, 2019:83). She analyses the comments in a petition forum aimed at keeping the bowling alley open in the face of a proposed redevelopment initiative which would require its closure. Jackson's analysis reveals how local residents make the case for the social value of the space through its capacity to provide the kind of convivial everyday encounters in which people are at ease with difference.

Back and Sinha (2016) identify ways in which young adult migrants in London exhibit 'convivial capabilities' as they 'build associations that work with and through difference'. They (2016:522) argue that conviviality offers 'an alternative understanding of culture that focuses on what people do every day rather than always reducing them to their cultural origins'. In doing so, they emphasise the capacity of conviviality as a conceptual tool to understand the 'paradoxical coexistence of racism and multiculture'(Back & Sinha, 2016:518), insisting that 'conviviality should not be a byword for saccharine diversity fantasies.' They note that convivial life can be observed among the 'micro-publics' of everyday life, listing 'workplace, schools and colleges' among other contact zones of association in which people negotiate difference through close proximity as necessary and habitual parts of daily life. As discussed earlier in this chapter, critical sociolinguistic accounts have provided important accounts of interaction in educational settings that might be described as convivial (Harris and Rampton, 2009; Pichler, 2006; Rampton, 2005; See also Winkler-Reid, 2015 for a non-linguistic account).

However, in observing these convivial relations, it is important not to mask or minimise the racialised hierarchies and structures *against* which such relations exist (de Noronha,

2022:160). It is important, then, that accounts of conviviality adopt 'a way of seeing' that is attentive to forms of division and racism alongside and sometimes within multicultural convivialities (Back & Sinha, 2016:521). By combining the critical sociolinguistic analysis of conviviality with an approach that is attentive to these structures and in emergent contexts, the present study aims to provide the descriptive complexity necessary to account for the racism within and alongside it. A central concept in accounting for these complexities is *articulation*

.

3.3 Articulation

The theory and method of articulation underpins this thesis. I use it to explain the structural relationship between race and class and to connect the everyday interactional with the social structure as well as connecting the discursive construction of meaning with material lived conditions. We have seen in the previous chapter how this concept relies on historically specific analysis of context to understand the relationship between racisms and their connection to other social relations. In the current chapter, I have outlined how sociolinguistic approaches analyse the relationship between micro-interactional lived experience and 'macro-sociological' categories of race and class. I have shown how sociolinguistic approaches to interaction have sought to provide non-reductive accounts of the social world that avoid essentialism, cultural fixity and ethnic absolutism. I have also shown how raciolinguistic approaches have aimed to account for the ways in which interactions are constrained by co-constituted social structures of race and class. In this section, I will argue Hall's theory and method of *articulation* provide a means of addressing both of these concerns. That is, it provides a theory of the social formation that accommodates both the discursive construction and negotiation of race and class and their rootedness in social structures and conditions of material inequality.

Focussing on the discursive construction of race, class and ethnicity, this study sets out to address two problematics associated with the identification of ethnicity and class in efforts to address inequalities in Higher Education. The first issue is, how is it possible to address the inequalities of racial injustice without recourse to essentialising categorisations? The second is, how can efforts to address racial injustice take account of its relation to other aspects of oppression within the social order?

These two questions are raised by Stuart Hall in his essay 'New Ethnicities', which marked 'a shift in black cultural politics in Britain' (Alexander, 2009:469). The essay posed a theoretical challenge to the essentialising racial and ethnic categories that had been employed in monitoring by UK policymakers since World War II (Harris & Rampton, 2009:98). Hall's essay describes a movement from an understanding of the category 'black' as an organising category forged in the common experience of racism and marginalisation by groups with very different histories, traditions and ethnic identities in post-war Britain. This came to form a cultural politics of resistance to the othering of black subjects as objects rather than subjects of representation in culture. Noting the emergence of a new front in this struggle, Hall suggests a move from a 'struggle over the relations of representation to a politics of representation itself' (1996a:442) in which cultural representation plays a formative, not merely expressive role' in the constitution of social and political life.

This raises two key points for the questions raised above in relation to this study. The first relates to the 'the end of the innocent notion of the essentialised black[12] subject' (ibid:443) that had been invoked to address racial injustice. As Hall (ibid) explains, 'what is at issue here is the recognition of the extraordinary diversity of subjective positions, social experiences and cultural identities which compose the category 'black'; that is, the

[12] Hall uses the term 'black' here as 'a way of referencing the common experience across ethnic and racial identities of racism and marginalisation in Britain (1996:441).

recognition that 'black' is essentially a politically and culturally constructed category, which cannot be grounded in a set of fixed trans-cultural or transcendental racial categories and which therefore has no guarantees in nature.' The second point concerns the ways in which '[t]he end of the essential black subject also entails a recognition that the central issues of race always appear historically in articulation, in a formation, with other categories and divisions and are constantly crossed and recrossed by the categories of class, of gender and ethnicity' (ibid:445).

Although specifically addressing race and ethnicity in his essay, Hall insists that rather than treating race and ethnicity as a kind of subcategory, his work always focuses on 'the whole social formation, which is racialized' (Grossberg, 2007 in Alexander, 2009:469). In this way, his work can be seen as treating race as internal to all social processes and as a lens through which broader structures can be explored' (Alexander, 2009: 469). Hall's theorisation of the social formation and social processes draws on neo-Marxist thought via Gramsci and Althusser as well as British Cultural Studies and Poststructuralism, particularly through the work of Foucault. While it is perhaps this later poststructuralist work that has the greatest impact on his conception of identity as discursively constructed, a central concept in Hall's theorisation of the relationship between identities and the social formation is 'articulation.'

Hall (1996b:141) uses the term 'articulation' to give effect to two senses in which the word is commonly used. The first gives effect to what he calls its 'language-ing', expressive meaning: a meaning in which somebody can be understood to articulate something through speech. The second use refers to its meaning in which two different elements can be connected or linked, as in the front and back parts of a lorry. He emphasises that the linkage suggested by the term is 'not necessary, determined, absolute and essential for all time and points to the need to ask 'under what circumstances can a connection be forged or made?' (ibid). This articulation of distinct elements with 'no necessary belongingness' under certain

conditions can give the appearance of 'unity' of a discourse. This articulated discourse can, in turn, establish a unity through linkage with social forces that it can under certain historical conditions, but need not necessarily, be connected' (ibid).

To take the example of the emergence of the 'black subject' in post-war Britain addressed in Hall's 'new ethnicities' essay (Hall, 1996a) above, a discourse of blackness responds to racism and marginalisation experienced by non-white populations in post-war Britain establishing a non-necessary link (an articulation) between ethnic groups subject to these oppressions giving the appearance of unity to a discourse of 'the black experience'. This articulated discourse enabled social action through a politics of anti-racism that critiqued the ways in which those subjects were 'positioned as the unspoken and invisible "other" of predominantly white aesthetic and cultural discourses' (1996:441). In this way articulation can be seen as 'both a way of understanding how ideological elements come under certain conditions, to cohere together with a discourse, and a way of asking how they do or do not become articulated, at specific conjunctures, to certain political subjects.' (Hall, 1996b, 142).

The theoretical utility of 'articulation' [13] for Hall is its capacity for 'characterising a social formation without falling into the twin traps of reductionism and essentialism' (Slack, 1996:112). Reductionist Marxist approaches which saw the social formation as a product of the economic base and superstructure or as an effect of the relations to the means of production had been found wanting both in their capacity to explain the actual lived conditions and motivations of the working class (Slack 1996:116). Furthermore, these approaches failed to account for other social relations of dominance and subordination along the lines of race and gender and to address their complex interplay with the oppressions of class (ibid). At the same time approaches that looked to culture, rather than class and the

[13]Halll emphises that articulation is not simply a theoretical concept but has many other applications in cultural studies (see Slack, 1996:114)

economic, as the realm for such dominance exhibited the same reductive tendencies with culture replacing class as the deterministic factor (ibid).

Hall's concept of articulation builds on Laclau's formulation of the term and its later development by Laclau & Mouffe (2001). Laclau's poststructural approach develops Gramscian and Althusserian neo-Marxist approaches to understanding the social formation, drawing on a Foucauldian analysis of power to emphasise the role of discourse structuring experience. Laclau & Mouffe (2001:108) argue that 'every object is constituted as an object of discourse'. They refer to examples of 'an earthquake or the falling of a brick' as events that certainly exist but contend that 'whether their specificity as objects is construed in terms of "natural phenomena" or "expressions of the wrath of God" depends on the structuring of a discursive field. As such, Laclau and Moufe deny a separation between the material and discursive, instead arguing for an understanding of 'linguistic and non-linguistic elements' as constituting 'a differential and structured system of positions' (ibid).

This account disrupts the certainties of teleological Marxist approaches with their foundation in the consciousness of a founding subject in the industrial working class (Laclau & Mouffe, 2001:109). Instead, Laclau and Mouffe (ibid) posit a social formation consisting of 'diverse subject positions' existing within a discursive formation. These positions and formations do not necessarily correspond to the relations of production and resulting class interests as they would in reductionist Marxist analysis. Instead, discursive formations come about as a result of certain regularities arising from social antagonisms Laclua & Mouffe (2001:109). These regularities create positions of equivalence and difference between particular subjects within society (ibid: xiii). Importantly, the positions established in this way are structured in relational sequences without the certainties associated with earlier Marxist approaches (ibid:109).

Hall (1996b:144) acknowledges the contribution of Laclau's theory of articulation in breaking the 'necessitarian and reductionist logic that has dogged Marxist ideology'. By this he is referring to the appeal within class reductionist Marxist approaches to a 'necessary and intrinsic relation between ideas and classes' (Hall, 2016:83). In remarks indicative of his theoretical position on identity, Hall (ibid:145) points to the importance of Laclau & Mouffe's introducing the discursive perspective and thereby bringing 'into play […] the whole dimension of subjectivity, particularly, in the ideological domain.' He notes that this has 'required us to think about reintegrating the subjective dimension in a non-holistic, non-unitary way' (ibid.) and that this has important implications for understanding 'the self' as contradictory and 'constituted out of and by difference' (ibid.). However, Hall considers that Laclau & Mouffe's position on the discursive is in danger of losing its reference to historical and material conditions, committing a kind of reverse reductionism that treats the discursive as if it were a completely open field (Hall, 1996b:145-148).

In this sense, Hall's understanding maintains an important and difficult tension. He aims to resist discursive explanations for the social that struggle to account for the social forces that produce stubborn relations of inequality such as race and class. To achieve this, he retains elements of a Marxist historical materialist perspective. At the same time though, he employs discursive explanations to resist the deterministic tendencies of historical materialism. Conceptualised in this way, material conditions are seen as 'the necessary but not sufficient condition' of all historical practice' (ibid:147). But these material conditions need to be thought 'in their determinate discursive form, not as a fixed absolute' (ibid). As such, the possibilities of articulation through discursive practices occur within the constraints of a historically produced present that shapes everyday experience (ibid:148). This means that to understand why some articulations are more powerful and effective than others, it is important to examine 'the ways in which the 'relatively autonomous' social, institutional,

technical, economic and political forces are organized into unities that are effective and are relatively empowering or disempowering' (Slack, 1996:124).

Citing Hall on articulation in the domain of textual communication, Slack (ibid) notes the importance of examining how these forces:

> *at a certain moment, yield intelligible meanings, enter the circuits of culture—the field of cultural practices—that shape the understandings and conceptions of the world of men and women in their ordinary everyday social calculations, construct them as potential social subjects, and have the effect of organizing the ways in which they come to form consciousness of the world .*
>
> (Hall, 1989:49, in Slack, 1996:124

The present study attempts to expose the discursive conditions that shape the understandings and conceptions of the world that participants access in their everyday social calculations in the university. The concept of *articulation* accounts for the relationship of these discursive conditions to the structures and material conditions of inequality. In order to do this, the study relies on accounts of the discursive construction of identities in historically specific conditions.

3.3.1 Identity

Hall's conceptualisation of identity is informed by the notion of articulation set out above. He argues that:

> *[p]recisely because identities are constructed within, not outside, discourse, we need to understand them as produced in specific historical and institutional sites within specific discursive formations and practices, by specific enunciative strategies*
>
> (Hall, 1996c:4).

It is this conception of identities constructed in discourse in specific historical and institutional sites that informs the critical sociolinguistic approach taken in the current study. In these critical sociolinguistic approaches identity is a ‘relational and sociocultural phenomenon that emerges and circulates in local discourse contexts of interaction rather than as a stable structure located primarily in the individual psyche or in fixed social categories’ (Bucholtz & Hall 2005:586). The utility of this approach lies in its capacity to illustrate the discursive form taken by material conditions of inequality (Hall, 1996b:147) and in doing so to address the constraints of the historically produced present to which they respond (ibid:148).

I argue that these sociolinguistic approaches have the potential to complement and reinforce Hall’s theoretical understandings of identity. Foucault’s (1970) understandings of the subject constructed in discourse inform Hall’s understanding of the process of identity construction or *identification* as one of ‘subjectification to discursive practices’ (1996c:2). Foucault’s early work addressed the issue of subjectivity genealogically and dislodged the centrality of the humanist subject, seeing it instead as a historical phenomenon and proposing ‘an analysis of discourse that did not give priority to the subject that speaks’ (Foucault, 1970:387, in Rose et al. 2009:11). This means that what is needed is ‘not a theory of the knowing subject but rather a theory of discursive practice’ (Foucault, 1970, p. xiv, in Hall 1996c:2). It is argued here that critical sociolinguistic approaches provide such a theory and, through close attention to discursive practices engaged by individual subjects, can address some of the limitations noted by Hall in Foucault’s theory of the processes of subjectification.

To illustrate these limitations, Hall points to two analytically separate components of the processes. The first component consists of the discourses and practices that summon us into place as ‘social subjects of particular discourses’; the second is the processes which produce subjectivities in the individual. Hall uses the term a point of ‘suture’ to refer to the meeting

point of these two components that produce identities; that is, ‘points of temporary attachment to the subject positions which discursive practices construct for us’ (Hall, 1996c:5-6). In respect of the first component, Hall credits Foucault’s approach to the ‘radical historicization of the category of the subject’ (ibid:10) with providing a powerful account of how subjects are summoned into place by discursive practices. On Foucault’s account ‘the subject is produced “as an effect” through and within discourse, within specific discursive formations and has no transcendental continuity or identity from one subject position to another’ (ibid). Whilst acknowledging the critical value of this approach to the construction of subject positions, Hall notes that Foucault’s work does not account for the second aspect required for suture: the processes which produce subjectivities in the individual. That is, the constitution of a subject capable of being summoned into position, or not, goes unaddressed. For Hall, this means that subject positions become ‘a priori categories which individuals seem to occupy in unproblematic fashion’ (ibid). Despite noting that Foucault in his later work began to address these questions in work on normative self-regulation and technologies of the self, Hall considers that Foucault’s theory lacks an account of the

> *mechanisms [...] by which individuals as subjects identify (or do not identify) with the “positions” to which they are summoned: as well as how they fashion, stylize, produce and ‘perform’ these positions, and why they never do so completely, for once and all time, and some never do, or are in a constant, agonistic process of struggling with, resisting, negotiating and accommodating the normative or regulative rules with which they confront and regulate themselves*
>
> (Hall, 1996c:14)

That is, Hall argues that Foucault’s account fails to account for how, at an individual level, people make the non-necessary connections that he refers to as *articulations* (ibid).

In order to address this gap, Hall looks to Butler’s drawing together of Foucauldian and psychoanalytic understandings. In her work on gender, Butler takes from Foucault the notion

that 'regulatory power produces the subject it controls, that power is not only imposed externally but works as the regulatory and normative means by which subjects are formed (Butler, 1993:23 in Hall, 1996c:15).' But to understand 'how certain regulatory norms form a "sexed" subject in terms that establish the indistinguishability of psychic and bodily formation' she turns to Lacanian psychoanalysis (ibid). Hall considers that this theoretical combination provides explanation for why subjects come to identify (or not) with particular subject positions that is missing in Foucault's account. However, Rose (1996:8) argues that psychoanalysis is a 'particular theory of the subject', making it part of the discourse of subjectification that Butler seeks to investigate[14].

Rather than looking to psycho-analytic understandings of the subject to understand the mechanisms by which individual subjects identify or not with subject positions in discourse, the critical sociolinguistic approach adopted in this study takes an empirical approach. Harris (2009:486) identifies a long-standing 'paucity of supporting empirical research' for the anti-essentialist and influential theoretical positions put forward by Hall. He quotes McRobbie, writing more than 30 years ago:

> *[T]he problem in cultural studies today [...] is the absence of reference to real existing identities in the ethnographic sense. The identities being discussed ... are textual or discursive identities. The site of identity formation in cultural studies remains implicitly in and through cultural commodities and texts rather than in and through the cultural practices of everyday life.*
>
> (McRobbie, 1992:30, in Harris, 2009:499)

The present study aims to provide the kind of anti-essentialist account suggested by Harris and McRobbie. It combines theoretical perspectives from cultural studies on identity and *articulation* with the ethnographic study of everyday interactions and practices in an

[14] This is not to underestimate the value of Butler's work on performativity and identity but to question as Rose (1996:186-187) does the need for a prior theory of the subject to support this.

educational context. To engage with this context it draws on historical accounts of race and class in the UK as well as insights from sociological studies into race and class in UK education suggesting that attention to structural constraints of whiteness is also necessary. Critical sociolinguistic research perspectives provide the fine-grained analysis of discursive practices that deal with the 'real existing' identities McRobbie considered to be absent from accounts in Cultural Studies.

To use Hall's terms, this focus on identities will show how discourses of race, ethnicity and class become articulated or not to certain political subjects as they navigate the discursive space of the studio. The utility of the approach is to show the discursive conditions in which this takes place; that is, to show *how* ideological elements come under certain conditions, to cohere together with discourses that can be articulated or not to individual subjects (Hall, 1996b:142). I argued above (Section 3.2.2) that Blommaert's approach to analysing 'ideological processes operating in and through polycentric and stratified systems' (Blommaert, 2005:173) at different levels of historicity (ibid:174/175) provides analytical tools well-suited to this task. Taking this approach means anchoring the analysis of everyday navigations of discourses of race and class in the historically specific contexts set out in Chapter 2. The theoretical underpinning for this approach comes from Hall's essay *Race, Articulation and Societies Structured in Dominance* [1980], which insists on the need for accounts of racially structured social formations to deal with the economic and superstructural while at the same time focusing on 'historically specific racisms' (Hall, 2021 [1980]:234). Despite arguing that explanations of racism cannot be abstracted from other social relations, Hall is clear that 'one cannot explain it by reducing it to those relations' (ibid:235). For Hall, the principle of 'historical specificity' is particularly important when addressing racisms because of the 'work' they do to dehistoricize social structures of class relations and to reconstitute them into unities of coherent black and white ideological subjects

who are the ‘natural and given “authors” of a spontaneous form of racial perception (ibid:241).’

At the time of writing his text, Hall considered that histories of the kind he prescribed had not yet been written (Hall 2021[1980]:234). However, in the years since there have been a number of specific historical accounts of the articulation of race and class in England (Cohen, 1988; Virdee, 2018; Shilliam; 2018, Kundnani, 2021). These have informed the historical context set out in Chapter 2.

3.4 Conclusion

This chapter has shown the theoretical underpinning for the study of the discursive conditions in which race, ethnicity and class are negotiated and their relation to material conditions of inequality. It has set out the utility of sociolinguistic approaches for resisting fixity and essentialism and recognising conviviality. I have argued that the central concept of indexicality and its account of the dialectic relationship between the micro-interactional and macro-sociological is compatible with Stuart Hall’s notion of *articulation* and that a sociolinguistic approach that employs indexicality is capable of addressing the ‘real existing’ identities that Cultural Studies has been critiqued for overlooking (McRobbie, 1992:30, in Harris, 2009:499). I have detailed how Hall’s notion of articulation and identity require attention to historically and contextually specific racisms and their relationship to capitalism and class in the social formation such as that provided in Chapter 2. Importantly, for the study, the current chapter has shown how the study adopts a raciolinguistic perspective to the study of interaction. This perspective allows for a focus on the mutually constitutive structural injustices of race and class in neoliberal racialised capitalism as they are navigated by participants. Such an approach requires attention to whiteness as a position of dominance in a racialised order of class relations and to convivial relations that existing amidst racism. This approach is intended to address the shortcomings of educational policy that separates out

race and class as axes of social oppression and treats them as risks to be managed by individuals through the orderly exercise of independent choice and/or the cultivation of deserving hardworking characteristics.

4 Methodology

4.1 Introduction

This chapter sets out the methodology employed to conduct the study. It begins with a discussion of Linguistic Ethnography and its suitability for answering the research questions addressed by the study. It goes on to engage with researcher positionality by addressing both personal and methodological reflexivity. This engagement with methodological reflexivity is then woven through a discussion of the research design with my positionality understood as an ongoing ethical consideration as the research design emerged in response to developments in the field. Finally, the chapter identifies key ethical principles that underpinned the overall study and sets out the procedures followed to ensure they were addressed.

4.2 Methodology

The research questions that this study sets out to answer address the relationship between situated use of language in an educational setting and social inequalities relating to race, ethnicity and class. The methodological approach I take to answer these questions is Linguistic Ethnography. As Barwell, (2020:273) notes, much Linguistic Ethnographic research has focused on educational settings. This research has often focused on issues of race, ethnicity, class and identity (Rampton, 1995/2005; Rampton, 2006; Madsen, 2013; Jaspers, 2011). In this section, I will set out the key theoretical principles of Linguistic Ethnography and explain their relevance to the present study.

Linguistic Ethnography describes an approach to researching social questions involving language that 'combines theoretical and methodological approaches from linguistics and ethnography' (Tusting, 2020:1). This combination has been argued to be complementary because of its capacity to open linguistics up whilst tying ethnography down (Rampton, 2007:596). That is, on the one hand, it provides linguistic analysis with a reflexive sensitivity to the processes involved in the production of linguistic claims and to the 'potential importance of what gets left out' (ibid). On the other hand, it provides ethnographic approaches with greater access to falsifiable data and provides a highly developed set of analytic tools for uncovering 'intricacies in the discursive processes through which cultural relationships and identities are produced' (ibid). In the present study, I use the analytic tools provided by linguistics to provide depth to the ethnographic description of social and institutional processes through which race, ethnicity and class are negotiated.

Despite acknowledging that there are methodological tensions in combining linguistics with ethnography, Rampton et al (2015:18) argue that 'the differences between linguistics and ethnography certainly do not amount to incompatibility.' They see the contributions of each as follows:

> *i) the contexts for communication should be investigated rather than assumed. Meaning takes place within specific social relations, interactional histories and institutional regimes, produced and constructed by agents with expectations and repertoires that have to be grasped ethnographically.*
>
> *ii) analysis of the internal organisation of verbal (and other kinds of semiotic) data is essential to understanding its significance and position in the world. Meaning is far more than just the 'expression of ideas', and biography, identifications, stance and nuance are extensively signalled in the linguistic fine-grain.*

The present study combines these two aspects of linguistic ethnography to address its research questions. The ethnographic investigation of context described in (i) is used in the

present study to establish the discursive conditions in which race, ethnicity and class are negotiated, by treating the studio as a 'cultural context with its own sites of struggle, local institutional imperatives and affordances' (Creese, 2008:235) which feed off and into wider socio-historical structures. Linguistic analysis of semiotic data of the kind described in (ii) provides an empirical account of the ways in which these conditions are negotiated in interaction. The analytic tools of critical sociolinguistics set out in the previous chapter allow for a detailed analysis of the way that meaning is negotiated through the situated use of language.

The theoretical principles that underpin Linguistic Ethnography can be seen to be rooted in Sapir's view that '[l]anguage does not exist apart from culture' (1921:207, in Copland and Creese, 2015:14). More recent developments, though, are seen to begin with linguistic anthropologists Hymes and Gumperz and their work on the ethnography of communication (Rampton et al, 2015:19; Copland & Creese, 2015:18-19). Hymes' contribution was to shift the focus from language to speaking and communication, that is to focus on the use of language rather than its structure (Rampton et al., 2015:24). In this approach the formal structures of language cannot be separated from its use. The relationship between linguistic and social features order is understood to be dialectic with linguistic meaning and the social order co-constructed in interaction (ibid:23-24). This approach lends itself to poststructural critiques of essentialism of the kind described in the previous chapter (Hall, 1996a) that have informed the present study. Whilst ethnographic research is suited to making sense of empirical processes that are difficult to explain through structuralist understandings of the social world, poststructural linguistics is concerned with describing patterns of communication in use of language and provides a tool for understanding how 'group identities get constructed in culture, discourse and ideology' through the analysis of 'textual representations and communicative encounters in which 'categories and identities get

circulated, taken up and reproduced' (Rampton et al., 2015:20). Rather than groups themselves, it is 'taken-for-granted assumptions about groups, categories and peoples [that] are the objects of [linguistic ethnographic] research, as are the processes of diversity and change' (Copland & Creese, 2015:26). Since inequalities are often related to such taken-for-granted assumptions, stereotyping and essentialisation, in relation to social categories, LE appears to offer a particularly relevant methodological approach for the investigation of race, ethnicity and class in this study.

In addressing these social realities of inequality, LE takes a social constructionist view that social structures/the social world are discursively reproduced in everyday interactions (Tusting and Mayblin, 2007:581). This position is questioned by those taking a critical realist position on the relationship between the structures of the social order and empirical experience of the social world. For example, Sealey (2007:655) argues that 'LE can reveal in detail how speakers negotiate the constraints and enablements attendant on their particular situated experience but it *cannot* (emphasis in original) account for the pre-existing structural properties and powers which are experienced as constraints by these social actors.' The question posed is a pertinent one for the present study as it aims to account for the relationship between interactions between individuals and wider social structures.

In relation to this question, Pérez-Milans (2016a:84) argues that linguistic approaches can show how structure and agency are mutually constitutive in ways that can be tracked empirically in interaction. Indeed, he contends that an individual's adoption, rejection, or appropriation of subject positions can be seen to account for social reality as being 'discursively constructed, reproduced, naturalised and sometimes revised in social interaction, in the course of large-scale historical, political and socio-economic configurations' (Pérez-Milans, 2016a:84). Aligning with Pérez-Milans, the previous chapter detailed how sociolinguistic approaches might support the analysis of such processes using

the notion of indexicality as a dialectical process involving the micro-interactional and macro-social. It also argued for the compatibility of such approaches with Hall's notion of *articulation* to provide an account of the connections between 'everyday social calculations' of the interactional context and historical, political and socioeconomic configurations.

A feature of linguistic ethnography is its tendency towards '[m]aking the familiar strange' (Shaw et al., 2015:7) or '[g]etting analytic distance on the close-at-hand' (Rampton, 2007: 590) rather than the orientation in traditional anthropological work of making the strange familiar. This inside-outwards orientation is taken in the present study with the analysis of linguistic data providing a way of establishing analytic distance from the 'close-at-hand' business of everyday interaction in the university. As a researcher with an institutional role in the university in which the study takes place, the analytic distance provided by linguistic analysis is an important consideration in the methodological choices made. The ethnographic orientation of LE requires reflexive engagement with such issues of researcher positionality, including the researcher's role in the selection and recording of data and use of language (Tusting & Mayblin, 2007:576). At the same time, it is important that this researcher-centred reflexivity does not foreground the researcher at the expense of the social processes under investigation (Pérez-Milans, 2016b:2). These aspects of the research will be addressed in the following section.

4.3 Positionality

Engaging reflexively with my own researcher positionality poses some difficult questions or tensions for a study in which identity positionings are seen as emergent, relational and discursively constructed (Bucholtz & Hall, 2005). As Skeggs (2002:350) has argued, 'debates around reflexivity rely upon a concept of the self' that can involve fixing the identity of others in place in order to accrue reflexivity to oneself. Skeggs (ibid:364) argues that '[t]he ability to be reflexive via the experience of others is a privilege, a position of mobility and

power, a mobilization of cultural resources' (ibid) and emphasises the importance of 'building sensitivity into research design and paying attention to practice, power and process' (ibid:370) over narrating the self of the researcher. Similarly, Patiño-Santos (2020:213) argues that *methodological reflexivity* is to be exercised throughout the research process from design to analysis to inform decisions taken and as the project progresses. I will use the terms *personal reflexivity* and *methodological reflexivity* to address how my awareness of my own positionality as part of a dynamic process shifted during the project and informed its development.

As set out in the introductory chapter, my trajectory until the point of the study had been one in which my only personal experience of social injustice could be said to relate to class. Although I had become aware of racial injustice in the university and saw myself as an employee of the university as bearing some responsibility for its reproduction, at the outset of the study, I had little sense of my own orientations toward whiteness. On reflection, my absence of personal experience of racial oppression might in some ways have led me to see promise in approaches that dismantle racialized categorisations since I have never required them to mobilise against, or make sense of, injustices I have faced. While narratives of self have been an important part of emancipatory struggles for marginalised groups (Skeggs, 2002;355; Hall, 2021 [1988]:246) it is a characteristic of white people that our advantageous racialised position goes unrecognised (Lewis, 2004; Bucholtz, 2019:489) or is invisible to us (Ahmed, 2007:157).

One of the most uncomfortable and productive points put to me during my research has been a question put to me during an online meeting of a Sociolinguistic Working Group on Race and Language, which has been an invaluable source of critique and collaborative learning during the study. On this occasion a PhD student of colour, after hearing me present my work asked, 'you present as white, I presume you identify as white'. I struggled with this question.

Of course, I acknowledge that I am white, and in acknowledging I am white I recognise my relative position of privilege in relation to similarly located people of colour (Lewis, 2004:628). Nonetheless, a positive self-identification with the racialised category of whiteness was something I struggled to recognise. As Leonardo (2004:150) points out, discourses of privilege can suggest a kind of passive relationship to whiteness, but it is important to consider what I do actively to reproduce whiteness.

Through the process of the research, I have come to make sense of what I do through my orientation to whiteness using the contextually sensitive theoretical positions put forward in Chapters 2 and 3. In this way, I understand whiteness using a theoretical position taken in the thesis and drawn largely from Shilliam (2018) and Hall, ([1980] 2021) as a position of dominance in a racialised order of class relations that people position themselves around or against. This has meant I can make better sense of my own relationship to it in situations where privilege is at stake and ask, what do I do with my unmarked white positionality in this space to align with privilege in the social order? This affects my institutional position in the university. Academia has never felt like my space, so I have had to develop a way of being in it.

In doing so I reproduce whiteness by aligning with the norms of the space, the formalities and rituals of socially-distanced politeness in situations that seem to me to demand it (e.g. job interviews, committee meetings, presentations, seminars). To use Ahmed's (2007:158) description, this is how the institutional space of the university 'recruits' me into the whiteness it is oriented 'around'. I am not passive in this process of recruitment. I actively mobilise resources that I am not required to mobilise outside of these spaces. I know these to reproduce privilege and the relative comfort with which I can allow myself to be 'recruited' is perhaps a function of my 'inherited proximity' to whiteness (Ahmed, 2007:155). But there is discomfort too. While accommodating to institutional norms, I want to retain something of

myself. I make use of any ‘wiggle room’ (Erickson, 2001) afforded and increasingly feel more at home presenting a version of myself while feeling less like a boorish outsider, but still my own orientation to whiteness feels slightly ‘out of line’ with the institution I inhabit (Ahmed, 2007:159). Often, I struggle in these more formal institutionalised settings, making comments that are perhaps too direct or blunt, lacking in the required social niceties, or ill-judged attempts at humour.

In my teaching role, I want to occupy an in-between space. With students I want to index that I consider myself something of an outsider, to go subtly but recognisably ‘off script’ (Singh, 2021:1168) to index a more humanising positionality that shows I do not align with such a position of dominance, and better still present a challenge to these hierarchical orders. All the while, of course, this is in tension with the social and institutional positions I increasingly occupy and the resources I have mobilised to occupy them. As Ahmed puts it, ‘you can move up only by approximating the habitus of the white bourgeois body’ (Ahmed, 2007:160).

In negotiating my positionality as a researcher with participants in the current study, I inevitably drew on my teaching role, which allowed me to occupy an in-between space that was not quite aligned with the institution or the students. Supporting learners with academic literacies in workshops and tutorials meant that I would be helping to make sense of the academic expectations of courses and lecturers. In this role, I worked closely with students in small groups or on an individual basis. It had been part of my practice to build a kind of rapport and trust with students that reduced social institutional distance. I had also previously conducted participatory research into racial inequalities with students of colour and had some experience of explicitly addressing my usually racially unmarked whiteness in these projects. I would apologetically remark that I’m just some white guy who sits in an office, so it was their contributions that counted and would make a difference.

I had imagined that these experiences would be good preparation for building relations with participants, and perhaps to some extent it was, but as I began the study, I realised in my interactions with participants that rapport was on the whole less easy to establish than I had imagined (field note reflections). In some ways, the PhD researcher position was one that I felt uneasy inhabiting. At the outset, I felt as though students were treating me differently (more distantly) than they would have in 'normal' circumstances. I felt it less easy to 'bridge the gap' between staff and students and my communications felt less easy and uninhibited. I was more self-consciously aware of my own whiteness than I had been in prior research. This was perhaps a function of the fact that I felt now solely exposed as the author of the project, rather than as deriving legitimacy from my institutional role in the university. It might have also been connected to a sense of anxiety about the importance of these relationships as this was not something that I had experienced in the same way during a short pilot study that preceded the substantive study. It felt harder to be 'human' while carrying this weight around. With time I developed what felt like a strong sense of trust and rapport with participants. This trust and rapport were perhaps enabled by adopting an approach to the research design that was sensitive to *methodological reflexivity*. I will now discuss how I addressed these issues.

In Patiño-Santos' (2020) terms, I responded to my positionality through making choices as the research design developed iteratively in response to developments in the field. This attention to reflexivity in the practices and processes of research also entailed an 'ethics in practice' approach in which 'ethical matters have to be continually negotiated in practice' because 'at different moments and in different spaces, power relations may shift and change' (Brooks et al., 2015:100). I treated my own positionality in the context of racial injustice as carrying a 'risk of harm' (Hammersley and Traianou, 2012) to participants. I took steps to minimize this potential for harm through methodological reflexivity that involved constant monitoring and adjustment of the research process (Patiño-Santos, 2020:214) in response to

the shifting dynamics at play. The decisions taken in relation to these ethical considerations at the various stages of the research are detailed in the discussion of the research design that follows, but first I will provide a brief overview of the research design and participants.

4.4 Research Design

4.4.1 Overview:

The ethnographic nature of the study meant that the research design developed iteratively in response to developments in the field. This began with a pilot study in the academic year preceding the substantive study. I conducted ethnographic observations in the studio and spoke informally to students about their experiences of the course. In the course of these discussions, I developed rapport with a particular participant and invited him to engage in an interview about his experiences of the first year of his studies, his decision to study architecture and comparisons with earlier schooling. This pilot study confirmed the importance of social interaction and group relations in narrative accounts that I had noted in earlier institutional studies (Chapter 1, Section 1.1). It also confirmed that the studio environment was likely to be a suitable and rich environment in which to collect interactional data relating to the research questions.

The PhD study consisted of 3 phases, which coincided with the three terms of the academic year. The first phase of the study began as the students began their course. It involved ethnographic observations of briefings, site visits and studio work as students collaborated on group work tasks. This stage involved ad-hoc conversations with students to get their initial thoughts on the course and to build rapport. This led to closer observations of group interactions as students worked on practical tasks. The second phase involved inviting multi-ethnic groups who had appeared relatively comfortable during my observations, and with whom I felt I had built some rapport, to record their interactions. In the third phase,

participants in the phase 2 groups were invited to become key participants in the study and to do the following over the remainder of the academic year:

- take part in two informal interviews about their experience of education.
- make fortnightly 1-hour audio recordings during group project work.
- make audio recordings of their presentations during formative reviews.
- make 2 x 30-minute audio recordings in a social setting of their choice that is outside of the architecture studio (e.g. chatting with friends and/or family).
- comment on analysis provided by the researcher.

As well as observations, interviews and interactional data, I also collected briefing and induction materials produced by the year convenor. As the study progressed, it became clear that through these materials and his interactions with the students in briefing sessions and teaching in the studio he was a central figure in shaping the subject positions of students. I approached him to invite him to participate further in the study through taking part in a semi-structured interview informal interview.

Eight key participants took part in the study, collecting interactional data and participating in interviews. However, at the data analysis stage, it became apparent that the richness of data collected, alongside the emergence of analytic attention to the course-co-ordinators role, meant that the study would focus on analytic depth in relation to just four of the original eight student key participants initially identified: Archer, Dan, Gary and Jasmine. While the study did not rely on the use of pre-determined identity categories, the following short summaries provide an overview of how each student positioned themselves in the course of interviews and interactions. All names provided are pseudonyms chosen by participants.

Archer was born in Nigeria and moved to the UK at the age of ten and attended state school in his hometown in Wales. His father is a psychiatric nurse and his mother was a midwife before moving to the UK and is now a carer. His parents, both Nigerian, were university-educated and he describes an unspoken expectation that he, like his two older sisters would study at university. He was living in student halls at the time of the study.

Dan is a local student of Chinese heritage. He commutes to university, lives at home and studies locally because of the cost of doing otherwise. His father owns a Chinese restaurant and rental properties. He is the first person in his family to go to university. He attended a selective grammar school in his hometown where a two-tier system of secondary education is still in place.

Gary is a white student whose mother is German. Both of his parents were university educated and he describes always knowing he would attend university. His father is an academic and his mother is a teacher. He attended a state school in his hometown in the South-East of England and was living in university halls at the time of the study.

Jasmine is a student of Punjabi, Indian heritage who was born in Finland, moving to the UK at the age of two or three. Her father owns a building company. She is the first person in her family to attend university and has two elder siblings. She attended her local state school in East London and was living in private accommodation at the time of the study.

Having summarised the research design and biographies of participants, I will now provide a detailed account of the research design in three parts: Research Questions, Data Collection and Data Analysis. Throughout the account, I will attend to issues of methodological reflexivity, and the ethical dilemmas and decisions this entailed.

4.4.2 Research Questions

The research questions I set out with were modified as my awareness of my own positionality shifted during fieldwork. As Patiño-Santos (2020:214) points out, reflexivity should take account of the kind of questions linguistic ethnographers ask and the ways in which these are modified by the contingencies of fieldwork and analytical process.

At the outset of the study, the first main research question as included in the PhD funding application was:

> *How are identities discursively constructed for first-year architecture students from BME backgrounds?*

As the study progressed, this became:

> *What are the discursive conditions in which race and class are negotiated?*

This adjustment responded to two emergent considerations. The first was the importance of including white participants in the study. The second was the direction of the analytic gaze away from individuals and towards the structures which individuals navigate.

The rationale for focusing on students self-identifying as BME had been that, as set out in Chapter 2, it was such students who were subject to the essentialising formulations employed in the deficit discourses connected with racial inequalities (Bhopal & Pitkin, 2020:543) and reified as racial Others who are 'the embodiment of social problems' (St Louis, 2009:568). However, in the course of fieldwork in the studio, I had noted the existence of 'racial banter' within and across groups (Field note reflections) and become concerned about the initial research design in the context of this 'routine teasing' around ethnic backgrounds (Field notes). I felt a deep sense of discomfort about my positionality as a white researcher and the potential Othering effect of the project and in exacerbating what could be potentially harmful

situations for students. As I engaged further with the theoretical underpinnings of the study, there was also a strong theoretical justification for working with white participants in the study. The relational and emergent nature of the discursive construction of identities through indexical processes (Bucholtz & Hall, 2005) drew attention to the ways in which identities are negotiated within the constraints of orders of indexicality (Blommaert, 2005). Similarly, the notion of *articulation* (Hall, [1980] 2021) foregrounds the context in which subjectivities are negotiated. An account of these orders and contexts could be best produced through a focus on a range of individuals differently positioned by them. As a result, the study was adapted to include participants from white ethnic backgrounds.

Similarly, the focus on the processes of identity construction in the earlier research question shifted towards a focus on the discursive conditions in which they are produced. This responded to a tension that existed in the study from the outset. The aim of the research was to unsettle essentialist assumptions around identity that attended racial inequalities and to account for them instead through sociolinguistic analysis of their discursive construction. The approach entailed research with participants from a range of ethnic backgrounds and an analytic focus on their individual discursive practices. Where these ethnic and racialised identity categories are seen to be negotiable, this poses questions about accounting for the racial inequalities which necessitated the study. There is a risk that these approaches fail to adequately engage with structures of racial inequality, presenting race as 'flexible, fascinating and fictional' in ways that have been argued to privilege the interests and experiences of white scholars like me (Lo & Chun, 2020:26). Since the aim of the research is to account for the ways in which material inequalities are reproduced in the discursive realm without recourse to essentialising categorisations, individuals' discursive practices are a central analytic focus but only to the degree that they reveal the interplay with existing conditions of inequality. The shift to a focus on discursive conditions in which identities are negotiated

better captured the aims and orientation of the study as it developed. The theoretical underpinnings of this position were provided in the previous chapter.

4.4.3 Data Collection

4.4.3.1 Observations

I had initially hoped to begin my observations during a week-long induction programme for the incoming students. However, in negotiating access to the studio as a research site, the year convenor and gatekeeper, Joe (pseudonym) had considered this to be potentially intrusive and disruptive to the aims of encouraging an open, informal interaction in which students could socialise with new acquaintances in an unfamiliar environment. This meant my observations began in September as students were briefed on their first studio project. Given my presence in the studio as a white researcher engaging with issues of race and the potential for Othering that this entailed, it was decided in discussion with Joe that I would aim for the maximum possible disclosure of the study aims by presenting these to the full cohort of students present in the studio at the first studio briefing.

The 'what and why' of my presence in the studio were set out in a PowerPoint presentation in the following terms:

> ***What?***
>
> *Ongoing PhD study into unpicking assumptions of research on inequalities in Higher Education that uses fixed identity categories re ethnicity and social class (the ones you're asked to fill in on forms).*
>
> ***Why?***
>
> *Because equality policies in Higher Education and Architectural Education need to reflect more complex understandings of identity than those indicated by boxes on forms*
>
> ***How?***

Researching with you*

What next:

Informal chats and studio observations to understand architecture studio environment for 1st year students

After that (in a month or two):

Invitations to research with me in a smaller sociolinguistic study to help unpick problematic categories.

**Absolutely no obligation to take part at any point + anonymous + confidential*

(see Appendix 1 for full presentation)

To my surprise, the presentation was met with widespread applause from the students.

My observations in this first phase consisted of attending project briefings, spending time in the studio space and joining the students on on-site visits and around the city as they worked on projects. I sat with students as they worked on projects together, taking handwritten field notes and asking questions when appropriate. At other times, I would try to capture the dynamic of the studio as a whole, noting the flows of students in and out, rhythms of activity and uses of the space. Following my studio observations, I would reflect on my field notes, writing short summaries.

In the second phase, which began in November, on the basis of my first phase observations, I identified 6 multi-ethnic groups of students who had appeared relatively comfortable with my presence as I had observed them. The selection of participants on this basis has implications for the data collected and the claims that can be made from its analysis. It means that perhaps students who were struggling more with the discursive conditions of the studio are less well represented in the accounts here. Nonetheless, given the ethical considerations regarding the need to minimize harm to participants, this felt like a necessary compromise. I approached each group to invite them to participate in the second phase, in which they would agree to

take part in the research (See Appendix 2 for information sheet and consent form). Of the six groups approached, 2 were ruled out due to one group member being unwilling to take part, making the recording of their group interactions unviable.

As I invited key participants to take part in the study in January, I felt it was important to address my institutional positionality and emergent issues of researcher/researched power relations (Brookes et al. 2015:100). As a result, I invited the prospective key participants for lunch at a local pizza restaurant to give them the opportunity to ask any questions about the project in a non-institutional context, and in which I was outnumbered 10:1. This felt like a successful exercise in disrupting power relations and diminishing institutional and social distance to develop rapport as potential participants quizzed me on the aims and rationale for the study. All 10 students signed up to participate in the study.

This arrangement continued through phase 3 in which 8 of the 10 students from the phase 2 groups became key participants as they joined new project groups. One participant (John) had left the course in order to pursue a more ‘maths-focused’ approach to architecture. Another (Szandra) was participating in a project group in which one of her fellow students objected to the recording of interactions. In the second and third phases, my observations focused on studio dynamics and briefings. Students’ attendance in the studio was unpredictable and the interchanging nature of group work and cross-group interactions meant that my presence in close-up group interactions would have been disruptive to participants’ development of relations with their new groups. I would regularly ‘check in’ with participants as they were working in groups to facilitate the smooth running of recordings and to make myself familiar to those students who were taking part in recordings. However, at this stage, the participants took a more participatory role in the collection of data. The table below (Table 2) shows how the focus of the study developed over the academic year with fieldwork commencing in September, before audio recordings began in November, continuing through to May with

interviews taking place with key participants in January and May. Of the eight key participants, the four final participants highlighted in bold type were selected for the final thesis due to the constraints described above (Section 4.4.1).

Table 2. Overview of Data Collection Involving Student Participants

Research Timeline	**Phase 1 September - November**	**Phase 2 (4 groups) November-January**	**Phase 3 (key participants*) January -May**
Data Collected	observations informal ad-hoc interviews	observations, audio recording	observations, interview 1 (January) and 2 (May), audio recording
Participants	All 1st year students	Harsha / Adam / James Archer/Szandra Jasmine/ Nick Gary/ John / Dan	Harsha James Adam **Archer** Nick **Jasmine** **Dan** **Gary**

The table presented on the following page (Table 3) shows the quantity of data collected organised by type:

Table 3: Quantity of Data Collection by Type

Data type	Form	Quantity
Audio Recordings (4 Key Participants)	Studio interactions	25 hours
	Presentations	0.75 hours
	Social interactions	4.5 hours
Fieldnotes	Handwritten notes	280 pages (A5)
Participant Observations	Studio, briefing room and live on-site projects	200 hrs
Interviews	**Student participants** Interview 1 (x8)	8.5 hours
	Interview 2 (x8)	6.25 hours
	Separate follow-up interviews (x4)	4.25 hours
	Year Convenor (1 hr)	1 hour
Interactional Maps	Annotated studio plan	8

4.4.3.2 Interviews

I undertook informal interviews with students as they worked in the studio throughout the study. These took the form of short chats about how they were finding the course and what they were working on. These were particularly useful for building rapport and developing an understanding of the context in Phase 1. The main source of interview data came from two interviews, which can be described as ‘formal’ in that they were pre-arranged, semi-structured, and used to elicit information across a range of topics (Copland and Creese, 2015:30). However, I was familiar to the students and the interviews were conversational in style and took the form of a discussion with the participants (cf. Harris, 2006). They took place in a tutorial room that is separate from the building in which the School of Architecture is located and was spacious enough for us to sit alongside each other around a round table, rather than facing each other across a desk, often sharing a pot of coffee. The first interview coincided with the start of phase 2 when participants had just started to audio-record their

group-work discussions. It focused on the participants 'educational journeys' and took a reciprocal style in which I shared my own experiences and mostly followed the participants' lead. They lasted on average around an hour with students given the opportunity to ask me any questions at the end of the interview. Participants were seemingly happy to be given an opportunity to describe their experiences including their schooling, their decision to study architecture, their process of applying for university and their initial impressions of the course and mode of study. In the second interview, which took place in May as the students were about to complete their first year of study, participants were asked to reflect on their interactions over the academic year and were provided with a plan of the studio layout on which to map them before the interview (see Figure 2 below). This replicated a task I had observed the students undertaking as part of their course, in which they mapped interactions across a dining table. Participants were given a hand-drawn plan of the studio and assorted coloured pens. They were given 15 minutes prior to the interview without my presence to map their interactions over the course of the year. They were told that this would form the basis of our discussion and the map acted as a prompt from which they narrated their interactions over the year in a conversational interview. As an elicitation tool, the interactional map provided a discursive space for reflection (cf. Lytra et al. 2016) before the discussion and played a role in addressing researcher/researched power relations by giving more control over our discussion to the participant, making use of the capacity of visual methods to activate a 'participant as navigator' role (Kolar et al., 2015:25). The use of visual methods as an alternative way of communicating also allowed for participants to interpret the task differently, as can be seen in Figure 2 (below), in which Jasmine represents areas of safety and danger in green and red respectively (See chapter 7 for more detailed analysis). As the discussion of interactions drew to a close, I asked participants for broader reflections on the first year of their studies and offered them the chance to ask any questions. The topics of

race, ethnicity and class were not brought up by me unless they became relevant to the students' narrative accounts or questions.

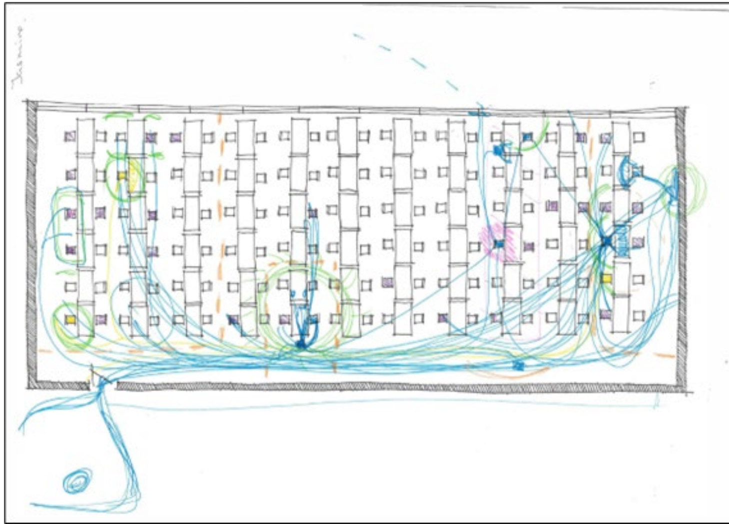

Figure 2. Example of interactional map: Jasmine

In the course of the interviews, there were occasional ethical dilemmas posed by the tension between my role as a researcher and that of my institutional position. These were often attended to in the micro-ethics of interaction (Guillemin & Gillam, 2004:264). For example, in the course of interviews, two of the participants raised with me that they were thinking of leaving the course on the basis of what I felt to be a limited understanding of its pedagogical intent and/or their performance. This led to a dilemma between my roles as a researcher and my institutional positionality. In these cases, I decided that the 'least bad course of action' (Macfarlane, 2009, p.32 in Brookes et al. 2015:116) was to divert from the interview to encourage the students to talk through their concerns with the year convenor and administration team. This felt like the most 'humane, nonexploitative' response in the moment (Guillemin & Gillam, 2004:264).

In my observations of briefings and studio work, I had noted a great deal of attention paid at briefings to orienting students towards their study of architecture it became apparent that an interview with the year convenor would be useful for the study. I felt that for this interview it

would be useful to disengage from the institutional context of the university. We had worked together, although not directly, for a number of years and developed a high degree of collegiate familiarity. This meant that the imposition of unfamiliar researcher-participant relations in the institutional setting felt potentially awkward. I decided it would be more beneficial to 'have the conversation' in a more open and expansive way outside of the university and emphasised that it would be an open and relaxed discussion. When Joe suggested he could come to me, I initially thought we would use a café, but it was an unusually hot day, so we conducted the interview on the beach wearing lapel mics. This seemed a successful strategy as Joe seemed relaxed, talking at length about his approach to his role, employing familiar aspects of his repertoire including his customary absurdist humour (see Chapter 5).

4.4.3.3 Self-made audio recordings

At the outset of Phase 2, participants began recording group interactions. They were provided with lapel mics and small digital recording devices that could be stored in a pocket[15]. The recording devices were then passed to me for downloading and secure storage and wiped of existing content before being handed back. Phase 2 recordings took place at the students' time of choosing when the maximum number of students in the group were present. Given the effect my immediate presence had on interactions, and the difficulties of unpredictable attendance and changing groups, I was not present with the students at the time of recording, although I would sometimes be present in the studio. Students were under no obligation to submit what they had recorded to me, so had control over what data was submitted for analysis. To my knowledge, there was only one occasion on which recorded data was erased. This was due to it revealing sensitive information about a student who was not a key

[15] Initially, participants aimed to also record video data to allow for muti-modal analysis, but this was soon abandoned due to technical problems with syncing and quality of video data obtainable while obscuring the lens to protect anonymity of bystanders.

participant in the study. This participatory approach to collecting speech data was adopted by Harris (2006) in his study on new ethnicities and language use and in this case, was found to have mitigated the power differential between researcher and researched. The approach felt like an important consideration in the present study. In phase 3, key participants continued to record in their new groups, gaining verbal consent from new group members. The initial research design had included recordings of formative reviews and social interactions outside of the university with the intention that these might provide insight into the use of different aspects of participants' repertoires across contexts. These recordings were not undertaken by all students and were ultimately deemed surplus to the needs of the study given the variety of subject positions available for analysis within the polycentric studio environment. The table on the following page (Table 4) provides an overview of audio data collected by the four participants whose data contributed to the analysis in this thesis. There is some disparity in the amount of recording time collected by each student with Archer collecting significantly more than other students. However, recording time did not necessarily correlate with the amount of speech recorded. For example, Archer's recordings included long periods of unspoken activity.

Table 4: Dates and length of audio data recordings collected by participants

	Archer	Dan	Gary	Jasmine
Studio interactions Phase 2	04.12 (68mins)	27.11 (60mins)	20.11 (24mins) 27.11 (60 mins)	n/a
Studio interactions Phase 3	22.01 (108mins) 05.02 (186mins) 26.02 (172mins) 28.02 (14mins) 21.03 (178 mins) 04.04 (80 mins)	22.01(62 mins) 07.02 (65 mins) 04.03 (86 mins) 28.03 (179 mins)	06.02 (105 mins) 12.02 (55 mins) 14.03 (24 mins) 24.03 (41 mins)	05.02 (72 mins) 12.02 (63 mins) 28.02 (62 mins)
Formative Review	25.01 (6 mins) 07.03 (27 mins)	n/a	n/a	03.07 (11 mins)
Social Interactions Outside University (undated)	(28 mins) (20 mins) (57 mins) (34 mins) (47 mins)	(91 mins)	n/a	n/a

4.4.3.4 Documents

I collected course documentation relevant to the students' first-year studies. This included an induction handbook, project briefings and course handbook. Access to these documents was provided by the gatekeeper and Year Convenor, Joe.

4.4.4 Data Analysis

Data analysis in Linguistic Ethnography does not involve the application of prescribed methods but an analytical disposition towards situated language in use (Copland & Creese, 2015). This involves micro-analysis that attends to the moment-by-moment unfolding of interactions to account for how 'each utterance […] responds to what came before while simultaneously setting up expectations for what can follow through data' (Snell & Lefstein,

2012:4). It combines this analysis with ethnographic attention to context. The analysis of data began with repeatedly listening to the interactional data recorded by participants data collected to sensitize myself to the kinds of interactional dynamics at play in the studio. At this stage, I took descriptive notes of the interactions of interest and occasionally produced rough transcripts noting their timings in the recordings. I selected instances of significance at this stage by identifying discursive practices by which subject positions relating to race, class and ethnicity appeared to be at play. I drew on the indexical processes involved in identity construction, as noted by Bucholtz and Hall (2005:594):

> *(a) overt mention of identity categories and labels; (b) implicatures and presuppositions regarding one's own or others' identity position; (c) displayed evaluative and epistemic orientations to ongoing talk, as well as interactional footings and participant roles; and (d) the use of linguistic structures and systems that are ideologically associated with specific personas and groups.*

As detailed above, I had noted teasing occurring in the studio in my ethnographic observations. On a preliminary analysis of the audio-recorded data teasing, and humour more generally were shown to feature across the data set with surprisingly little interaction focussing on negotiation of the task at hand. These episodes of humour seemed to involve positionings within groups in which students were working on projects but would often involve students from other project groups who were passing, checking on friends or shouting across from nearby desks in the frequently raucous environment of the studio. Often the episodes involved the positioning of interlocutors in terms of race, ethnicity and class. Orienting myself to the activity type of group work interactions and giving consideration to the constraints this imposes around goals, roles, structure, participants and setting (Bezemer, 2015:211), I first selected one such episode captured in audio data recorded by Jasmine for closer analytic attention. The sample analysis in Excerpt 4.1 below shows how this proceeded on a turn-by-turn basis:

Excerpt 4.1: Sample Analysis - Jasmine

Line	Speaker	Utterance
15	Riki	Listen yeah you foreign (while laughing) people go away (while laughing) (..) Brexit
		• **'listen yeah'** to get attention and position them as 'foreign people' before telling them to go away while laughing. After a short pause, he says 'Brexit' • Indexicality: **'Listen yeah'**, at a pragmatic level, indexes a hostile stance and perhaps sets up an expectation of rebuke. Use of CUV/Cockney might index minoritised ethnicity and class positioning of Riki. • **'foreign people go away (..) Brexit'** indexes anti-immigrant discourses which had become prevalent since the EU referendum campaign. Riki's laughter keys the remark as playful and non-serious. • The remark also positions Riki as British in opposition to **'foreign people'** • (Field notes show Riki using Brexit as a verb previously. 'I'm not even from this country, I'm going to Brexit.')
16	Daniela	Brexit means Brexit
		• The Brexit theme is taken forwards into the next turn as Daniela quickly replies **'Brexit means Brexit'** • Indexicality: this statement indexes UK political discourse via a much mocked phrase used by the British Prime Minister, Theresa May. • By displaying her familiarity with the phrase, Daniela (a Bulgarian student) positions herself as familiar with British politics, which perhaps serves, at a pragmatic level, to respond to Riki's jocular positioning of her as a **'foreign'** person.
17	Jasmine	It's a touchy subject ((laughter))
		• Continues Brexit theme • Indexicality: Jasmine is perhaps indexing widely reported awkwardness around discussing Brexit even amongst family and friends at the time of the interaction.

Borrowing, as is common in LE, this approach from conversation analysis, I paid attention to the smallest of details of each turn and attended only to what could be deduced from the text of the transcript with attention to the ways in which the 'expression of ideas', and 'biography, identifications, stance and nuance are extensively signalled in the linguistic fine-grain' Rampton et al (2015:18). I also included ethnographic detail where relevant as, for example, in line 15 (Excerpt 4.1) below where I had witnessed a similar use of language from Riki in

the studio. This turn-by-turn analysis produced a heavily annotated transcript, as can be seen in the short excerpt:

This close analysis pointed to intricate patterns of stance-taking and local positioning that involved orientations to cultural reference points such as ‘Brexit’ in the example above. This led to closer analytic attention to the ways in which humour was an important discursive practice in building relational identities (Boxer & Cortez-Conde, 1997) in this kind of groupwork interaction and highlighted the ideological positionings taken up and resisted in the stances taken (Lytra, 2017:168; Jaworski & Thurlow, 2009:220) around race, ethnicity and class. This line of analysis around humour as a discursive practice for developing relational identities as well as the reworking and reproduction of ideological positioning was taken up in relation to other instances across the data collected by other participants.

Interviews and observations provided further ethnographic context for the analysis of interactional data as well as further data for further analysis of positionings. Interviews were analysed using the same turn-by-turn techniques described above but adjusted for the activity type of the interview and the differing constraints this imposes. The second interview followed up on emergent areas of analytic interest from the first interview. Both interviews also provided an opportunity for follow-up on audio data of emergent interest that had been collected during studio interactions. This included ‘playback’ sessions typical of approaches in interactional sociolinguistics (Rampton, 2016) in which we listened together to areas of analytic interest in the recordings. In instances where I wanted to check the course my analysis was taking, I would ask participants what was happening. I would also ask participants to comment on emerging analysis and provide clarifications on ethnographic details that were unclear from the recordings (see Chapter 7 Excerpt 7.14 for an example). Where necessary, ad-hoc playback sessions were arranged with participants to address issues emergent in analysis. These seemed to be enjoyed by participants, who were interested to

reflect on their discursive practices. In an email correspondence following a playback session, Jasmine commented 'loved the analysis.' These procedures felt important for both developing trust and rapport and establishing a collaborative and participatory approach to the collection and analysis of data (Rampton, 2016) that provided some mitigation of researcher/researched power relations.

The analysis of interviews provided an opportunity to use the methodological approach to reflexively respond to my positionality. Through linguistic analysis, I could gain analytic distance on my own use of language to position myself in respect of race, ethnicity and class. One such episode created a moment of tension in otherwise free-flowing interview interactions with Jasmine, a participant with whom I developed immediate rapport and easy familiarity in my early studio observations and informal interviews. The analysis of this episode can be seen in Chapter 7 (Excerpt 7.9).

While the analysis of student participants' interactions began from the linguistic analysis of interactional data collected in recordings, ethnographic observations were the starting point for analysis of the communication of Joe (Year convenor) with students. Analysis was undertaken from vignettes that I produced from field notes taken at project briefings. These gave an account of the 'lived stuff' (Rampton et al., 2015: 18) to which the linguistic analysis related. An induction pack, which doubled as a presentation was analysed as a written resource for the ways in which it positioned Joe and students in the sociolinguistic space of the studio. Although LE is generally concerned with spoken data, with analysis of written text normally described as discourse analysis, Cook (2011:437) has noted the compatibility of discourse analysis of written text with LE approaches. These texts, produced and presented by Joe, are analysed as resources that form part of his communicative repertoire. The interview with Joe was analysed using the same turn-by-turn analysis as that applied to student interviews.

While there was an orientation from linguistic analysis towards ethnographic understandings in the analysis of student interactions and a reverse orientation in the analysis of Joe's interactions, there has been a certain linear simplification of the process of analysis presented here. In actuality, the relationship between the analysis of data from interviews, observations, and audio recordings was not linear but recursive and iterative with analysis of each source informing and being informed by the other in the application of the theoretical framework. The analysis relied on repeated listenings, re-reading of transcripts and field notes undertaken in light of emerging analytical and theoretical positions which were integrated as the project developed (cf. Shaw, 2015:159).

The above discussion of the research design has detailed how it was informed by an 'ethics in practice' (Guillemin & Gillam, 2004) approach to minimise potential harms relating to my positionality as they emerged in the field. However, from the outset, the research was guided by ethical principles and procedures that took place prior to as well as during fieldwork.

4.5 Ethics

Before embarking on fieldwork, I gained ethical approval of the Goldsmiths Department of Educational Studies. During this process and throughout the study I made use of British Educational Research Association guidance on ethical educational research (BERA 2018) and consulted the British Association of Applied Linguistics *Recommendations on Good Practice in Applied Linguistics* (BAAL, 2021). All data was stored securely and anonymised at the point of collection. Traianou (2014:63) identifies three key ethical principles in qualitative research: minimizing harm, respecting autonomy and preserving privacy. I outline below how the study responded to each of these principles.

4.5.1 Minimising Harm

The discussion of issues of ethnicity, class and particularly race is potentially sensitive and as such heightens the risk of harm to participants in terms of emotional distress it may cause to participants (Traianou, 2014:63). Because of the poststructural approach taken to understanding the discursive construction of identities, the vulnerability of participants to such distress was not assumed a priori, nor were the issues of race, class and ethnicity addressed with students directly during interviews unless they were raised by participants. Nonetheless, given the subject matter of the study, it was reasonably foreseeable that such sensitive issues were likely to arise. When they did arise, I faced 'ethically important moments' in which I had to balance my ethical obligations to act in a non-exploitative way and to minimise harm while at the same time 'being mindful of [my] role as a researcher' (Guillemin & Gillam, 2004:264). I addressed this by checking that participants were comfortable to continue and respecting their wishes when there was something they said they would prefer not to talk about. This created occasional tensions. This was particularly true in my interviews with Archer, a participant who described experiencing anti-black racism throughout his education. Archer was softly spoken and tentative in his interviews, but we had developed a good rapport and from our first informal chat in the studio had been able to share a joke. He would offer information that was suggestive of emotionally sensitive incidents around race but would often stop short of giving fuller accounts. The excerpt below provides an example. During his second interview, Archer had been describing a discursive strategy of keeping to himself and I had asked why he thought that was.

Excerpt 4.2: Interview - Archer

```
20              erm (.) £probably something to do with my
21              upbringing£
22              £I don’t know£ [((lau[ghs))
23    SDS                      [((laughs))
24    Archer    Ahh
25    SDS       and you said it was like counselling last
26              time [((laughs))
27    Archer         [((laughs))yeah
28    SDS       £errwha do you do wanna say anything£ about
29              it
```

Having sensed some anxiety in Archer’s response to my question, I sought to relieve the tension by joking about a comment he had made in response to our previous interview, cueing this as a joke with laughter. When Archer responded with laughter, rather than directly asking what it was about his upbringing that he attributed this strategy to, I presented the continuation of this line of enquiry as one that was optional and that he was not under pressure to discuss (line 28). On reflection, the negotiation of this ‘ethically important moment’ feels like a reasonable compromise between my responsibility as a researcher to produce worthwhile knowledge (Traianou & Hammersley, 2012) and my ethical responsibility to minimise harm to participants.

4.5.2 Respecting Autonomy

In order to ensure that autonomy was respected, I ensured that all participants made the decision to participate on the basis of informed consent. They were provided with information sheets (Appendix 2) and signed consent forms (Appendix 2) regarding their participation in the study. However, with the study taking place in the studio, it was inevitable that other students would be observed and audio recorded in the course of data

collection. In order to address this, the presentation at the outset of the study (Appendix 1) briefed students on its aims and the use of recording equipment. Students were assured that if they had any objections or questions about the study and my presence in the studio, they could approach me or Joe (as gatekeeper) in person or by email. Additionally, A3 signs were placed on the studio doors to remind students on entering that recording may be taking place in the studio as part of an ongoing research project. In respect of key participants' right to withdraw from the project I addressed an ethical tension between the well-being of the research project and the well-being of participants (Copland, 2020:184) by stipulating in the information sheet that in the event that they decide to withdraw from the project, they would be asked what they want to happen to data they had provided up to that point, but that after one month following the end of fieldwork (30th June), anonymised data could no longer be removed from the study.

4.5.3 Preserving Privacy

Steps have been taken to preserve the anonymity of participants. However, it is important to accept that while a useful strategy for achieving confidentiality, strategies of anonymisation have limitations (Hammersley & Traianou, 2012). The measures taken in the present study include the use of self-chosen pseudonyms for participants and the allocation of the pseudonym UniX for the name of the institution in which the study took place. Since the students are identified as first-year students of Architecture, the year in which data collection took place has also been omitted as a measure to preserve anonymity. Nonetheless, the ethnographic detail required on participants makes them potentially identifiable to those who were present in the studio. There is also a balance to be struck between the inclusion of important ethnographic details such as the university's proximity to London and preserving the anonymity of participants by providing only a vague location of the study. As a result, the location is described as the South of England. Similarly, the pseudonym 'Harrington' has

been used for the city in which the university is located. Nonetheless, given that my employment history is discoverable, the Year Convenor's anonymity is less well protected. When the centrality of his data became apparent, in line with guidance published by the Arts and Humanities Research Council (Kasstan et al., 2023:12), I made Joe aware of the limitations of these depersonalising processes so as not to overpromise anonymity and shared my analysis with him to ensure he continued to consent to its publication.

4.6 Conclusion

This chapter has set out the key theoretical principles of LE, explained their relevance to the current study and detailed the particular combination of ethnographic and linguistic methods employed. It has engaged issues of both personal and methodological reflexivity that have informed the study with particular attention to whiteness understood as a position of dominance in a racialised order of class relations and its articulation with my institutional and researcher positionalities. The research design has been outlined with reference to how this was reflexively arrived at through an ethics in practice approach. Finally, the chapter has set out the ethical principles that underpinned the study and the procedures undertaken to ensure they were followed. The following three chapters provide the data analysis undertaken using this methodological approach. Each chapter addresses all four research questions.

5 Briefings: subverting and reproducing racialised academic space

5.1 Introduction

This section of the thesis presents data analysis. It consists of three chapters, each focussing on different aspects of the discursive conditions of the architecture studio. The current chapter focuses on these conditions in relation to key institutional practices of inductions and briefings in which students are oriented to the study of architecture. It draws on the argument developed in Chapter 2 that current developments in national policy around race and class in HE and at an institutional level in UniX appear to be driven by notions of choice with individuals obliged to exercise freedom as choice, autonomy, self-responsibility, and the obligation to maximize one's life as a kind of enterprise' (Rose et al, 2009:13). Underpinning these developments is a discourse of meritocracy in UK HE (HMG, 2022:74). Through analysis of the discursive practices employed at induction and briefings, the chapter argues that such ideological positionings are reproduced in the studio but that they are simultaneously subverted by appeal to convivial relations noted as a feature of urban multicultures (Back and Sinha, 2016).

The chapter addresses the ways in which the 1st year convenor, Joe, employs humour and racially marked (black) cultural resources during induction and project briefings in ways that subvert the racially unmarked (white) academic norms of the space. These discursive practices were observed and noted in the course of ethnographic observations to foster convivial relations among students. I argue, however, that they simultaneously reproduce neoliberal meritocratic discourses of hard-working individual competition that reproduce racially unmarked whiteness in the space.

5.2 Subversion and reproduction of racialised academic space

First-year students receive a one-week induction to help them acclimatise to the course and weekly project briefings to guide their studio work. The analysis in this section centres on the discursive practices of Joe the first-year convenor, a senior lecturer and colleague of mine in the university for three years prior to the commencement of the study. His responsibilities in this role include curriculum design, course administration, timetabling and co-ordination of teaching. He is also the primary academic point of contact for students and teaches in the design studio. At the start of this induction programme, Joe delivered a 46-slide induction presentation, a copy of which was provided to each new student as an induction handbook for the course. These induction materials are analysed here but the significance of Joe's discursive practices to the study first emerged during my field-noted observations of project briefings. As the study developed, I approached Joe to invite him to participate in an informal semi-structured interview. These three sources of data are analysed below. As discussed in the Methodology Chapter, Joe and I share a good collegiate working relationship. We also share many 'epistemological positionalities' (Singh, 2021), including our white racialised identities, working class(ish) background and age. The analysis that follows relies on Joe's life trajectory as it is influenced by the spaces of 'urban' underground club (sub)culture. This is something that has also been an important influence on my life trajectory and outlook (see introductory chapter) but is not something I address explicitly in my teaching practice. I rarely worked directly with Joe but would regularly chat for extended periods when bumping into each other around the university. If I was passing his office, I would often drop in for a chat. Our discussions would usually be light-hearted and jocular, but we have engaged in

more serious discussions around his cohort, student learning and the equality initiatives I had been working on as part of my job role.

The analysis presented here, is arranged in two parts: the first (5.2.1) focuses on Joe's subversion of the norms and expectations of the space; the second (5.2.2) centres on his cultivation of self-responsible deservedness in the students. Across these two parts, there is a tension between Joe's disruptive use of communicative resources and his social and institutional position as a white academic. This tension might be seen as characteristic of neoliberal governmentality, through which the freedom to construct or shape new social relations can be seen to come with 'new' forms of social control through twin processes of 'autonomization and responsibilization'(Rose, 1999:xxiii).

5.2.1 Convivial subversions of racially hegemonic space

Using the concept of *spatial repertoires* (Pennycook & Otsui, 2014), I will argue that the *place* created through the encounter of the social space with Joe's communicative repertoire might be considered, in Massey's (1991:28) terms, to weave together a constellation of social relations in the locus of the School of Architecture to produce an articulated moment in a network of social relations that simultaneously reproduces and subverts existing norms. This place-making is argued to be a subversive response to a *racially hegemonic evaluative centre* that ascribes authority to unmarked white middle-class norms of the institutional space, positioning whiteness as a position of dominance in a racialised order of class relations. Against these normative expectations of the space, I argue that Joe orients to a *convivial evaluative centre* to create a place of interdependency where social and institutional distance is elided.

The structure of this section follows a vignette written from field notes to evoke the weekly briefings observed during the study. First, the analysis presents how Joe engages a range of

semiotic resources that index underground club (sub)culture in ways that engender a sense of interdependency and 'humanity' that he sees as lacking in the institutional space and his role within it. These tensions are explored through analysis of an induction slide in which he explicitly addresses his participation in hip-hop culture.

The following excerpt from a vignette is drawn from fieldnotes taken at weekly project briefings where the full cohort of 110 students would be briefed on what was expected of them in their studio work for the week ahead:

The weekly briefing

1) It's 9.45 in the crit room. Students aren't expected until 10.00 am but the music is already
2) pumping - it's bass-heavy, no lyrics, just beats. The blinds are down, the lights are
3) off, the white background of the project brief, projected as a 3 x 5m rectangle onto the front
4) wall, is all that illuminates the space. 110 stackable plastic orange chairs are arranged in 11
5) not-too-neatly-defined rows. The gap in the middle of each row forms the aisle through
6) which the students will walk to find a seat. Where the aisle ends, there's a black, boxy leather
7) sofa pressed against the rear wall. Joe is busily clicking files at the Mac on the cabinet in
8) the front left corner. He's standing, slightly stooped, nodding to the music, swaying slightly
9) with fidgety feet. The crit room is cold; its outer wall is mostly windows (single-glazed
10) aluminium), the floor is parquet wood (sixties original according to Joe – I suspect the
11) windows are too), the front and rear interior walls are smooth grey brick (exposed), a thin
12) ply wall separates the crit room from the rest of the ground floor, the steel beams
13) providing structural support have been painted red as if to alert students to their
14) significance. Despite the cold, Joe is wearing short sleeves (two t-shirts) the outer –
15) slightly smaller than the inner - has a logo on the front, which could belong to a
16) skateboard company or record label. His jeans have a skater-like quality too – they're
17) worn low and hang at the back in a way that suggests a lot of wear since they were last
18) washed, they end crumpled at a pair of basketball boots with oversized tongues. In other
19) more formal settings, Joe's outfit might be incongruous with his age (mid-40s) and
20) position (year convenor) but nonetheless he wears it, it doesn't wear him – it's his
21) space, his outfit, his music, his cohort.
22) He exercises physical as well as sartorial ownership over the space – he's a big man, he

23) stands tall, arches his back, skips, dances sometimes, and occasionally loosens his neck by
24) moving his head from side to side in the manner of a boxer. From his vantage point at
25) the front, he can see through the only entrance to the room to the main entrance to the
26) building. He can see who's coming next and who's here but not in attendance.

Applying the concept of *spatial repertoires* (Otsuji & Pennycook, 2014), we can begin to see here the use of a communicative repertoire from Joe's broader life trajectory to make use of the available communicative resources of the social space of the crit room. The resulting *place* might be seen as an 'articulated moment[] in [a] network[] of social relations and understandings' constructed 'out of a particular constellation of social relations, meeting and weaving together at a particular locus' (Massey 1991: 28, in Pennycook & Otsuji, 2014:165). While Joe's use of the space might be said to subvert the social relations and understandings f that attend it (ibid), the communicative repertoire Joe brings sits in tension with the social and institutional associations that attend the space of the crit room and his position as a white convener and senior lecturer within it. As Blommaert et al. (2005:203) argue, 'context (including space) organises and defines sociolinguistic regimes in which spaces are characterized by sets of norms and expectations about communicative behavior – orders of indexicality.'

The norms and expectations of the crit room should be institutionally, geographically and historically contextualised. Institutionally, the space serves as a briefing area that is separate from the studio space. The makeshift arrangement of chairs (line 4/5) is conventional but the sofa to the rear (line 6) suggests a more relaxed disposition than that that of the standard lecture theatre. At the same time, these artefacts position the bodies in the space, creating a clear divide between students and lecturer. They sit and face; he stands and orchestrates. Once seated, they are stationary; he can move, and he does. A physical distance of approximately 3 metres separates them from him. The social space and its institutional

conventions will be familiar from school assemblies even if the place emerging from its encounter with Joe's communicative repertoire is not. As a space of higher education it has a historical and social association with elite spaces. While the university has an art school heritage and the school itself has an activist outlook, the governance of the profession of Architecture is embedded in hierarchical systems of prestige and is overseen by the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA). Geographically, the school is located in a provincial city an hour or so from London. The location of the school in a provincial city an hour or so from London means that students from the capital make up a significant proportion of the student body and with this comes an ethnic diversity within the cohort that is notably greater than the predominantly white population of the surrounding area. Visiting lecturers comment positively on the 'diversity' of the student body relative to London-based schools.

Joe's performance does not deny his institutional role in leading the year group, instead, he utilizes this institutional position to curate the space in ways subverts normative constraints on what can and can be done in such spaces (Blommaert et al., 2005:203). He does this by drawing on communicative resources from his life trajectory (Pennycook and Otsuji, 2014:179) to make the institutional, provincial social space indexical of urban underground club (sub)culture. The darkened room and repetitive beats and basslines (lines 1-4) provide the visual and auditory signs/cues. One choice that struck me at these briefings was the lyric-free, bass-heavy rumblings of *Glacial*. It can be heard by accessing the following link:

Danny Scrilla - Glacial (Original Mix) ft. Kromestar MP3 Download & Lyrics | Boomplay

Glacial is co-produced by Danny Scrilla and Kromestar. Kromestar is 'a British Sikh dubstep[16] and grime record producer from South London' (Wikipedia, 2023). Scrilla is a DJ/producer based in Munich, Germany whose webpage (no longer accessible) described the origins of his sound as follows: 'Dub and Soundsystem culture heavily influence the Scrilla sound so it is unsurprising he [has a] background in Roots, Dub and Dancehall as part of a legendary dub soundsystem.' His DJ booking agency lists 'his love for UK Garage, Dub, Reggae, Dancehall and Jungle' (Synchronicity, 2022).

The sound produced by this transnational collaboration around black cultural resources belongs to the cavernous nocturnal spaces of underground club (sub)culture. The stripped-back aesthetic and exposed structural elements of the briefing room have an industrial quality (lines 11-13) that is often shared with such spaces. The semiotic resources Joe brings include patterns of cultural behaviour learned in spaces outside of the institution. His style of dress indexes 'street' or 'urban' culture stereotypically associated with youth (lines 15-18). His physical movements provide a rhythmic energy and fluidity (lines 22-24) not ordinarily associated with the institutional role of the lecturer but commonplace in spaces of urban underground club (sub)culture evoked by his curation of the space.

Music culture has played a pivotal role in the history and trajectories of race and class in Britain and in movements of solidarity across racialised lines (Gilroy, 1987; Virdee, 2014). In particular, in his accounts of *conviviality*, Gilroy (2000:249) writes of the potential of the spaces of the underground club scene indexed by this spatial repertoire in the crit room:

> *The expressive cultures that have grown up in these polyglot urban spaces – transnational and translational vernacular cultures –supply and celebrate a variety of interconnection that not only acknowledges interdependency but, at its insubordinate*

[16] Dubstep is a genre of electronic dance music that originated in South London in the early 2000s. It is generally characterised by sparse, syncopated rhythmic patterns with prominent sub-bass frequencies (wikipedia)

> *and carnivalesque best, has been known to project an immediacy, a rebel solidarity, and a fragile, universal humanity powerful enough to make race and ethnicity suddenly meaningless.*

Without overstating the effect of this subversion of the social space of the crit room, it should be acknowledged that the introduction of these expressive transnational vernacular cultural production of Kromestar & Scrilla along with Joe's communicative repertoire constitutes a significant departure from the normative sociocultural and institutional expectations of the social space. They introduce orders of indexicality not normally associated with the academic space and cultivate a different interactional regime. These interventions might be said to orient to an evaluative centre outside of the academy and from underground club spaces in which Gilroy notes a profound incompatibility with the pervasive moods of colonial and imperial nostalgia' (Gilroy, 2000:250). Such contrasts were noted in the convivial role played by 'inappropriate' musical choices of 'grime, more grime [and] deep rumbling reggae' (Valluvan, 2016:213) at a street party nominally celebrating the 2011 royal wedding.

When I ask Joe about his use of music at briefings in an interview, he replies:

Excerpt 5.1: Interview – Joe

```
and so yeah I think
and it starts the day off a little bit differently
so the idea that there's a little bit of music playing
when they come in
doesn't hopefully make them feel quite so self-conscious
it's all about sitting down and having a chat with somebody
```

Joe's apparent aim is to foster a sense of interconnectedness and conviviality in the space that might otherwise be lacking and result in individuals feeling self-conscious. The claim is a modest one but nonetheless implies the subversion of a space that might otherwise feel unwelcoming to some.

Joe goes on to say:

```
'I think it shows that I'm human ↗'
```

Singh (2021:1170) notes that '[r]esistance against colonial/modern epistemologies seems to become possible in moments when individual actors "go off script" and engage with others on the level of humans rather than reducing their engagements to epistemological positionalities prescribed by their social or institutional roles.' Here Joe's claim that the music indexes his humanity could be understood to be a way of going off script to establish an interconnection that goes beyond his prescribed institutional role. After saying he hopes his apparent love of music will inspire them to have things they love too, Joe reflects on the role of music in bringing about a sense of interconnectedness.

Excerpt 5.2: Interview – Joe

```
1    Joe:    if you're in a spot
2            where everybody is enjoying the same music
3            it doesn't matter what or who you are
4    Steve:  Yeah
5    Joe:    it's quite a nice thing
6    Steve:  Yeah
7    Joe:    it kind of brings people together
8            and that if they don't like it
9            and they kinda tell me you know (.)
10           they can go and sit in a cupboard ((laughs))
```

Expanding on his earlier more modest claim, Joe implies that he sees the 'pre-music' (racially unmarked, white) social space of the crit room as one that inhibits social interaction, and in which prescribed epistemological positionalities that might determine 'what and who you are' (line 3) have greater relevance. This might be considered to signal the 'indifference to difference' described by Valluvan (2016:206) as central to convivial multicultures. Joe's more expansive description of how music (of the urban underground, racially marked as black) 'kind of brings people together' (line 7) evokes Gilroy's (2000:250) description of the 'interconnection and interdependency' supplied and celebrated by the underground club

scene. He goes on to characteristically follow up a serious point with a humorously absurd one (line 10).

My field notes from participant observations document loud music and heavy bass alongside a lively atmosphere with a buzz of excitement in a room half full 15 minutes prior to the start of the briefing with most students engaging in chat with people near to them. While this *place* might be said to subvert the associations of the social space, any greater sense of interdependency and interconnection brought about by the communicative repertoire Joe brings in his efforts to index his humanity sits in tension with the social and institutional associations that attend the crit room and his position as a white convener and lecturer within it. These tensions are central to the articulated moments in networks of social relations that make the *place* (Massey, 1991:28).

The tensions are also reflected in Joe's life trajectory and made explicit in an induction presentation delivered in the crit room at the start of the course. Of the 46 slides in the pack/presentation, three introduce Joe. The first slide (Figure 3 - circle added to highlight relevant text) provides an explanation of his institutional role and his educational and professional background, followed by an explanation of his approach to architectural practice. The slide ends with the following statement:

I am generally interested in being (slightly):

Subversive
Mischievous
Speculative (Playful)
And just so that you know that I am human
and do sometimes have to change a nappy or two.

INFO
A BIT ABOUT
ME

As your Year Convenor it is part of my role to help you address some of the challenges that you might encounter. I am happy to answer the simplest of questions and if I am unable to help, I can at least suggest another member of staff that might be able to. I am on campus for the majority of the week and so am happy to help when possible. If a more formal meeting is required we can then arrange an appropriate time and a private setting.

I have been active in architectural education since 1995, working in a variety of positions across the sector.

I joined XXX in 2007 as a sessional member of staff and have since spent nine happy and rewarding years working at the School. During this period, I have contributed to and now lead the combined Stage One BA(Hons) Architecture and Interior Architecture and Design. I am also currently acting Course Leader for Interior Architecture and Design.

In 2013 I gained professional recognition for my teaching; becoming a Fellow of the Higher Education Academy. This allowed me the opportunity to further develop my skills and understanding of the theories and methodologies employed across the wider context of the HE sector and the more specific approaches in the creative arts.

Alongside my teaching, I have worked on Arts Council funded research projects through XXX which I cofounded in XXX in 1999, bringing together a loose collective of artists, designers, architects and educators.

My own practice stems from a conscious effort to explore the social, cultural and political milieus of the everyday; the mundane, the banal, the habitual, the parts of life that go unnoticed, what could be defined as the consequence(s) of architecture, the life between buildings.

I am generally interested in being (slightly):
Subversive
Mischievous
Speculative (Playful)

And just so that you know that I am human and do sometimes have to change a nappy or two.

014

Figure 3. Year Convenor Introductory Slide

Joe’s jocular claim to be human, inserted amongst slides that refer to his institutional and academic position, relies on the expectation of a shared presumption that the position is in some way dehumanising. Alongside the ‘off script’ (Singh, 2021:1170) spatial repertoire of the briefing room, again here Joe seems to be using his communicative repertoire to engage on a more human and less institutional level as he positions himself professionally and academically. The second slide provides an example of a project he was professionally involved in (Appendix 3). The third of the three slides introducing Joe (Figure 4) goes on to detail his attachment to and participation in hip-hop culture. The analysis that follows considers how Joe uses the communicative resources from this aspect of his life trajectory as part of a spatial repertoire that subverts the social space of the briefing room.

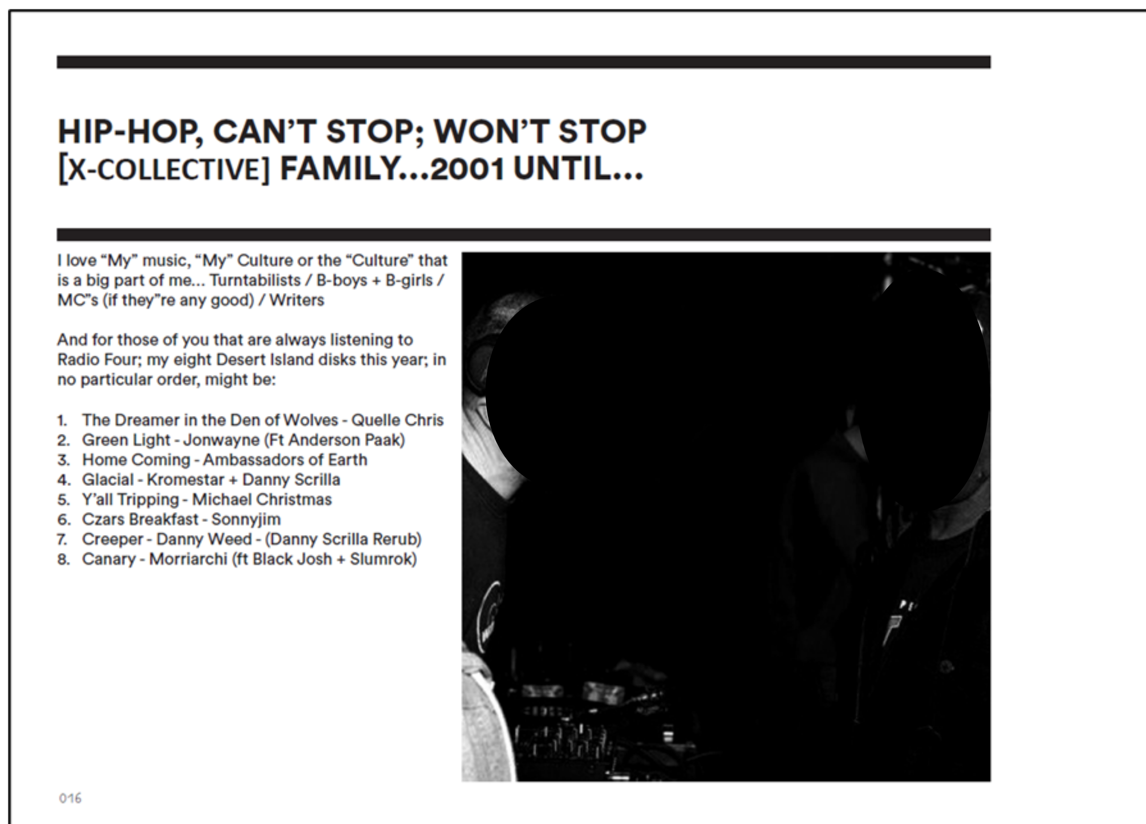

Figure 4. Hip-hop Introductory slide

The slide title replicates the title of a successful 2006 book *Can't Stop Won't Stop: A History of the Hip-Hop Generation.* The book provides a commentary on the genre's political and cultural impact. An extract from the blurb emphasises the 'multiracial', and 'polycultural' nature of youth rebellion embodied by the movement as well as its origins in social deprivation:

> *Forged in the fires of the Bronx and Kingston, Jamaica, hip-hop became the Esperanto of youth rebellion and a generation-defining movement. In a post-civil rights era defined by deindustrialization and globalization, hip-hop crystallized a multiracial, polycultural generation's worldview, and transformed American politics and culture.*

The subtitle provides a reference to a hip-hop collective to which Joe has belonged since 2001, describing them as a family. Posters promoting nights put on locally by the collective can be found around the school and also on the door to Joe's office. While at an ideological

level, the polycultural worldviews indexed by the slide title are unlikely to be decipherable to students, Joe's self-positioning in the opening lines of text make this explicit with the statement:

I love "My" music, "My" Culture or the "Culture" that is a big part of me…

Here the use of the possessive pronoun 'my' is used to claim ownership over hip-hop music and culture. The capitalisation of 'my' and its repetition serves to emphasise this. However, the use of scare quotes suggests a problematising of this sense of ownership that could be seen as appropriation of this emblematic feature of black culture, and an alternative framing of culture is offered in 'or the "Culture" that is a big part of me...' That is, he claims to be largely constructed by the culture. Rather than opting for the most appropriate framing and deleting the other, Joe leaves the epistemic stance towards the relationship between culture and the racialised individual open. This shows a metapragmatic awareness of the ideologically contested space that his claims to culture occupy (cf. Singh, 2021:1168). In the process, it implicitly acknowledges his white identity, disrupting the social space of the briefing room where this is normatively unmarked.

The claim does work in aligning Joe with the multiracial, polycultural perspectives advanced in the blurb for *Can't Stop Won't Stop* and those of the expressive urban cultures considered by Gilroy to disrupt meanings of race and ethnicity (….) above. The claim might also be seen to do work in disaligning, at a cultural and institutional level, with racially unmarked whiteness.

Joe's claim to the 'culture' of hip-hop is illustrated with examples of participants in the culture:

Turntablists / B-boys + B-girls / MC"s (if they're any good) / Writers

The image to the right of the text shows Joe in headphones behind a set of turntables and a mixing desk in a dark setting, exemplifying his own participation in the culture as a turntablist/DJ. The image under the title depicts Joe in mid-set conversation with a world-renowned black hip-hop icon. The image serves both to legitimate and authenticate Joe's claim to participation in hip-hop culture and perhaps to some extent exemplifies what is termed the 'multiracial' dimension in *Can't Stop Won't Stop* and suggested by Joe's intentionally ambiguous claims to hip-hop culture.

Returning to the text, the parenthetic (if they're any good) that follows MC"s positions Joe as a connoisseur capable of taking an evaluative stance towards aspects of the culture. This stance is taken further in the text that follows, where Joe makes a playful contrasting cultural reference to BBC Radio 4, which is iconic of middle-class, middle-aged listening habits and could be said to juxtapose hip-hop culture. The long-running and well-known BBC4 show *Desert Island Discs* invites famous guests to choose eight discs, a book and a luxury item to take with them as they are cast away on a mythical desert island. However, in a departure from the format of the show, Joe restricts his musical choices to those for the year in question and these are updated yearly for each cohort. This has the effect of further demonstrating the currency of his knowledge and engagement and with it a claim to authentic participation in hip-hop culture. The Radio 4 reference also broadens the semiotic scope of the slide with an appeal to those familiar with the mainstream middle-class indexical associations of Radio 4 and able to appreciate the ironic 'dig' at students. Equally, it aligns Joe with middle-class, middle-aged listening habits in a way that might suggest an element of self-parody while also indexing a breadth of cultural engagement.

Joe takes up his social and institutional position as a racially unmarked white lecturer by subscribing to racially marked black cultural resources of hip-hop. Through a range of semiotic resources including the book referenced by the slide title, choice of imagery and his

careful claim to be largely constructed by black culture, Joe's repertoire draws on two strands of his life trajectory (DJ and Lecturer) in the social space of the studio.' In this case, the convivial interconnected, interdependent, polycultural social relations of hip-hop and underground club culture weave together with the more institutionalised relations set up by the norms and expectations of the space (Blommaert, et al, 2005:203) to make a *place* (Massey, 1991). The network of social relations that constitute the *place* could be said to be produced through articulation of *convivial* and the *racially hegemonic* centres to which Joe's spatial repertoire orients. These placemaking practices are further interwoven with discursive practices of humour and the cultivation of self-responsible deservedness that will be discussed next.

5.2.2 Self-responsible deservedness

This section analyses discursive practices of humour, arguing that this aspect of Joe's communicative repertoire is mobilised to reduce the social distance between him and the students while engendering the hard-working characteristics demanded of the course and the profession. I argue that these practices both subvert racially hegemonic whiteness as a position of dominance in a racialised order of class relations and reproduce it through appeal to notions of self-responsible deservedness central to racialised neoliberalism.

A slide on attendance (Figure 5 below) featured on page 8 of the induction presentation/pack is illustrative of an approach that can be seen throughout the resource:

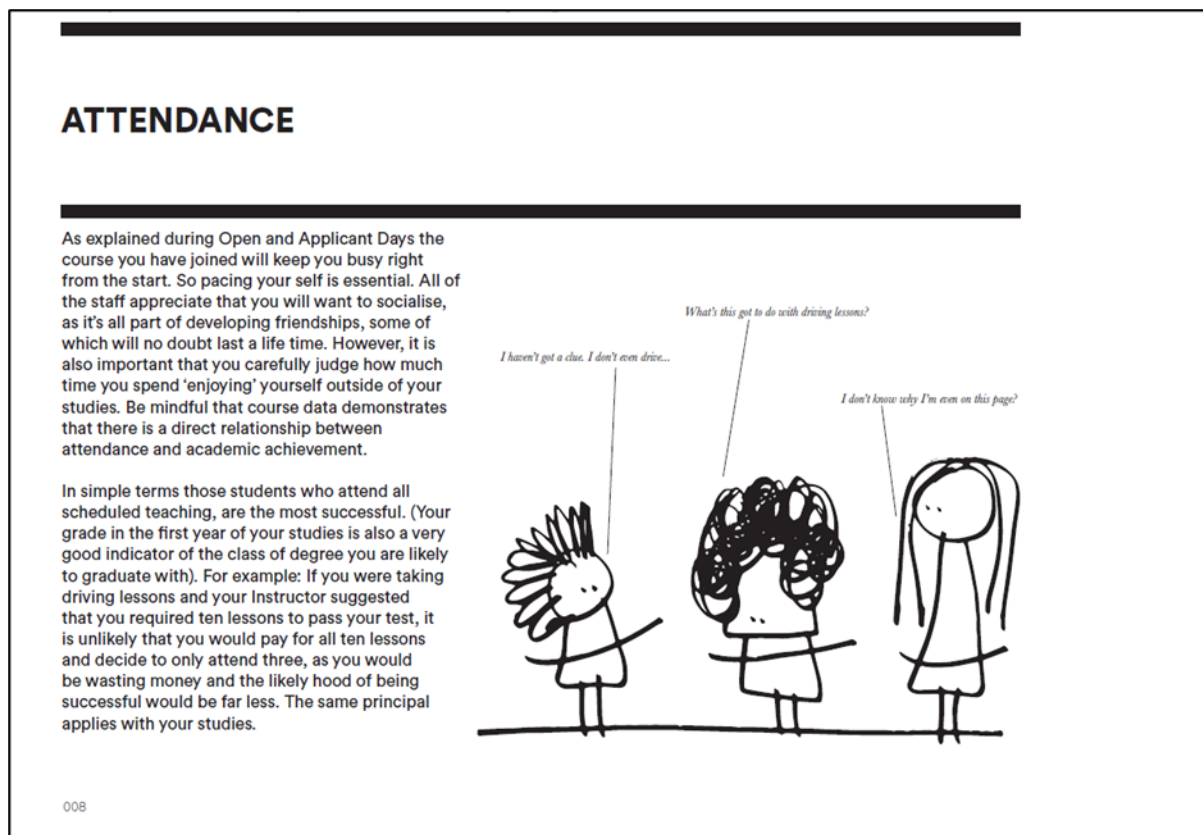

Figure 5. Attendance Slide

The advice regarding attendance begins by addressing students directly and introduces an affective dimension centred around the importance of socialising and developing friendships that will last a lifetime. It moves on to emphasise the need for students to respond to statistical monitoring in conducting their social lives, adopting a formal scientific register, 'be mindful that course data demonstrates that there is a direct relationship between attendance and academic achievement.' This is followed by an analogy with driving lessons that makes the point in relation to value for money. This encouragement of self-governance through a combination of market logics and statistical ranking is embedded in discourses of neoliberal governmentality in which subjects are afforded '[t]he individual freedom to conduct their

own behaviour according to economic principles' (Martín Rojo & Del Percio, 2020:10). The students are nudged towards adopting self-responsible habits that are linked to academic success. In this way, the evaluative centre appealed to might be described as one of *self-responsible deservedness*.

As is commonplace in the induction slides/pack, the text is accompanied by 3 figures drawn in a childlike cartoonish style who represent the student recipients of the advice. In this instance, they ridicule the analogy being made with driving lessons before taking a surreal turn into questioning their place on the page. The dialogue reads:

Student a: What's this got to do with driving lessons?

Student b: I haven't got a clue. I don't even drive…

Student c: I don't even know why I'm even on this page?

This use of humour alongside the cultivation of hard-working, self-responsible characteristics was also present in the delivery of briefing presentations as shown in the following vignette excerpt.

The weekly briefing continued

27) At 9.50 students start to filter in in twos-and-threes. Coats zipped up, heads down, bags
28) on backs. Some catch Joe's eye as they enter, those who do get a nod and a smile in
29) return. As the dark, bassy space fills up, chatter and laughter quickly spreads. Some
30) students have an arm over the back of their chairs and chat with the group behind them.
31) Others talk along the row, sometimes across those seated in between. Joe paces at the
32) front, swinging his arms behind his waist then gently connecting open hand with clenched
33) fist in front of him. He occasionally puffs out his cheeks. He points to a student and sends
34) an exaggerated wink and a broad smile in their direction. It's almost 10.00 and the place
35) now has a buzz of anticipation. The new brief is about to be revealed. What can be seen of
36) the windows around the ill-fitted black blinds are steamed up with the heat and breath
37) generated by so many packed-in bodies. At 10:02 students are flowing in and Joe is
38) ushering them towards the seats, 'come on, quick, we start at 10 guys not five-past'.
39) It's standing room only at the back now. Five students occupy the two-seater sofa, three

40) slouch in the middle and one perches on each arm. Joe checks his watch and makes his
41) way over to the Mac and mouse in the corner. The students don't seem to be taking
42) much notice of what's going on in front of them but as soon as the music fades and Joe
43) starts to speak, they're silent – no need to be reminded, they know the drill.
44) OK now before we get into the brief, I just need to pick up a few things with you. Some of
45) you are still underestimating the challenge of the course. This isn't Fine Art. I appreciate
46) you might talk to students from other courses and get a misleading sense of the amount
47) of time you need to spend on this. You really have got to use every last minute of time
48) available to you. I say it at open days and inductions. I say it every year, I don't make any
49) pretence – I can show you the figures if you like because these are the kind of fun things I
50) have to do, there's a really clear relationship between those students who are here, who
51) are always in the studio, and those who are successful and those who fail and drop out
52) and haven't put the hours in. Your design tutors in the studio have to come in on the train
53) from London in the morning and most probably go back and work on their own projects
54) until late in the evening. They do it because they love what they do. Much to the delight
55) of my family, I spend most of my waking hours in that little office over there - in fact, I'm
56) thinking of moving them all in under the desk. Fucking great. We love you Dad, when will
57) we see you again? The studio is open from eight until eight, it's not 9-5. Eight thousand
58) architecture students graduate every year, it's simple really: do you want a job or not
59) want a job? It really is that simple. Now I understand that probably lots of you have taken
60) up architecture because you've got some kind of creative urge or talent but you also and
61) probably your parents also want you to get a professional well-paid job at the end of it
62) all. But it's not that well-paid. It's okay, you can earn a decent living, but it's not doctors and
63) lawyers. You've really got to do it because you love it. It's called extrinsic versus intrinsic
64) motivation. It's got to come from you. Adam knows what I'm talking about, don't you
65) Adam [points to Adam on front row]. See! – top man Adam, I knew you would. Are they
66) new trainers? Fucking hell man, where you getting your money from, hey [laughs]? He's
67) minted, this guy – 8th richest man in Harrington. Anyone running out of tracing paper,
68) come and see Adam, he's got loads – giving it away. That's right, isn't it mate? Lovely
69) [claps hands and rubs them together]. I'll give his number out at the end. Where do you
70) live Adam? Can you lend me a tenner?

While the social space of the crit room is dominated by Joe, the students also play a part in the construction of the place. The excerpt above suggests that the response of the students to

the place and the semiotic resources at play is compatible with the notions of interdependency and interconnectedness (lines 29 – 31).

A nod and smile of acknowledgement is available for those who make eye contact with Joe on entry but most make their way to empty seats. Once seated, many make connections with those in their immediate area in spite of the arrangement of chairs. As they do so, the sound of laughter and chatter spreads between them creating a convivial buzz of anticipation (lines 29-35). Joe, although separated in space, maintains a kind of connection through exaggerated gestures made visible by his position at the front. As a space of interaction, though, at this moment, the room belongs to the students (line 42). As Joe performs his institutional duties of keeping time and marshalling latecomers (lines 37-38), students take little notice of his actions but respond almost immediately to the fading music (line 43) and sound of Joe's voice as signals that the briefing is about to begin. The institutional relations are confirmed by the speed with which the room of 120 students cut short their interactions to listen.

As Joe performs his institutional position as year convenor, briefings often contain extended reference to the challenge of the course and the work ethic required of architects (lines 44-48). This involves a range of discursive strategies. Joe frequently distinguishes the work ethic required on the course from others taught on the campus (line 45). He correlates statistical information that is collected to report on student success and failure with the amount of time students spend in the studio to encourage greater attendance and participation in the studio (lines 49-52). Governmentality for Rose (1999:xxi) is 'government at a distance' involving 'programmes, strategies, techniques for acting upon the actions of others towards certain ends' by 'harnessing [ ] micro-fields of power'. Joe's course is monitored for its performance in both internal annual monitoring and externally by national student satisfaction surveys and the continuation, results and career prospects of students, which feed into university league table rankings. These rankings are seen to have a positive effect on course enrolment and

particularly so in the unusually high student enrolment in the year of the study. Joe uses the statistics he has at hand to conduct the conduct of students. As Ball (2012) has argued in relation to educators in HE, 'neoliberalism gets into our minds and our souls, into how we think about what we do, and into our social relations with others. It is about how we relate to our students and our colleagues.' Ball (2012:20) notes 'the tyranny of metrics over professional judgment' on the processes and practices of the lecture room. Joe's reference to design tutors' hard-working practice and his own long hours and working conditions are provided as evidence for his claims and as models for the students (lines 52-57). The competitive nature of the profession and the surplus of demand for graduate jobs are highlighted in an effort to motivate students to work harder even at this early stage in their architectural education (lines 57-59). However, while students are encouraged to conduct themselves in relation to these external factors, motivations for success should be intrinsic to the individual (line 63). In this neoliberal manifestation of 'orderly independence' (Shilliam, 2018) the students' conduct is conducted in neoliberal fashion through what Rose calls a 'twin process of autonomization plus responsibilization – opening free space for the choices of individual actors whilst enwrapping these autonomized actors within new forms of control' (Rose, 1999:xxiii).

The space of the crit room is connected with the places of work and wider social relations encountered in the employment market in intense competition with other graduates and candidates (lines 58-59). Students are encouraged to acquire the characteristics of successful selves in this environment (lines 60-64). As an educational space, the place can be seen as a 'space[ ] for the inculcation of neoliberal principles as well as [a] site [ ] of production of the type of worker needed for the neoliberal economy' (Martín Rojo & Del Percio, 2020:12). Simultaneously, it is a place of disruption and resistance to orderliness where these serious messages are interspersed with a kind of freestyling, often surreal humour that employs

expletives and colloquial discursive resources that push at the normative constraints of 'what people [at least lecturers] can do or cannot do' in such spaces (Blommaert, 2005:203) (lines 64-70).

A field note entry reads:

> *Joe alternates serious messages with humour – he does it well. Sometimes surreal, very spontaneous and unpredictable (fieldnote 18th September)*

During our interview, Joe identifies humour as key to the bond-building approach that he considers a strength of his teaching. He positions himself as not a 'traditional academic' suggesting this is linked to his approach:

Excerpt 5.3: Interview - Joe

1	Joe	I don't know
2		I want to be a bit careful maybe again about what I say
3		but I'm not maybe what may be considered
4		somebody who's a traditional academic
5		I haven't you know
6		I left school at sixteen ↗
7		went straight to art college
8		I don't have any A-levels
9		erm did national diploma
10		higher national diploma
11		and then degree ((rhythmic listing))
12		and then an MA
13		you know
14		so it was maybe a slightly different route hhh to others
15		so maybe that just makes me just approach it differently
16		… possibly .. erm you know
17		I'd like to think one of my strengths is
18		building a kind of bond and relationship
19		and a capacity to do that –
20		build a bond and a relationship with the students
21		which I think <you know> is important

```
22        so that whilst there's lots of uncertainty
23        and lacks of confidence
21        there's the confidence that you're leading them in the
22        right direction
23        and I guess the brief demonstrates
24        that I'm serious about it
25        but my kind of maybe manner in the studio is different
26        If it's all so fucking serious
27        they're just all going to be bored shitless
28        and they'll all wander off
29        and you know so the kind of performative the humour
30        I think that's important
31        I think I guess that's not everybody's cup of tea you know
32        everybody has their own likes and dislikes
33        and that's where people warm to it
34        or kind of get bored by it ((laughs))
35        they tend not to speak to me
36        when they go to the second year ((laughing))
37        you walk past them and they just go neahhh erm yeah
```

Joe takes a hedged and cautious approach to distinguishing himself from 'what may be considered somebody who's a traditional academic' (lines 3/4). He provides a list of more vocationally oriented qualifications leading up to his degree and the fact that he does not have A'-Levels as evidence for this and as a possible reason for his 'different' approach (lines 5-15). This different approach involves a capacity to 'build a bond and a relationship with the students' (line 20) that is considered necessary to provide students with the confidence that they are being led in the right direction (lines 20-21) in the face of uncertainty and a lack of confidence on their part (lines 22-23). Joe breaks down his approach using a dichotomy that can be seen throughout the interview, briefing observations and induction materials: seriousness versus humour. Seriousness is constructed as socially distancing, whereas

humour is aligned to the more personable, human relationship that Joe seeks to initiate with students.

As noted in his interview, this is a discursive strategy that Joe is aware of (lines 29-30). While explaining that he aims to demonstrate his seriousness in the brief (lines 23-24), he indexes his non-conformist approach using discursive resources of 'bad language' not normally employed in the course of the interview. He explains that his use of humour is a strategy to prevent it from becoming 'all so fucking serious' that the students are 'just all going to be bored shitless and they'll all wander off (line 25).' The use of humour and 'bad' language in opposition to institutional expectations of education is documented in Willis's (1997 [1979]) account of the response of working-class males to the middle-class institutional settings of education. In this account, Willis argues that the participants ('the lads') reject the school's efforts to control their time, instead trying to claim it as an aspect of their immediate identity and self-direction'. Instead, the lads find ways to escape lessons and use this resource for the purposes of 'having a laff.' That is, for the 'development of particular cultural skills' of vital importance in a counter-school culture (ibid:28-29). Joe's reflections on his performative humour suggest an approach to making the studio a place where these cultural skills can be put to use. When the studio is a place for 'having a laff', he reasons that the students are less likely to be 'bored shitless' (line 27) and wander off (line 28).

Understood in this way, Joe's approach to building a bond and reducing the social distance between himself and the students can be seen to have a class dimension. Rampton (2011a:1239) notes a similar use of class distinction in an educational setting in London where 'cockney' stylisations indexical of working-class positionings are seen to evoke solidarity, whereas 'posh' stylisations indexical of middle-class positionings are used to evoke social distance and constraint. Joe's discursive strategies to make himself 'human' in distinction to the 'traditional academic' appear to involve similar positionings. Willis (1997

[1979]) notes such strategies employed by teachers in a school setting can be rejected by those they aim to get closer to because of what ‘teaching’ has already come to represent in the institution. However, I noted in my observation of briefings that, on the whole, Joe’s efforts appeared to be accepted.

> *Joe ‘performs’ but they react with laughter and warmth (?). He pushes at levels of acceptable, deliberately tries to shock* (fieldnote).

However successful, though, the reduction of social distance is required due to Joe’s institutional position. This position entails engaging with discourses of student success and employability that also inform the ‘serious’ aspects of his communication, such as references to student failure and the need for hard work and regular attendance in the studio. Joe reflects on the use of humour in his teaching in ways that suggest a kind of responsible autonomy (Rose, 1999:xxiii) or ‘orderly independence’ (Shilliam, 2018) that he demonstrates in his own teaching and hopes to engender in the students. This can be seen in the following excerpt from our interview, which follows his reflections on the use of music (Excerpt 5.1):

Excerpt 5.4: Interview - Joe

```
1   Steve:  Yeah
2   Joe:    yeah so yeah
3           I think it’s yeah so a bit serious in some respects
4           but playful in others
5           and enjoyment and yeah yes
6           so you’re creating a kind of
7           you’re trying to create your kind of ecology
8           your own kind of ecosystem erm
9           because they will look
10          you know it happens doesn’t it every year
11          they’ll look out of the windows of the studio
12          and see various people
13          that’ll sit on the green grass
```

14 and it's sunny
15 and they're there maybe 90% of the day
16 and they <u>can</u>
17 because there's a different different courses
18 and they're working differently
19 but then you've got to look towards your own kind of
20 ecosystem a bit
21 and think right ok whilst they're outside sipping
22 Martinis or whatever it might be
23 or an iced latte
24 ((laughs))
25 <u>white lightening</u>
26 you know
27 they've gotta
28 it's tough
29 we're already preparing them to be professionals
30 boring as that sounds
31 Steve: yeah yeah yeah
32 ((silence))

Joe appears to be describing what might be considered a process of polycentric placemaking. The ecology (line 7) or ecosystem (line 8) he is trying to create corresponds with a notion of place shaped through a spatial repertoire created through the encounter of the social space with Joe's music and humour. The choice of the terms 'ecosystem' and 'ecology' to describe the place that he wants to create in order to keep the students focused on their studio work is suggestive of the interdependency described earlier in relation to the club scene dynamic indexed in briefings. Explicit reference to the perceived importance of nurturing interdependency in learning can be found on page 3 of the induction slides/pack (Appendix 4) and under the heading 'self directed-ness':

> *It is essential that as time passes you move from being a dependent learner to being independent and then as you progress, interdependent.*

The combination of self-directedness and interdependency is illustrative of the ‘ecology’ Joe strives to create in neoliberal conditions. This is considered necessary to engender the hard-working, self-responsible practices of a ‘tough’ and competitive profession (lines 28-29). The articulation of neoliberal meritocratic discourses with subversive cultural resources within the space is perhaps most starkly illustrated by the final slide of the induction presentation (Figure 6) which connects the frequently emphasised need for students to develop competitive hard-working characteristics to their survival on the course.

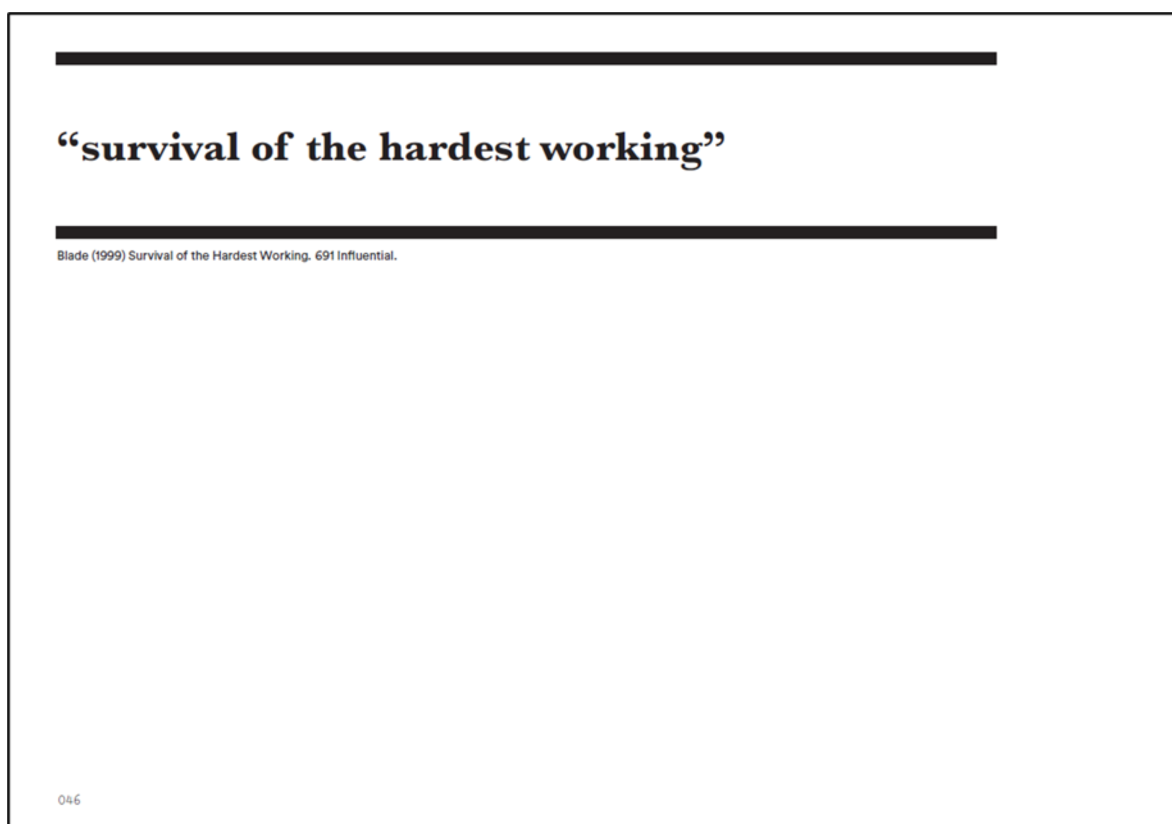

Figure 6. Final Induction Slide

The phrase ‘survival of the hardest working’ references the title and lyrics of a late-nineties hip-hop track by Iranian-born UK rapper, Blade. The slide recontextualises this as a piece of induction advice or even a warning to new students. A number of factors affect its semiotic potency within the space. Firstly, in terms of the material conditions that attend space, the

school has separate studios for each undergraduate year group. These get progressively smaller as over the three years fewer students 'survive' end-of-year assessments. This fact alongside racial inequalities has the effect that cohorts become smaller and whiter with each passing year of the course. It was this observation from a previous Head of School and a desire to change it that initiated my first research projects with students (Chapter 1). The emphasis on the need for hard work is repeated at almost every briefing alongside warnings that every year those who don't heed these warnings fail the course. Secondly, the slide is the only one in the presentation that doesn't contain content other than the title. This gives it prominence, lending it the quality of a sign. As the final slide of the induction presentation, it represents the final message students receive before embarking on their studies proper. The summing up, 'take-away message' or conclusion of the advice provided. Blommaert (2013:33) argues that '[signs] operate in particular identified spaces and define such spaces' and that this constitutes their spatial scope. Here, the sign might be argued to define the studio space as one where only the hardest working survive.

The application of academic conventions of referencing and use of quotation marks recontextualization the slide. That is the selection of traditionally differentiated modalities of rap and academic referencing conventions, which orient towards different evaluative centres are combined in a way that determines the *semiotic scope.* The slide articulates the subversive qualities of semiotic resources from hip-hop, with traditional academic conventions and neoliberal meritocratic discourses noted as promoting competitive self-interest as the key to educational success (Martín Rojo and Del Percio, 2020:9). Techniques of neoliberal governmentality are employed against this backdrop of insecurity to conduct the conduct of students, compelling them to act in self -responsible fashion to outcompete their classmates and maximise their opportunities (cf. Sunyol and Codo, 2020). In this way, an evaluative stance (Jaffe, 2009:5) towards deservedness is implied. Applying 'Social Darwinist' (Burke,

2012:111) logics, the institutional or structural factors that Joe's discursive practices appear to respond to are elided. Instead, those who do not 'survive' are positioned as not working hard enough to belong in the space. Bhopal (2018:5) notes the role of meritocratic discourse in reproducing racial inequalities in Higher Education through a white ignorance of racial privilege and a belief that 'those who rise to the top have done so because they have worked hard and deserve to be there, in comparison to those who have not – who are lazy.' The relationship of these racialising deserving/undeserving distinctions (Shilliam, 2018) to broader histories of race and class in England has been set out in Chapter 2. They can be seen to inform orders of indexicality in this polycentric space in ways that respond to the evaluative centre of the self-responsible deserving (white) subject of racialized neoliberalism.

5.3 Conclusion

To conclude, I will return to the research questions. In answer to questions 1 and 1.1, this chapter has found that the discursive conditions Joe navigates can be characterised by orientation to three evaluative centres: that of a *racially hegemonic perceiving subject*, *self-responsible deservedness* and *conviviality*. In orienting to the *racially hegemonic centre*, Joe's discursive practices mobilise a spatial repertoire to respond to and resist an order of indexicality that positions him as aligned with the traditional academic and thereby whiteness in his institutional position in the space of the studio. These discursive conditions are subverted through orientation to an evaluative centre of *conviviality* that ascribes value to resources indexical of working-class multicultures. Nonetheless, in this context, these convivial orientations articulate with an appeal to the evaluative centre of the *self-responsible deserving subject* through the neoliberal meritocratic discourse that is mobilised to motivate and prepare students for the profession.

Applying Hall's notion of articulation (Hall, [1980] 2021; Hall, 1996b:147) to answer research questions 2 and 2.1, these discursive conditions relate to material conditions of

inequality observed in the visible shrinking and whitening of the studios as cohorts progressed over the three years of the course (Chapter 1). They relate to historically specific articulations of race and class shaped by racializing hard-working/idle, deserving/undeserving distinctions (Shilliam: 2018) and by notions of cultural evolution through competition that underpin neoliberal political thought and reproduce whiteness (Kundnani 2021:59). That is, the evaluative centres of the *self-responsible deserving subject* that Joe orients towards and *the racially hegemonic subject* he orients against articulate (Hall, [1980] 2021). In Chapter 2, I argued that this articulation was inscribed into social policy from New Labour onwards (Shilliam, 2018:121) and informs current OfS policy and institutional practices at UniX. The findings of this chapter suggest that this articulation of racial hegemony and self-responsible deservedness also informs the institutional practices of briefing and induction in the studio. However, the analysis also found that they are resisted/subverted through Joe's orientation to an evaluative centre of *conviviality*.

The next two data analysis chapters will focus on the interactions of students to analyse the discursive conditions in which they operate and explore the material inequalities to which they relate.

6 Studio talk: student constructions of self-responsible deservedness and conviviality

6.1 Introduction

The analysis presented in the previous chapter detailed how in inductions and briefings, the year convenor's discursive practices can be seen to make a *place* in which conviviality and interdependency articulate with techniques of neoliberal governmentality that position students as hard-working individuals engaged in meritocratic competition. This chapter centres on the studio as a sociolinguistic space in which students engage in group work and make important social connections as they pursue their studies and projected futures. The data analysed comes from narrative interview accounts and interactions recorded by two student participants, Gary and Dan, and might be seen to exemplify the tensions between *convivial* and *self-responsible deserving* evaluative centres observed in Joe's placemaking induction and briefing practices. The use of humour is central to both students in the process of developing their social connections and will be analysed using the notion of relational identity development (Boxer & Cortez-Conde, 1997) as it applies to two distinct interactional regimes. Through this analysis, I argue that in these discursive conditions both orientations taken respond to *orders of indexicality* in which whiteness assumes a position of dominance in a racialised order of class relations and is hegemonic. That is, in both cases, racially hegemonic whiteness is an impactful evaluative centre operating at a scale of scope and value that makes it recognisable and valid across *interactional regimes* (Blommaert, 2005:207) in the studio. I will argue that in the material conditions of the studio, where group work is central to their studies, this places an unequal sociolinguistic burden on students of colour such as Dan who are required to navigate the positionings these discursive conditions place on them. In short, I show *how* the discursive conditions of the studio are white.

The chapter begins with a vignette that gives a sense of the studio as an interactional space. It goes on, in Section 6.3, to analyse the narrative accounts in which Gary and Dan construct

the social space of the studio and their place within it during interviews. The next section (6.4) analyses the discursive practices by which Gary and Dan construct relational identities in the studio. The findings of the analyses in these sections are then addressed in a concluding discussion.

6.2 Convivial studio space

The following vignette draws on fieldwork observations in the studio to describe the space in which the students interact as they work on a series of group projects throughout their first year of study.

> *Physically, the first-year studio space is a hangar-like structure with rows of desks to seat 130 students. It is accessed by taking a left up a flight of stairs before the grand piano that occupies the entrance to the School of Architecture. Its 1960s modernist functionalism means that internal structures and steel supports are exposed. Electric cables are threaded through the supports, supplying bright yellow cube socket sets above tables with chains attached to take their weight. The studio is by some way the largest in the school. Studio size decreases each year over the three years of the undergraduate course as some students drop out or do not make the grade - a physical reminder to accompany the many verbal ones that those who don't work hard enough will not make it through.*
>
> *You enter the studio at the second row of desks from the left, the remaining eight rows to the right. The spaces between rows of desks act as channels that end as each row meets the far-side wall. From desk level upwards this wall becomes window overlooking a small car park and leafy surround to the rear of the school. This along with glazed skylights means the studio is a light space and makes the temperature difficult to regulate in extremes of summer and winter. The near-side wall is for displaying work – usually drawings. Some displays are semi-permanent but others are for 'pinning up' to receive group feedback at the end of a day's studio work on a design task.*
>
> *When full the studio is loud and has a buzz of energy. Students usually outnumber staff by around 50:1. They 'own' the space. Occasionally, they are marshalled by Joe but no other member of staff commands the studio space. Students eat, socialise and sometimes nap in the studio. It is visibly and audibly a multi-ethnic space. Different languages can be heard, Russian, Chinese, Punjabi and Nigerian languages mingle with a range of British accents and*

Contemporary Urban Vernacular. Laughter (lots), occasional shrieks and screams can be heard. Students don't have an allocated desk – group work is key to first-year work and groups change with each project. Students tend to move with their groups, although some prefer to stay put in particular friendship groups. As groups change, connections spread across the studio. Some keep themselves to themselves, wear headphones and don't engage in conversation with others unless approached or required by a group task. Others travel around the studio from group to group, checking in with others, instigating conversation or asking about work in progress. It's common for students to shout across the studio at a range of three or four desks. There is a culture of sharing and borrowing of equipment, ideas and titbits of advice cleaned from discussions with tutors. Some apparently come to the studio primarily to work, others primarily to socialise, others aim to avoid it if they can.

The vignette provides a short ethnographic account of the multi-ethnic conviviality noted by Back &Sinha (2016:524) to be found in the 'micro-publics' of everyday life, such as the 'workplace, schools and colleges' in which people negotiate difference through close proximity as necessary and habitual parts of daily life. On the face of it, there is an 'indifference to difference' (Valluvan, 2016: 206). In the *polycentric* (Blommaert et al, 2005:207) environment of the studio, differences are multiple and so are the norms and expectations of the space (Blommaert et al, 2005:203) and evaluative centres to which students orient in their interactions with one another. These multiple centres generate indexicalities for participants and these are oriented to in distinct ways. As Back and Sinha (2016:521) suggest, analysis of multicultures requires us to adopt 'a way of seeing' that is attentive to forms of division and racism alongside and sometimes within multicultural convivialities.

The remainder of this chapter adopts such a way of seeing in its analysis of student participants' interactions in the space and their narrative accounts of it.

6.3 Competitive and convivial constructions of studio space

This section focuses on the contrasting ways in which two key participants, Gary and Dan, orient to two broadly contrasting evaluative centres in narrative accounts of studio interactions during interviews. It argues that Dan, a local commuter student narrates his approach to studio interactions in ways that might be seen to orient towards the notions of conviviality and interdependency oriented to by Joe in briefings and inductions (Chapter 5). Gary's narrative accounts, on the other hand, orient towards the competitive, self-responsible, neoliberal individual that accompanied them.

At the start of our interview, I ask Dan how his first term has been. He describes the process of adjusting from his previous studies to a live drawing project where he was tasked with producing a site survey of a cathedral. When I mention that this was a group project he expands on the group-working aspect of the course in positive terms:

Excerpt 6.1: Interview – Dan

```
1   Steve:  I mean that was another one of those projects
2           where you were working as a group
3   Dan:    yeah sort of thing yeah n erm I guess yeah
4           meeting new people is fun
5           as well just learning how sort of
6           who you get along
7           who don't get along sort of thing (laughs)
8           but it's it's
9   Steve:          y:e:a:h
10  Dan:    it all comes together when you're working as a group
11          sort of erm and I thought that was quite nice
12          erm as a course itself
13          cause I know some courses don't do that
14  Steve:  right (.) it's much more individual
15  Dan:    yeah this is more of a group effort
```

```
16           sort of thing
17           which I feel is quite nice
18           like everyone's part of a group in the studio
19  Steve:   yeah you you mean the whole group
20           like every[body
21  Dan:               [yeah like erm meeting different people in
22           the studio like you've [got
23  Steve:                          [mmm
24  Dan:     a wide connection sort of thing
25           to different people in the studio and
26           like everyone helps each other out and sort of thing
27  Steve:   yeah
28  Dan:        which is quite nice I feel
```

In response to my mention of group work, Dan takes an enthusiastically positive evaluative stance (Jaffe, 2009:5) towards the process, saying 'meeting new people is fun' (line 4). While conceding that he doesn't get along with everyone (line 7), he suggests that ultimately things work out 'it comes together when you're working as a group'(line 10). He again takes a positive evaluative stance on this aspect of the course by contrasting it favourably with others (lines 11-13) and describing it as 'quite nice' (line 11). When I suggest he is saying that other courses are more individual (line 14), he agrees contrasting again with 'the group effort' (line 15) he ascribes to his experience at UniX. Repeating his evaluative stance this time with affective emphasis, he says 'which I feel is quite nice' (line 17). Initially describing everyone as 'part of a group in the studio' (line 18), after my request for clarification (lines 19-20), he describes 'meeting different people in the studio' (line 21) as establishing 'a wide connection' (line 24) and reciprocal support or interdependency at group level where 'everyone helps each other out' (line 26) and repeats his positive affective stance 'which I feel is quite nice (line 28).'

Later in the interview, Dan's positive evaluation of group work and the relations of interdependency it fosters across the studio are further developed. When I suggest he is building networks, he appears reluctant to accept this framing, suggesting a less instrumental motivation:

Excerpt 6.2: Interview - Dan

```
1   Steve:  OK yeah yeah
2           so you've got you're building sort of networks
3   Dan:    yeah sort((hypercorrect)) of yeah but
4   Steve:  y:e:a:h
5   Dan:    I guess that's what university ({hypercorrect 't')) is
6           about sort of thing
7   Steve:  Sure yeah
8   Dan:    You've got to try and (.) be more socialised
9   Steve:  yeah
10  Dan:    with other people
```

Dan initially agrees with my suggestion, responding yeah (line 3), then adds a more careful atypically t-voiced 'sort ((hypercorrect)) of yeah but' before adding 'I guess that's what university is about sort of thing'. When I affirm this (line 4), he reformulates my suggestion that he's building networks to say, 'you've got to try and (.) be more socialised […] with other people' (lines 8-10).

Dan positions himself as primarily motivated by developing relationships with others and enjoying the opportunities the course provides for him to do that by working interdependently so that 'everyone helps each other out' (Excerpt 6.1, line 26). His positionings contrast markedly with those of Gary, whose narrative constructions are of relative dominance over others and hard-working competition. For example, when, as our first interview is drawing to a close, I ask if Gary has anything else he wants to say about his experiences at UniX, he looks out of the window and on seeing Halls of Residence A, says he will talk about that. He makes a distinction between students living at Halls of Residence A, which is just a few metres from the studio and those, like him, living at Halls of Residence B, which is a 20-minute walk from the university:

Excerpt 6.3: Interview – Gary

```
1   Gary:   there's a big fucking competition on
2           (.)
3           people at [Halls of residence A] have
4           seem to have a big advantage
5           cause they can wake up later
6           which means they can work later
7           which means they can work more
8           they lose less time in going to university
9           which means if you're more work-orientated
10          [Halls of residence A] seems like a really good choice
11          (.)
12          but everybody there fucking hates each other
13          so [???] that bad
14  Steve:      [(laughs)
15  Gary:   ((goes on to weigh up the benefits and drawbacks of
16          Halls of each Halls of residence before concluding:))
17  Gary:   but when it comes to actually doing work
18          the advantage is definitely like having the luck to
19          stay in Halls A
```

Gary begins with a heavy emphasis on 'big fucking competition' (line 1). After pausing briefly, perhaps for performative effect, he takes an evaluative stance to position residents of Halls A as having a 'big' competitive 'advantage'(lines 3-4). Emphasising that they 'seem' (line 4) to have this advantage sets up a narrative gap. He goes on to describe a multi-clause chain of causation that constructs the advantage enjoyed by these students as connected to their capacity for engaging in hard-working behaviours and lower sacrifice of time spent on travel (lines 4-6). Halls A are constructed as the most advantageous choice for providing maximal opportunities for the more work-oriented. However, Gary then fills in the gap he opened in his narrative, by contrasting this advantage with the claim 'but everybody there fucking hates each other' (line 12). After weighing up the advantages and disadvantages of

each, he concludes that the advantage lies with those ‘having the luck to stay in Halls A’. That is, in Gary’s ‘self-capitalising’ (Sunyol and Codo, 2020:135) evaluation, the disadvantageous social arrangements at Halls A are a price worth paying for in order to maximise opportunities to engage in harder-working practices.

This orientation towards the studio as competitive is also found in his second interview in which Gary constructs his own and his friends’ social relations in the studio as ‘dominant’ and hard-working by virtue of their presence in the studio.

Excerpt 6.4: Interview – Gary

```
1  Gary:   There are a few other friendship groups
2          but I think ours might be
3          the most dominant one ((laughing slightly))
3          because we’re always in
4  Steve:  mhmm okay
5  Gary:   It sounds weird to say it
6          but we’re we’re right in the centre
7          with quite a mass of us outside
```

In describing social connections in the studio, Gary tentatively takes an evaluative stance towards power relations, positioning his friendship group as ‘the most dominant one’ (line 2) the use of ‘think’ and the modal ‘might’ (line 2) as well as slight laughter (line 3) serve to limit the certainty of the epistemic stance that accompanies a self-evaluation that might be seen to be arrogant. He constructs his group’s dominance as a result of hard-working characteristics exemplified through their constant presence ‘we’re always in’ (line 3). Again, taking a slightly tentative epistemic stance ‘it sounds weird to say it but’ (line 5), he constructs the dominance of his group spatially, as occupying the centre of the studio with ‘quite a mass of us outside (line 7).

The interactional map produced by Gary (Figure 7 below) further illustrates how he constructs his and his group's position in the studio. His own position is marked by a small black circle five desks from the right-hand side on the bottom row of the plan.[17] The yellow lines emanating from his desk show people he communicates regularly with. His own lines of communication are multiple and second only to another member of the group, Charlie. The green circles are allocated to various members of the group to indicate 'their zone in which they frequent.' Gary's 'zone' appears to cover almost the whole studio and is significantly larger than that he attributes to others. In a departure from the instructed task of detailing his own interactions, Gary added to the diagram blue lines related not to him nor his connections, but to two black Nigerian students, who are distinguished in the key (top left) as having a 'friend zone migration' to a 'relax space' in the top right corner of the plan. As such they are constructed in distinction to the 'hard-working' members of Gary's group along lines that evoke Shilliam's hard-working/idle racializing distinctions.

Figure 7. Interactional Map: Gary

[17] Names have been scribbled out to preserve anonymity

The following section argues that Gary's construction of the interactional space also facilitates a fractally recursive (Gal & Irvine, 2019) reproduction of 'orderly independence' central to constructions of racialised and classed distinctions of deserving and undeserving populations (Shilliam, 2018).

6.4 Navigating racially hegemonic discursive space

Having broadly set out the differing orientations towards evaluative centres taken by the two participants, the remainder of this chapter focuses on the discursive practices and interactional regimes through which Gary and Dan develop their relational identities through humour during group work in the studio. It analyses transcripts of recordings from group interactions provided by each participant alongside their narrative accounts. I will argue that despite the distinct interactional regimes and evaluative centres at play in Gary and Dan's interactions, both respond to a *racially hegemonic* centre, generating orders of indexicality that position whiteness as dominant. Additionally, I will suggest that while on the face of it, Gary's data suggests classed positionings and Dan's suggests racialised positionings, close analysis shows how in both cases constructions of race and class are interanimated (Chun, 2019) or co-constituted (Rosa & Flores, 2017) in ways that are fractally recursive (Gal & Irvine, 2019:127) of the articulation of race and class in the broader social order. That is, they reproduce oppositions salient at the level of the broader social order onto relations in the studio.

The analysis begins with Gary's constructions of class as he narrates an account of the dynamics of domination in group work and studio interactions. I then move on to analyse the discursive resources he engages to index 'intelligent non-conformity' in both narrative accounts and studio interactions that centre around joking about an absent other (Boxer and Cortez-Conde, 1997). I argue that the resources Gary employs share many of the qualities of a white 'superstandard' documented by Bucholtz (2001) in her study into multi-ethnic

relations in a US High School *The Whiteness of Nerds*. Gary's negotiation of his white subject position is then contrasted with analysis of Dan's group-work interactions. In these interactions, the humour takes the form of teasing to develop in-group relational identities centres around discursive practices indexical of multi-ethnic working-class positionings (Pichler, 2006:237). I will argue that different indexical orders and discursive practices are locally valid and recognizable to each participant. While analysis of the first interaction draws attention to the extreme whiteness indexed by the group he constructs as 'dominant', analysis of the second, alongside Dan's narrative accounts, highlights orientation to white dominance in the studio through a convivial navigation of racism that places the burden of accommodation on students of colour.

6.4.1 Aligning with dominance in a racialised order of class relations

Uniquely among the participants interviewed, Gary positioned himself within the studio environment by analogy with a class system in which he occupied a dominant position. He constructed this analogy in his first interview on his educational journey and elaborated on it in his second interview when I followed up on this framing:

Excerpt 6.5: Interview – Gary

```
1   Steve:  you said if you look across the groups
2           there's like a class system
3           with people participating in the design process,
4           being active and giving commands
5           but also people get given work to do but do it slower
6   Gary:   yep that came from the technology group
7           the more thoughtful people
8           the others 'not calling them unthoughtful'
9           they would become the grunts
10          because we would think about the design
11          and we'd labour it
```

```
12          and we'd work out the intricacies
13          of like how the environment things
14          the technological things would work
15          cause they were fairly fucking useless
16          like they didn't want to do it
17          or they were practically very bad at architecture
18          probably both
19          so we'd give them a workload to make them useful
20          because we'd given them proper work to do
21          but they'd fucked it up massively
22          so we didn't have time to cover up their mistakes
23          and also their ideas were horrible
24          so we told them to do what they can do
25          which was simple enough
26          and it sounds horrible
27          because we were downgrading them to mere workers
28          not kind of cohort people of our cohort
29          but they became kind of pawns
30          in our race to get things done in time
```

When I refer to Gary's earlier comments, which made a class-based distinction between those carrying out orders and those taking part in the design process and giving orders (lines 1-5), he appeared to immediately recognise the comments and pointed to a particular project they came from (line 6). He affirms and then expands on this, firstly by distinguishing between more thoughtful students (line 7) and 'the others' (line 8) whom he takes care not to label as unthoughtful by contrast before labelling them 'grunts' (lines 8-9). This military slang for disposable infantry or 'cannon fodder' draws on a similar register to that used in his first interview 'giving commands' and perhaps positions the 'thoughtful students' as a kind of officer class giving commands to the grunts. He goes on to explain the active role played by the 'thoughtful' students, positioning himself among them through the repeated use of 'we' (lines10-12). Firstly, he says they would carry out the mental labour of the design 'we would

think about the design', then, perhaps signalling hard work, says 'we'd labour it' before listing the various aspects of the task (lines 10-12). In explaining the reason for this division of labour he takes a strongly-worded negative evaluative stance on 'the grunts' abilities, describing them as 'fairly fucking useless' (line 15), then constructing them as not wanting to do the work (line 16). He oscillates again to suggest an alternative explanation, that they lack ability (line 17), before suggesting they are neither willing nor able (line 18). He describes a situation where the 'more thoughtful' students evaluated the others' work negatively so gave them work of lower importance and difficulty to 'make them useful' (line 19). Gary reflects that 'it sounds horrible because we were downgrading them to be mere workers' (line 27) in this evaluation, to be a worker is to be less significant. 'Mere workers' are then referred to as outside of the cohort 'not kind of cohort people of our cohort' (line 28). They are then again positioned as disposable 'pawns' (line 29) in the 'thoughtful students'' race to get things done.

While Gary's explanation perhaps invokes a register of a kind of performative rhetorical flourish, in which military metaphors explain more mundane realities, his attempt to make sense of his subject position in the studio indexes ideologies that place him in a position of dominance from which those dominated need to be managed due to their lack of ability or hard-working tendencies. Not capable of making their own decisions, their labour is managed for them. Those found to be undeserving and therefore disposable are cast outside of the cohort. He sees this as happening across the groups (line 1) in ways that evoke the notion of 'little platoons' of 'paternalistic hierarchies' (Shilliam, 2018:11). Without the inculcation of deserving characteristics through the hierarchal arrangement of 'little platoons', such populations are deemed dangerously anarchic (See Chapter 2, Section 2.2 for extended discussion). We will see shortly in relation to Gary's group interactions how such

constructions have informed recent political discourse around breakdowns in order in relation to absent fathers and the figure of the single mother.

The semiotic process by which these ideological axes of differentiation become part of Gary's everyday discursive practice can be explained by applying the concept of *fractal recursivity* (Irvine & Gal, 2019). Chapter 3 detailed how through this process the *principle of contrast,* once established, can be used to establish cascades of differentiation, which can be indexically invoked in specific situations (ibid: 127-130). In this case, the deserving/undeserving distinctions central to the construction of racialised class relations at a national level are invoked as centres to which Gary orients in the studio space. The paternalistic hierarchies of small platoons throughout the studio are constructed as bringing hard-working orderly independence to bear on those who lack it.

It is possible that the class analogy Gary proposed was a response to the focus of the study. However, this account was accompanied by unprompted instances of stylised double voicing using regionally-marked accents suggesting an equation of lower-class status with a lack of ability or independence. In one example, while working on a group task, Gary is approached by a female student (FS) who is asking to be brought up to speed on the project:

Excerpt 6.6: Studio Interaction - Gary

```
1  FS:    Don't ask me anything
2         cause 'I don't know'
3         ((Exaggerated southern regional accent
4         – slowly drawn out)) ((laughs))
5  Gary:  right OK
```

In this short excerpt, the use of a regional accent marked as working-class against a middle-class standard (Snell, 2010) indexes an 'already constituted of semiotic value' (Silverstein, 2003:201) that through the participant's judgment of appropriateness to context constitutes a

'sociocultural reality' for these interactants. The exaggeratedly drawn-out production of the phrase 'I don't know' (line 2) and laughter (line 4) cues the remark as a joke that aligns working-class status with slowness and a lack of knowledge, intelligence and independence. There was further evidence of such ideological positionings in Gary's second interview during which he expressed his annoyance with students he considered to be 'fairly fucking useless'. The following account illustrates how these negative evaluative stances articulate with speech that indexes working-class positioning:

Excerpt 6.7: Interview – Gary

```
1   Gary:  it really does really annoy you
2          because if you're working until 11 or 1 o'clock in the
3          morning
4          and you're just always working
5          and you're pulling all-nighters to get this done
6          before a review
7          and somebody walks in and like
8          'oh can I please have your page?
9          you didn't say I should come in.'
10         ((stylised cockney/South-East accent + whiny voice))
11         I'm going to talk to Joe about it
12         no
13         you can go away
```

Gary expresses strong annoyance (line 1) before repeatedly positioning himself as hard-working (lines 2-5), which sets up a contrast with another student who is implied to be a fellow group member. He uses 'double voicing' (Bakhtin, in Baxter, 2014:23) to report the student's request to have access to Gary's work (line 7) and their protestations that 'you didn't say I should come in' (line 9). The statement 'you didn't say I should come in' positions the student as lacking orderly independence and as relying on Gary. The double-voicing is stylised by adopting a non-standardised accent indexical of working-class

positioning. In this case, I am the interactant with whom Gary assumes a shared orientation to an 'already constituted framework of semiotic value' (Silverstein, 2003:194). Without stylisation, the student is narrated as suggesting they will complain to Joe if their request is not met. Gary's response no you can go away' (lines 12-13) casts the student outside of the group, positioning him as not displaying the orderly independent hard-working characteristics required of it in a fractally recursive reproduction of deserving/undeserving distinctions described above.

We can see in both interactional accounts how the principle of contrast established in Gary's narrative account of studio relations as operating on the basis of class structures relies on an indexical relationship that invokes language ideologies surrounding working-class speakers and their characteristics. However, in orienting to a racially hegemonic centre, Gary also positions himself according to indexicalities of whiteness. The analysis that follows details these orientations.

6.4.2 Indexing whiteness

At the start of this chapter, it was argued that the studio space can be characterised by convivial interaction between its socioculturally diverse occupants. The analysis provided in the previous section illustrated how, at a propositional level, Gary positions himself as part of a dominant group within the studio. To understand how this positioning is realised discursively in the context of the studio, attention will now turn to the discursive resources employed to construct this position in the course of interaction. It will be argued that these resources, employed by Gary in the course of our narrative interviews and in studio interactions, share many of the qualities of those found by Bucholtz (2001) in her study into multi-ethnic relations in a US High School where the dominant youth culture draws on black

cultural resources. Bucholtz documents the discursive practices of a group of white students, who adopt a 'nerdy' identity through the use of language as a stylistic resource for the construction of an intelligent and eccentric non-conformist identity (Bucholtz, 2001: 87; Bucholtz, 2011:139). This identity was achieved through the use of a 'superstandard' and was accompanied by a 'zany brand of humour' (Bucholtz, 2011:139). Bucholtz argues that in this context the superstandard was indexical of 'extreme whiteness' (See Section 3.2.6 for extended discussion).

Features of the superstandard that apply to the resources employed by Gary include a 'precisely enunciated speech style, excessive formality, use of language 'evoking the registers of scholarship and science' (Bucholtz, 2001:91) and a 'stance of scientific objectivity' (Bucholtz, 2001:93). As Bucholtz (2001) points out, this usage creates an ideological contrast with the colloquial standard with even slight deviations from the standard marked as distinctive and noticeable. In Gary's usage the superstandard articulates with notably direct and harsh evaluative stances towards others, as we have seen in his account of fellow students as 'fairly fucking useless.' This stance also articulates with discourses of opposition to prevailing notions of political correctness that could be found in British and Global media at the time and have been engaged by journalists and politicians since in what are constructed as 'anti-woke culture wars' (Cammaerts, 2022). I will argue that Gary's discursive practices position him as a non-conformist across two different scales. Firstly, they index an emergent 'anti-woke' public discourse propagated in the UK by politicians, and right-wing media and an anti-democratic extreme right in which notions of civility and incivility are contested (Cammaerts, 2022) (cf. Bucholtz, 2019 for a US based account). This discourse was emergent at the time of the study and has become more mainstream since. Secondly, and relatedly, his studio interactions with friends can be seen to adhere strongly to a racially hegemonic centre, through a discursive regime in which the loud and apparently

unrestrained mocking of marginalised populations coupled with the use of a 'superstandard' might be seen as non-conformist in the polycentric context of a studio characterised by sociocultural diversity.

As illustrated above, Gary positions himself in distinction to many of his fellow students using hard-working/lazy dichotomies in narrative accounts. In the following excerpt, Gary distinguishes himself from fellow students on grounds of confidence and eccentricity. He also indexes intelligence and non-conformism through mobilising discursive resources associated with formal academic register alongside derogatory evaluations of others.

Excerpt 6.8: Interview – Gary

```
1   Gary:   It's basically the point of your study
2           you treat people differently upon your first interaction
3           unless you're very (2.0) confident eccentric I guess
4   Steve:  Right
5   Gary:   then you'll treat them how you are
6           but like people treat each other very differently
7           they did at the beginning too
8           like each person has their own little façade on
9           to appear better than they actually are
10          and it kind of all falls apart after a while
11          and people start not being the fun new kind of people
12          who you meet there
13          but now my friends are kind of scattered
14  Steve:  Right
15  Gary:   like which kind of I guess means
16          I've found people that I like
17          and it's kind of (1.0) iridescent ((Hypercorrect))
18          (1.0)
19          that's not the right word
20          irrelevant
21          that's the word I'm looking for((laughter))
22          irrelevant of where they are
```

Gary begins by taking a 'researcherly analytic stance' similar to that found by Bucholtz (2001:93) in her analysis of the white identity practices of 'nerds'. Whilst I had emphasised to all participants that this was research *with* them and not *on* them, Gary was the only participant who explicitly (re)defined the research aims in his interview (line 1). Similarly, he was alone in suggesting to me alternative methods by which the research might be undertaken at the end of his interview. This understanding of our interaction as 'a shared intellectual enterprise' and demonstration of his 'ability to engage in the scientific discourse of research' is in common with the practices observed in Bucholtz' (2001:93) study. In line 2, Gary's choice of the excessively formal preposition 'upon' over 'on' draws on academic registers that might be seen to index intelligence. Perhaps displaying familiarity with architectural discourse, the belittling phrase 'their own little façade' (line 8), rather than more colloquial and/or neutral phrasings, such as 'putting on a front', is used to describe the misleading first impressions he attributes to people he meets at university. Gary makes a distinction between the approach adopted by these people and that of 'confident eccentric' (line 3) people. By implication, Gary positions himself as the confident eccentric type through insider knowledge of the subject position, 'then you'll treat them how you are' (line 5). That is, Gary positions himself as not conforming to the social norms of others by virtue of his confidence and eccentricity, echoing the 'eccentric, non-conformity' prized by the 'nerds' in Bucholtz' (2011:139) study. In Gary's construction, the façade erected by the less confident or eccentric students 'kind of ALL falls apart after a while' (line 10), revealing them not to be 'fun new kind of people' (line 11). In describing his friends as 'kind of scattered' (line 13), Gary begins to describe their location as 'iridescent' (line 17). The hypercorrect voicing of 't' here corresponds to the 'precisely enunciated speech style' adopted by Bucholtz's (2001:92) nerds. Gary goes on to self-correct his use of 'iridescent' with a non-standard prepositional pairing 'irrelevant of' (line 22). It seems here that the word Gary was searching for was

'irrespective'. This suggests Gary was operating at the limits of his lexical/grammatical range. This can also be seen in Gary's irregular use of 'stricken' in the extract below where he appears to have been searching for 'conflicted' or similar:

Excerpt 6.9: Interview – Gary

```
Going to A'levels I decided to take a more mathematical route. I
saw. I was stricken between doing Art, Product Design, Architecture
and Maths ((emphasis added))
```

Rather than adopting a more colloquial standard phrasing, such as 'I couldn't decide what subjects to take…', Gary opts to use a less common lexical item resulting in a non-standard use that suggests that he is operating beyond his lexical range. In these examples, Gary appears to be stretching for a linguistic superstandard (Bucholtz, 2001:88) that indexes intelligence through racially hegemonic language ideologies that associate the use of standardized less common lexical items with intelligence (Cushing, 2022).

Having considered Gary's use of a superstandard to index intelligence, the analysis that follows focuses on the aspects of his discursive practices that index non-conformity. When describing the people he interacts with in the studio, he defines them by reference to their hard work, diligence, or humour. He refers to his discussions with Charlie, a white male student whose discursive practices position him as middle-class (See Section 6.4.3), and who was identified as the most connected student in the group in Gary's interactional map. In relation to these discussions, he says:

Excerpt 6.10: Interview – Gary

```
1  when I'm bored
2  I'll walk up to him
3  and do some autistic shit
4  we'll look at Instagram or mock people
```

```
5  kind of friendly humour
6  yeah just a little bit crazy
```

Gary's use of the phrase 'do some autistic shit' (line 3) positions him outside of prevailing norms of acceptability surrounding disability and learning differences as well as describing his and Charlie's (identified earlier as the member of Gary's group with the highest number of lines of connection) behaviour as non-conformist in that it is outside of behavioural norms. He follows up this positioning with examples including looking at Instagram or mocking people (line 4), which he constructs as 'kind of friendly humour' (line 5) before evaluating it as 'just a little bit crazy'. By positioning his discursive practices as 'autistic' and 'crazy', Gary constructs them as non-conformist to the extent that they are outside of prevailing norms and corresponds to the 'zany brand of humour' noted by Bucholtz (2011:139). The analysis in Chapter 7 will detail how Jasmine also refers to a 'group of boys' whose jokes are 'like a bit crazy' and who affect the dynamic of the studio in ways that make her feel excluded. She names Gary as one of them whom she can speak to on an individual level but not when they are all joking together.

In the interactional data collected by Gary, there are episodes of group joking that appear to correspond to the mocking 'crazy jokes' identified by Jasmine. In these interactions, intelligence is often indexed by the use of excessively formal or more 'scientific' academic register (as identified by Bucholtz, 2001:91) and is used to co-construct discriminatory jokes about absent marginalised and stigmatised others such as people with disabilities, refugees, single mothers, Muslims or Jews indexing an emergent 'anti-woke' discourse (Cammaert, 2022). These jokes are often interwoven with talk around the academic task at hand, constituting a localised interactional regime corresponding to the situational humour that Boxer & Coretz-Conde (2001) define as 'joking about absent others' to provide opportunities for bonding. According to Boxer & Cortez-Conde (1997:283), in-group bonds are developed

by making jokes about a common outgroup. Commonality is provided by 'wordplay' and/or poking fun at 'others' to some laughable characteristic that makes *them* different from *us*.

Despite the possibility of causing offense, the jokes are produced at a volume audible to others in the busy studio, meaning that the absence of the targeted 'others' from earshot can not be guaranteed. The example below comes from an exercise in which students were asked to design a dining space for a number of differently socially located guests, for example, a fisherman, a surgeon, and a refugee. This exercise provided a rich source of humour for the group. The following excerpt is taken from a conversation initiated by Joshua, a white student, who is passing and joins the group. Joshua has suggested the exercise is stupid, not worth doing, and is about a political standpoint. In response, Gary says it is about developing stereotypes. The audio suggests at least four participants including Joshua, who is present but not participating verbally during this excerpt.

Excerpt 6.11: Studio Interaction – Gary

Participants:
Gary: Male, White, British
Henry: Male, White, Canadian
Joshua: Male, White British (present but not participating verbally during this excerpt)

```
1   Gary:     the young single paren-ohhh
2             did you get the single parent?
3   Henry:    huh
4   Gary:     is one of yours a single parent
4   Henry:    yeah ((laughing))
5   Gary:     nice
6   Henry:    that's what I was saying
7   Gary:     have you drawn the baby as well? ((laughs))
8   Henry:    it's the other half of the single-parent
9   Gary:     ahhhh the dad that ran away ((laughing))
```

10	Henry:	why is it the dad? could have been the mom
11		((stylised))
12	Gary:	because very typically
13		and this is an exercise about stereotyping
14		and I would be stereotyping
15		the mother usually decides to keep the child
16		because of the motherly bond
17		and the father realises he just fucked up
18		so he just jogs on (1.0)
19		usually <u>before</u> the birth
20		((muted laughter))
21		((deep sigh))
22		(4.0)
23		there's one more but it's glued to the table
24		((return to work frame))
25		((Some discussion of drawings – gentle mockery))
26		I like this
27		this is cool
28		is this the (???)
29	Henry:	it's the single parent(???) alone
30	Gary:	she's just crying cause she's got no husband
31	Henry:	what if she's just like complaining
32	Unknown:	What if the crying is very loud though
33	Henry:	What if the crying overwhelms the entire table
34		((while laughing accompanied by group laughter ad
35		high pitch laughter from one student in particular))

When it becomes apparent that Henry is designing for a character defined as a single parent, Gary instigates a play frame by repeating the reference to a single parent with an exaggerated 'ohhh' (line 1). He asks for confirmation that this is Henry's character and after receiving Henry's confirmation, which is accompanied by laughter, replies 'nice,' (line 5) suggesting that this is in some way worthy of comment. After Henry explains that this was what he was talking about, Gary asks whether he has drawn the baby, cueing his question as a tease/joke with laughter. Henry's reply that 'it's the other half of the single parent' (line 8) leads Gary to

make an exaggerated sign of recognition 'ahhh (line 9).' He then flips the parent/child (other-half) reference in Henry's statement to mum/dad parental relations 'the dad that ran away ((laughing))' (line 9). Gary's joke involves an assumption that the reason for a single parental relationship is that the dad has run away. Henry's stylised tease, 'why is it the dad? could have been the mom?' (line 10) questions Gary's assumption that the single parent was the mum and introduces a discourse that questions gendered assumptions. Gary's multi-clause response adopts a more formal academic almost legalistic register. It begins with a hedge 'because very typically' (line 11), followed by two clauses of caveats referring to his previous statements on stereotyping (lines 13 & 14) as if to erect a pre-emptive defence against accusations of holding the views he is about to utter. The main clause is delivered in formal register 'the mother usually decides to keep the child' (line 15), and uses 'the mother' rather than 'mums' and the baby becomes the 'child'. The use of nominalisation in identifying the cause in 'the motherly bond' (line 15) continues the academic register, further 'evoking the registers of scholarship and science' and stance of scientific objectivity noted by Bucholtz (2001:91/93) in her study of 'white nerds'. Switching sharply to a more colloquial register, Gary describes the actions of the father who 'realises he just fucked up so he just jogs on (1.0)' (line 18). The more casual language corresponds to the casual attitude attributed to the father. The abrupt change in register also appears to distance Gary from the caution indexed by the heavily hedged and caveated position constructed at the start of the statement making the statements more directly attributable to him. After a pause, Gary adds 'usually <u>before</u> the birth' (line 18). As the specificity of the account increases, it becomes increasingly less legible as an objective observation of a social stereotype and more attributable to Gary's own beliefs. Henry responds with muted laughter (line 20), which seems notably low-key given the effort with which Gary has invested and the intensifying last statement 'usually <u>before</u> the birth.' The muted laughter is followed by a deep sigh from Gary

and a four-second pause before breaking frame and returning to task (line 22). Some gentle mockery continues around the drawings Gary has produced before another student joins and asks what Henry's drawing is. When he replies that 'it's the single parent (???) alone' (line 29), Gary returns to the topic of the single parent as the target of the joke, saying 'she's just crying cause she's got no husband' (line 30). Henry joins in to say what if she's just complaining (line 31). Another student adds 'what if she's crying very loud though' (line 32) to which Henry laughingly says 'what if the crying overwhelms the entire table' (line 33). The choice 'overwhelm' and 'entire' here invests his contribution with a 'formal, literate tone' corresponding to that observed by Bucholtz (2001:93). This is met with some high-pitched laughter from another group member. Using these superstandard resources, the group have co-constructed an image of the single mother as a helpless crying wreck whose behaviour threatens to overwhelm the entire table. This appears to develop relational bonding between them. They each contribute their own additions to the joke, which affirms the shared schema that informs the 'laughable characteristics' they attribute to her and the common outgroup that they distinguish themselves from in order to create the 'in-group' (Boxer & Cortez, 1997:283).

As Lytra (2017:168) highlights, such playful talk is 'embedded in broader social, historical, political and ideological contexts and discourses and can be mobilised to contest but also to reproduce dominant linguistic hierarchies and social stratification.' Chapter 2 (Section 2.2) detailed how the figure of the single mother has been a stigmatised symbol of working-class amorality (Skeggs (2005:965) associated with family breakdown and the 'blackening' of the working class (Shilliam, 2018:125-30).

Shilliam quotes a speech by British Prime Minister, David Cameron in 2011 in the aftermath of uprisings across England following the police shooting of an unarmed black man in Tottenham. The speech positions 'broken families' as the cause of the uprisings:

> *Irresponsibility. Selfishness. Behaving as if your choices have no consequences. Children without fathers. Schools without discipline. Reward without effort. Crime without punishment. Rights without responsibilities. Communities without control.* (North, 2011, 818, in Shilliam, 2018:131)

Cameron's concern with the absence of patriarchal hierarchy and its effects on maintaining order at different levels of social structure echoes orderly/disorderly racializing distinctions relating to the maintenance of the 'English genus' and is rooted in Burke's notion of 'little platoons' to maintain national order in the face of revolution (discussed in Chapter 2, Section 2.2). The analysis presented earlier in this chapter illustrated how Gary's narrative of studio relations can be seen as indexically invoking orderly/disorderly distinctions of these 'little platoons' to position himself in the studio. In the current instance, ideologies of national order and the family are invoked in Gary's use of situational humour. This is exemplified in his joking about absent others to develop an 'in-group' in distinction to a common outgroup (Boxer and Cortez-Conde (1997:283) using the figure of the single mother and the reckless irresponsible father who 'jogs on' after realising 'he just fucked up' (lines 16-17). Similarly, the concern for motherhood as a source of national degeneration can be seen to be ideologically reproduced through Henry's depiction of the crying of the helpless single mother overwhelming the entire table (line 32). The jokes make ideological appeals to a fractally recursive (Gal and Irvine, 2019:127) principle of contrast between a recklessly irresponsible *them* and an orderly independent *us.* Their effect is to activate a shared ideological schema that positions the 'dominant in-group' as *us* in ideological distinction to the disorderly, helpless single mother and irresponsible husband as *them* (Boxer and Cortez-

Conde, 1997:283) and hence as orderly independent hard-working individuals. This distinction has been shown by Shilliam (2019) to have been central to the deserving/undeserving distinctions that maintain racialised class hierarchies in Britain. In this way, these distinctions provide a racially hegemonic evaluative centre from which indexicalities surrounding the single mother are generated. The bonding of the group relies on the indexical properties of the figure of the single mother to position themselves in a superior position through a hierarchical order of indexicality. In the local context, the loud use of superstandard in the multi-ethnic setting contrasts with both the standard and non-standard usage that surrounds it, indexing what Bucholtz refers to as an 'extreme whiteness' by virtue of its markedness in relation to the standard.

While the figure of the single mother is the target of the jokes, the discourses of social inclusion that inform the task on which the students are working are also subverted through the adoption of an emergent anti-woke discourse. As noted earlier, the jokes about the absent other would take a range of marginalised or stigmatised 'others' as their target. The example below comes from a one-to-one discussion with a white female student, Amy, in the studio in which Muslims are the joked about absent other:

Excerpt 6.12: Studio Interaction - Gary

```
1   Amy:   I want to die ((quietly – moaning voice))
2   Gary:  you know there's a religion for that
3   Amy:   what?
4   Gary:  there's a religion for that
5          (2.0)
6           Islam ((whispered))
7   Amy:   that's really bad
8          (2.0)
9   Gary:  oh shit I'm wearing a mic ((as if surprised - laughs))
10  Amy:   you can wipe it
```

```
11         ((both laugh))
12  Gary:  I guess that's karma ((laughing))
```

When Amy appears to moan that she's tired, saying 'I want to die' (line 1), Gary makes an open-ended statement connecting this with a religion (line 2). Amy's response suggests she is confused by this (line 3), so Gary repeats his initial statement and after 2 seconds without a response, whispers 'Islam' (line 6). Amy's evaluation of the statement as really bad (line 7) is followed by another two-second silence, before Gary's apparent realisation that he is audio-recording. Amy suggests he can wipe the recording (line 10) and laughter ensues before Gary laughingly suggests the negative consequences of the recording being heard are deserved (line 12). Gary's unprompted remarks recycle orders of indexicality operating at a greater sociolinguistic scale in racist populist public discourse circulating around the time and exemplified by UKIP MEP, Gerard Batten during the 2017 election campaign in which he described Islam as a 'death cult (Guardian, 2017).' Despite Gary's apparent alarm at realising he was being recorded, it was clear to him that he was under no obligation to share the data he collected with me and nonetheless did so. In fact, there were a number of occasions in the data collected by Gary when he apparently realised he was recording comments that were offensive and shared them. This suggests that Gary felt relatively unconstrained in making such racist comments while recording.

Analysis of Gary's discursive practices has illustrated how he positions himself in the studio as dominant and as a competitive, hard-working, intelligent non-conformist. It has found that the ideologies upon which these positionings rely articulate with specific histories of race and class that position whiteness as dominant in a racialised order of class relations. This constitutes a *racially hegemonic evaluative centre* from which the stratified orders of indexicality are generated (Blommaert, 2007:119). The crazy jokes about absent others rely

on the existence of such orders, making them pertinent to the everyday positionings and relational identities in the studio. Gary as a middle-class, white student orients to this centre to construct himself as a student deserving of success within such an order. However, centres in the studio are multiple. The following section analyses an interaction in which racist positioning was used, but Gary's participation was notable for its absence. It is suggested that one reason for this might be the operation of distinct interactional regimes and competing evaluative centres across the two groups.

6.4.3 Convivial resistance and reproduction of racial hegemony

While the participants in the 'crazy jokes' analysed above were from the same white ethnic group, Gary began collecting data while working as part of a multi-ethnic group. The other students in the group were Pritti, John and Dan. Pritti was an international student of South Asian heritage from Singapore who was rarely present in the studio. The other two students both commuted to the university from nearby towns: John, a black student[18] and Dan a student of Chinese heritage. The communicative repertoires engaged by both John and Dan contained features of Contemporary Urban Vernacular (CUV hereafter) (Rampton, 2015) indexing multi-ethnic working-class social positionings.

In respect of John, these features are evident in the short excerpt below taken from self-recorded audio during studio interactions:

Excerpt 6.13: Studio interaction - John

Does anybody have any like / pho**t**os of **th**e cathedral yeah /(yawn)
/fəʊ**ʔ**əʊZ əv **d**i: kə**t**i:drʌl jeə/
(2.0)
/coz when I went to pu**t** tha**t** thing up **th**ere/
/kɒz wen æ wen**ʔ** tə pʊ**ʔ** ðæ**ʔ** θIŋ ʌp **d**eə/

[18] As John left the course before phase 3 of data collection, he did not take part in an interview and I was unable to establish his ethnic heritage

The highlighted features taken from Excerpt 6.16 in Dan’s contribution below illustrate these features in his repertoire:

Excerpt 6.14: Interview – Dan

12 I might have a few like words sor**t** of **th**ing
/sʊə**ʔ** ə **f**Iŋ/
13 some people might call me some names
14 but erm (1.0) I guess that’s wha**t** i**t** is **innit**
/wɒ**ʔ** I**ʔ** IZ **InIʔ**/

While John left the course after the first term, both Dan and Gary became key participants in the study.

The group occupied a desk on the back row of the studio next to a set of drawers accessed by all students for things such as paper supplies. They sat alongside another group consisting of white male commuter students from nearby towns. The interactions analysed here involve two such students, Charlie and Tony. There was a lot of across-the-desk joking between the two all-male groups that I characterised in my field notes (participant observations in the studio) as a ‘lads at the back of the class’ style of humour. Much of the subject matter centred around racialised positionings with frequent reference to the recordings being undertaken. The humour took the form of one-sided racialised teasing with Dan and John regularly the targets. In these interactions, Charlie mobilises a repertoire that is very slightly regionally accented and indexical of racially unmarked (white) middle-class status by virtue of its closeness to standardised lexical and grammatical forms and is occasionally hypercorrect in social interaction (see line 51, Excerpt 6.15), whereas Tony used non-standardised forms such as ‘aint’ to replace negative present simple use of verb ‘be’ (line, 50, Excerpt 6.15) and negative first person ‘do’ replacing negative third person ‘do’ in ‘John don’t speak’ (noted in surrounding talk) which are common to the local vernacular, which is close to cockney, and

are also shared with Contemporary Urban Vernacular (Rampton, 2015). Combined with his use of terms of address such as 'bro'(line 46, Excerpt 6.15), and 'man' (lines 38 and 39, Excerpt 6.15), these are indexical of multi-ethnic working-class positioning.

I argue that the exchanges between the students exist within a locally recognisable indexical order and an interactional regime that might be described as convivially reproducing race. They illustrate, at an interactional level, racism *within* conviviality in multicultural settings noted by Back & Sinha (2016) as part of the paradoxical co-existence of racism and urban multiculture (Back & Sinha, 2016:518). The analysis below provides an account of this interactional regime of conviviality through teasing as a form of jocular mockery. It draws attention to the discursive practices at play and argues that they simultaneously orient to an evaluative centre characterised by *conviviality* and *racially hegemonic perceptions*. The following excerpt is taken from a stretch of interaction in which Dan is the target of racialised teasing. In the interaction preceding the excerpt, Dan is asked for the time. Some teasing about Dan's ability to tell the time follows and he is asked by Charlie if he can tell the time. There are occasional interventions from a passing student identified in the transcript as PS.

Excerpt 6.15: Studio Interaction – Dan

Participants:
Tony: Male, British, White (Local Commuter Student)
Charlie: Male, British, White (Local Commuter Student)
Dan: Male, British, Chinese heritage (Local Commuter Student)
John: Male, British, Black (Local Commuter Student)
P.S: Unknown passing student

```
1   Tony:       Can you tell the time?
2   Dan:        ((laughs)) what?((high pitch))
3               What sort of question is that?
```

```
4   Tony:       Can you tell the time? ((quickly as if to say it's
5               a serious question/insistent tone))
6               (1.0)
7   Dan:        Can you no[t tell?
8   Charlie:              [no you can't
9   Dan:        I can what you talking about? ((sounds very
10              slightly aggravated/upset))
11  Tony:       I can what you talking about
12              ((mimics using slower softer tone of voice))
13  Dan:        I can man
14              ((in slower softer tone of previous mimic))
15  Dan:        why you bully me? Why you bully me?
16  Charlie:    when it's 12 at night yeah
17              is it AM or PM?
18  Dan:        huh?
19  Charlie:    if it's 12 at night is it AM or PM? ((louder))
20  Dan:        AM (1.0) WHAT? ((laughing))
21  Charlie:    I was expecting you to get that wrong-
22  PS          wait what? ((American))
23  Charlie:    he's like whaaat? ((high pitch extended))
24  PS          what t:h:e  ((stylised US accent))
```

Dan first queries the validity of Charlie's absurd question (line 2). After a pause, he responds to Tony's insistence by directing it back to him (line 7) but is interrupted by Charlie's intervention (line 8), which suggests he has answered in the affirmative. At this third time the tease is put to him, he signals slight aggravation or annoyance with a change of tone, contradicting Charlie's claim that he can't tell the time and questioning again what he is talking about (line 9/10). This is followed by Tony's mocking repetition (line 11), which mimics the more emotional tone and delivers the utterance more slowly. Rather than challenging again, Dan responds by adopting the same tone, saying 'I can man' (line 13). This perhaps suggests a mocking attitude towards the sensitivity which is attributed to his previous utterance by Tony's tease. He extends this mockery of sensitivity by adopting the

position of a bullied child through repeatedly asking 'why you bully me?' (line 15) in childlike syntax. He is interrupted again by Charlie, who asks a question about time to test Dan's time-telling ability (line 16). Dan asks Charlie to repeat the question (line 19). When he does, Dan answers correctly without hesitation before questioning and laughing (line 20). Charlie responds to Dan, saying he was expecting him to get that wrong (line 21). There is some repetition of Dan's questioning and incredulous tone (line 17) and Charlie then reports the questioning element of Dan's response to the audience '*he's like <u>whaaat</u>?'*. Another student, who appears to have overheard, adds 'what the…?' in a stylised US accent. The following excerpt details how the teasing develops a racialised dimension:

Excerpt 6.15 (Continued): Studio Interaction – Dan

```
24  Dan:      What sort of question was that
25            ((stylised US accent follows previous turn))
26  Charlie:  it's a legit question /lədʒɪʔ/
27  Dan:      le-git-i-mate /lə-dʒɪʔ-məʔ/
28  Tony:     are you a legit /lədʒɪʔ/
29            (1.0)
30  Dan:      yeah
31  Tony:     are you a legit person?
32            (3.0)
33  Tony:     one square ((returns to task talk))
34            (2.0)
35  Charlie:  Dan when does your visa run out?
36  Dan:      laughing loudly ((High pitch)) Jeeez
37            ((others laughing too))
38  Tony:     that was a low blow man
39  Dan:      that was out of the (.) blue man
40            ((group laughter))
41  Tony:     that got John yeah  ((John's mic records laughter at
42            this point – the 'boys' had been commenting on how he
43            had been remaining straight-faced until this point))
44            ((laughter Dan and rest of group – loud laughter –
45            high pitch))
```

46	Tony:	that got him good bro
47		((laughter uncontrolled from Dan))
48	Charlie:	that was well too far ((inaudible))
49	Dan:	nah it’s not alright but it’s alright
50	Tony:	nah that aint alright
51	Charlie:	that isn’t alright I said it and I know very much
52		it’s not right ((hypercorrect))
53	Dan:	yeah man I’m going to go home and cry now
54	Charlie:	sorry?
55	Dan:	I’m going to go home and cry
56		you ain’t my friend no more Charlie ((laughs))
57	Charlie:	Dan please don’t
58		((Laughs))
59		(3.0)
60	Dan:	((laughs)) Don’t worry man I’ve conditioned myself to
61		take these racial abuse
62	Tony:	Wooaaahhh
63	Charlie:	Do you reckon you can get kicked out of UniX
64		for being recorded?

At the start of the excerpt, Dan adopts a similar US English stylisation to the previous turn, asking ‘what sort of question was that?’ (line 24). Charlie defends his question, calling it ‘legit’ with a marked glottal stop (line 26). Perhaps drawing attention to the uncharacteristic use by Charlie, Dan responds with the full word ‘leg-it-i-mate’ broken into its component syllables and ending the second and last syllables with a glottal stop (line 27). Tony asks are you a legit (line 28) but does not finish his sentence. When Dan says ‘yeah’ (line 30), he completes the sentence asking are you a legit person? A 3-second silence (line 32) follows when Dan doesn’t answer. Tony then briefly breaks frame to return to talk about the task as if thinking aloud and says ‘one square’ (line 33). After a further 2-second pause, Charlie asks, ‘Dan when does your visa run out?’ (line 35) indexing an ethno-nationalist discourse that would exclude Dan from Britishness by virtue of his Chinese ethnic heritage. The presence of

such a discourse in British society and the casual nature of the delivery provides the necessary tension and uncertainty around the teasing frame (Schiefflin,1986:167, in Boxer & Cortez-Conde, 1997:280). Dan laughs loudly at a high pitch, suggesting shock and follows with an extended, 'Jeeeez' (short for Jesus) (line 36). Tony takes an evaluative stance towards Charlie's remark, saying 'that was a low blow man' (line 38), thus suggesting that this falls outside of the rules of engagement under which the teasing frame operates. Dan adds 'that was out of the blue man' (line 39), suggesting that the escalation to racialised tease caught him by surprise. Group laughter ensues before Tony points out that John, who had previously been noted as remaining straight-faced in the face of the teasing, was also laughing (lines – 41-45). Loud laughter throughout the group follows and Tony adds 'that got him good bro.' (line 46). This is met with loud and relatively uncontrolled laughter from Dan (line 47). Charlie aligns with Tony's earlier evaluation of the tease as a 'low blow' (31) by saying 'that was well too far' (line 39) but Dan suggests it is acceptable, replying 'nah it's not alright but it's alright' (line 49), legitimating Charlie's comments and suggesting that he distinguishes the playful nip, which is 'alright', from the 'bite' it denotes (Boxer and Cortez-Conder, 1997:279), which is not alright. Tony takes an evaluative stance to disagree by saying 'nah that ain't alright' and Charlie again aligns with Tony's evaluation, this time by repeating it but reformulating into standardised grammatical form 'that isn't alright' (line 51). Charlie takes an epistemic stance that positions the speaker's evaluations as authoritative, 'I said it and I know very much it's not right' ((hypercorrect)). The emphasis on very much and not serve to strengthen the severity of the (self)evaluation. In Boxer & Cortez-Conde's (2001:279) terms, these responses are necessary in order to distance the playful nip from the bite which it denotes. Dan continues the tease by again adopting the position of the sensitive victim and indexes a childlike orientation 'yeah man I'm going to go home and cry now' (line 53). When Charlie asks him to repeat (line 55), he repeats 'I'm going to go home and cry'

(line 55), and further develops the childlike positioning by adding ‘you ain’t my friend no more Charlie’ (line 56)*,* while cueing this as a joke with laughter. Charlie plays along, saying ‘Dan please don’t’ (line 57). Dan responds with laughter and after a three-second pause laughs again then takes a more formalised, institutionalised framing towards the role of victim, saying: ‘don’t worry man I’ve conditioned myself to take these kind of racial abuse’ (line 60). Tony plays along by drawing attention to this framing with an apparently jocular suggestion of a need for caution (line 62). Charlie follows up by asking about the institutional consequences of the interaction being recorded (lines 63-64). Some discussion and further teasing around this point ensues.

The non-standard linguistic resources and stances of toughness employed are indexical of multi-ethnic working-class status (Pichler, 2006:237). While the resources employed by Charlie share features of the intelligent, non-conformist super-standard employed by the dominant group, he appears to align with Tony’s evaluative stances. Conviviality is achieved through the one-sided, white-dominant, rough-and-tumble negotiation of racially-marked status in white space. The episode shows teasing used as a resource for racial positioning and negotiation of acceptable boundaries within the group's relational identity development. The tease relies on the fact that Dan’s Chinese heritage is racially marked in this setting and this provides the bite through a racist ethno-nationalist positioning of him as outside of British nationality and whiteness. Dan’s response to teasing frequently involves him performing exaggerated childlike vulnerability or sensitivity. The evaluative centre for the tease might be considered to be a tough working-class multi-ethnic conviviality comparable to that found in other sociolinguistic studies in England (Harris & Rampton, 2009; Hewitt, 1986; Rampton, 2005), the boundaries of this centre are policed here by Tony in his evaluations of Charlie’s contributions as ‘below the belt’ and his rejection of Dan’s acceptance of them in his judgment that ‘nah that ain’t alright’.

The recording was taken just two months after the students began the course. Dan explained in his first interview that he had met the other commuter students on the first day and had struck up a relationship with them. However, it became clear during Dan's interview that he was no stranger to the discursive regime of racialised teasing that took place in the studio. As our interview was drawing to a close, I asked Dan if he had any questions for me. He sought to find out more about the study and I explained that the focus of the study was on the role of everyday interactional context rather than focussing on racialised characteristics of students. At this point, it seemed important to ask Dan about his experiences in relation to ethnicity.

Excerpt 6.16: Interview – Dan

```
1   Steve:  is that how does that like link
2           with your experiences of like
3           have you experienced like any erm
4   Dan:    sort of
5   Steve:  yeah any erm
6           does it even make
7           has it ever even been an issue
8           like being a Chinese student and
9   Dan:    errr. not maybe not for m:e:
10          I haven't experienced any sort of racism
11          or anything or or majorly
12          I might have a few like words sort of thing
13          some people might call me some names
14          but erm (1.0) I guess that's what it is innit
15  Steve:  y:e:a:[h
16  Dan:          [like even close mates
17          they try to joke around on the Chinese sort of thing
18  Steve:  yeah
19  Dan:    and if you're close mates you don't mind
20  Steve:  yeah yeah yeah
21  Dan:    you ju the sort of jokes
22          and sort of thing if you are close and
```

23 Steve: yeah yeah £obviously there's stuff
24 on the on the recording where there's£
25 Dan: yeah((loud laughter)) yeah yeah
26 Steve: I mean [I
27 Dan: [I don't mind that stuff
28 cause sort of where I grew up
29 my mates they sort of joke around
30 they're quite harsh on the sort of ethnicity erm sort
31 of thing
32 Steve: yeah right yeah
33 Dan: but I take it as a jokey way
34 sort of they don't mean it as any trying to like
35 to like do anything to you
36 but it's just a joke
37 sort of thing
38 Steve: I think-you know-[yeah
39 Dan: [some people can't
40 some say
41 some other people
42 they might not be able to take that racism
43 (.)
44 but I just take it as a joke sort of thing
45 I don't really try and
46 if someone calls me a name
47 I don't really try and do anything back cause I know
48 they're joking
49 like if I'm close
50 but if someone on the street try and calls me a name
51 that's that's different
52 that's different
53 Steve: Yeah
54 so it's context again right?
55 Dan: yeah exactly yeah

Dan's response to my question about whether being a Chinese student has ever even been an issue, 'errr not maybe not for m:e:' suggests that perhaps it is for others. Dan goes on to say

that he hasn't 'experienced any sort of racism or anything' (lines 10 and 11) but then qualifies this with 'or majorly'. He goes on to give examples of 'words' and 'name-calling' (lines 12-13) as the kinds of racism he has experienced but which wouldn't qualify as major. He signals an acceptance that this is to be expected 'I guess that's what it is innit' (line 14). As I begin to reply (line 15), he refers to the 'bonding and biting' nature of this racism, explaining that 'even close mates try to joke around on the Chinese sort of thing … and if you're close mates you don't mind' (line 16-17). As I signal understanding (line 18), he continues, this time emphasising the need for the interactant to actually be close to qualify as legitimate participants, 'you ju the sort of jokes and sort of thing if you are close and' (line 22). Interpreting this to be how Dan frames interaction such as that analysed above, I refer to the data he has collected (lines 23,24). Before I can finish, Dan confirms my interpretation: 'yeah ((loud laughter)) yeah yeah (line 25). As I seek to qualify my reference to the data (line 26), Dan interjects, constructing a place-related set of 'harsh' discursive regime that he connects with those encounters in the back corner of the studio: 'I don't mind that stuff cause sort of where I grew up/ my mates they sort of joke around they're quite harsh on the sort of ethnicity erm sort of thing' (line 28). The stress placed on personal pronouns 'I' and 'my' suggests that Dan constructs these norms as unlikely to be recognisable to everyone. At a later point in the interview, Dan returns to the subject of banter with friends at home, and suggests this discursive regime is not generally recognisable in the studio, saying 'I try to cut down on that in the uni' and identifies university as a different environment'.

Despite the harshness Dan attributes to his mates' jokes, he insists that no personal harm is meant by them (lines 33-37). As I begin to comment, he takes an affective stance of toughness or insensitivity as he returns to the university context to make a distinction between himself and other students who 'might not be able to take that racism' (lines 39-42). After a brief pause, he reiterates his strategy of taking name-calling racism as a joke (line 44)

and, points to the importance of an existing bond, adding that he doesn't retaliate if he is close with his interlocutor. He distinguishes this approach from the one he would adopt if a stranger called him a name (line 50), emphasising that would be different through repetition (lines 51 & 52), implying a context dependency that he enthusiastically confirms (line 55) when I suggest it (line 54).

Dan appears to accept racialised teasing as a discursive resource that is part of developing 'close' relational identities both inside and outside of the university. In his second interview, reflecting on his interactions over the year, Dan explains how he, Charlie and Tony remained 'mates' and were in regular contact both in the studio and in a WhatsApp group. In particular, he describes how in a later project he had asked Tony for measurements and as a result had got to know Tony's group, expanding his network. They helped each other out (Interview 2: 16:30). The members of the WhatsApp group are Charlie, Tony, Dan, John (no longer on the course) and another student. Dan says of the group, *'If anyone needs anything, you just pop it in there'* (Interview 2: 29:00). In Dan's first interview, he explained that he still socialised with Charlie and Tony in the studio despite them working in different groups and helped them out if their own group was not doing well. In the following excerpt, at my suggestion that he is developing networks, he constructs making social connections as 'what university is about':

Excerpt 6.17: Interview – Dan

```
1   Steve:  OK yeah yeah
2           so you've got you're building sort of networks
3   Dan:    yeah sort of yeah but
4   Steve:  Y:e:a:h
5   Dan:    I guess that's what university is about
6           sort of thing
```

```
7   Steve:  Sure yeah
8   Dan:    You've got to try and (.) be more socialised
9   Steve:  yeah
10  Dan:    with other people
```

Dan attributes his success in making connections in his first project group to the recognisable discursive regimes of humour that he shared with John and Tony. When I ask him about any differences in the dynamic of his first and second project groups, he says:

Excerpt 6.18: Interview – Dan

```
1   Dan:    I don't know
2           it's just sort of you know
3           you find the people
4           and you sort of click you [know
5   Steve:                            [yeah
6   Dan:    and then you sort of
7           you just sort of got that banter in between each other
8   Steve:  yeah yeah-yeah-yeah
9   Dan:    and me John and Tony
10          sort of had the banter between each other
11          but erm compared to this group
12          I don't really know
```

Dan's reflections suggest that the connections that constitute 'what university is about' (Excerpt 6.17, line 5) are not available in all groups he finds himself in. Furthermore, he describes clicking with Tony and John through banter (lines 4,9), but not Charlie or Gary who were also present. Earlier analysis found that Charlie's engagement in the banter appeared to be subject to Tony's evaluation in the convivial reproduction of race (Excerpt 6.15, lines 50-51 and lines 38-48) and Gary's non-participation has been noted. These three students had in common a use of non-standard forms and CUV that are indexical of multi-

ethnic working-class positioning and, according to Dan's account above, also shared a recognisable set of discursive norms around teasing and stances of toughness that has been noted by Pichler (2006:237). Dan appeared to find that these norms were not shared across the studio. When asked for his reflections on how he might have changed over the course at the end of the second interview, Dan attributed greater sensitivity to students at uni to those he had met before (Interview 2 - 35:50).

Amongst friends, though, Dan mobilizes discursive resources to index toughness through having a laugh and a joke about racist teasing that targets his ethnicity. Other ethnographic studies in educational settings have shown that race and ethnicity can be reworked through humour, enabling potentially hurtful othering discourses to be recontextualised as objects of ridicule to be laughed at (Lytra, 2017; van de Weerd, 2019; Winkler Reid, 2015). Similarly, Harris & Rampton (2009:115-117) argue that race and ethnicity can become subsidiary incidental issues in an 'unruly convivial mode of interaction'. They point out the need for close attention to the ways in which negotiation of ethnic issues is embedded in and amongst other contextually specific local concerns (ibid). I have argued here that these local concerns place Dan in a position where what is at stake is the opportunity to build connections, friendships and networks: the very thing he constructs as being 'what university is about'. Dan is drawing on a pre-existing repertoire from a 'harsh' discursive regime that he identifies with his mates and the place he grew up. Participating in the teases means orienting to a racially hegemonic evaluative centre in the space of the studio against which his Chinese heritage is racially marked, indexing exclusion and making it an available resource for the tease. In this context, the teaser/teased relation reproduces racialised hierarchies in which the position of the mocker is elevated in relation to that of the mocked (Chun, 2004:273). Participation and/or the burden of keeping the interaction good-natured falls to Dan. His acknowledgement that not all students can take that kind of racism suggests Dan recognises

that the burden of accommodation lies with him. While this is an affective and sociolinguistic burden of that Dan appears willing to accept among close ‘mates’ in studio interactions, the cost of conviviality is borne unequally. We can see in this interaction forms of division and racism that exist *alongside* and sometimes *within* multicultural convivialities’ (Back & Sinha, 2016:521, italics added). de Noronha (2022:163) points out that ‘racism and conviviality interact and coexist in complex ways in specific places.’ The analysis provided has aimed to illustrate some of those complexities as they are navigated by Dan.

Comparing the ways in which humour was used to do identity work across both groups, illustrates how the interactional regimes and evaluative centres differed. Rather than joking about the absent other that we saw in the previous section (Section 6.4.2, Excerpts 6.11 & 6.12) in relation to Gary, the practices analysed in relation to Dan could be characterised as teasing. Boxer & Cortez-Conde (2001:278) argue that ‘joking differs from teasing in important ways that have the potential to lead to different outcomes in a conversational exchange.’ Boxer & Cotez-Conde, 2001:279) describe teasing in terms of ’nipping and biting’. In teasing, the ‘playful nip’ is given by the teaser to the teased. To be understood as a nip rather than ‘a bite’ a shared schema of intention is required. Because of the presence and active participation of both teaser and teased, it can lead to the development of a more intense bond, albeit with higher risks attached (Boxer & Cortez-Conde, 286).

Turning to Gary’s non-participation, In Bucholtz's (2001:85) account of the identity of ‘white nerds’, she explains that this identity ‘is racially marked precisely because individuals refuse to engage in cultural practices that exist across racialised lines and instead construct their identities by cleaving closely to the symbolic resources of an extreme whiteness, especially the resources of language.’ We can observe a similar pattern in Gary’s use of humour to develop relational identities between the two groups, which in turn suggests the operation of two distinct discursive regimes. While there might be other reasons for Gary’s non-

participation, we have seen that the discursive resources employed by Gary in the ‘crazy jokes’ about absent others operate according to a distinct interactional regime from the teasing employed in the exchanges of the ‘lads at the back.’ The former operated in a way that relied upon discourses of hierarchy that positioned the in-group as dominant in relation to the mocked; in the latter, discourses of hierarchical relations provided bite that for the source of the tease but around which a shared schema of intention was implied. Nonetheless, the analysis has found that the reproduction of racialised hierarchies through the imposition of racialised positioning on Dan imposes an unequal sociolinguistic burden.

While on the face of it, Gary’s interactions engaged with class and Dan’s race, the analysis has shown how in both cases, these are mutually constitutive. The convivial reproduction of race articulated with working-class stances of toughness, while the dominant class positions assumed in mocking the single mother were accompanied by an indexical relationship of intelligent non-conformity to whiteness. This supports an understanding of race and class in which they do not simply *affect* each other here but *effect* one another, constituting and determining the nature of each other in interanimating fashion (Chun, 2021: 335)

6.5 Conclusion

In answer to research questions 1 and 1.1, the analysis presented in this chapter has found that the studio space can be characterised by a convivial *polycentricity* (Blommaert et al., 2005:207) in which close proximity makes negotiation of difference a habitual part of everyday life (Back & Sinha, 2016:524). Analysis of student participants’ discursive practices has found that within this space student participants oriented to the evaluative centres of *self-responsible deservedness*, *conviviality* and the *racially hegemonic perceiving subject* highlighted in Chapter 5. The discursive practices and orientations to these conditions taken by individual participants differed.

Gary's discursive practices orient to the evaluative centre of both the *racially hegemonic perceiving subject* and the *self-responsible deserving subject*. In narrative accounts during interviews, he positions himself as competitive, and self-capitalizing and 'dominant' while indexing an intelligent non-conformism found to be indexical of whiteness in US studies in education (Bucholtz, 2001). In the studio, his discursive practices include 'joking about absent others' (Boxer & Cortez-Conde, 1997:280) to develop relational identities that position him and his friends as dominant. These positionings rely on the orders of indexicality produced by a racially hegemonic perceiving subject.

Dan orients to an evaluative centre of *conviviality* in interviews and interactions and his navigation of the space is centred around developing new social relations. Part of this navigation is achieved through discursive practices of teasing that rely on his legitimation of jocular orientations to an evaluative centre of the *racially hegemonic perceiving subject* that produces orders of indexicality that position him as racially marked in the studio by virtue of his Chinese ethnicity.

In answer to research questions 2 and 2.1, the analysis presented here has found that material conditions of inequality result from the sociolinguistic burden these discursive conditions impose on Dan. The evaluative centre on which Gary relies to construct fractally recursive (Gal & Irvine, 2019:127) axes of differentiation and self-responsible deservedness are historically situated in the construction of whiteness as a position of dominance in a racialised order of class relations (Chapter 2). These same discursive conditions position Dan subordinately. They are resisted through orientations to an evaluative centre of conviviality that ascribes value to multi-ethnic working-class discursive resources and are reworked as means of developing relational identities among 'mates.' Nonetheless, they impose an unequal burden on Dan to do this sociolinguistic work (Lo & Chun, 2019:11). To apply Hall's ([1980] 2021) notion of *articulation*, the *racially hegemonic* discursive conditions of

the studio can be argued to rely on historically specific ideologies of race and class that reproduce material conditions of inequality in the present.

This chapter has found that in contrast to the discourses of neoliberal choice, enterprise and meritocratic success, and in spite of the existence of convivial relations, the discursive conditions of the studio impose an unequal sociolinguistic burden on racialised students. The next chapter will explore these findings in relation to two more student participants, Jasmine and Archer.

7 Stratified studio space: conviviality amid racially hegemonic perceptions

7.1 Introduction

Chapter 5 identified three evaluative centres to which the year convenor oriented in briefings and inductions. It argued that despite the subversions offered by a convivial orientation, the value ascribed to self-responsible deservedness in the context of material inequalities reproduced racially hegemonic perceptions. Chapter 6 presented analysis of students' orientations to these centres and found that contrary to notions of meritocratic self-responsible deservedness, students navigated racially hegemonic space in ways that suggested an unequal sociolinguistic burden for racialised students. This chapter builds on those findings to analyse the discursive conditions navigated by two key participants, Archer and Jasmine. The chapter draws on interactional data and interview data and details how the discursive practices analysed utilize humour to negotiate racialised and classed positionings in this context.

7.2 Convivial resistance to racial hegemony (Jasmine)

This section analyses the interactions and interviews of Jasmine, a key participant in the study, to argue that she navigates racially hegemonic (white) discursive space through jocular mockery in the studio. The analysis focuses on two excerpts of interactional data audio-recorded by Jasmine during group work in the studio, alongside interview data. Analysis of interactions details how exclusory ethno-racial discourses are invoked in jest between students to position one another as they do relational identity work. Taken together with Jasmine's narrative accounts of her own position in relation to interactional regimes at play in the studio, such playful talk was found to construct a stance of toughness that indirectly indexes experience of the kinds of area she is from. Through humour, and orientation to a convivial evaluative centre, Jasmine navigates what she constructs as an exclusory social space in which her loud 'bubbly' personality is constrained. With reference to the

interactional data, it is argued that 'racially hegemonic' perceptions (Rosa & Flores, 2017:628) constitute a dominant evaluative centre towards which participants orient in the institutional setting of the studio, and that in turn, Jasmine is navigating what can be characterised as white discursive space in the studio.

The interactions took place at the start of the second term of the first year. Students are working in tutor-allocated groups of six or seven on a two-week design project introducing technology in architecture. They have been working together as a group for a week. Of the participants in the interaction, only Jasmine was a key participant in the study. As such, the categorisations of the students accompanying the excerpt below arise from Jasmine's narrative accounts in interviews and the audio-recorded interactional data.

The first excerpt of interactional data provides an episode of playful talk among the group. This involves ethno-racial positioning of Jasmine by her groupmate, Riki. The excerpt follows a short stretch of task-oriented talk in which Daniela is rushing Riki to finish doing something so that they can leave the studio.

Excerpt 7.1: Studio Interaction – Jasmine

Participants:

Jasmine: Female, British, Indian/Punjabi heritage (Londoner, born in Finland)

Riki: Male, British, Filipino heritage (Londoner)

Daniela: Female, Bulgarian

Gemma: Female, White British (Non-Londoner)

(engaged in surrounding talk but not contributing here)

Mika: Male, Finnish (engaged in surrounding talk but not contributing here)

Priti: Female, Singaporean of Indian heritage (engaged in surrounding talk but not contributing here)

*In Excerpt 7.11 Bobby, a White British male student from another group, participates in the interaction.

```
1   Riki      Fanguro
2   Daniela   what is that?
3   Riki      that just means like for fuck’s sake in Italian
4   Daniela   Fanguro?
5   Jasmine   what does it mean?
6   Riki      for fuck’s sake in Italian
7             fang:u:r:o hmm?
8   Gemma     are you Italian?
9   Riki      no
10            ((Jasmine and others laugh- Jasmine, short ‘heh’))
11  Daniela   H:e:’s the Kappa boy
12            ((Laughter from at least 3 participants))
13  Riki      Listen yeah you foreign ((while laughing)) people go
14            away ((while laughing)) (1.0) Brexit
15  Daniela   Brexit means Brexit ((mockingly))
16  Jasmine   It’s a touchy subject ((laughter))
17  Riki      you’re not even European
18  Jasmine   I am ((high pitch))
19            why do[ you think I
20  Riki            [ you’re Indian ((laughing while voicing
21            ‘Indian’))
22  Jasmine   oh yeah ((short laughter with accelerated exhalation
23            towards the end))
```

The play frame opens with Riki’s ‘fanguro’ (line 1). The elongated ‘h:e:’s’ in Daniela’s teasing remark ‘H:e:’s the Kappa boy’ (line 11) accentuates the positioning of Riki and acts as a contextualisation cue to point the play frame in the direction of personal teasing. The competing framings of subject positions and identities that follow rely on metapragmatic associations indexed as participants orient to discourses and ideologies sitting outside of the

current situation. These orientations are polycentric: that is, the indexical trajectories produced aim at a number of evaluating centres.

Riki's response to Daniela's tease and the resulting laughter at his expense (line 12) is to position the others as 'you foreign people' (line 13) and to tell them to go away before adding 'Brexit' (line 14). In this way, Riki indexes anti-immigrant discourses which had become prevalent since the European Union (EU) referendum campaign but, by accompanying his remark with laughter, he cues the remark as playful and teasing. A field note entry shows the use of 'Brexit' as a verb meaning 'to leave' by Riki on an earlier occasion. This shift of orientation from popular culture to the ironic invocation of ethno-nationalist discourse is quickly taken up by Daniela, whose mocking 'Brexit means Brexit' (line 15) indexes awareness of UK political discourse via an oft-repeated and much-derided phrase used by the then British Prime Minister, Theresa May. At a pragmatic level, this may also serve to respond to Riki's tease that positioned her as a foreign person by indexing her awareness of UK political discourse.

Jasmine continues the jokey Brexit theme by laughingly saying, 'it's a touchy subject' (line 16). At this time, there was widely reported awkwardness around discussing Brexit even amongst friends and family. Riki responds by implicitly challenging Jasmine's right to comment on Brexit by positioning her as 'not even European' (line 17). Here he again indexes the anti-immigrant discourses of his previous turn but without audible contextualization cues. Jasmine's response, 'I am' (line 18), rejects Riki's positioning, protesting that she is European while her high-pitched tone suggests a degree of emotion that indicates she has taken Riki's tease seriously. As she begins to challenge his claim with 'why do you think I' (line 19), Riki interrupts to position her ethnically: 'you're Indian' (line 20). This time, both the contextualization cue of Riki's laughter and perhaps the absurdity of Riki, who is British and of Filipino heritage, adopting this position, appear to cue the remark as a

tease (cf. van de Weerd 2019: 254). This statement builds on metapragmatic associations with anti-immigrant ideologies indexed by Riki's previous two turns (lines 13 and 17) but escalates them to an ethno-nationalist strand that associates Britishness with whiteness and thereby excluding Jasmine on the basis of her Indian heritage. Jasmine's laughing response 'oh yeah' (line 22) suggests she realizes Riki's teasing intent and continues the play frame. Questions raised here around whether Riki and Jasmine are critiquing or reproducing the exclusionary ideologies indexed in their playful talk will be considered in greater detail in relation to Excerpt 7.11. However, the fact that Riki's remarks are understood by Jasmine to have teasing intent suggests that the performance of such ethnic teasing as humour is within the range of expected behaviours, thereby constituting an 'interactional regime' that is locally recognisable between the two interactants (Blommaert, et al. 2005:212). The following section draws on narrative accounts from Jasmine's interviews in which she constructs familiarity with this kind of humour as part of a recognisable interactional regime that is central to the ways in which she navigates the sociolinguistic space of the studio.

7.2.1 Navigating exclusory sociolinguistic space

A key theme in Jasmine's accounts of interaction in the studio is the role of humour and the part it plays in establishing recognisable interactional regimes. The analysis that follows draws on the sociolinguistics of stance to understand the centrality of these practices of jocular mockery to the way that Jasmine narrates her position within the studio, comparing and contrasting herself with others by means of 'explicit and implicit forms of social categorization and evaluation' (Jaffe, 2009:9). These categorizations allow Jasmine to take up relational positions in respect of the students she encounters in the studio through a process of adequation in which she determines whether they are 'sufficiently similar for current interactional purposes' or constructed as too different through a process of distinction (Bucholtz & Hall, 2005:599). The analysis proceeds in two parts. The first predominantly

deals with adequation and the ways in which Jasmine uses the indexical properties of humour to construct similarity on the grounds of place and experience of material conditions. The second part is about distinction and deals with the exclusion Jasmine experiences in the studio. Again, the experience of this exclusion is constructed through its relationship to the practices of humour.

7.2.1.1 Adequation and tough stances: Taking the mickey with Londoners

Jasmine constructs the studio as a discursive space with connections to place. She invokes the category of Londoner to position herself in this space and suggests that fellow Londoners can be identified by their interactional behaviours. In the following excerpt from an interview about her 'educational journey', she recounts the process of getting to know new people in the studio on arrival at university.

Excerpt 7.2: Interview – Jasmine

```
1   Jasmine:  and I remember Beverley my friend
              she was the one that first approached me
2   Steve:    right ok yeah
3   Jasmine:  and I was like 'oh I'm from here' ((spoken with higher
4             pitch))
5             and she was like 'oh I'm from London' ((spoken with
6             higher pitch))
7             I'm like 'oh m:e: t:o:o:' ((higher pitch))
8             I think I'm most of my friends are from London
9   Steve:    right [ok
10  Jasmine:        [yeah
11            I think  it's just that (.) thing so where you from in
12            London ((lowered intonation))
13            even Deborah we're literally our areas are [connected
14  Steve:                                               [right
15  Jasmine:  right next to each other you never [know
16  Steve:                                       [yeah
```

17 Jasmine: and I think we just sorta spoke
18 then I sorta her friends
19 then ((intake of breath)) you just find people
20 you get along with
21 ((with slight sigh)) and
22 Steve: yeah yeah yeah ((1st two yeahs casual, 3rd deep –
23 confirmatory))
24 and that's mostly it just turns out they're mostly from
25 London
26 Jasmine: yeah ((tone suggests surprise))
27 Steve: [yeh
28 Jasmine: and every time I chat with them I'm woah everyone is from
29 London (.)
30 I think it's just the way you speak as well
31 and the sort of (.) ((short intake)) jokes you have
32 I think
33 it sort of links back to where you're from ((speeds up))
34 Steve: tell me about that
35 can you can you explain a bit more?
36 Jasmine: yeah of course
37 I think Londoners are you know when I first came here
38 when I moved in? the morning when I left to uni
39 people like 'morning' ((higher pitch)) I'm like ..
40 Steve: ((laughs nasal))
41 Jasmine: In London I don't do that
42 Steve: no ((laughing))
43 Jasmine: I'll have a screw face (.)
44 you're going where you're going (.)
45 you just look angry
46 Steve: yeah
47 Jasmine: no-one approaches you-
48 you don't approach them unless you know them
49 even on like transport
50 you you would never [smile or look at someone ((smile
51 voice)) (.)
52 Steve: [mmm mhmm]
53 Jasmine: so I came here

54 first you’re being all formal and stuff
55 your like ‘oh I’m from here I’m Jasmine’ ((higher pitch,
56 quieter with laughter))
57 Steve: ((laughs))
58 Jasmine: slowly slowly when you start doing the jokes and stuff
59 it’s sort of (1.0) taking the (.) mickey
60 out of each other ↗
61 Steve: yeah
62 Jasmine: that’s the sort [of I have
63 Steve: [yeah
64 Jasmine: I’ll do a little joke I need to [test if the person
65 responds
66 Steve: [yeah
67 Jasmine: cause I’m a really bubbly person
68 so (.) the way I check-you know see if someone is going
69 to like my personality is I’ll do a little [joke
70 Steve: [yeah yeah
71 Jasmine: and see if they respond [back
72 Steve: [yeah
73 Jasmine: and (.) I think (.) that just worked for me ((up)) cause
74 I’ve always done [that
75 Steve: [yeah
76 Jasmine: and I’m like if someone doesn’t like me in that way
77 it’s fine
78 we can go back to formal
79 Steve: yeah
80 Jasmine: cause you know I wanna work with you at some point in my
81 life
82 Steve: yeah yeah
83 Jasmine: and it’s not like you take that joke into your work

In this narrative account of the interactional strategies she employs as part of her communicative repertoire, Jasmine positions herself as a Londoner adapting to a new set of interactional norms at university. She employs metapragmatic stereotypes in order to contrast the (public) interactional norms of the new locality in which she is studying with those she is

used to adopting in London. She suggests a connection between these 'non-London' interactional norms and those employed in the studio, describing her use of jocular mockery to navigate the sociolinguistic space of the studio.

Jasmine's connection of ways of speaking and humour with place (lines 30-33) prompts me to ask her to elaborate (line 34). As she responds enthusiastically (line 36), she takes a complex 'metasociolinguistic stance' (Jaffe 2009:17) towards the interactional norms she attributes to Londoners, differentiating between Londoners going about their business in London and her fellow Londoner students in the studio. She initially constructs a binary opposition between the 'screw-face' (line 43) and 'angry' (line 45) position she adopts to respond to interactional norms in London and the friendly, perhaps more intimate, 'morning' (high-pitched – melodic) (line 39) she constructs as stereotypical of Harrington (pseudonym), the city in which she is studying. After making these distinctions she reports studio interactions in which she initially aligns with the norms she ascribes to Harrington, by 'being all formal and stuff' (line 54). This involves introducing herself by name and saying where she's from (line 55). The reported speech that narrates these interactions is marked by a raised pitch and melody, which aligns with that she uses to report the 'morning' greetings of Harrington locals (line 39). Sentences are fronted with the change-of-state token 'oh' (lines 3, 5, 7, 55) so that they are recognisably different from the voice she uses to provide her account (Besnier 1990). They appear to register politeness. These initial exchanges are followed by tentative moves to establish whether her interactants will share her humour. She 'slowly slowly' (line 58) begins to 'take the mickey' (line 59) followed by little jokes that index both her 'bubbly' personality and where she's from. In this way, she constructs place and humour as related to 'the sort of jokes you have' (line 31). This metapragmatic recognition of the line being taken is understood to be an acceptance of Jasmine's bubbly personality but also as something that would be shared by fellow Londoners (line 33) leading

to an affective stance of greater intimacy. Where the line taken is not recognised, social distance is maintained and the 'formal', less intimate stance is resumed 'if someone doesn't like me in that way it's fine, we can go back to formal' (line 78). Elsewhere in her interviews, Jasmine expresses concern over coming across as a 'strong character', a trait she puts down to her Punjabi heritage. The initial construction of hostile London interactional norms set against friendly non-London norms is replaced by a more socially distant polite formality and a more intimate jocular set of norms recognisable to Londoners in the studio.

The more intimate affective stance achieved through reciprocal jocular mockery 'taking the mickey out of each other' (line 59) indirectly indexes where you're from. At one level, Jasmine constructs her sense of 'where you're from' as being a Londoner. However, being from London or not can be determined from the initial introductory interactions (lines 3, 55) without the need for additional probing through tentative jocular mockery. This suggests that for Jasmine, the 'little joke' (line 64) establishes more about 'where you're from' than whether or not you're from London and perhaps that where you're from is not simply about place. As the interview progresses, 'where you're from', for Jasmine, is constructed as linked to experience of school and upbringing in a 'rough area' with a high crime rate. This is shown in the following excerpt from Jasmine's account:

Excerpt 7.3: Interview – Jasmine

```
1    Jasmine:  I think just finding out where each other's from
2              and it's just like school basically
3    Steve:    right
4    Jasmine:  like how you are in school
5              the way you speak to your friends
6    Steve:    right
7    Jasmine:  it was that sort of respon cause we were brought up
8              the same way I would say
```

9		so I think I don’t know it’s just that little joke
10		there that just started
11	Steve:	yeah yeah well maybe that yeah so so like yeah
12		school so like you said it was like it’s like school
13		that’s how you were brought up and school how was
14		that yeah
15	Jasmine:	I didn’t go to private or anything just normal
16		and erm most of my friends did except one
17		which is went to a girl's school
18		so it was really different
19		but we loved that
20		we could tell her about what we experienced
21		and I’ll speak about it
22		because now I read about that some of the students
23		from my old school are in jail ((high pitch))
24	Steve	oh right ok
25	Jasmine:	so it’s a rough area
26	Steve:	right
27		*Some discussion of the area Jasmine is from and*
28		*neighbouring areas*
29		*where I had lived*
30	Jasmine:	so like the crime rate’s going crazy in my area
31		so I was just reading oh look someone’s stabbed
32		it’s like
33	Steve:	((intake of breath)) right
34	Jasmine:	I remember one of my international friends
35		one of the girls
36		she was a bit like what?
37		and you know I was like oh it’s normal (.)
38		like for us(.) and erm I think yeah it’s just like
39		just the areas and stuff
40		and that bond just created in school
41		like how what did you used to do what did you used
42		to study for GCSEs? did you have this at school?
43	Steve:	yeah
44	Jasmine:	things like that and I don’t know it’s just sort of

```
45   Steve:    so you mean when you're here you're exchanging
46             stories about each other's schools
47   Jasmine:  yeah (.) like what did you study before
```

Again, Jasmine constructs 'where you're from' as linked to 'the way you speak' (line 5) and a 'little joke' (line 9) but this is linked to school (line 12) and upbringing (line 13). Distinguishing her experience of school from that of her privately educated friend, Jasmine constructs her school by reference to the fact that some of its former students are in jail and connects this to its locality. She frequently uses the term 'area' to refer to local material conditions (lines 25, 30, 39), which are described as 'rough' (line 25) with a crime rate that is 'going crazy' (line 30) and exemplified by an instance of stabbing she has read about (line 31). School is constructed as the site of shared experience in which such happenings are 'normal' for the 'us' who are from such areas (lines 37-38). These might be described as constructions of a stance of toughness in the face of difficult conditions. As mentioned in the previous chapter, such constructions are noted by Pichler (2006:227-240) in her analysis of an episode of teasing among a group of Bangladeshi girls at a comprehensive school in East London. This analysis shows how stances of toughness index 'contemporary stereotypes about British working-class youth culture.' The analysis in Chapter 6 found that Dan's response to teasing indexed such notions of 'toughness' connected to place while distinguishing them from the discursive norms of the studio space (Section 6.4.3, Excerpt 6.16, line 30). Pichler notes that a number of researchers of girl talk have linked 'toughness' with 'working class-ness' and 'politeness' with middle-classness (Hasund and Strensom, 1997:129; Eder, 1990: 74, in Pichler 2006: 240) and argues that ritual insults allow working-class girls to develop communicative self-defence skills, required by the 'toughness' of working-class culture at the same time as expressing closeness' (Pichler, 2006:241).

Pichler (ibid) argues that such stereotypes are 'carriers of ideologies about culture/ethnicity, class and gender that play an important role in the construction of identities within the group.' A stance of toughness is indexed through both the jocular mockery Jasmine engages in with Riki and the narrative constructions provided in her interview. They are also reinforced in a later episode in which she pranks him and chides him for his gullibility. As Jasmine considers the jokes to be recognizable to those who share her experiences of the material conditions of 'rough areas', engagement with the interactional regime she describes might be considered to indirectly index working-class youth culture. The next section focuses on Jasmine's narrative account of how engagement with this regime positions her as an outsider in the studio.

7.2.1.2 Distinction and scale in interactional regimes: Stronger jokes and weird jokes

In narrative accounts, Jasmine positions herself as an outsider in the studio and constructs a dichotomy to distinguish between different styles of humour to explain the distinction between the 'London' students who share her kind of humour and the 'large majority' of those who don't. This section draws on data from an interview on Jasmine's educational journey and her reflective interview to analyse how these positionings are constructed in Jasmine's account. It argues that Jasmine identifies two distinct interactional regimes operating at different sociolinguistic scales (Blommaert, 2020:2; Singh & Spotti, 2020) in the studio with exclusory effects. The first interactional regime involves a 'stronger', 'more masculine' style of humour that indexes the tough stance associated with the material conditions in 'areas' like Jasmine's and 'link back' to where she's from. This is distinguished from the second regime, which is constructed around 'nerdy' or 'goofy' jokes and is adopted by the 'large majority' in the studio to the exclusion of Jasmine and her friends.

In her narrative account of her educational journey, Jasmine contrasts her school experience with that of university. Looking back fondly on her school experience, in line with her earlier self-characterisations as 'a bubbly person' (Excerpt 7.2, line 67) she describes taking an active role as class representative, being selected as head prefect, being respectful but cheeky to teachers and occasionally getting into trouble. In the following excerpt, she narrates how this changed on arrival at university:

Excerpt 7.4: Interview – Jasmine

```
1   Jasmine:  but coming here was a bit like (.)
2             it was a whole different environment
3             the way the teachers speak
4             everyone behaves (.)((intake of breath))
5             I wasn't fitting in
6             I felt like an outsider
7   Steve:    tell me more about that
8             it's really [interesting because
9   Jasmine:              [yeah? (high pitch))
10            so I remember when I first got on the course
11            I sat on the table
12            got to know people
13            but the w:a:y like in the crit room
14            (.)
15            like some kids have a great joke with erm Joe
16            ((Year Convenor))
17            it's (.) I love that
18            I used to be that
19            but I just can't
```

The interactional regime Jasmine encounters in ways of speaking and behaving at university (lines 3 and 4) is distinguished from that which she describes at school and constitutes a 'whole different environment' (line 2). The terms 'everyone' (line 4) and 'whole' (line 2) contrast with the repeated emphasis placed on the singular 'I' used to explain Jasmine's

exclusion (lines 5,6, 17, 18) and the feelings it engendered (lines 5-6). This constructs an affective stance of isolation that corresponds to the findings of (Ball et al., 2003:232) in relation to working-class, ethnically minoritized students feeling 'out of place' at university.

When asked to elaborate (line 7), Jasmine highlights issues of differential access to discursive space, distinguishing between the way that she has got to know people and the way 'some kids' (line 15) engage in humour with the course co-ordinator at whole-group briefings in the crit room. While she appreciates the dynamic involved in this humour (line 17) and aligns it with what she used to 'be' at school (line 18). She distinguishes between what she could be in the discursive space of school (line 18) and what she can be at university where she 'just can't' (19). That is, Jasmine describes being positioned by the discursive conditions in ways that restrict her access.

Jasmine reasons that this is due to a lack of access to contact with tutors that can provide opportunity to establish these relationships and describes the relative lack of contact compared with that she experienced at school. When I remind her of her comments that some people were having that kind of jokey relationship with tutors (lines 14-15) and ask 'how does this work?', she constructs a dichotomy to distinguish between two distinct styles of joking at play in the studio:

Excerpt 7.5: Interview – Jasmine

1	Jasmine:	erm I don't know it's sort of like I wouldn't it's (..)
2		stereotypical I would say *that's the only way I could*
3		*describe it cause I don't know enough* ((very fast))
4		it's erm more of like the nerds I would say (.)
5	Steve:	right
6	Jasmine:	the goofy people like that have that weird jokes
7		my jokes are much more m:a:y:b:e *stronger* ((fast))

```
8   Steve:     ((laughs))
9   Jasmine:   so it's erm and erm I don't know but it's great to see
10             that you know everyone's laughing
11             but it's you can't be part of that
12  Steve:     right
13  Jasmine:   because you're not like that
```

Although taking a tentative epistemic stance and hedging her framing as stereotypical (lines 1-3), Jasmine constructs the groups engaging in humour with the course co-ordinator as 'nerds' (line 4) and 'goofy people' (line 6) with 'weird jokes' (line 6). The kind of humour that constitutes this interactional regime is distinguished from her own jokes, which are described as 'much more m:a:y:b:e stronger' (line 7) and appear to index the tough stance that is associated with the working-class material conditions of her upbringing noted earlier (Excerpts 7.2 and 7.3). Again, Jasmine makes reference to the restrictions this difference in interactional regimes places on what she can access or 'be part of' (lines 11) in the studio. She contrasts this with the majority experience, 'everyone's laughing' (lines 10). In line with her earlier comments that 'I think it's just the way you speak the sort of jokes you have I think it sort of links back to where you're from' (Excerpt 7.2 line 7.3), Jasmine explains the reason 'you can't be part of that' (line 11) humour is 'because you're not like that' (lines 13). As Blommaert (2007:128) argues, 'difference goes hand in hand with inequality because every difference can become distinction – valued, hierarchized emblematicity of categories and identities.' In the polycentric discursive space that Jasmine describes, the interactional regime of stronger jokes that index her 'tough' stance among fellow Londoners operates at a lower scale of value and recognition (Blommaert, 2020:2) than that of the weird/crazy jokes of the group of boys. That is, on Jasmine's account, they are less valued by the majority in the discursive space of the studio and the limits of recognition are set by those with

experience of place (London) and the interactional regimes associated with material conditions of ‘rough areas’ like hers.

The affective stance of isolation and exclusory effects, illustrated by analysis of the excerpt above, is intensified in a reflective interview conducted at the end of the academic year. In this interview, Jasmine revealed she was thinking of leaving the course. When I ask if there is anything she would like to reflect on, she constructs a distinction between the interactional regimes she is familiar with and those adopted by the majority in the studio.

Excerpt 7.6: Interview – Jasmine

1	Jasmine:	what am I doing wrong
2		that I wasn’t doing at high school?
3		loudest kid in the classroom
4		all the teachers know you
5		you get in trouble but not to that extent
6		but always got my work done
7		overthinking and being comfortable in the classroom
8		like I know why I’m not
9		the people are too different
10		like the large majority is too different to me
11	Steve:	what’s the difference?
12	Jasmine:	I don’t know
13		it sounds so horrible if I explain it
14	Steve:	no explain it
15		because you know when do you get the chance
16		I mean
17	Jasmine:	it’s just I won’t get along with them
18		in the sense of what I find funny
19		they won’t find funny
20		the way they behave
21		not in a rude way like they’re animals no no no
22		it’s just I don’t know they’re very different
23		and in a sense of it’s so hard to explain
24	Steve:	yeah is it better through examples

25 can you tell me examples cause then
26 Jasmine: yeah there's a bunch of there's a group of boys
27 that erm really good students
28 they know how to do their work
29 and I always forget his name
30 he's the one that sits there
31 erm he was in my first tutor group
32 like he's to speak to da-da-da-da
33 but when they're together being happy doing jokes
34 Steve: mmm
35 Jasmine: it's erm what the hell?
36 you know like it's just not something I'm used to
37 maybe
38 and the jokes they have it's like a bit crazy
39 maybe not to the boys I've been around
40 I think
41 (.)
42 the best way to explain you know
43 the whole stereotype of nerds
44 Steve: yeah
45 Jasmine: I don't I can't be part of that
46 Steve: yeah
47 Jasmine: and the guys I've been around it's more I don't know
48 (sighs) guys like I would say more masculine maybe

Jasmine positions the large majority of students as 'too different' to her (line 10). When encouraged to explain the difference she identifies a difference in humour. She goes on to emphasise that she isn't evaluating them negatively as 'rude' or 'animals' (line 21) but 'very different' (line 22). When she struggles to explain, I ask for an example. After a false start, 'there's a bunch of' (line 25) that may have carried negative connotations, Jasmine identifies 'a group of boys' (line 25) and evaluates their knowledge and ability as students positively (lines 26-27). She suggests that one of the group is easy to speak to on an individual level (line 31) but that in group interactions when they are engaging in humour their jokes are

'crazy' (line 38), matching Gary's description of his jokes with Charlie (Chapter 6: Section 6.4.2 - Excerpt 6.10, line 6). As such she is identifying an interactional regime within the studio. She begins to make a comparison to the boys she has been around (line 39) before again explaining through a connection to the 'stereotype of nerds' (line 43). Again, she distinguishes herself from the interactional regime she attributes to those she constructs as nerds, saying 'I don't I can't be part of that' (line 47). Jasmine then returns to her comparison with the guys she's been around (lines 44-45), saying 'and the guys I've been around it's more I don't know (sighs) guys like I would say more masculine maybe.' The emphasis on the second use of 'guys' in the utterance suggests an expectation of a set of behaviours from men and a heteronormative construction of masculinity, similar to phrasings such as 'when men were men' or 'boys will be boys'. She follows this up with a tentative evaluative positioning of them as 'more masculine maybe'. In contrasting nerdiness with masculinity here, there appear to be parallels with Jasmine's tough stance indexed by stronger jokes and the nerdy behaviour of weird-goofy jokes. The indirectly indexical relationship of toughness to heteronormative masculinity might also be seen to include stereotypical representations of working-class males.

In relation to these students, Jasmine explains that she feels minoritised in the studio:

Excerpt 7.7: Interview- Jasmine

```
1  Jasmine:   so there's a small majority of us
2             and a large majority of the others
3  Steve:     so you feel like there's a majority of those people
4             and a minority of the people that you get on with
5  Jasmine:   yeah
```

In Jasmine's reflective interview, I thought I recognised the 'group of boys' she was referring to as exemplifying the kind of humour she was referring to, so I sought to ascertain whether

she recognised an ethnic or class-related dimension to the distinctions she was making. I referred her to comments in her first interview about the students who have a joke with Joe, she says 'yeah that too, yeah'. She reiterates that this was what she used to be like with her teachers and gives examples of her school behaviour where she was the 'loudest kid in the classroom'.

When I frame her comments as being about different rules of interaction she strongly agrees.

Excerpt 7.8: Interview - Jasmine

1	Steve:	so are you saying that
2		there's a different set of rules unwritten rules
3	Jasmine:	hmm
4	Steve:	of like what goes and what doesn't go
5	Jasmine:	a hundred per cent a hundred per cent
6		I that's how I see it

She then began to talk about different styles of dress among students before returning to the theme of areas and taking a more hesitant epistemic stance:

> and erm I don't know maybe it's just the difference in area?
> or what they (1.5)

As Jasmine hesitates, I interpret her reference as being related to experience of material conditions and offer a crude colloquial positioning of the students' ethnic/racialized and class status, which she strongly rejects:

Excerpt 7.9: Interview -Jasmine

1	Steve:	when you say difference in area
2	Jasmine:	mmm
3	Steve:	I mean are we talking about posh white boys is
4		that a fair like
5	Jasmine:	they're not <u>posh</u> white boys ((slightly annoyed?))
6		I wouldn't describe it as that
7	Steve:	no no no no

8 Jasmine: if it was that then I would say simply
9 they’re stuck up
10 I can just say it
1 Steve: yeah yeah
12 Jasmine: I don’t see them as that
13 Steve: no OK that’s interesting
14 Jasmine: If you speak to them ever
15 like Gary is someone
16 I don’t really speak to that much
17 but if there’s a joke going on
18 I can joke around with him
19 or someone else like in that instance there’s
20 jokes like Bobby can get along with them and us
21 sort of thing
22 and it’s so bad to say us and them
23 it’s just like kind of categorising
24 but it’s not erm they are really nice
25 you can speak to them and be like der-der-der-der
26 I need this or like do you know what this is?
27
28 It’s not that they’re rude
29 they’re not rude
30 it’s just they’ve been together
31 longer than most of us
32 Steve: ok
33 Jasmine: since foundation year other courses
34 they just know each other more
35 they have that same joke and
36 Steve: yeah
37 Jasmine: I mean they’re having a good time

The excerpt above requires some attention to my positionality as a white male researcher interested in the discursive construction of class and race. Jasmine distances herself from my colloquial framing of ‘classed and racialized identities’ of the boys she was describing. In my interviews with Jasmine, which were free-flowing and took a conversational and reciprocal

style, there are a number of points at which I align with a working-class position. For example, in the first interview, I responded to Jasmine in the following way:

```
yeah yeah because I remember you saying before that you thought
that the. It was like the people who were aving ((dropped aitch))
the jokes
```

In this setting, aitch-dropping is non-habitual for me. This suggests I was aligning with Jasmine in adopting a speech style stereotypically associated with being working-class. In her earlier interview, when she said she was the first person in her family to go to university, I had reciprocated with my own experience of being the first in family to go to university. During her description of rough 'areas' I had asked where she was from and reciprocated by explaining that I had lived in neighbouring areas in the knowledge that these shared some of the associations with violence and crime that she was referring to. All this suggests that I was also constructing the 'posh white boys' as an out-group to our in-group, despite being white and male myself (cf Skeggs, 2002). Jasmine's tone suggests annoyance at my attribution of this othering distinction to her 'areas'-based distinction and rejects it, saying 'I wouldn't describe it as that' (Excerpt 7.9 line 6).

While Jasmine rejects my framing, analysis of the interview suggests that this rejection rested on a difference in indexical associations with the term 'posh'. In my use of the term 'posh', I had intended to position the students by colloquially framing them as middle class. However, Jasmine's rejection centres around an interpretation of 'posh' as indexing negative personal characteristics such as being 'stuck-up' (line 8) or 'rude' (line 25). Jasmine continues to rebut my suggestion by pointing out that she can joke along with Gary. As we saw in the previous chapter, Gary is a fellow key participant who is white, narrates a stereotypically middle-class background in interviews, and describes himself as belonging to the dominant group in the studio. She problematises the distinction by pointing out that another white male

student, Bobby, can get along with both the majority ‘them’ and minority ‘us’ groups (line 20). As she makes these them’ and ‘us’ distinctions, Jasmine signals that she is uncomfortable, describing such distinctions as ‘so bad’ (line 22). In line with her earlier comments (Excerpt 7.6, line 32) she reiterates that she can interact with these students on a transactional level (lines 15-18, 20-27), identifying her fellow key participant Gary as one such student. She then goes on to depart from her previous constructions of the difference in interactional regimes as linked to areas, instead attributing it to the ‘majority’ students’ prior familiarity with one other from ‘foundation year’ and ‘other courses’.

In order to clarify my question, I check whether Jasmine recognises a class element to the distinctions she is making:

Excerpt 7.10: Interview – Jasmine

```
1   Steve:    so it’s not like a class thing
2             that you’re talking about
3   Jasmine:  no no no no
4   Steve:    no
5   Jasmine:  I don’t think I don’t think so
6             it’s not like the one thing I do love about
7             I can say about the uni in the classroom no-one’s
8             like money or like in that sense
9   Steve:    right
10  Jasmine:  I can’t ever tell who’s rich who’s not
11  Steve:    right yeah
12  Jasmine:  yeah
```

While Jasmine rejects a class-related framing of her distinctions, her construction of class is as a straightforward question of wealth (lines 8, 10) that is not connected with the material conditions and lived experiences of ‘rough areas’ she recounts in her interview. This suggests

that although Jasmine does not perceive it as such, there is still grounds for a class analysis of her situation (cf. Pichler, 2006:241).

While Jasmine challenges my construction of the majority students as ‘posh’, she appears to accept my description of them as ‘white’ and ‘boys’, while defending them as individuals. Both Gary and Bobby are phenotypically white, male students and while Jasmine strongly argues against my construction of the majority students as posh, her initial rejection of my framing emphasises ‘posh’ while leaving ‘white’ unmarked (line 5). This suggests it is only my description of them as ‘posh’ that she finds problematic. Furthermore, her justification for disagreeing with my framing is based on personal character that might be negatively associated with ‘posh-ness’ rather than a rejection of ‘white’ as phenotypical classification. Jasmine is keen to point out how she is not being critical of the individuals who make up the majority group. In fact, she says ‘they’re really nice’ (Excerpt 7.9, line 24); nonetheless, her capacity to be ‘bubbly’ (Excerpt 7.2, line 67) or ‘the loudest kid in the class’ (Excerpt 7.6, line 3) is curtailed in this environment.

That is, the sociolinguistic space she navigates imposes constraints. These white male students, whose discursive practices of humour constitute an interactional regime that is recognisable to the majority of students (Excerpt 7.6 and 7.7), are simply ‘having a good time’ (Excerpt 7.8, line 37). However, this regime constrains her opportunities to participate in the studio. Consequently, her engagement with the majority of students is limited to the formal and/or transactional (Excerpt 7.6, line 32; Excerpt 7.2, line 78). As Blommaert (2007:117) argues, orders of indexicality relate to one another ‘in relations of mutual valuation’ The ‘crazy’, less masculine jokes of the ‘group of boys’ are provided as an example of access to an *interactional regime* and indexical order to which Jasmine does not have access. The ‘stronger jokes’ that index tough stances and, indirectly, working-class lived experiences of material conditions associated with ‘rough areas’, are part of an interactional

regime that appears to occupy a lower *scale* (Blommaet, 2020:2) in the sociolinguistic space of the studio. That is, their recognisability is limited to a minority of students (Excerpt 7.7) and their value is restricted to those students and does not confer the capacity to engage tutors (Excerpt 7.4, line 15). The previous chapter found that the 'crazy' jokes' about absent others loudly engaged by Gary in group interactions index whiteness in the studio through mutually constitutive racialised class positionings.

Despite feeling like an 'outsider' (Excerpt 7.4, line 6) and part of 'a minority' (Excerpt 7.7, line 5) in the studio, Jasmine finds a more welcoming discursive space and interactional regime within the technology group in which the interactions analysed here took place. In mapping her interactions over the course, Jasmine chose to delineate spaces as 'comfort zones' (cf. Ahmed, 2007:158) using green lines to mark out these spaces in which she felt 'more confident' (Figure 8 below). The space she occupied during the technology project, in the lower centre, is the largest and most heavily circled comfort zone on the map. In line with her positionings of herself as the 'loudest kid in the class' at school, as she explains her mapping, Jasmine says:

> over here I felt really comfortable as well in technology like we were the loudest group in the entire (inaudible) (Interview 2 – 3:20)

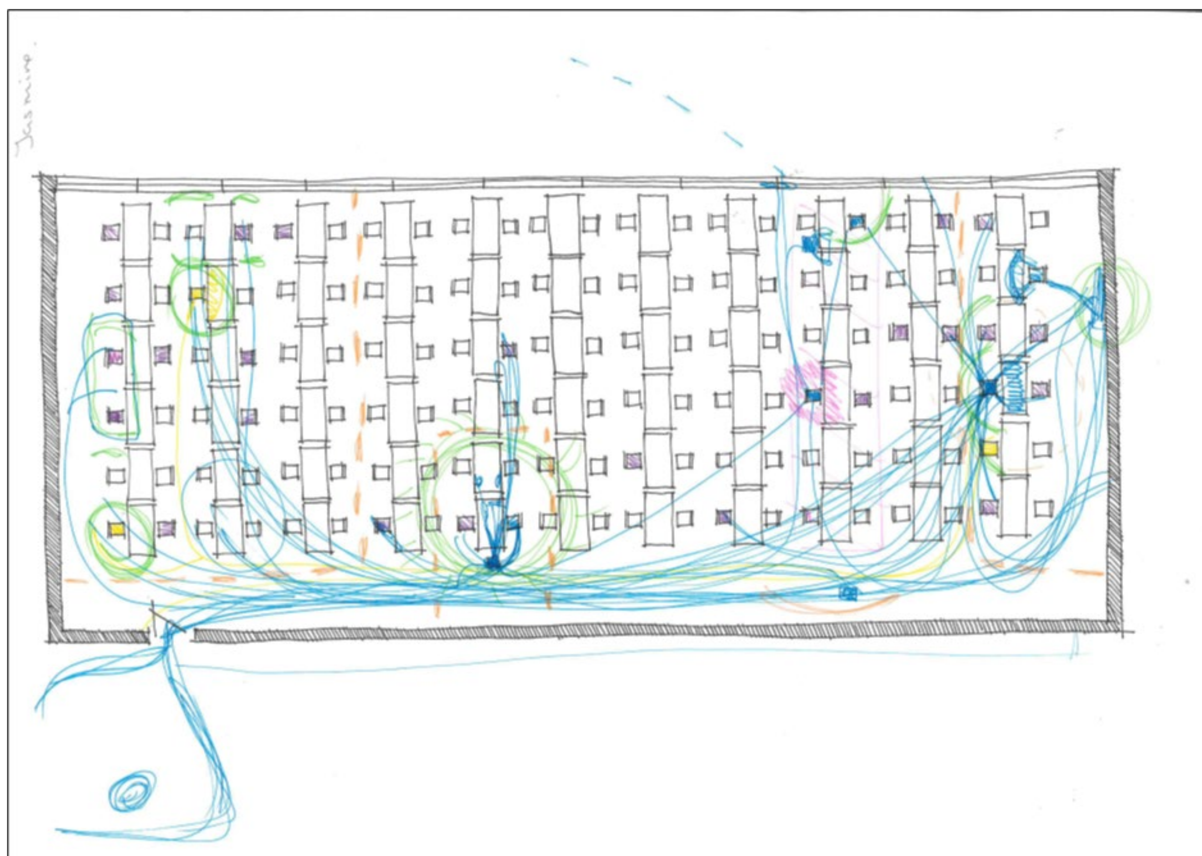

Figure 8. Interactional Map: Jasmine

Despite describing the group as a ‘comfort zone’, Jasmine also recounts her initial trepidation at not knowing most of the ‘technology group’. She pays particular attention to Riki:

like Riki
I thought he was more of what I would say the nerdy behaviour
and I’d never spoke to him

To her surprise, she found much in common with him:

Riki was just never expected
he’s like the twin
that my guy twin we never knew that

She goes on to emphasize, saying:

it’s just literally a twin before repeating never expected it.

In a follow-up interview relating to another episode involving Jasmine and Riki, she explains that some members of the group wouldn’t get her jokes but ‘Riki is from London so he has that’. This ‘stronger’ and ‘more masculine’ style of joking that Jasmine associates with

Londoners appears to have changed her initial expectations of Riki since she began working with him on the technology project. In Bucholtz & Hall's (2005:599) terms, Jasmine initially constructs a relational identity of distinction with Riki but moves to adequation, deeming him 'sufficiently similar' as she interacts with him in the technology group.

Analysis of the narrative accounts provided by Jasmine shows that her recognition of the jocular mockery instigated by Riki around exclusory ethno-nationalist discourses in excerpt 7.1 is informed by connections to the socio-economic conditions of 'rough areas' and everyday practices of 'strong', 'masculine' jokes that she associates with London. That is, discourses of race, class and gender grounded in the material conditions and recognizable discursive practices of Jasmine's upbringing articulate to 'yield intelligible meanings' (Hall, 1989:49, in Slack, 1996:124) and organize 'the ways in which [she] come[s] to form consciousness of the world' (ibid) she inhabits in the studio. As Rosa & Flores (2017:636) note, these intersectional constructions are unstable and demand analysis of the particular contexts, and perspectives in which they are configured. Such contexts and perspectives are provided by Jasmine's narrative accounts of the exclusory discursive space of the architecture studio and its relation to 'strong jokes' constituting interactional regimes that index experience of material conditions of 'areas' like hers. The following excerpt demonstrates the instability of such constructs in this space as Riki and Jasmine co-construct notions of brownness in response to the intervention of Daniela.

7.2.1.3 Co-constructing Brown-ness

The excerpt begins with a passing student, Bobby, described above by Jasmine as a student who can 'get along with them and us' (Excerpt 7.9, line 20), instigating a play frame in response to the group's laughter at his misunderstanding of an assigned task. In the ensuing

interaction, Jasmine and Riki exploit the play frame to do identity work and negotiate relational identities of brown-ness. Boxer & Cortez-Conde (1997:284) note the effectiveness of bonding through teasing, arguing that analysis of joking and teasing provides the opportunity to observe with clarity ‘relational identity development.’

This excerpt comes from a stretch of interaction that occurred almost twenty minutes after that analysed in Excerpt 7.1 with Riki’s teasing of Jasmine with reference to Brexit. In the intervening period, there had been discussion of arranged marriage among the group with Jasmine and Priti co-constructing an account of differing cultural norms around the practice in response to Riki’s questions.

Excerpt 7.11: Studio Interaction – Jasmine

```
1   Bobby:     why you all looking at me?
2              this is rude just [cause I’m white
3   Jasmine:                     [ ((laughs)) what?
4              it’s cause you’re Sri Lankan=I’m joking
5              ((to Bobby))
6   Riki:      and that’s your half sister right?
7              ((line 11 suggests Riki is referring to Jasmine))
8   Bobby:     I’m for it
9   Riki:      that’s your half sister right there
10  Bobby:     my half sister? [my actual sister apparently
11  Jasmine:                   [I’m not Sri Lankan
12             I’m not Sri Lankan
13  Riki:      yeah but you’re still brown same difference
14  Jasmine:   ((laughs)) yeah (???)
15  Bobby:     yeah but I was born in India
16  Jasmine:   me I was born (???)
17             of course I was ((laughs))
18             look at him I was
19  Riki:      yeah but I’m not that part of Brown society
20             you’re the
```

```
21  Daniela:   how are you brown?
22  Riki:      Filipino
23  Jasmine:   ((loud laughter)) that's so rude ((laughing)) ((loud
24             laughter)) oh my god ((squealed))
25  Riki:      wait did I say something wrong?
26  Jasmine:   no
27  Daniela:   I [did
28  Jasmine:     [she did (.) she's like
29             how are you brown((laughs))
30  Riki:      equators and that innit
31  Jasmine:   that's what so we can deal with the sun
32  Riki:      yeah ((high pitch))
33             Oh man oh Bobby((laughs))
34  Jasmine:   ((laughs)) I feel so horrible cause all we're doing
35             is laughing it's going to be like ha ha ha
36             ((students return to task-related talk))
```

Bobby instigates the play frame (line 1) and makes race an available resource for humour by positioning himself as both white and racialized (line 2). The play frame is taken up by both Jasmine and Riki (lines 3/4 and 6), suggesting that Bobby is legitimated here to make jokes of this nature. As Jasmine has already noted, Bobby can get along with 'us' and 'them', suggesting he operates across interactional regimes. The reason for Jasmine's positioning of Bobby as Sri Lankan is unclear. However, this draws Riki into positioning Jasmine as Bobby's sister (line 6). When she resists this positioning (line 11), Riki's teasing essentialism 'you're still brown same difference'(38) again indexes racist discourses and ideologies, overriding Jasmine's claim to ethnic/national differentiation with a racializing categorization. This is cued as a tease by the fact that Riki has recently referred to himself as brown and it is recognized as such by Jasmine, who responds with laughter and apparent mock agreement. Here, there appears to be a dual target of the playful talk. Firstly, there is 'teasing' directed at Jasmine as the addressee or hearer who is present and 'becomes the

center of an interaction in which a humorous frame has been set up.' (Boxer & Cortez-Conde, 1997). Secondly, there is 'joking' where the humour is aimed at absent others (Boxer & Cortez-Conde (1997:280). In this case, the target of the joke might be considered racist ideologies through parody of those who would adopt them, as observed by Van de Weerd (2019). This kind of in-group parodying of racializing ideologies was also shown in an educational context by Rosa (2016) in his raciolinguistic study of the use of 'inverted Spanglish' by Mexican and Puerto Rican youth in the US. Chun (2004:264) argues that such practices when performed by authenticated marginalized subjects, reproduce racializing discourses while simultaneously decontextualizing and deconstructing them. Authenticated speakers are legitimized to tell these jokes by an ideological assumption that permits the 'mock[ing of] stereotypical features commonly attributed to a community in which they can authenticate their membership' (ibid:278). Riki is authenticated here by the fact that he explicitly identifies as 'Brown'. However, Jasmine does not identify explicitly as Brown and repeatedly positions herself as Indian. This aspect of Riki's remark perhaps tends more towards the reproduction of racializing discourses and with it the 'biting' that accompanies the 'bonding'.

After a brief discussion of where she and Bobby were born (lines 15-16), Jasmine teases Riki, saying look at him (line 18). Riki takes this to be a positioning in relation to his own 'brown-ness' and responds by differentiating himself and suggesting a sociocultural dimension to brown-ness 'yeah but I'm not that part of that Brown society you're the' (lines 19-20). This differentiation is an attempt at stratification of the community membership from which Riki draws his legitimacy for mocking Jasmine. Chun (2004:273) highlights practices of in-group mocking that serve to elevate the mocker while derogating the mocked. In this case, Riki appears to be exempting Filipino brown-ness from that he associates with being Sri Lankan or Indian. Daniela asks him to elaborate on his distinction 'how are <u>you</u> brown?' (line 21).

Riki responds by straightforwardly stating his ethnic heritage Filipino (line 22) but Jasmine calls attention to a transgression '((loud laughter)) that's' so rude ((laughing))((loud laughter)) oh my god ((squealed)) (line 24). Since Jasmine met Riki's racializing tease and denial of her claim to ethnic differentiation with ready acceptance and laughter (line 14), the transgression appears to be a matter of Daniela's legitimacy rather than the use of the category in itself. Daniela is implicitly positioned as the 'out-group' that such 'in-group' bonding necessitates (Boxer & Cortez-Conde 1997:283). Both Riki and Jasmine are othered by the essentializing constructions of brown-ness indexed in the ironic jocular mockery instigated by Riki. As detailed previously, though, they share an orientation to interactional norms associated with 'rough areas' in London and to the ways in which discourses of race, class and gender articulate in this context. These orientations enable potentially hurtful othering discourses to be reworked as objects of ridicule to be laughed at (Van de Weerd, 2019; Winkler Reid, 2015). Daniela, as a white student from Bulgaria, however, is not legitimated. In this sense, her intervention appears to be seen by Jasmine as embodying the structural position of whiteness inhabited by the 'racially hegemonic perceiving subject' (Rosa & Flores, 2017:628). This raises the prospect that the object of ridicule is no longer necessarily exclusory racializing discourse, but subjects racialized as brown. It should be noted here that despite being positioned as 'out-group' here, as an Eastern European migrant Daniela may well have experienced racism in a UK context.

Although Riki initially fails to notice the transgression, asking, 'wait did I say something wrong?' (line 25), when Jasmine repeats Daniela's question to him (lines 28-29), his response is to extend his answer from Filipino to 'equators and that innit (line 30).' This framing of 'brown-ness' is capable of accounting for both Riki's (Filipino) and Jasmine's (Indian) heritage, offering the potential for solidarity and dispensing with Riki's earlier differentiation between himself and 'that brown society' (line 19). Jasmine confirms Riki's explanation

with ‘that’s what’ (line 31) and offers a biological explanation of phenotypical difference, ‘so we can deal with the sun’ (line 31). In her use of the pronoun ‘we’, Jasmine aligns with Riki and also implicitly with the label ‘brown’. Riki’s response (line 32) affirms Jasmine’s extended explanation with the result that they have co-constructed an explanation of brownness as a phenotypical trait of skin tone that is connected to climatic conditions in regions of the world closer to the equator.

This contextually dependent discursive reworking of ethno-racial identity supports Harris & Rampton’s (2009) assertion that the empirical support for Hall’s (1996a) ‘new ethnicities’ and Gilroy’s (2004) critique of ethnic absolutism can be found in analysis of everyday talk. Furthermore, racial identities can be seen to shift within specific interactions (Alim, 2016b:35). These changing borders of Brown-ness and resistance to racial categorisation might be argued to be characteristic of the transracial subject, described by Alim (2016a) as: ‘one who knowingly and fluidly crosses borders while resisting the imposition of racial categories – calling into question the very existence of the oft-heard question: What are you really?’. Analysis of these communicative practices makes visible the often unseen ideological and discursive conditions in which such practices are carried out. In Trechter & Bucholtz’ (2001:5) terms, the ethnographic context is utilized to detail how whiteness can ‘become unmoored from its unmarked position and float into seeing (and hearing) range.’

As Rosa and Flores (2017:637) argue, ‘analyses of shifting, intersectional positionalities and assemblages of signs must situate individual embodiments and language practices in relation to broader structures and patterns of power.’ The discourses of exclusion and difference indexed by Riki and Jasmine in these co-constructions have their roots in the British and European colonial project and the political project of colour-coded racialized capitalism that have served as justification for the continued dehumanization and oppression of people and populations racialized as other by them (Virdee, 2019; Shilliam, 2018; Rosa & Flores, 2017).

Riki's teasing denial of Jasmine's capacity to define herself outside phenotypical categorisation 'yeah but you're still Brown same difference' (line 13, Excerpt 7.11) is a jocular play on such dehumanizing discourses. The co-constructed response to Daniela's question 'how are you brown?' (line 21, Excerpt 7.11) shows that in racially hegemonic spaces such as the studio, Riki and Jasmine share an understanding that their jocular constructions of Brown-ness are vulnerable to misinterpretation. In Excerpt 7.1, Riki's ironic invocation of ethnonationalist exclusion 'you're not even European', (Excerpt 7.1, line 17) and 'you're Indian' (Excerpt 7.1, line 20) recontextualizes discourses of British identity prevalent at the time. Mondon & Winter (2020) detail how such far-right ideologies had been mainstreamed in sensationalist media in the service of campaigns for the UK to leave the EU. These discourses have been argued by Kundnani (2021) to rely on ideologies that have been central to neoliberalism from the outset in Hayek's political economy. Meanwhile, at an institutional level, exclusory discourses have been argued to inform HE equality policy in ways that construct students of colour such as Jasmine and Riki as deficient (Bhopal & Pitkin, 2020:543), reifying them as racial others who are the embodiment of social problems (St Louis 2009:568).

Here these discourses are recycled as part of an interactional regime in which participants show 'indifference to difference' (Valluvan, 2016:212) through multi-ethnic teasing that relies on the duality of a 'conflict paradigm' of race in media and political discourse alongside 'quotidian multicultural routines' (ibid:218). The regime involves the tough working-class stances that are familiar to Jasmine and Riki. This provides a welcome space of conviviality in the studio environment that Jasmine feels excluded from. The analysis of Jasmine's data suggests the studio is a racially stratified sociolinguistic space. Attention will now turn to Archer's navigation of the space.

7.3 Convivial resistance to racial hegemony (Archer)

As in the previous section, the analysis here centres on racialized positioning through jocular mockery. It focuses on audio-recorded interactional data captured by Archer and the narrative accounts he provided in interviews. The section is divided into two parts: part one provides analysis of interactional data to show how Archer instigates jocular mockery in a localised interactional regime with friends as a means by which to actively resist indexicalities generated by a racially hegemonic evaluative centre that racially positions him in the studio; part two analyses data relating to the broader ethnographic context of the studio as a whole, as provided in Archer's interviews and recordings. This analysis suggests a more commonly employed discursive strategy of silence and restraint in response to a studio-wide interactional regime in which racially hegemonic perceptions position him in ways that are constraining.

7.3.1 Jocular mockery: resisting and reproducing racially hegemonic discourse

The stretch of interaction analysed in part 1 (below) focuses on the use of jocular mockery to do identity work around issues of race. While the interaction is convivial and teasing in nature, I argue that it orients to a *racially hegemonic evaluative centre* in ways that can provide insight into the discursive conditions in which race and class are negotiated in the studio. By analysing the stances taken in the course of the interaction, the indexical orders and evaluative centres to which participants orient become apparent. This analysis allows for questions about the *orders of indexicality* that are valid and recognisable in this context (cf. Blommaert, 2007: 127).

7.3.1.1 Humour for Counter-hegemonic Critique

Analysis focuses on two transcribed excerpts, which have been separated for the purposes of analysis but which occurred as an uninterrupted sequence. The first excerpt centres around Archer's use of the word 'spicy' to position his friend Oliver. The use of 'spicy' is an attempt by Archer to recycle a flirtatious use of the term from a discussion initiated with Archer by

Rebecca 12 minutes prior to the start of the extract by asking him about his on/off relationship with her flatmate. In the course of their discussion, Archer compliments Rebecca on her earrings. She responds by saying that she thought they would spice her up a bit and asks Archer if she's looking spicy. Archer says he doesn't think spice is what she needs and that she probably needs watering down a little. Oliver joins the discussion five minutes prior to the start of the extract and is complimented by Archer on his new haircut. Kate appears to be sitting on an adjacent desk. At the start of the excerpt, Archer has picked up a pair of scissors to work on his design.

All four participants are 1st-year undergraduate architecture students approximately 5 months into their studies. The categorisations of participants below are derived from Archer's accounts and ethnographically available information on parental background, education and professional status.

Participants:

Archer: Male, Black British Nigerian, Middle Class

Oliver: Male, White British, Middle Class (Commuter student from local area)

Rebecca: Female, White British (from London)

Kate: Female, International Student from Dubai

Excerpt 7.12: Studio Interaction – Archer

1	Archer:	shit(.)fuck((whispered under breath))no((laughs))
2	Oliver:	did you cut yourself?
3	Archer:	ah fuck
4		((whispered under breath while laughing))
5	Rebecca:	(???)
6	Archer:	yeah(..) it's like bleeding inside
7	Oliver:	that's pretty (rah/raw)
8	Archer:	you're pretty (rah/raw) (.)
9		actually you look pretty fit so (???)
10	Oliver:	(???)
11	Archer:	nothing I just gave you a co[mpliment
12	Oliver:	[pretty (???)]
13		thanks Archer
14	Archer:	you never heard it so
15	Oliver:	means a lot
16	Archer:	doesn't count
17	Oliver:	I'll take your word for it
18	Archer:	you're looking(.) spicy
19		but [like
20	Oliver:	[spicy?
21	Archer:	British spicy
22	Archer:	so it's like bland really ((laughs))
23	Rebecca:	are you talking about me right now?
24	Archer:	no but I'm using your analogy
25	Rebecca:	OK fair
26	Oliver:	he's insulting you
27	Archer:	n:o it's a compliment >kind of<
28	Rebecca:	he was insulting me earlier
29		he's just [moving round
30	Archer:	[was I?
31	Rebecca:	oh no you weren't
32		actually you called me spicy didn't you
33		is that good thing though?
34		if you're saying it's British spicy
35		what does that mean↘
36	Archer:	[y:e:a:h
37		so it's not spicy at all

```
38  Rebecca:  so I'm kind of like bland as well?
39  Archer:   no you're not(.)
40            actually °are you British spicy?°
41  Rebecca:  ((laughs))am I British? ((laughing))
42            what other spicy could I be?
43            is there a difference between American spicy and
44            British spicy?
45            I feel like that's sort of the same
46            but then they sort of take things to an extreme a lot
47            of the time don't [they?
48  Archer:                     [yeah  y:e:a:h that would be an
49            American (.)
50            you're like closer to the American
51            (.) °no actually°
52  Rebecca:  y:e:a:h
53  Archer:   Kate's American
54  Rebecca:  Mexican spicy
```

From line 7, Archer's response to Oliver's suggestion that his injury is a bit 'pretty rah', sets up a fast-paced 'to-and-fro' between himself and Oliver that suggests a familiarity with this kind of banter between them that is supported by other episodes in the interactional data collected by Archer. When Archer says 'you're looking(.)spicy' (line 18), this qualifies his earlier remark 'you look pretty fit' (line, 9) (sexually attractive). The evaluative stance taken here by Archer recontextualises the term used in his early flirtation with Rebecca.

The remark carries over the positive sexual connotations from this earlier previous interaction, providing an in-group reference for the teasing of Oliver, which provides the opportunity for bonding and 'relational identity development' between Archer and Rebecca, who are in on the joke (Boxer & Cortez-Conde, 1997). The positive connotations of 'spicy' though are reversed when Archer adds 'but like British spicy' (line 21) so it's like bland really ((laughs)) (line 22). The opposition of blandness and spiciness invoked here might be

considered a discursive or cultural resource with which the participants (Archer and Rebecca in particular) co-construct identities in the course of interaction (Irvine & Gal, 2000:38). As Irvine & Gal (2000) note, such dichotomies work across scales drawing on the metapragmatic associations relevant at one level of relationship and projecting them on to another through a process of *fractal recursivity*. In this case, the qualities of spiciness and blandness associated with the cuisines of certain populations are projected onto the populations themselves. The spicy/bland dichotomy has been noted in sociolinguistic research on race. While Rosa (2019:170) notes how 'spiciness' can be used in racializing linguistic practices to position Latinx populations in a US context, Trechter & Bucholtz (2011) note the use of cultural blandness to frame whiteness. The success of Archer's teasing here relies on the activation of such associations and shared orientations towards them as discursive and cultural resources among interactants. That is, the teasing draws on an *indexical order* of presupposed schematizations of 'appropriateness' to context. These include pragmatic micro-level considerations of teasing Oliver and flirting with Rebecca to do relational identity work, which exist in dialectical relationship with metapragmatic associations at a macro-level of social order (Silverstein, 2003:227). Archer's joke relies on notions of Britishness as culturally bland and on Oliver (white, tall, ginger hair) looking British. In the initial instance, it is unclear whether Archer's positioning of Oliver as looking 'British Spicy' relate to physical characteristics or other aspects of his appearance such as style of dress. Nonetheless, ideologically, Britishness is constructed as a sufficiently visually homogeneous category for Oliver to be recognisably positioned within it. Accordingly, he is positioned as bland and in turn is teasingly positioned as sexually uninteresting.

After some discussion of who the comments were directed at and whether they were insulting (lines 27-31), Rebecca recognises that Archer called her spicy but asks 'is that a good thing though? if you're saying it's British spicy what does <u>that</u> mean↘' (lines 33-35). Rebecca

aligns with Archer's negative evaluation of 'British spicy'. She has accepted that the 'British spicy' comments were directed at Oliver and that Archer was just using her analogy (line 24) but implies that since they apply to Oliver they must also apply to her.

When Archer confirms that 'British spicy' means not spicy at all (line 37), Rebecca questions whether this makes her bland (34). Archer takes up the evaluative stance and stresses 'no you're not (.) (line 39) before suggesting a reappraisal 'actually °are you British spicy?°'(line 40). Archer's softened tone for the question 'are you British spicy?' suggests the question is rhetorical and emphasises the evaluative stance being taken and the position of relative power assumed. Rebecca laughingly asks 'what other spicy could I be?' (line 42), implying her options are limited. She suggests American, before saying: 'I feel like that's sort of the same but then they sort of take things to an extreme a lot of the time don't they?' (lines 45-47). The pronoun 'they' suggests that Rebecca does not identify as American but the fact that 'American spicy' is offered as an alternative suggests she could pass for American because of the way she looks.[19] This confirms an understanding of 'British spicy' as relating to cultural associations with phenotypical whiteness rather than some other aspect of appearance such as style of dress. The notion of spiciness being co-constructed here, then, relies not simply on nationality but indexes metapragmatic understandings of race and nation that associate phenotypical whiteness with Britishness and Americanness.

Trechter & Bucholtz (2001:5) note that the ideological power of whiteness rests in its unmarked status as the racial category against which others are marked, arguing that 'whiteness is usually absence, not presence: the absence of culture and color.' To use Trechter and Bucholtz' (2001:5) terms, Archer's explicit reference to blandness unmoors 'whiteness from its unmarked position bringing […] and into seeing (and hearing) range.'

[19] Although Rebecca later suggests 'Mexican spicy' (line 50), this suggestion is not taken up by Archer

This evaluative stance taken by Archer, and suggested by Rebecca, towards whiteness indexes a particular ideological position (Jaworski & Thurlow, 2009:220). The position taken while negatively evaluating whiteness as bland also arguably contests its ideologically unmarked status. The evaluative authority here lies with Archer as a black man negatively evaluating whiteness according to indexical qualities of blandness.

On the one hand, the data analysed here might be read as evidence of race and ethnicity as subsidiary incidental issues brought up in an 'unruly convivial mode of interaction' (Harris & Rampton, 2015). However, on the other, as with class in Rampton's (2003) study of class hegemony in classroom interactions, they might be argued to indicate the ways in which racially hegemonic understandings structure the processes of subjectivity at play in the discourse analysed in the studio. That is, the analysis might help us to see how participants' actions reproduce, recognise and/or resist the principles of race-thinking that structure 'their everyday sense of the world' (Rampton, 2003:54). Specifically, the example above demonstrates how Archer's counter-hegemonic critique of whiteness as culturally bland simultaneously resists and reproduces racially hegemonic notions of race and nation and the sexually exoticized, racially-marked other.

As the interaction continues, (Excerpt 7.13 below) Archer instigates confusion around his national and ethnic identity. This leads to jocular mockery that draws on ideologies of race, nation and belonging that attend his being racially marked as black in this setting.

7.3.1.2 Resisting positioning: how would you know?

Excerpt 7.13: Studio Interaction - Archer

55	Archer:	Kate's American
56	Kate:	I'm not American
57	Archer:	can you hear the way she speaks she's American
58		((laughing))
59	Rebecca:	[you sound American though yeah you're
60	Kate:	I'm not American
61	Oliver:	I thought you were American when I met you
62	Rebecca:	you're from Dubai right?
63	Kate:	yeah
64	Rebecca:	yeah
65	Kate:	I went to an American school
66	Rebecca:	O:h is that why?
67	Archer:	same thing
68	Rebecca:	you're from Wales right?
69	Archer:	no
70	Rebecca:	no?
71	Archer:	Jamaican
72	Rebecca:	yeah but you live in Wales
73	Archer:	°no yeah° ((to Oliver?)) didn't you know that?
74	Oliver:	I thought you were from Wales
75	Rebecca:	he can be both ((laughing))
76	Archer:	yeah I can be both ((laughing))
77	Rebecca:	((laughs loudly)) you're just Jamaican or Welsh
78	Archer:	[Jamaican (quietly)
79	Kate:	he's not Jamaican ((shouts))
80	Archer:	yes I am ((loudly))((laughing))
81	Kate:	you're from (???)Nigeria
82	Rebecca:	yeah [I believe that more
83	Archer:	[nah nah nah
84	Kate:	he's Nigerian (.) he's such a bullshit
85	Rebecca	(laughs) do you want to be Jamaican

86		is that what it is?
87	Archer	(laughs loudly)
88		((Kate telling a story in the background))
89		ah I should use that one more often
90	Oliver	(???) friend?
91	Archer	yeah
92	Oliver	oh
93	Archer	((laughs))

After some teasing discussion of Kate's nationality and its relationship to how she sounds, Rebecca switches the attention back to Archer to seek confirmation of her understanding that he's from Wales (line 68). When he denies this (line 69) (despite actually coming from Wales), she says 'no?' (line 70), signalling again that she thought he was from Wales (59). Archer responds 'Jamaican (line 67)', suggesting that he is from Jamaica, not Wales, although the choice of 'Jamaican' over 'Jamaica' means that this is not a direct rebuttal and leaves a hint of ambiguity. Rebecca accepts Archer's claim to be Jamaican but clarifies that she was referring to where he lives (line 72). In the next turn, Archer appears to be responding to an inaudible question or look from Oliver and says '°no yeah° ((to Oliver?)) didn't you know that?' (line 73). Oliver's reply, 'I thought you were from Wales' (lines 74) draws laughter from Rebecca as she says, 'he can be both' (line 75). This response from Rebecca implies that Oliver has suggested that being from Jamaica and Wales are mutually exclusive. That is, it indexes ethnonationalist ideologies and attributes them to Oliver. In fact, this is Rebecca's construction as Archer has already explicitly denied he's from Wales (line 69). Archer joins in, aligning with Rebecca 'Yeah I can be both ((laughing)) (line 76), his laughter cues the remark as tease. This remark also legitimates Rebecca's use of his ethnic/national identity as a subject for teasing. Rebecca repeats the implication of the construction she incorrectly attributes to Oliver, emphasising the mutual exclusivity understood in such ideologies through stressing the word 'or' (line 77) when she says 'you're

just Jamaican or Welsh' (line 77). The co-constructed teasing of Oliver rests upon an indexical order that is accessible to participants through a dialectic relationship between the (micro) flirtatious pragmatic considerations of Archer and Rebecca and the (macro) metapragmatic presuppositions of shared orientations to the ridiculing of ethno-nationalist discourse within the group. In this context, Oliver's supposed transgression is treated as something like a slip-up to be laughed about rather than an indication of ethno-nationalist ideologies.

Kate reveals that Archer is not Jamaican (line 79) and when he laughingly insists that he is (line 80), she points out that he is from Nigeria (Archer *is* from Nigeria and moved to the UK at the age of 10). Rebecca evaluates Kate's claim that Archer is from Nigeria to be more believable than Archer's insistence he is Jamaican, saying 'yeah I believe that more (70).' When Archer rejects this 'nah nah nah' (line 71), Kate repeats her assertion that he's Nigerian and says 'he's such a bullshit' (line 84). Rebecca laughs and offers an explanation for the situation, suggesting to Archer that the motive for his pretence is that he wants to be Jamaican (line 85). Archer responds to Rebecca's final evaluation of the situation by laughing loudly and saying, 'ah I should use that one more often' (lines 88-89) suggesting satisfaction with the outcome.

In a post-analytic playback interview with Archer, I sought to establish why he had denied that he was from Wales. The following excerpt of the interview shows his response:

Excerpt 7.14: Playback Interview - Archer

```
1   Steve:   she says you're from Wales right?
2            and you say no (1.0)
3            I mean what what what's your
4            i is there anything that you kind of want to say about
5            your reaction to that or
```

```
6   Archer:  erm I I feel like I was just flirting ↗
7            so I was just like I don’t know
8            it seemed like something stupid [so
9   Steve:                                   [yeah just kind of for
10           a laugh
11  Archer:  yeah yeah basically (.)
12           just kind of
13           cause I remember doing that a couple more times
14           erm like just cause people do ask that
15           and then just kind of like ha yeah I’m Jamaican
16           ((laughs))
17  Steve:   what people
18  Archer:   [???]
19  Steve:   pe pe pep people people ask what what what do they ask
20           if [you’re from?
21  Archer:     [like where are you from
22           and things like that
23           and then I sometimes
24           depending you know what the situation is
25           I’m just kinda taking the piss kind of like
```

At an immediate pragmatic level, Archer’s refusal to be positioned as Welsh and his positioning of himself as Jamaican serves as a flirtatious provocation (6). It places Rebecca in the potentially face-threatening (Goffman, 1967:5) position of having to take an evaluative stance toward the validity of the claim. Since such stance-taking is always ideological (Jaworski & Thurlow, 2009:220), this has the effect of bringing the ideological framing of these questions to the fore. On this occasion, Archer instigates a situation where questions of about where he is from are foregrounded.

However, as Archer makes clear in his post-analytic playback interview, this is also a reworking of an interactional strategy of ‘taking the piss’ (line 25) that Archer employs more widely in the studio when faced with the familiar question ‘where are you from’ (line 21) that

attends people who are racially marked in racially hegemonic spaces (Alim, 2016:36; Wei and Hua, 2016). When I ask 'why Jamaican?', Archer answers:

Excerpt 7.15: Playback Interview – Archer

```
1  Archer:  I don't know really ((laughing))
2  Steve:   is that the one you always use or do you?
3  Archer:  y:e:a:h ((laughing)) yeah I just feel like
4           well (.) how would you know ((laughs))
```

Here Archer appears to be drawing attention to the fact that the question 'where are you from' is about him being positioned as black. Since the question asks him to position himself in a way that can account for his skin colour in this setting, Archer's 'taking the piss' might be seen as a strategy of unsettling this relationship of positioner and positioned. Having repeatedly been asked to engage in this process of positioning himself according to his skin colour, he realises he can resist this imposition through bogusly positioning himself as Jamaican 'and then just kind of like ha yeah I'm Jamaican' (line 15, Excerpt 7.14).

Importantly, for the analysis here, these instances provide a lens through which the discursive space Archer is navigating can be brought into view. As a black man navigating the discursive space of the university architecture studio, among this group of white friends, he employs discursive practices of jocular mockery or takes the piss to disrupt or bring to the fore racially hegemonic norms and ideologies. Considered in this way, his actions can be seen as 'strategies to both succeed within [elite] institutions and simultaneously reject the personal reification of racial denigration and stereotyping' (Evans & Moore, 2015:450). They go some way towards 'calling into question the very existence of the oft-heard question: What are you really?' (Alim, 2016a). His refusal to answer straightforwardly might be seen to query the

epistemic validity of the question along with the status of the questioner: as Archer puts it, 'how would you know (Excerpt 7.15, line 4).

In the context of the interactions analysed above, Archer can invoke these strategies with humorous or flirtatious intent. Judgements about the appropriateness of doing so rely on access to an indexical order that embodies sufficiently shared orientations towards racialised positionings. However, in the polycentric environment of the studio, such orientations cannot be guaranteed, so other strategies are required. The following section considers more broadly the ethnographic context of Archer's recordings and the narrative accounts of positionings provided in his interviews to analyse these strategies and the discursive conditions to which they respond.

7.3.2 Navigating exclusory sociolinguistic space

7.3.2.1 Racial hegemony as 'neutral'

While episodes of extended talk in the studio, such as the one examined above, are not uncommon, they are infrequent and take place among a small number of students. For the most part, Archer's audio recordings are characterised by long periods of silence. This can be seen in Archer's interactional mapping of the studio (Figure 9 below) in which he identifies just a few students with whom he interacts during each project.

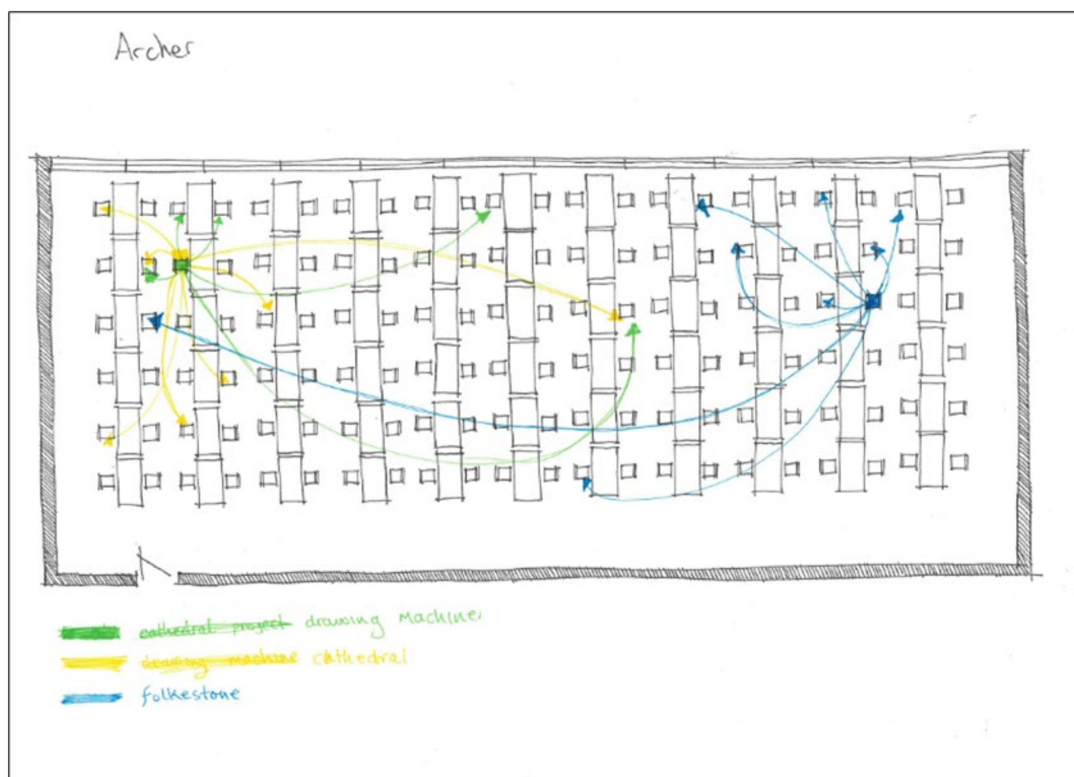

Figure 9. Interactional map: Archer

During the reflective interview in which we discussed Archer's interactional diagram, I asked whether there was a difference in the ways in which he spoke to tutors and students. In response, Archer identified a difference in his interactions with students:

Excerpt 7.16: Interview – Archer

```
1    Archer:   I feel like
2              (1.0)
3              when I'm friends with people
4              I'm a lot more (.) opinionated
5              and that that's the only difference like
6              but when I'm talking to someone I'm not that
7              close with
8              it's kind of a
9              (1.0)
10             n:e:u:t:r:a:l ((very slowly))
11             (1.5)
12             not viewpoint
```

13 but kind of neutral behaviour (.)
14 I just kind of keep to myself-
15 don’t make too big of a
16 (1.0)
17 buzz’
18 Steve: yeah (.) why why why do you think that is?
20 erm (.) £probably something to do with my
21 upbringing£
22 £I don’t know£ [((lau[ghs))
23 Steve: [((laughs))
24 Archer: ahh
25 Steve: and you said it was like counselling last
26 time [((laughs))
27 Archer: [((laughs))yeah
28 Steve: £errwha do you do wanna say anything£
29 about it
30 Archer: erm (.) well ((slowly)) cause (1.0)
31 m:y parents are immigrants
32 >well well so< am I-
33 -errmm well it’s it’s it’s always like / keep
34 to yourself ((whispered))/ you know
35 Steve: r:i:g:h:t really?
36 Archer: don’t make too much er too much trouble

Archer contrasts the ‘more (.) opinionated’ approach to interactions he employs among friends with a ‘n:e:u:t:r:a:l’ (line 10) approach when talking to people he is ‘not that close with’ (line 6/7). He explicitly differentiates this neutrality from the ‘opinionated’ approach referred to (line 4) instead, suggesting something more behavioural ‘kind of neutral behaviour’ (line 13). He elaborates by saying ‘I just keep to myself, don’t make too big of a (1.0) buzz’(lines 14-17). In this way, neutral behaviour is constructed as that which is inconspicuous and requires the exercise of restraint in interaction with others in order to avoid the excitement/commotion that would attend him behaving otherwise. When I invite Archer to speculate as to the reasons for this strategy (line 18), he smilingly suggests it might

connect to his upbringing before adding ‘I don’t know’ (lines 20-21). My response (line 25) references the fact that a fellow participant (Adam) had said that Archer told him the first interview was a bit like therapy. I had jokingly mentioned this to Archer in a pre-interview chat and we had laughed about it. After I ask him if he wants to say anything about it, Archer slowly suggests a connection with his parents’ immigrant status in the UK (line 31) before also positioning himself as an immigrant. Archer has lived in the UK since the age of 10. The statement >well well so< am I (line 32) is spoken quickly and appears to serve a corrective function. That is, it corrects a potential disalignment between Archer and his parents when he positions them as immigrants. It is interesting here to consider possible alternative formulations, for example ‘we are immigrants’. The fact that, in the first instance, Archer refers only to his parents might suggest he sees their position as immigrants as differing from that he ascribes to himself. In a *recontextualization* (Bauman & Briggs, 1990) of his earlier description of the interactional strategy he adopts in the studio ‘I just kind of keep to myself’ (line 14), Archer manipulates the form of the utterance, whispering the reported speech that constitutes his parents’ advice ‘keep to yourself’ (line 34). This performative recontextualization serves to emphasise the force of the advice while lending it a furtive quality by excluding potential overhearers. Following the surprise indexed in my response in my elongated question ‘r:i:g:h:t really?’ (line 35), Archer elaborates by adding ‘don’t make too much er too much trouble’ (line 36). This further recontextualizes his earlier remarks on his interactional strategy ‘don’t make too big of a (1.0) buzz’ (lines 15-16), both elevating the severity of the consequences of failing to keep to oneself from making ‘too big of a buzz’ to making ‘trouble’ and serving to further emphasise the degree of alignment between the two statements. Archer goes on to say that there is much more to this but that he would rather not say.

It appears that Archer is providing a metapragmatic commentary on the alignment of discursive strategies geared towards being inconspicuous that are appropriate to orders of indexicality that operate across scales (Blommaert, 2007; Blommaert, 2020) and impose interactional regimes on him and his parents requiring strategies of restraint. These strategies, he suggests, are appropriate to the experiences of immigrants in his hometown and to his own situation in the context of the studio. Applying Irvine and Gal's (2003, p. 37) notion of *fractal recursivity,* Archer is describing insider/outsider, conspicuous/inconspicuous oppositions that provide discursive resources for him to navigate between different levels of cultural fields he experiences at home and at university. That is, the oppositions that he applies to the experience of his parents' navigation of the wider community of his hometown appear salient to his navigation of the architecture studio. The connection with his parents' experiences suggests a connection with the continuation of postcolonial racist ideologies in which non-white immigrants are seen as troubling to the white British nation (Virdee, 2014).

Archer has experience of being positioned as troublesome in his education. In the course of his first interview on his educational journey, he explains that he was expelled from his High School for a one-off incident in which he punched a pupil who repeatedly racially abused his friend during a playground game of football. He says of this experience that he was naïve but he that he is not anymore. When I ask him what he means by this in our second interview, he says:

Excerpt 7.17: Interview – Archer

```
n:o:w er (1.5) I'm a bit more sceptical (.) about a lot of things
>but at the same time<
I don't let my scepticism kind of (1.0) run everything
```

Archer confirms that he was talking about being naïve to racism and goes on to explain that he was subject to racial bullying at school to which he was oblivious at the time but now

recognises as such. When I suggest that being sceptical but not ruled by scepticism must be a difficult line to tread, he says:

Excerpt 7.18: Interview – Archer

```
e:r:m
(2.0)
in a way-I don't think of it as difficult
it's just
(3.0)
I don't know it's just the way I would like to be treated
```

He then recounts something he reports always saying to a friend about how he wants to be treated:

Excerpt 7.18 (Continued): Interview - Archer

```
1   Archer:  when I enter a room I I want to be seen as
2            a man who is black-
3            -a man who just so happens to be black
4            rather than a black man in a way
5            obviously, you can't avoid the obvious
6            but I want like OK but what's he like
7            then?
8            oh… he's also this like that's kind of
9            like a side thing
10           but you know that's not the way that
11           everybody thinks
12  Steve    so you think that you that people define
13           you by your colour when they see you?
14  Archer   yeah in a lot of ways in subtle like ways
15           kind of like they do things and then
16           you're like ok cool ((laughs with exhale))
```

Archer describes being positioned by others' perceptions in ways that are activated visually and precede interaction (line 1). Contrasting how he is perceived as 'a black man' (line 4) with how he wants to be perceived as 'a man who just so happens to be black' (line 3), he draws attention to the essentialising nature of racially hegemonic perceptions (lines10-11). He distinguishes between essentialising and non-essentialising positionings, making clear that he is not suggesting that he does not want to be seen as black (line 5), only that he would like to be free of essentialising positionings that make his blackness a dominant characteristic that eclipses others. He is resigned to these perceptions, which suggests they are hegemonic (lines 10–11), forming part of his everyday social calculations. When I ask 'so you think that that people define you by your colour when they see you?', his response, 'yeah in a lot of ways in subtle like ways kind of like they do things' (lines 14–15) suggests that he recognises when being positioned in such ways and treats it with wry acceptance 'and then you're like ok cool ((laughs with exhale))' (lines 15-16).

The racially hegemonic perceptions (Rosa and Flores, 2017:628) Archer describes position him according to racially-unmarked white norms against which phenotypical blackness is racially marked. In the studio, this racial-markedness appears to articulate with high/low binaries of class.

7.3.2.2 Indexical inversion: looking like a Londonish accent

In order to establish whether Archer experiences these perceptions in the studio, I ask if he is finding this at university as well:

Excerpt 7.19: Interview – Archer

```
1   Archer:  Yep yeh erm well it's a bit less because I feel like
2            people are a bit more exposed but still kind of yeah
```

```
3   Steve:   Can you is there is there any kind of example you
4            might give or something like that?
5   Archer:  erm well people always assume that I'm
6            cause apparently I have a Londonish accent
7   Steve:   right
8   Archer:  so people always assume I'm from London
9            and then they kind of make judgements
10           and then they meet me and they're like
11           oh so you're not you're
12           not like a roadman or whatever ((laughs with sigh))
13  Steve:   ((laughs with sigh)) yeah
14  Archer:  OK honey ((sarcastically))
```

Archer suggests the assumptions shaping others' perception of him are due to his Londonish accent (line 6). His use of *apparently* (line 6) suggests this is something he has been told rather than something he recognises for himself. In fact, in over 10 hours of audio recordings, this is not something I was able to discern either. I noted one example of an interaction in which Archer employed some features of CUV (Rampton, 2011b; Rampton, 2015), or what Cheshire et al. (2011) label Multicultural London English (henceforth, MLE), in interaction with a group of female students he had gone for lunch with:

```
I don't know I was out /with ((wIv))/ (1.0) I was out with Sarah
```

However, this was notable as a one-off example of socially strategic stylisation (Snell, 2010) or accommodation, followed by a possible 'self-correction', rather than a more commonly detectable feature of his language use in this context. In general, I was not able to discern any phonological or grammatical features associated with regional variation in Archer's speech. His speech tended to align with standardised norms that are indexical of middle-class status in a UK setting (Snell, 2010). Despite the absence of linguistic features that might be associated with London, Archer reports that in the first year, people said it a lot (playback interview) and even comments that he hears it when listening back to the recordings.

Nonetheless, Archer contends it is this apparent Londonish accent that leads people to assume he is from London and in turn that he is 'a roadman or whatever' (line 12). Roadman is a term used to describe young men affiliated with working-class urban street culture and is indexically associated with exaggerated/strong-form CUV/MLE (cf. Ilbury and Kerswill, 2023). The Cambridge English Dictionary (2021) entry for 'roadman' reads: 'someone, usually a young man, who spends a lot of time on the streets and may use or sell drugs or cause trouble.' Ilbury (2023) has analysed the use of 'roadman' as a stylistic identity in parodic video performances on the social media platform TikTok. He shows how stylisation around features of MLE in the videos are used to circulate 'anti-poor and anti-black' representations of working-class men evoking 'colonial logics that equate Blackness with hypermasculinity, violence, and criminality'. As such, Ilbury (2023) documents a process of 'raciolinguistic enregisterment' in which 'signs of race and language are naturalized as discrete, recognizable sets.' That is, the linguistic features of youth speech associated with the 'roadman' have become iconic racialised representations of working-class males (cf. Irvine and Gal, 2000, p. 37). This leaves the question of why people 'always assume' (line 8) on the basis of his speech that Archer is a roadman from London, despite an absence of these recognisable linguistic features, before they get to know him.

This can be explained by the phenomenon of *indexical inversion* (Rosa and Flores, 2017, p. 628) in which language ideologies are associated with social categories in ways that 'produce the perception of linguistic signs.' That is, rather than emanating from Archer as a racialized subject, the language practices are produced by raciolinguistic ideologies that systemically stigmatize 'linguistic practices of racialized populations […] regardless of the extent to which these practices might seem to correspond to standardized norms' (Rosa and Flores, 2017, p.

628). It appears that he is frequently heard as a *roadman or whatever* (line 12) despite an absence of linguistic features evident in the repertoire he employs in the studio because of youth language ideologies by which urban youth speech has come to index low-status, ethnic Otherness of the roadman (from the perspective of the white perceiving subject) and social problems (Androutsopoulos, 2010; Jonsson et al., 2019; Ilbury, 2023). The mutual constitution of ideologies of class and race means that Archer is racially positioned by others in the studio as low status on the high/low binary despite the relatively high status attributed to his middle-class background and indexed by his language use. When I refer Archer back to his earlier comment about the judgements people make about him (line Excerpt 7.19, line 9) and ask what kind of things he thinks they assume, he says:

Excerpt 7.20: interview – Archer

1	Archer:	I think they just assume your temperament
2		erm they just assume the way that you conduct yourself
3		and I' I feel like I'm quite lucky er like if
4		I might be wrong
5		but I feel like
6		if you speak to me for like a very short period
7		you get the impression
8		that like I'm just a chill person
9	Steve:	mhhm
10	Archer:	er whereas someone else
11		who is just like genuinely a nice person
12		but they're more confident blah blah blah
13		and you speak to them for a bit
14		like it might not break that that I don't know that
15		first
16		impression of you straight away
17	Steve:	right
18	Archer:	and it might linger for a bit
19		and just become like the permanent way
20		that they think of you

Archer considers himself lucky (line 3) in that the assumptions about his temperament and conduct (lines 1–3) that attend him in the studio can be dispelled through interaction that gives the impression he is *just a chill person* (lines 6–9). To better understand why he considers this impression might be formed, it is worth returning to Archer's reflections on his interactional strategy in Excerpt 7.16. The 'kind of neutral behaviour' (Excerpt 7.16, line 13) that Archer employs with students he is 'not that close with' (Excerpt 7.16, lines 6–7) appears to be a response to perceptions that would position him as black and therefore not chill. Archer is describing an indexical order that is activated in the studio. In his judgements of appropriateness to context, he shows restraint at a pragmatic micro-level in order to mitigate presuppositions of his temperament and conduct that draw on metapragmatic associations with blackness in this institutional setting. Such strategies of restraint have been noted by black participants in studies of racialization in elite institutional spaces (Mehji, 2015, p. 238; Evans and Moore, 2015). In Evans and Moore's (2015) study across settings in Law schools and the commercial airline industry, one participant's account of having to 'fly under the radar' (ibid., p. 447) in conversations with colleagues resonates with Archer's *neutral* behaviour of keeping to himself (Excerpt 7.16, line 14). Another participant in Evans and Moore's study says, "I try to voice my opinions and give my information in the calmest way that I can because I don't want them to think that I am the angry black man" (ibid., p. 446). This careful management of perceptions when expressing opinions shows similarities with Archer's contrast between the 'a lot more (.) opinionated' (Excerpt 7.16, line 4) approach adopted with friends and the 'n:e:u:t:r:a:l (1.5) not viewpoint but kind of neutral behaviour' (Excerpt 7.16, lines 10-13) he adopts with people he is not that close with.

Given that through a process of indexical inversion, Archer is positioned as a lower-class 'roadman' associated with violence and criminality, such strategies appear well-founded.

Outward projections of confidence with people who do not know him yet would perhaps risk making 'too big of a (1.0) buzz' (Excerpt 7.16, lines 15–17) and result in him being permanently positioned as conforming to the racialized stereotype. Archer suggests that black students who fail to attend to the racially hegemonic constraints of 'first impression' (Excerpt 7.20, line 16/17) in this indexical order risk permanent stigmatisation simply through projecting confidence in this context (Excerpt 7.20, lines 12–20).

This section has shown how Archer's presence as a man who is black, in this space, is conspicuous and carries a semiotic weight that indexes the aggressive, lower-class criminality invoked by the racialized figure of the 'roadman'. It is perceived to override other considerations of character in essentialist and racializing formulations, and even other forms of semiosis such as language through processes of indexical inversion. The analysis of Archer's interactions has illustrated how amongst friends, he can utilise jocular mockery to find some counter-hegemonic 'wiggle room' (Erickson, 2001:178) by which to resist and bring into view the white norms that position him in this way. Analysis of his interviews, however, shows that these norms are hegemonic in this context. What counts for 'neutral' behaviour in the studio is that which exercises restraint in the face of these racialized positionings in order to neutralise expectations surrounding blackness. Strategies of resistance and restraint are necessary 'to both succeed within these institutions and simultaneously reject the personal reification of racial denigration and stereotyping' (Evans & Moore, 2015:450). However, the analysis presented has found that these strategies rely on the negotiation of distinct interactional regimes and orders of indexicality which embody uneven and systemic stratification that correspond to 'patterns of authority, of control and evaluation, and hence of inclusion by real and perceived others' (Blommaert (2007:117).

7.4 Conclusion

In answer to research questions 1 and 1.1, this chapter has found that the discursive conditions of the studio make it a stratified sociolinguistic space in which a *racially hegemonic evaluative centre and a convivial* evaluative centre produce indexical orders and interactional regimes that are navigated by participants. This is revealed in the discursive practices of both Archer's 'piss-taking' and restraint and in the co-construction of Brownness through teasing by Jasmine & Riki. The positionings resisted and taken up by Jasmine and Archer have been found to evidence the interanimation of race and class (Chun, 2019:340). Riki and Jasmine develop relational identities through teasing around ethno-racial identities that presuppose shared understandings of interactional norms associated with the material socioeconomic conditions of 'rough areas' of London. Archer is positioned as lower-class as a result of negative stereotypes activated by an indexical order that associates lower-class status with aggression and black skin in the studio. In this way, race and class effect one another; the way they are racialised constitutes the way they are classed in the studio and vice-versa (ibid).

In relation to research questions 2 and 2.1, the sociolinguistic burden of orienting to an evaluative centre that positions them as racially marked is shouldered by Jasmine and Archer, pointing to similarities with the material conditions of inequality noted in Chapter 6 in relation to Dan. The discursive practices employed respond to the institutional practice of studio learning. The analysis found the reworking and resisting of ethnic categorisation in everyday talk (Harris & Rampton, 2009; Alim, 2016a), but rather than subsidiary incidental issues in an 'unruly convivial mode of interaction' (Harris & Rampton, 2009), these practices were found to provide convivial spaces through alternative interactional regimes from those which oriented to *a racially hegemonic perceiving subject* and operated more broadly in the studio. Chapter 2 detailed the histories of race and class that have centred around the

reworking of colonial logics of a white English genus and the racialized outsider. The positionings resulting from these exclusory discourses were invoked in the teasing between Riki and Jasmine, around the labels ‘brown’ and ‘Indian’. They were simultaneously resisted and reproduced in Archer’s ‘British spicy’ teasing of Oliver. The significance of the perceptions produced by these racializing ideologies in the studio is demonstrated by the indexical inversion that positions Archer as a ‘roadman’. These ideologies and discourses of exclusion articulate with material conditions in which the participants, in their ‘everyday social calculations’ (Hall, 1989:49, in Slack, 1996:124) as architecture students negotiate the widespread institutional practice of studio learning. In doing so, they find themselves navigating indexical orders that position them as subordinate to whiteness in a racialized order of class relations.

8 Conclusion

Having analysed the data in Chapters 5-7, this chapter returns to the research questions posed in the introduction. It summarises the findings in relation to each of the questions it has asked and sets out the theoretical, methodological and policy contributions it has made. Finally, potential directions for future research are suggested.

8.1 Findings

Each of the preceding data analysis chapters (5-7) has addressed the interrelated research questions posed. The following discussion responds to each of these questions in turn to consider how they have been answered across the chapters.

Research Question 1: What are the discursive conditions in which race, class and ethnicity are negotiated in the 1st year undergraduate Architecture studio?

The study has found that the discursive conditions in which participants negotiate race, ethnicity and class in the studio are polycentric (Blommaert, 2007:118). Multiple evaluative centres generate *orders of indexicalities* and *interactional regimes* (ibid:119) for participants and these are oriented to in distinct but often interrelated ways. Nonetheless, the findings presented in chapters 5-7 highlight that *all* participants orient in some way to an evaluative centre constituted by a 'racially hegemonic perceiving subject' (Rosa & Flores, 2107:628). This centre is recognisable in studies of interaction in educational settings (Rosa, 2019; Corona & Block, 2019) and in policy around language use in UK education (Cushing, 2022; Cushing and Snell, 2022). The *orders of indexicality* generated by this centre are 'valid and recognisable' (Blommaert, 2007:127) across different interactional regimes in operation within the studio and across the studio as a whole. They are utilised by students and the year convenor to negotiate positionings according to a racialised order of class relations in which whiteness occupies a position of dominance. In each of the interactions analysed, participants

resist, rework, and/or reproduce the indexicalities imposed on them by these orders through interaction.

The analysis found orientations to a second evaluative centre in the studio: that of the deserving self-responsible subject. This centre ascribes value to hard-working competitiveness and individual success as has been noted in critical sociolinguistic studies on neoliberal governmentality and education (Del Percio and Wong, 2020; Sunyol and Codo, 2020; Urciuoli, 2020). I have argued that through its neoliberal articulation, this evaluative centre is ideologically linked to the historical and contemporary construction of race and class in Britain/England (Kundnai, 2021, Shilliam, 2018) and thus articulates with racially hegemonic perceptions (Rosa & Flores, 2017). This articulation of the racially hegemonic and self-responsible deserving centres has been found to be integral to the discursive conditions of neoliberal HE navigated by participants (Discussed in Section 8.1.1 below, and in relation to research question 2.1).

Thirdly, the two centres described above are accompanied and resisted by orientation to an evaluative centre of conviviality. This centre ascribes value to a confident ‘indifference to difference’ (Valluvan, 2016:206) and building associations ‘that work with and through difference’ (Back and Sinha, 2016:518) against racialised hierarchies and structures (de Noronha, 2022:16). They are recognisable in critical sociolinguistic accounts of educational settings (Harris & Rampton, 2009; Rampton, 2005). The indexical orders and interactional regimes the centre generates are navigated through orientations to the discursive resources and practices indexical of working-class multicultures.

In pointing out the three evaluative centres, it is important to state that ‘the impact of certain centres of authority is bigger than that of others’ (Blommaert, 2007:120). The relative impacts of these centres will be addressed shortly in relation to the findings regarding research

question 2 and 2.1. First, I will address the discursive practices through which participants oriented to them by summarising the findings of the study in relation to research question 1.1.

Research Question 1.1: *What are the discursive practices through which subject positions are negotiated in the course of studio interaction and in narrative accounts?*

Orienting to *evaluative centres* requires the navigation of the *orders of indexicality* that they produce. This includes responding to the positionings that result from these orders. In Chapter 5, my analysis of Joe's subversion of the space centred around the use of a *spatial repertoire.* I found that he used the constraints and affordances of the space to engage with black cultural resources and working-class discursive practices to navigate *orders of indexicality* that associated whiteness with the position of the traditional academic. It was argued that Joe's going 'off script' from the epistemological positionalities that are prescribed by his institutional role (Singh, 2021:1170) resisted this subject position, thus revealing the script. That is, the normative values of the space were argued to assume racially unmarked white middle-class norms and interactional regimes that gave his actions a subversive or disruptive quality.

Joe's discursive practices also included evaluative stance-taking (Jaffe, 2005:9) in relation to hard-working-deservedness. This stance was adopted by Joe in briefing presentations and induction and was argued to orient toward an evaluative centre of the deserving self-responsible subject. The meritocratic reward of survival for the hardest working reproduces an order of indexicality in which deservedness and undeservedness are ascribed respectively to the winners and losers in a competitive environment. I argued that Joe's encouragement of self-governance through a combination of market logics and statistical ranking employs techniques central to neoliberal governmentality, exhorting them to play their part in the neoliberal games that govern them (Rose, 1999:xxiii). These techniques were interwoven

with discursive practices of humour and the cultural resources that distanced him from the figure of traditional academic and racially hegemonic perceiving centre.

Chapter 6 focused on the discursive practices of Gary and Dan. It found that each negotiated subject positions by orienting to an evaluative centre of a racially hegemonic perceiving subject while also orienting to other centres. Gary was argued to orient to both a racially hegemonic perceiving subject and the deserving self-responsible subject. The competitive self-capitalizing self (Sunyol and Codo, 2020:135) he constructs in his narrative positionings relies on notions of little platoons and class distinctions that appear to be fractally recursive of those noted by Shilliam (201:173) in the constructions of white elites that ultimately rely on racializing colonial distinctions between free and unfree labour (See Section 2.2 for a detailed discussion). Through orders of indexicality that construct whiteness as dominant, he positions himself as white, indexing intelligent non-conformism through his use of a ‘superstandard’ (Bucholtz, 2001:87) that is marked in the studio. The ‘crazy jokes’ and emergent anti-woke discourse operate to develop relational identities between him and his friends, positioning them as superior in comparison to marginalised absent others. The target of the joke, the single mother, and the reckless run-away father have been shown to be central figures occupying the low position (Shilliam, 2018:125-131) that constructs theirs as superior in this *order of indexicality.* Another example involves the racist populist framing of Islam which appears to recycle the views of a former UKIP MP. While much of what Gary says is highly objectionable and offensive, the analysis here centres on the hegemonic nature of the evaluative centre, from which these *orders of indexicality* and *indexical regimes* are generated. That is, the discursive practices Gary employs rely on racializing ‘frameworks of semiotic value’ in existence in the studio that inform his everyday social calculations. He uses the articulation of racially hegemonic and responsible self-deserving centres to negotiate a

subject position that is, in his ‘everyday social calculations’ (Hall, 1989:49, in Slack, 1996:124), dominant in the space.

Analysis of Dan’s discursive practices suggested the importance of a teasing form of humour to develop relational identities. An orientation to interdependency in his narrative positionings was accompanied by a convivial orientation found in his interactional data. The teasing was argued to rely on orientations to working-class interactional norms of ‘toughness’ (Pichler, 2006:227) and an evaluative centre of the racially hegemonic perceiving subject. This entailed convivial subversion of ethno-nationalist orders of indexicality that positioned Dan as outside of the nation by virtue of his Chinese heritage. Dan legitimated this jocular racial abuse despite the protestations of his interlocutors that it had gone too far, preferring to construct this as a place where the closeness of relations among ‘mates’ meant that there were different rules and norms, or *interactional regimes* that made him confident of their ‘indifference to difference’ (Valluvan, 2016). As such, the analysis found an orientation to the evaluative centre of the conviviality.

Analysis of Jasmine’s interactions in Chapter 7 showed similarities with Dan’s in Chapter 6 in the use of racialised teasing and adoption of tough stances indexical of working-class positionings to enable in-group bonding. The interactions in this group, particularly between her and Riki suggest an orientation to a convivial centre but an awareness that the indifference to difference might not be shared in this polycentric context. Analysis of narrative accounts highlighted how these discursive practices provided ‘comfort’ (cf. Ahmed, 2007:158) in a studio space where she felt excluded by the discursive practices of the majority in the stratified discursive space of the studio.

This stratification was also apparent in Archer’s accounts of the studio (Chapter 7), which suggested a racially hegemonic evaluating centre and orders of indexicality that positioned

him racially and in terms of class through a process of inverse indexicality as a potentially aggressive 'roadman.' His discursive practices in navigating these conditions rely on a fractally recursive reproduction of orders of indexicality operating at a greater scale that position his parents as immigrants and therefore people who should make themselves inconspicuous. However, like Jasmine, and perhaps Dan, he finds a *place* in the studio where with close friends he can be more 'opinionated' and employ resources that display a confident indifference to difference. In this interactional regime, he can subvert and disrupt the positionings imposed on him by racially hegemonic orders of indexicality. Racialising positionings become a resource for flirtation and 'piss-taking' at the expense of white friends. The regime has a convivial quality amidst the racism of the positionings in the wider studio.

The discursive practices analysed draw attention to the role of humour in finding space for innovation among the constraints of the social structure. Ethnic positioning was often the trigger for teasing and jocular mockery that reproduced and resisted racializing discourses. In the teasing episodes of Jasmine, ethnic positioning provided the construction of difference that constituted the playful 'nip' (Boxer & Cortez-Conde, 1997:284) against which the convivial stance of indifference was taken. In Archer's case, the sewing of ambiguity around his Jamaican or Nigerian ethnic heritage highlighted the subsidiary importance of such categorisations to being racially positioned as black in the studio (Chapter 7). Similarly, brownness was the relevant exclusionary category in Jasmine and Riki's interactions (Chapter 7). With the exception of Gary, participants did not directly invoke class positionings. Nonetheless, class positionings were found to be integral to the racialized subject positions negotiated by all participants. They were invoked in Joe's communicative repertoire to engender convivial relations, in Gary's distinctions from the figure of the single mother, in Jasmine's and Dan's 'rough' or 'harsh' interactional regimes and in the positioning of Archer as a 'roadman.' The need for such strategies of innovation around articulations of race,

ethnicity and class in participants' 'everyday social calculations' (Hall, 1989:49, in Slack, 1996:124) in the sociolinguistic space of the studio raises important questions about the material conditions of inequality that motivate the study and their relationship to the institutional practices and broader social orders.

Questions 1 and Sub-question 1.1 have drawn attention to the discursive conditions and practices at play. The second two research questions connect these discursive conditions with the material conditions of inequality. The relationship between the discursive and the material has been theorised using the concept of *articulation* (Hall, [1980] 2021; Hall, 1996b:147), understanding race, class and ethnicity as discursively constructed in contextually specific ways through studio interactions but in the material conditions of a historically produced present. The answers to research question 2 and sub-question 2.1, address these material conditions and specific historical contexts in relation to institutional practices and broader social orders.

Research Question 2. How do these discursive conditions relate to material conditions of inequality in HE?

The material conditions of racial inequality in the studio, can be observed in the shrinking and 'whitening' of the cohort over the three years of undergraduate study. These are borne out at a greater scale in the context of the stark material inequalities noted in architectural education and the profession as a whole (See Chapter 1, Section 1.1). The discursive conditions that students navigate have been found to include an orientation to an evaluative centre of the deserving self-responsible subject. This centre produces indexical orders in which in which success is meritocratically attributed to hard-working deservedness. The study has found that contrary to meritocratic discourses, racialised students face unequal burdens in their everyday navigation of discursive conditions that require orientation to a

racially hegemonic evaluative centre that assumes white dominance in a racialised order of class relations.

Gary mobilised the orders of indexicality produced by these centres to negotiate a position he constructed as dominant, whereas others were positioned by them in less advantageous ways. In Dan's case through the group relations that he and his interactants construct, race might be argued to become essentially insignificant (Gilroy, 2004:105). As argued above, its reworking as a legitimate topic for a joke with mates in an unruly mode of convivial interaction (Harris and Rampton, 2009) might be seen as evidence of a confident 'indifference to difference' (Valluvan, 2016:206). However, *orders of indexicality* that cast him as an outsider because of his Chinese ethnicity set the material conditions with which Dan must deal in the studio, positioning him as racially marked and imposing on him the sociolinguistic burden of attending to this positioning and navigating these orders. The material consequences of not engaging are a lack of much-needed relationships in the group-oriented work encouraged in the studio.

These consequences are felt by Jasmine, whose account of the studio suggests polycentric interactional regimes but identifies a majority interactional regime that minoritizes her and her friends with the effect that the communicative resources she employed at school enabling her to consider herself 'bubbly' and the 'loudest kid in the class' are not available to her. She identifies an example of these exclusory *interactional regimes* in the studio in the 'crazy jokes' of Gary's group of boys, which were found to be indexical of whiteness. Jasmine finds a 'comfort zone' in the unruly multi-ethnic working-class teasing of the technology group which constitutes an *interactional regime* oriented to a different evaluative centre of convivial multiculture.

In this stratified discursive space, Archer's strategy of restraint is another example of a response to being positioned as potentially aggressive by racially hegemonic perceptions that attend him in the studio. His cautious approach to avoiding appearing confident comes at a material cost to his ability to make social contacts in the studio. These discursive practices can be seen as reactive strategies employed by racialized subjects whose discursive strategies are carefully calibrated in response to ideologies that position them as outsiders (cf. Lo & Chun, 2018:11). As has been widely observed in sociolinguistic analyses of regimes of monolingualism (Alim and Smitherman 2012, Pennesi 2019, Rosa 2019, Shankar 2015, Zentella 1997, in Lo & Chun, 2018:11), this means 'engaging in sociolinguistic labor that those regarded as white are not held accountable for'. The strategies are perhaps particularly necessary in the interactional studio environment of architectural education. Studies have noted strenuous demands placed on students of architecture (CEBE, 2007) in a studio-based teaching system in which 'success hinged upon their forging of strong social networks' (CABE, 2005:70). The discursive processes involved in negotiating the institutional practices of architectural education at UniX and their relationship to broader social orders are addressed by the final research question.

Research Question 2.1: How do discursive processes interconnect with institutional practices and broader social orders in ways that relate to inequalities in educational outcomes in HE?

I have argued that Joe's reproduction of a discourse of meritocratic competition to motivate and prepare the students responded to an evaluative centre the deserving self-responsible neoliberal subject. In this way, the institutional practices of induction and briefings were argued to reproduce those found in the UniX equality policy and recent OFS policy discourse on inequalities. These discourses articulate with the ideologies of hard-working /idle, deserving/undeserving distinctions central to race and class in Britain (Shilliam, 2018) and neoliberal notions of competition rooted in Hayek's 'cultural evolution' (Kundnani, 2021).

They construct whiteness as a position of dominance in a racialised order of class relations. The analysis presented in Chapter 6 found that these discourses are taken up in the studio by Gary to position himself as dominant in the studio in ways that are fractally recursive (Gal and Irvine, 2019:43) of broader social orders. For example, I argued that the orders of indexicality they rely on are recognisable at greater scales in the racialised political discourse of 'blackened broken families' and absence of patriarchal hierarchy (Shilliam, 2018:125-131).

In this way, the evaluative centre of the neoliberal self-responsible subject articulates with that of the racially hegemonic perceiving subject in the context of the studio. The study has found that the discursive practices of humour, often through orientation to the evaluative centre of conviviality, provide a means of navigating these conditions through orders of indexicality that value a confident indifference to difference found in urban multicultures and interactional regimes indexical of working-class positionings. Nonetheless, these practices simultaneously reproduce the racializing discourses on which they rely. I argued also, in Chapter 5, that Joe's use of cultural resources oriented to this convivial evaluative centre in order to resist racially hegemonic perceptions that associate the figure of the traditional academic with white dominance in a racialised order of class relations. Simultaneously it reproduced racially hegemonic whiteness through the meritocratic ideologies attending the self-responsible neoliberal subject. The above examples, show how the convivial centre articulates with that of the racially hegemonic and the deserving self-responsible subject. Analysis of these articulations provides 'a way of seeing' that is attentive to forms of division and racism alongside and sometimes within multicultural convivialities (Back & Sinha, 2016:521) in a polycentric setting.

The close analysis of discursive practices and conditions has detailed 'ideological processes operating in and through polycentric and stratified systems' (Blommaert, 2005:173) to show

how ideological elements relating to broader social orders of race, ethnicity and class, have 'come under certain conditions, to cohere together with a discourse, and a [have] become articulated, at specific conjunctures, to certain political subjects' (Hall, 1996b: 142). However, this leaves the question of how 'the impact of certain centres of authority is bigger than that of others' (Blommaert, 2007:120); and how and why some articulations are more powerful and effective than others (Slack, 1996:124). To address this question, I will apply Blommaert's concept of *scale* to assess the 'multiple interrelated levels of spread and influence' (Singh & Spotti, 2021:371) that certain centres have.

Scale is the intersection between scope of communicability and value in terms of access to resources or political or sociocultural uptake (Blommaert, 2020:2). The scope of communicability of orders of indexicality produced by the racially hegemonic (white) evaluative centre that ascribes value to whiteness as a position of dominance in a racialised order of class relations has been traced from its colonial beginnings to its racist populist manifestations at the time of the study in Chapter 2. Analysis has found it to be part of the everyday social calculations (Hall, 1989:49, in Slack, 1996:124) of all participants in the studio space, shaping the value and function of the sociolinguistic repertoires (Blommaert et al, 2005:203) and reproducing material conditions of inequality. This suggests a high degree of uptake and an ideology operating with a long reach of 'historicity' (Blommaert, 2005:175).

Resistance to these centres was negotiated by orientation to a convivial evaluative centre and orders of indexicality found in the lived realities of multi-ethnic life in Britain. The scope of communicability of these orders and the access to resources they provide appear more limited. Dan and Jasmine locate them in the 'strong' or 'harsh' interactional regimes in the 'rough' or 'less sensitive' places of their upbringing; both note their lack of validity in the wider context of the studio (Section 6.16 and Section 7.2.1.2) while Archer must first negotiate being positioned as a potentially aggressive 'roadman' before safely engaging in

convivial interactions. Gilroy has emphasised the importance of convivial resistance among young people in conditions of economic inequality describing them as a 'bulwark against the machinations of racial politics' and constructions of race in wider contemporary British culture. There are historical antecedents to these orders of indexicality in organised multi-ethnic working-class resistance (Virdee, 2014) and a combative anti-racist response to exclusionary violence of the 1970s and 80s that drew on structures of feeling from 'the rougher end of the poor educational deal Britain offered to all its working-class youth' (Gilroy, 2021:8)[20]. These cultures of resistance have operated with greater scope of communicability in anti-racist struggles and their expression through music culture in punk and reggae, finding more organised political expression in the formation of *Rock Against Racism* (Gilroy, 1987:159) and later in less formal, more decentred manifestations in underground club scenes and 'alternative public spheres' that surround them (Gilroy, 2000:249). Nonetheless, these convivial orientations tend to be found in 'micro-publics' of everyday life (Back & Sinha, 2016:518) and are yet to find a more concerted political uptake (Virdee, 2019:24).

Back & Sinha, (2016:522) argue that conviviality offers 'an alternative understanding of culture that focuses on what people do every day rather than always reducing them to their cultural origins', but this is at odds with the fixed notions of identity offered by institutional discourse and initiatives around ethnic monitoring (2004:132). Their scope of communicability, in the institutional context of the university, is more limited. Kundnani (2002:68) has observed that the 'double-edged sword' of multiculturalism that led to efforts to address inequalities in 'the classroom' also took a politicised and rebellious black culture

[20] Gilroy (2021:9) has argued that these histories of resistance in Britain have been forsaken in favour of more spectacular viral narratives of cruelty, triumph and uplift from African American culture and experience.

off the streets and made it a means of preserving the status quo.[21] Chapter 5 detailed how Joe's spatial repertoires upscaled black cultural resources in the context of the academic space, subverting normative 'status quo' expectations of 'what can and can't be done in the space' (Blommaert et al., 2005) of the briefing room. These discursive practices, though, were articulated with a neoliberal orientation to meritocratic self-responsible deservedness in which those who work hardest and make the right choices are rewarded with success. The long history of deserving/undeserving distinctions around race and class (Shilliam, 2018) and their inscription into social policy and the institutional practices of the OFS and UniX was set out in Chapter 2. This articulation with racial hegemony has been argued to be central to neoliberalism (Kundnani, 2021). Against evaluative centres historically embedded in these political, economic and institutional structures, the convivial centre resists from a lower scale.

This is not to suggest a hopelessly static picture. As Slack argues:

> *The examination of and participation in communication – or any practice – is [...] an ongoing process of re-articulating contexts, that is, of examining and intervening in the changing ensemble of forces (or articulations) that create and maintain identities that have real concrete effects.*
>
> (Slack, 1996:125).

The present study aims to contribute both an examination and an intervention by drawing attention to these practices of low-scale resistance and the 'wriggle room' the convivial centre appears to offer to those 'walking uphill in the presence of social gravity' (Erickson, 2001:165). Singh & Bartlett (2017:54) claim that lower-scale resources can be valorized and 'can index higher scales of power and meaning in local sociolinguistic life.' The potential for

[21] Chapter 2 documented the dilution of such efforts from discourses of institutional racism to deficit constructions of affected students, and most recently to questions of choice and agency.

upscaling such interventions will be discussed in Section 8.1.3 on policy implications and Section 8.2 on future directions.

Having discussed the findings of the study, I will now set out its key contributions to theory, methodology and policy.

8.1.1 Theoretical Contribution

8.1.1.1 Whiteness and racial hegemony

The study makes a contribution to emerging critical sociolinguistic scholarship addressing whiteness through a raciolinguistic lens in a UK context (Cushing and Snell, 2022, Cushing, 2023). This research has drawn attention to whiteness through the racially hegemonic perceptions in educational policy in British schools and in teacher education (Cushing, 2023). The present study contributes an account of the impact of whiteness on everyday interactions and social calculations in the educational setting of the university.

As discussed in Chapter 2, the issue of whiteness in Higher Education has been contested in the recent Commission on Racial and Ethnic Disparity (CRED, 2021) and has been noted as of central importance to addressing inequalities in research on race (Bhopal, 2016; Back, 2004; Pilkington, 2018). The raciolinguistic perspective adopted in the study treats whiteness as 'a historical and contemporary subject position that can be situationally inhabited both by individuals recognized as white and non-white' (Haney-Lopez 1996, in Rosa & Flores, 2017:628). It takes its historical construction from histories of race and class in Britain (Shilliam, 2018; Virdee, 2014) in which whiteness can be seen to occupy a position of dominance in a racialised order of class relations. In this way, it follows research in UK HE into race and class that has found 'dominant notions of class in Britain are 'shaped and informed by whiteness even when whiteness is not explicitly named' (Rollock, et al., 2014:171).

The theoretical contribution has been to combine a raciolinguistic perspective with polycentric *orders of indexicality,* and *articulation.* A raciolinguistic perspective refocuses attention from the 'empirical linguistic practices of racialised subjects', towards 'interpretive and categorizing practices of racially hegemonic perceiving subjects' (Rosa & Flores, 2017:628). These perceptions can be enacted by 'non-human entities' such as institutions and policies (ibid). The current study has extended the notion of 'non-human entities' to include the multiple evaluative centres we attend to in interaction with others (Blommaert, 2007:118) and the 'patterns of authority, of control and evaluation, and hence of inclusion by real and perceived others' that they produce as 'orders of indexicality' (Blommaert, 2007:117). This theoretical move places the focus on 'the reproduction and rearticulation of broader racial and linguistic structures within emergent contexts' rather than on racial and semiotic flexibility at the level of individual bodies (Rosa & Flores, 2017:636). Using Hall's notion of articulation, these racial structures in emergent contexts are theorised in the specific historical contexts in which they are discursively produced and in articulation with the material conditions of inequality in which they come to inform subjects 'everyday social calculations' (Hall, 1989:49, in Slack, 1996:124).

8.1.1.2 Race and class as mutually constitutive

A second contribution made by the study is to the theorization of race and class as mutually constitutive and interanimating in everyday day interaction. This contribution responds to Gillborn's 2010:5) suggestions that 'serious critical work on intersectionality' in educational research needs to 'detail these complexities and account for how categories and inequalities intersect, through what processes, and with what impacts.' The contribution of this study is to provide a particular focus on the 'processes.'

The approach taken is underpinned by Hall's notion of articulation (Hall, 2021 [1980]:199) and his insistence that the analysis of racism takes account of historical specificity and class.

Thorough historical accounts of the British context have recently been written (Shilliam, 2018; Virdee, 2014; Kundnani, 2021). On the basis of these accounts, the position taken in the study follows Shilliam's (2018:180) claim that 'class is race' and that 'there is no politics of class that is not already racialised'. This approach is also compatible with a raciolinguistic perspective that sees race and class as co-constituted (Rosa & Flores, 2017:635). The analysis in Chapters 5-7 has presented the relationship between hierarchies of race and class to be one of 'interanimation' (Chun, 2019:335) in which one does not simply *affect* the other but *effects* it by bringing it about. Both race and class are understood to be reproduced in emergent, relational discursive constructions of everyday interaction (Bucholtz & Hall, 2005; Chun, 2019).

8.1.1.3 Racialised neoliberal governmentality

The sociolinguistic literature on neoliberal subjectivities and governmentality reviewed in Chapter 3 (Martín Rojo & Del Percio, 2020) has provided important insight into the discursive processes by which neoliberal subjectivities are negotiated and their disproportionate effects on racialised subjects (Urciuoli, 2020; Wong, 2020). However, by incorporating perspectives on racialised neoliberalism (Kundnani, 2021; Shilliam, 2018) the discussion (Chapter 2) and analysis (Chapters 5 and 6) presented in this study have suggested that the construction of neoliberal subjectivities itself can be seen as a racializing process involving constructions of self-responsible deservedness in racially hegemonic educational space.

8.1.1.4 Conviviality amid racial hegemony

The current study contributes to theories of conviviality that have emphasized its capacity as a conceptual tool to understand the 'paradoxical coexistence of racism and multiculture' (Back & Sinha, 2016:518). It has similarities with critical sociolinguistic studies in educational settings that have found an 'unruly convivial mode of interaction' (Harris and

Rampton, 2009) and ethnographic studies that have noted a means of playfully upending the reification of difference (Winkler-Reid, 2015). These studies analyse the interactions of participants acknowledging that they take place in the context of racism. However, the approach taken in the current study also presents situated analysis of the racialised orders of indexicality that these discursive practices work against in the buzzy polycentric atmosphere of the multi-ethnic spaces of the briefing room and the studio. The ‘conflict paradigms’ (Valluvan, 2016:218) of ethno-nationalism in media and political discourse surrounding ‘quotidian multicultural routines’ (ibid.) are often reworked in the teasing interactions of participants. As de Noronha (2022:160) has argued, the observation of convivial relations should not mask or minimize the racial hierarchies and structures against which they exist. The approach taken in this study contributes a way of theorizing how these structures are discursively constituted and navigated. Back and Sinha (2016:522) argue that conviviality offers ‘an alternative understanding of culture that focuses on what people do every day rather than always reducing them to their cultural origins’. This has been underpinned by the methodological approach taken.

8.1.2 Methodological Contribution

The study makes a methodological contribution to Linguistic Ethnography by combining the anti-essentialist orientation of existing LE-informed studies with a raciolinguistic perspective that simultaneously accounts for the discursive constraints at play in the interaction. An additional contribution is the ethics in practice approach that was adopted to inform methodological reflexivity.

The study follows earlier LE research in UK educational settings that has utilised the capacity of fine-grained linguistic analysis along with Cultural Studies to provide anti-essentialist accounts of identity negotiation (Harris, 2006; Harris & Rampton, 2009). Such everyday accounts have been considered missing in Cultural Studies, which has been critiqued for

centring analyses on the textual (McRobbie, 1992:730, in Harris, 2009:499), the spectacular (Harris, 2009:500) and the visual (Harris, 2006:5). Research in the Sociology of Education, on the other hand, has drawn on Hall's notion of *articulation* to move away from static conceptions of culture and engaging with processes of articulation to understand how identities are shaped in complex historical processes (Shain, 2003:132). These accounts have examined the role of discourses of race, class and ethnicity in identity construction in school settings (Shain, 2013). Sociolinguistic accounts have to date not used *articulation* in this way. The methodological contribution of the current study is to use the tools and procedures offered by linguistic ethnographic analysis to engage with processes of articulation in ways that pay close attention to the indexical processes at play in the shifting contexts of everyday interaction where race, class and ethnicity are discursively reproduced.

In one sense, this methodological approach sits in tension with a raciolinguistic perspective described above, which argues for a refocusing of attention from documenting the 'empirical linguistic practices of racialised subjects', towards 'interpretive and categorizing practices of racially hegemonic perceiving subjects.' In fact, the contribution of the approach in the current study might be described as directing attention towards the 'interpretive and categorizing practices of racially hegemonic perceiving subjects' *through* documenting the 'empirical linguistic practices of racialised [and non-racialised] subjects' applying the theoretical approach set out in the previous section. This methodological approach is less concerned with the subjects who produce linguistic practices than with the 'real and perceived others' (Blommaert, 2007:117) that constitute the evaluative centres to which they orient. Nonetheless, the approach does require close work with individual participants and this has required ethical and methodological considerations regarding the positionality of the researcher.

As detailed in Chapter 4, I treated the negotiation of my positionality as a white researcher engaging with issues of race as a cause of potential harm and an ethical issue requiring ongoing methodological reflexivity and modifications to the research design. While reflexivity is central to LE, tensions exist in accounting for positionality in studies that take assumptions about identity as their object (Copland and Creese, 2015:26). The account presented in this thesis contributes an attempt to address this tension while resisting essentialist framings of identity.

8.1.3 Policy Contribution

Chapter 2 detailed the shift in policy context that took place during the course of the study. The funding application for the study described it as taking place in 'a political climate where tensions around race, ethnicity and social class have surfaced as separate but increasingly urgent questions of social justice.' As the study progressed, this urgency increased. Chapters 1 and 2 detailed the urgency with which questions of racial injustice, in particular, were mobilised in the protests following the murder of George Floyd and the toppling of the statue of slaver Edward Colston by black and white protesters in Bristol. The policy response of the UK government was to treat race and class as increasingly separate, locating disadvantage in a 'left behind' white working class and locating issues of racial inequality in individuals by emphasising the importance of agency and choice (CRED, 2021:7). The effects of institutional and structural racism were diminished and denied (Tikly, 2022:470; see also Warmington, 2024). The use of equality data in education formed a part of the CRED report's argument, denying the mutual constitution of race and class and treating them as part of a multivariate analysis through which class can be controlled for (Tikly, 2022:475). In this context, the present study contributes an account of race and class in education without relying on static and separate identity categories inhering in individuals that run counter to the current direction of policy.

The study has found a differential burden placed on racialized students by racially hegemonic perceptions that are reproduced by meritocratic discourses of deservedness. This suggests the need for a fundamental policy shift away from discourses of choice and meritocratic equality of opportunity. Instead, policy aiming to address inequalities of race and class in education should respond to their historical and contemporary mutual constitution and the role HE plays and has played in their reproduction by inscribing deserving/undeserving distinctions at the heart of social policy (Shilliam, 2018:121). This would require abandoning the approach detailed in Chapter 2 in which class is treated as structural and race as an issue of discrimination and treating both racial and class-related inequalities as social injustices requiring both recognition and redistribution (Fraser, 1995). The present study has highlighted ways in which racialized structures are discursively and materially reproduced in educational settings. However, the lack of attention to a wealth of existing qualitative research (Tikly, 2022:473), the disassociation of ‘impediments and disparities’ faced by ethnic minorities from systemic issues in the recent report by the Commission on Racial and Ethnic Disparities (CRED, 2021) and the subsequent retreat from issues of racial inequality in HE by the OfS detailed in Chapter 2 suggest that such shifts in policy would require an unlikely, perhaps inconceivable, about-turn.

In the absence of such action, change is required within the university. In part, such efforts are underway in increasing calls for decolonization of the university. Nonetheless, it has been argued that such efforts, even when embraced by senior management for financially strategic reasons, face significant difficulties in institutional co-option and dilution of its radical message (Shain et al., 2021). Shain et al. (2021:934) suggest the need for bottom-up approaches in which student and staff activists make connections with other grassroots movements to head off institutional co-option. Similarly, Tikly (2022:482/3) notes a need to link up efforts to decolonize the curriculum with those aiming to secure a better reflection of

working-class histories and to challenge stereotypes and norms around gender. The findings of the present study suggest the importance of such connections through its account of how the interanimation of race and class reproduce inequalities in education.

Shain et al. (2021:922) follow (Quijano, 2000) in defining coloniality as the 'ongoing logic of domination underlying imperial conquests and Eurocentricism in shaping the knowledge and culture of institutions.' The present study has found such 'ongoing logics' in its microanalysis of the culture of the institution as it is negotiated and reproduced in interaction that orients to a racially hegemonic perceiving subject. The decolonial project aims to understand and disrupt these logics (Shain et al., 2021:922). The present study has found such disruptions alongside colonial logics.

Joe's subversion of the space of the briefing room in Chapter 5, was not the result of a coordinated top-down or even bottom-up effort to address racial inequalities by reference to ethnic categories – it was the result of lived experience of convivial relations and cultural practices not normally associated with the more distancing norms of such institutional spaces. As such it was a subversion of racially unmarked white norms that disrupted the 'repetitive signification of race and space as naturalized' (Wu et al, forthcoming). Similarly, students' everyday interactions displayed a 'confident indifference to difference'(Valluvan, 2016:212) familiar from their everyday experience outside of the university. The harsh jokes around ethnicity of Dan's mates from the area where he grew up (Chapter 6, section 6.16) and Jasmine's 'strong jokes' from her 'rough area' (Chapter 7, Section 7.2.1.2) were found to provide familiar resources for the interactional regimes that resisted racially hegemonic perceptions in the studio. These might be seen as unco-opted disruptions of coloniality in the culture of the institution. The study has found them to operate on a much lower *scale* than the racializing discourses they disrupt and emphasized the existence of racism with and alongside these relations. Nonetheless, these disruptions indicate the co-existence of frameworks of

semiotic meaning in the sociolinguistic space that do not operate according to colonial or institutional logics and as such might offer important insights to bottom-up efforts to decolonize.

The research involved in the theoretical and contextual underpinnings of the current study has already informed a contribution to bottom-up staff and student activism through my co-authorship of a stimulus paper for the Higher Education Race Action Group. *Beyond BAME: Rethinking the politics, construction, application, and efficacy of ethnic categorization* (Da Costa, et al., 2021). The paper responded to dissatisfaction across the HE sector with the institutional categorisation of ethnicity in the face of racial inequality. The paper appears to have been of use to practitioners across the sector and has to date received over 3,500 downloads.

8.2 Directions for Future Research

A possible direction for further research would be the incorporation of gender and its articulation with race, ethnicity and class. This is a result of the lack of engagement with gender in the present study, which, as noted in Chapter 1, resulted from a focus on established patterns of inequality in HE. Over the course of the study, it became apparent, in particular, that heteronormative masculinities are articulated with discursive constructions of race and class. Nonetheless, this falls outside of the scope of the present study.

In its treatment of race and class as mutually constitutive, the study aligns with Shilliam's (2018:179-180) observation that a historically informed view shows that race is not a minority issue and that the pursuit of social justice requires analysis and ethical engagement with class as race. This study provides a contribution to such analysis and engagement through the empirical analysis it has presented. However, the study is specific to the institutional practices of architectural education in HE. Future research could usefully extend

the approach to different sites of education. In addition, the theoretical framework and methodology could usefully be applied outside of educational contexts in order to establish the discursive conditions in which inequalities are reproduced.

Despite finding that social structures of race and class continue to reproduce inequalities through everyday interaction in academic space, the study has also highlighted the existence of places of conviviality. As has been shown repeatedly through this study, these are not spaces outside of racism. Nonetheless, their existence provides important resistance to racially hegemonic conditions that perhaps offers something of the small window of hope and resistance that Virdee (2018:24) deems necessary in avoiding the politics of despair in a climate where political discourse 'recast[s] the real injuries of class through the politics of racist resentment (Virdee, 2018:24). Virdee (ibid) sees such hope in the increasingly educated children of the manual working class who are pushed into precarious forms of employment (2018:24) and argues that it needs to find a political form representative of its everyday multiculture. To do so it needs to 'absorb and demystif[y] the differences inscribed into its collective body by historical capitalism (Virdee, 2019:24). The direction of Virdee's argument suggests the promise of anti-essentialist accounts of race and class that can account for the 'ordinary hybridity' of everyday life while taking account of the mutually constitutive inequities of race and class. I hope that this thesis has offered some contribution in this direction.

Future research might nurture political awareness around these issues, engaging participatory approaches and the potential of *citizen sociolinguistics* (Svendsen, 2018:3) to harness the understandings of people who use their sense and intelligence to understand the world around them and to capture the social realities of everyday multicultures. The research participants in the current study (Jasmine and Archer in particular) responded positively to the opportunity to research their situated use of language and demonstrated an engaged and interested

capacity for metalinguistic analysis in theorizing their discursive practices and contexts. Sociolinguistic approaches are well equipped to provide anti-essentialist accounts of everyday life in convivial multicultures. The approach taken in the present study suggests the potential for these to also account for the racism *within* conviviality.

As an approach that conceives of 'laypeople […] as competent and not as an uneducated homogenous mass' (Svendsen, 2018:5), citizen sociolinguistics has important parallels with Hall's thinking on articulation and his critique of postmodern theory for its neglect of the experiences of 'the masses' (Hall, 1996b:141). Hall argues that '[t]he silent majorities *do* think; if they do not speak it is because we have deprived them of their means of enunciation, not because they have nothing to say.' In this sense, Hall argues that the notion of articulation 'enables us to think how an ideology empowers people, enabling them to begin to make some sense or intelligibility of their historical situation, without reducing those forms of intelligibility to their socio-economic or class location or social position' (ibid: 142). The present study has used the tools of critical sociolinguistics and linguistic ethnography to conduct a close analysis of the processes of articulation. Perhaps a citizen sociolinguistic approach would open up the possibilities, opportunities and reach of such approaches. This could involve researchers working in collaboration with citizen sociolinguists to collect and co-analyse interactional data, broadly conceived, from their everyday lives across a range of media, providing a means of enunciation that can upscale relations of 'ordinary hybridity' amidst structures of racialized and classed oppression.

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10 Appendices

Appendix 1: Presentation to Cohort

Appendix 2: Information sheets and consent forms

Appendix 3: Year Convenor Professional Project Slide

Appendix 4: Self Directedness Induction Slide

Appendix 1: Presentation to Cohort

Goldsmiths
UNIVERSITY OF LONDON

Research Summary

Steve Dixon-Smith PhD Candidate
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Goldsmiths
UNIVERSITY OF LONDON

What?

- Ongoing PhD study into unpicking assumptions of research **on** inequalities in Higher Education that uses fixed identity categories re ethnicity and social class (the ones you're asked to fill in on forms).

Why?

- Because equality policies in Higher Education and Architectural Education need to reflect more complex understandings of identity than those indicated by boxes on forms.

How?

Goldsmiths
UNIVERSITY OF LONDON

Researching **with*** you

What next:

- Informal chats and studio observations to understand architecture studio environment for 1st year students

After that (in a month or two):

- Invitations to research ***with*** me in a smaller sociolinguistic study to help unpick problematic categories

*Absolutely no obligation to take part at any point + anonymous + confidential

Any questions?

Goldsmiths
UNIVERSITY OF LONDON

Just ask – I'll be around every Tuesday…

Appendix 2: Information sheets and consent forms

Phase 2 Information Sheet and Consent Form

INFORMATION SHEET FOR PARTICIPANTS

The discursive construction of identities for Architecture students

What is the purpose of the study?

This PhD study aims to better understand the educational experiences of first year students of architecture. The study will work with students in the course of their day-to-day interactions in order to unpick generalisations used in statistical research that groups students by class, ethnicity, race and gender.

Why have I been invited to take part?

You have been invited to take part following earlier informal discussions in the architecture studio about your experience of your first year studies.

Do I have to take part?

Participation is voluntary. You do not have to take part. You should read this information sheet and if you have any questions you should ask the researcher (Steve Dixon-Smith). You should not agree to take part in this research until you have had all your questions answered satisfactorily.

What will happen to me if I take part?

If you decide to take part you will be given this information sheet to keep and will be asked to sign a consent form. You will then be invited to make video recordings of your group as they are taking part in group project work. The contents will be analysed by the researcher to inform his PhD study. You might occasionally be asked questions by the researcher in relation to the recordings to assist with this analysis. Your contribution will remain anonymous and entirely confidential throughout.

Will my taking part be kept confidential?

What is said and done during the recordings is regarded as strictly confidential. Your participation is entirely voluntary. If you change your mind, you are free to stop your participation and to have your data withdrawn without giving any reason at any point. All data for analysis will be anonymised. The video recordings will not be used in any way that means you can be identified from them. At all times there will be no possibility of you as an individual being linked with the data.

The General Data Protection Regulations 2018 will apply to all information gathered within the interviews and held on password-locked computer files

What will happen to the results of the study?

It is intended that the findings of PhD study will inform academic debate and policy initiatives around efforts to address inequalities in university education in the UK.

Who should I contact for further information?

If you have any questions or require more information about this study, please contact me using the following contact details:

Email: sdixo002@gold.ac.uk

Thank you for reading this information sheet and for considering taking part in this research.

CONSENT FORM FOR PARTICIPANTS IN RESEARCH STUDIES

Please complete this form after you have listened to an explanation and/or read an information sheet about the research.

Title of Study:
The discursive construction of identities for architecture students

Thank you for considering taking part in this research. The person organising the research must explain the project to you before you agree to take part. If you have any questions arising from the explanation already given to you, please ask the researcher before you decide whether to join in. You will be given a copy of this Consent Form to keep and refer to at any time.

Please tick or initial

I confirm that I understand that by ticking/initialling each box I am consenting to this element of the study. I understand that it will be assumed that unticked/initialled boxes mean that I DO NOT consent to that part of the study.

Please tick or initial

1. ***I confirm that I have listened to and understood the explanation of the above study. I have had the opportunity to consider the information and asked questions which have been answered satisfactorily.**
2. ***I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without giving any reason.**
3. ***I consent to the processing of my personal information for the purposes explained to me. I understand that such information will be handled in accordance with the terms of the UK Data Protection Act 1998/General Data Protection Regulations.**
4. **I consent to the video and audio recording of my interactions during the observations and interviews in which I participate as part of the study.**

Name of Participant	Date	Signature
Name of Researcher	Date	Signature

....
....

Phase 3 Information Sheet and Consent Form

………

8th January

Participant Information Sheet for first year students of Architecture and Interior Architecture

Title of the research project: The discursive construction of identities for architecture students
Researcher: Steve Dixon-Smith, Department of Educational Studies, sdixo002@gold.ac.uk
Supervisor: Vally Lytra, Department of Educational Studies, v.lytra@gold.ac.uk

You are being invited to take part in a research project. Before you decide whether or not to take part, it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully.

What is the purpose of the project?

This PhD study aims to better understand the educational experiences of first year students of architecture. It will work with students, focussing on their day-to-day interactions in order to unpick generalisations used in statistical research that groups students by class, ethnicity, race and gender.

Why have I been invited to participate?

You have been invited to take part following your willingness to participate in earlier observations of studio interactions.

Do I have to take part?

It is entirely up to you to decide whether or not to take part. If you decide to do so, you will be given this information sheet to keep and will be asked to give your consent. You can withdraw from the project or any part of it at any time without giving a reason.

What will happen if I take part?

If you decide to take part, you will be invited to:

- take part in two informal interviews about your experience of education.
- make fortnightly 1-hour audio recordings during group project work.
- make audio recordings of your presentations during formative reviews.
- make 2 x 30-minute audio recordings in a social setting of your choice that is outside of the architecture studio (e.g. chatting with friends and/or family).
- comment on analysis provided by the researcher.

The information collected from these activities will be analysed by the researcher to inform their PhD study. You might occasionally be asked questions by the researcher in relation to the recordings to assist with this analysis. Your contribution will remain anonymous and entirely confidential throughout.

The General Data Protection Regulations 2018 will apply to all information gathered. Data will be held on password-locked computer files.

If you do decide to withdraw from the project, you will be asked what you want to happen to data you have provided up to that point, but please note that after 30th June [redacted] anonymised data can no longer be removed from the study.

What are the possible disadvantages and risks of taking part?

No disadvantages and risks are foreseen.

What are the possible benefits of taking part?

By taking part, you will be contributing to research that has the potential to lead to greater equality in Architectural Education and Higher Education in general. The need for such research has been noted by the Higher Education Funding Council for England and the RIBA.

As a token of appreciation for your participation, you will receive credit to spend on materials in the university shop or print bureau on completion.

Will what I say in this study be kept confidential?

All the information that is collected about you during the course of the research will be kept strictly confidential. You will not be able to be identified in any ensuing reports or publications. Data will be held on password-protected computer files. Data collected during the course of the project might also be used for subsequent research related to the aims of the PhD project.

All personal data gathered will be held in compliance with the General Data Protection Regulations 2018 (see below).

Limits to confidentiality

Confidentiality will be respected subject to legal constraints and professional guidelines.

What will happen to the results of the research project?

It is intended that the findings of PhD study will inform academic debate and policy initiatives around efforts to address inequalities in university education in the UK. As such, the data is likely to be used in print and digital academic and professional publications.

Who is organising and funding the research?

The research is being conducted at Goldsmiths, University of London, Department for Educational Studies and has been approved by the Head of the PhD Programme. It is funded by the Economic and Social Research Council.

What if something goes wrong?

If you have any concerns about your participation or about the project in general, you should first contact the Principal Researcher, Steve Dixon-Smith sdixo002@gold.ac.uk or Supervisor, Vally Lytra v.lytra@gold.ac.uk. If you feel your complaint has not been satisfactorily handled, you can contact the Chair of the Goldsmiths Research Ethics and Integrity Sub-Committee (via the committee secretary on (+44) (0)20 7717 3338 or reisc@gold.ac.uk).'

Thank you for reading this information sheet and for considering whether to take part in this research project.

Data Protection Privacy Notice

The General Data Protection Regulation [GDPR] and Goldsmiths Research: guidelines for participants

Please note that this document does not constitute, and should not be construed as, legal advice. These guidelines are designed to help participants understand their rights under GDPR which came into force on 25 May 2018.

Your rights as a participant (data subject) in this study
The updated data protection regulation is a series of conditions designed to protect an individual's personal data. Not all data collected for research is personal data.

Personal data is data such that a living individual can be identified; collection of personal data is sometimes essential in conducting research and GDPR sets out that data subjects should be treated in a lawful and fair manner and that information about the data processing should be explained clearly and transparently. Some data we might ask to collect falls under the heading of **special categories data**. This type of information includes data about an individual's race; ethnic origin; politics; religion; trade union membership; genetics; biometrics (where used for ID purposes); health; sex life; or sexual orientation. This data requires particular care.

Under GDPR you have the following rights over your personal data[22]:

- ***The right to be informed***. You must be informed if your personal data is being used.
- ***The right of access***. You can ask for a copy of your data by making a 'subject access request'.
- ***The right to rectification.*** You can ask for your data held to be corrected.
- ***The right to erasure***. You can ask for your data to be deleted.
- ***The right to restrict processing***. You can limit the way an organisation uses your personal data if you are concerned about the accuracy of the data or how it is being used.
- ***The right to data portability***. You have the right to get your personal data from an organisation in a way that is accessible and machine-readable. You also have the right to ask an organisation to transfer your data to another organisation.
- ***The right to object***. You have the right to object to the use of your personal data in some circumstances. You have an absolute right to object to an organisation using your data for direct marketing.
- ***How your data is processed using automated decision making and profiling***. You have the right not to be subject to a decision that is based solely on automated processing if the decision affects your legal rights or other equally important matters; to understand the reasons behind decisions made about you by automated processing and the possible consequences of the decisions, and to object to profiling in certain situations, including for direct marketing purposes.

[22] https://ico.org.uk/your-data-matters/

Please note that these rights are not absolute and only apply in certain circumstances. You should also be informed how long your data will be retained and who it might be shared with.

How does Goldsmiths treat my contribution to this study?

Your participation in this research is very valuable and any personal data you provide will be treated in confidence using the best technical means available to us. The university's legal basis for processing your data[23] as part of our research findings is a "task carried out in the public interest". This means that our research is designed to improve the health, happiness and well-being of society and to help us better understand the world we live in. It is not going to be used for marketing or commercial purposes.

In addition to our legal basis under Article 6 (as described above), for **special categories data** as defined under Article 9 of GDPR, our condition for processing is that it is "necessary for archiving purposes in the public interest, scientific or historical research purposes or statistical purposes".[24]

If your data contributes to data from a group then your ability to remove data may be limited as the project progresses, when removal of your data may cause damage to the dataset.

You should also know that you may contact any of the following people if you are unhappy about the way your data or your participation in this study are being treated:

- Goldsmiths Data Protection Officer – dp@gold.ac.uk (concerning your rights to control personal data).
- Chair, Goldsmiths Research Ethics and Integrity Sub-Committee - via k.rumsey@gold.ac.uk, REISC Secretary (for any other element of the study).
- You also have the right to lodge a complaint with the Information Commissioner's Office at https://ico.org.uk/make-a-complaint/

This information has been provided by the Research Ethics and Integrity Sub-Committee with advice from the Research Services and Governance and Legal Teams.
Version: 13 August 2018

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[23] GDPR Article 6; the six lawful bases for processing data are explained here: https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/guide-to-the-general-data-protection-regulation-gdpr/lawful-basis-for-processing/

[24] Article 9 of the GDPR requires this type of data to be treated with great care because of the more significant risks to a person's fundamental rights and freedoms that mishandling might cause, eg, by putting them at risk of unlawful discrimination.

Goldsmiths
UNIVERSITY OF LONDON

Informed consent form

Informed Consent for: The discursive construction of identities for architecture and interior architecture students

Please tick the appropriate boxes | **Yes** | **No**

1. Taking part in the study

I have read and understood the study information sheet dated ██████ or it has been read to me. I have been able to ask questions about the study and my questions have been answered to my /satisfaction. ☐ ☐

I consent voluntarily to be a participant in this study and understand that I can refuse to answer questions and I can withdraw from the study or any part of it at any time, without having to give a reason. If I do decide to withdraw from the project, I understand that I will be asked what I want to happen to data I have provided up to that point but note that after 30th June ███ anonymised data can no longer be removed from the study. ☐ ☐

I understand that taking part in the study involves being invited to: ☐ ☐

- take part in two informal interviews about your experience of education.
- make fortnightly 1-hour audio recordings during group project work.
- make audio recordings of your presentations during formative reviews.
- make 2 x 30-minute audio recordings in a social setting of your choice that is outside of the architecture studio (e.g. chatting with friends and/or family).
- comment on analysis provided by the researcher.

The information collected from these activities will be analysed by the researcher to inform their PhD study. I might occasionally be asked questions by the researcher in relation to the information to assist with this analysis.

2. Use of the information in the study

I understand that information I provide will be used for print and digital academic and professional publications and presentations. ☐ ☐

I understand that personal information collected about me that can identify me, such as my name or where I live, will not be shared beyond the researcher. ☐ ☐

I agree that my information can be quoted in research outputs. ☐ ☐

3. Signatures

________________________ ____________________ ________________
Name of participant [IN CAPITALS] Signature Date

I have accurately read out the information sheet to the potential participant and, to the best of my ability, ensured that the participant understands to what they are freely consenting.

________________________ ____________________ ________________
Name of researcher [IN CAPITALS] Signature Date

4. Study contact details for further information

Researcher: Steve Dixon-Smith, Department of Educational Studies, sdixo002@gold.ac.uk
Supervisor: Vally Lytra, Department of Educational Studies, v.lytra@gold.ac.uk

Appendix 3: Year Convenor Professional Project Slide

PROJECT X / JUNE 2006:: XXX EVENT / TOWN CENTRE VARIANT #007

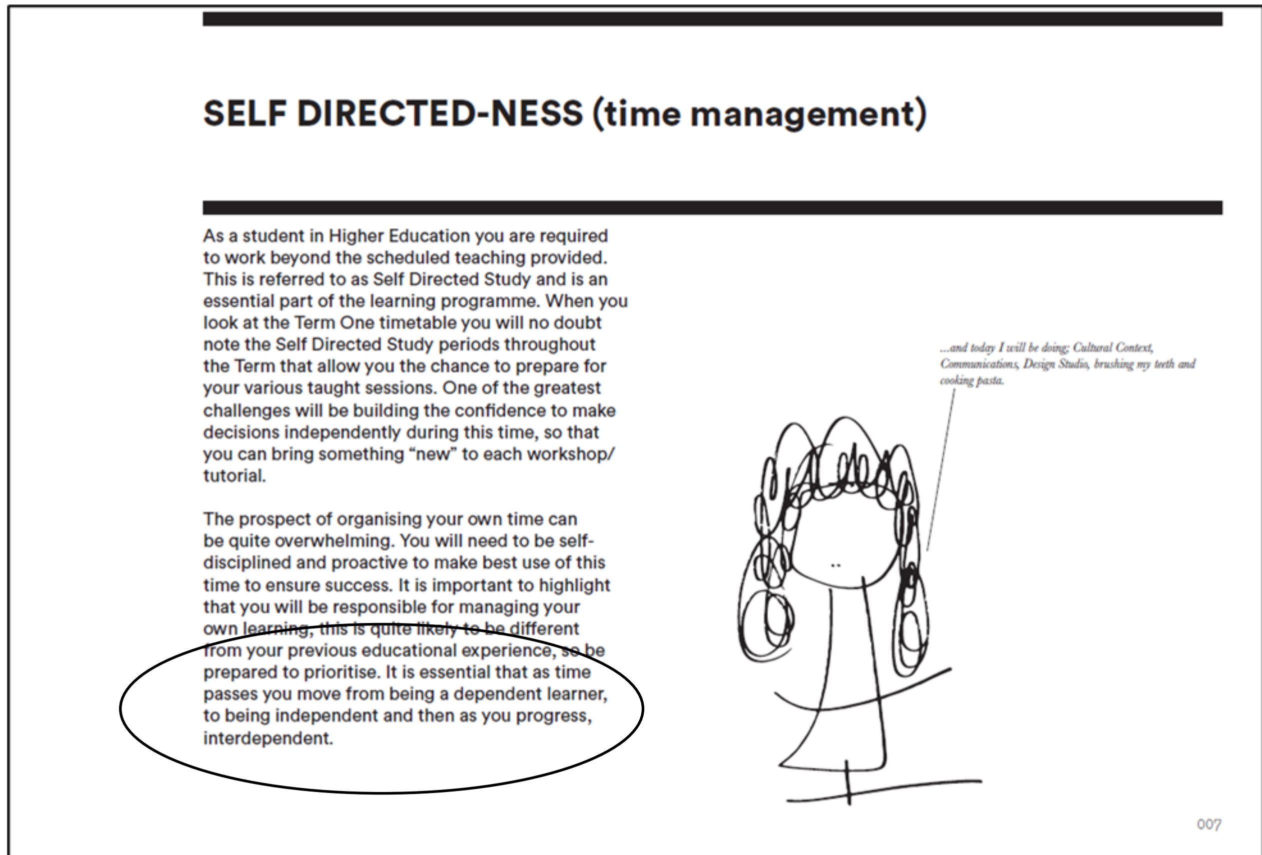
The guiding principal for this event was exploration and investigation of the forgotten or ignored spaces and places within the Town Centre. This event comprised of a Manual, specially designed Kiosks and a night time gallery of films projected onto the buildings along the length of Market Buildings.

Contributing Artists:
XXX

XXX: Public Art Consultancy

015

Appendix 4: Self Directedness Induction Slide



*Circle added to highlight relevant text