Transcription Glossary

The transcription symbols used here are common to conversation analytic research, and were developed by Gail Jefferson. A more detailed discussion of the use of these symbols and others is provided in chapter 3.

(0.5) The number in brackets indicates a time gap in tenths of a second.

(.) A dot enclosed in a bracket indicates a pause in the talk of less than two-tenths of a second.

= The 'equals' sign indicates 'latching' between utterances. For example:

S1: yeah September [seventy six=
S2: [September
S1: =it would be
S2: yeah that's right

[ ] Square brackets between adjacent lines of concurrent speech indicate the onset and end of a spate of overlapping talk.

.hh A dot before an 'h' indicates speaker in-breath. The more h's, the longer the in-breath.

hh An 'h' indicates an out-breath. The more h's the longer the breath.

(( )) A description enclosed in a double bracket indicates a non-verbal activity. For example ((banging sound)). Alternatively double brackets may enclose the transcriber's comments on contextual or other features.

- A dash indicates the sharp cut-off of the prior word or sound.

: Colons indicate that the speaker has stretched the preceding sound or letter. The more colons the greater the extent of the stretching.

! Exclamation marks are used to indicate an animated or emphatic tone.

( ) Empty parentheses indicate the presence of an unclear fragment on the tape.

(guess) The words within a single bracket indicate the transcriber's best guess at an unclear utterance.

. A full stop indicates a stopping fall in tone. It does not necessarily indicate the end of a sentence.

, A comma indicates a 'continuing' intonation.

? A question mark indicates a rising inflection. It does not necessarily indicate a question.

* An asterisk indicates a 'croaky' pronunciation of the immediately following section.

↓↑ Pointed arrows indicate a marked falling or rising intonational shift. They are placed immediately before the onset of the shift.

a: Less marked falls in pitch can be indicated by using underlining immediately preceding a colon:

S: we (.) really didn't have a lot'v cha:nge

a: Less marked rises in pitch can be indicated using a colon which itself is underlined:

J: I have a red shi:rt,

Under Underlined fragments indicate speaker emphasis.

CAPITALS Words in capitals mark a section of speech noticeably louder than that surrounding it.

° ° Degree signs are used to indicate that the talk they encompass is spoken noticeably quieter than the surrounding talk.

Thaght A 'gh' indicates that the word in which it is placed had a guttural pronunciation.

> < 'More than' and 'less than' signs indicate that the talk they encompass was produced noticeably quicker than the surrounding talk.

→ Arrows in the left margin point to specific parts of an extract discussed in the text.

[H:21.3.89:2] Extract headings refer to the transcript library source of the researcher who originally collected the data.