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'Being in the Bin': Affective understandings of prescriptivism and spelling in video narratives co-produced with children in a post-industrial area of the UK

Hugh Francis Escott^{a,*}, Kate Heron Pahl^b

^a Owen Building, Sheffield Hallam University, Howard St., Sheffield, S1 1WB, United Kingdom

^b Faculty of Education, Manchester Metropolitan University, Room 1.06, Brooks Building, 53 Bonsall Street, Manchester, M15 6GX, United Kingdom

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1. Introduction

This paper explores the social and embodied understanding of spelling as portrayed in small films made by a group of young people (aged 9–10) in the North of England, UK. The films outlined the implications of not being able to spell through a narrative in which an application for a job was rejected because it was poorly spelled. They emerged from a larger project which was concerned with the ways in which children's everyday language, their dialect and ways of speaking, could be understood from their perspective. We built on sociolinguistic concerns about how to address the inequalities supported by prescriptive standard language ideologies (cf. Baratta, 2017).

The Northern English accents and dialects, in the school we worked with, were not seen as appropriate by OFSTED, the official body for the inspection of schools in the UK. Yet these ways of speaking have nuanced social value in this area. Within the films the children made were commentaries on the significance and lived reality of prescriptivist beliefs about language. We argue that these understandings of the socially symbolic meanings associated with spelling, and other mainstream literacy and educational practices, were co-constituted through material-discursive and affective interactions. In this paper we explore the

methodological apparatus available to us to attend to these understandings in terms of researcher's orientations towards participants knowledge, and the representational means used to analyse this knowledge.

Multimodal transcription and data visualisation through the use of comics was used to analyse the films, drawing on methodological apparatus from the 'participatory turn' in social research, and research on multimodality and affect. We explored how ideas about correctness informed the children's embodied and affective engagement with each other and the world around them. We focus on the lived and affective realities (Stewart, 2007) of the children's engagement with language and schooling through attending to the cultural resonance of the children's films which describe an unsuccessful job application, that ends up in a bin. By thinking about the children's affective engagement with the application, we attended to what it felt to 'be in the bin'. This recognises the emergent living of life in the present, from which our participants' understandings of language and literacy were always situated. Here, we aim to work towards 'an emergent mapping of affective intensities and their effects produced across texts, bodies, and interaction' (Leander & Boldt, 2013: 38). We present an exploration of our data that involves us looking for ways in which the object and environment, and their resonances and echoes, can come to the fore in analysis.

This work contributes to ongoing discussions in this journal about how to; recognise and value the complexity of students' knowledge about language in what they say and do (Metz, 2018); attend to the discursive and physical movements involved in the construction of social space (Soltani, 2018) and the negotiation of language ideologies (Handsfield and Crumpler, 2013); and understand the widespread ideological construction of 'competence' in language use as involving the demonstration of enough 'accuracy'

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* Corresponding author.

E-mail addresses: hugh.escott@shu.ac.uk (H.F. Escott), K.Pahl@mmu.ac.uk (K.H. Pahl).

in the materialisation of speech or writing (Rydell, 2018; Griswold, 2011). We build on this body of work by focusing on affect, and material-discursive elements, to make sense of the meanings produced in the films, the 'ordinary affects' that our participants produced (Stewart, 2007).

In Section 2, we outline our research context and provide an overview of our video data. In Section 3, we discuss our theoretical framing, bringing together discussions of prescriptivism, citizen socio-linguistics, co-production, affect, and the material-discursive. In Section 4, we discuss our methodology, outlining the nature of our data, and our initial approach to multimodal transcription. In Section 5, we explore the socially-symbolic meaning embedded in the children's job application narratives. We then discuss how we attempted to attend to the emergent affective and material-discursive means through which these socially-symbolic understandings were co-constituted. This involves exploring in detail one moment involving the application and a bin. We detail the experimentation we undertook (with drawing and comic making) that informed how we developed our eventual approach to multimodal transcription. Finally in Section 6, we conclude by arguing that everyday understandings of prescriptivism are sedimented across talk, literacies and materials, and that attending to these understandings involves recognising the lived, embodied, multimodal, and affective means through which non-linguists relate to each other and the world around them.

2. Research context

The films were created by children as part of the 'Language as Talisman' project.¹ Ideas were co-produced with teachers and youth workers, whilst in workshops with children and young people we explored their perspectives about what types of language use they considered appropriate in particular situations. Our school-based study was conducted in an area in the UK that used to be dominated by the coal-mining industries, and is now a large council estate. More recently, it has been hit hard by post-industrialisation with jobs continuing to be low paid and precarious, with the region 'haunted' by the loss of the mines (see Ref. Bright, 2012 on 'social haunting'). It is known as high on the indices of deprivation, with particularly high figures for adults who have no educational qualifications, but also relatively good figures for people's perceptions of their quality of life.

'Language as Talisman' was a project that explored the nature of everyday language with children, artists, teachers, researchers and youth workers. The idea of the 'talisman' came from a community discussion about the magical properties of language. The project framing worked with the provocation of the talisman, a magical crafted item that brings about positive influence for the user or protects them from harm. This served to support dialogue between the project team around what participants 'do' or 'could do' with language to bring about positive effects or protect themselves. This dialogic space of enquiry formed the basis for the data we discuss in that it involved: (a) participants exploring language with the project team by reflecting on how they use language to shape the world around them; (b) informing the use of creative arts methods for the construction of data; and (c) motivated a flexibility in methodological approach which allowed for responding to participants' emergent interests. Our data comes from contexts in which we have taken on the role of facilitator through dialogue

¹ The project team included Kate Pahl (PI), Hugh Escott (research assistant), together with Jane Hodson, Richard Steadman-Jones and David Hyatt, poet Andrew McMillan and artist Steve Pool in partnership with two primary schools. This research was funded by the AHRC Connected Communities Program (grant number AH/J011959/)

(as opposed to observer or participant-observer), and our work was collaborative and exploratory. The project team was involved in simultaneously investigating how language was understood by individuals in everyday contexts and attempting to support (in this case) the school in thinking through how language used in the everyday could be valued within school alongside more prescriptivist paradigms that the school were faced with. This project as a whole involved exploring the interaction between children's everyday knowledge about language, professional descriptivist linguistic knowledge, and the prescriptivist views of language that underpin the education system. In this particular school context the co-production process involved in this aspect of the project focussed on foregrounding the pre-existing expertise that the teachers and children possessed. Over the course of the project, teachers and children explored the role that diversity in language plays in their everyday interactions.

The films we discuss in this article were produced during one workshop that we undertook in the school. In working with one Year 5 (9–10 s) class, poet Andrew McMillan, artist Steve Pool, Pahl and Escott worked with the whole class in a poetry workshop. This workshop prompted a conversation with the class teacher and some children about spelling, and it was decided that a smaller group would explore spelling through film-making. Escott worked with a smaller group of four children from this poetry workshop to do this. The creation of this smaller group emerged from dialogue with teachers and children around the significance of spelling activities in the school day, its role as a significantly visible means through which children are involved in conversations about language and literacy, and Escott's specific research interest in non-standard orthography (Escott, 2014). The group volunteered to work on films to be shown to and discussed by the rest of the class, and the teacher negotiated who was allowed to volunteer. Thus, our 'sample' of participants was emergent, negotiated, and self-selecting. The children in the whole class were asked for their consent to take part in the project, with the understanding that what they produced in workshop activities would form our research data and that they would be anonymised. In our discussion below, the children's films serve as the documentation of their ideas. The films as collaboratively produced data reflected the emergent, collaborative nature of this project, and thus serve as the only documentation of this process. Film-making here facilitates the creation of data *with* participants and was a practical approach that fitted with the relationships encouraged by the workshop environment of this aspect of the project.

The children's films described scenarios where a person applied for a job, presented their application, and it was rejected because it was badly spelled. In approaching these videos, we felt that a significant part of the children's understanding was embedded in the affective dimensions (Bennett, 2010; Stewart, 2007) of this video, as well as being located within how the participants interacted with sound and objects. Therefore, our theoretical framework recognises that our 'data' is collaboratively produced and we are challenged with accounting for the affective and more-than-human in our analysis.

3. Theoretical framing

3.1. Recognising and valuing the complexity of students' knowledge about language in what they say and do

Inclusive research agendas, particularly co-production, are methodologies that can support more nuanced understandings of children's perceptual frameworks (Facer & Enright, 2016). 'Language as Talisman' was a co-produced research project. Our concern in this work, like many linguistic researchers, is with deficit ways

of conceptualising everyday language and language variation in schooling. In order to conceptualise our approach to these concerns, we bring apparently incommensurate fields of socio-linguistic and material-discursive research together. We draw on the field of 'citizen sociolinguistics' in order to highlight the ways in which children's everyday knowledge of language as evidenced in the films can inform disciplinary understandings of literacy and language. In recent citizen sociolinguistics scholarship, there has been a call to reconceptualise how lay expertise is valued in sociolinguistic enquiry (Rymes & Leone, 2014). It has been argued that we need a new framework for linguistics research (Svendsen, 2018) which reorients towards non-linguists' sophisticated awareness of language in their day-to-day lives as legitimate knowledge. We are also troubled by the ways in which language, within the field of sociolinguistics, has retained pre-eminence; as such, the children's films included material objects, and sound, producing affective feelings. We thought 'with' the children, and followed their line of enquiry, including the visual and material (Bennett, 2010; Wargo, 2018). This provides a complex theoretical and analytic framework, which involves de-centring the expertise and authority of the institutionally-situated sociolinguist, and also de-centering the human and foregrounding the material, in order to privilege the lived affective understanding of spelling involved in the children's films. Attending to the material and non-human aspects of our data, produced by the children, took us further in understanding their affective responses to and embodied understandings of spelling (Stewart, 2007).

3.2. *Prescriptivism and the descriptive enterprise of linguistic researchers*

Our discussion centres on film narratives about a job application that was rejected because it was spelled incorrectly. Milroy and Milroy (2012) discuss how the English writing system is held up as a model of correctness, meaning that it serves as 'one of the sources of prescriptive norms [...] because speakers [...] have access to dictionaries and grammar-books, which they regard as authorities' (p. 22). Challenging prescriptive beliefs and norms about standards that surround language use has been a significant socio-linguistic enterprise. The tensions between prescriptivist influences on everyday understandings of language and the descriptivist nature of professional linguistic research knowledge provides a rich site for co-production dialogue. This is because of the different values placed on ways of knowing in everyday life, regardless of the specific concerns with rigour, ethics and professional practices involved in the creation of linguistic knowledge.

Curzan (2014) draws attention to historical ways in which everyday prescriptivist and descriptivist linguistic views of language have been conceptualised. For Curzan, institutional prescriptivism is endorsed and adopted by schools, which possesses 'the cultural and social power that comes with institutionalized authority' (2014: 16). While traditional academic linguistic research often involves valuing particular ways of knowing (e.g., institutionally-backed rigorous descriptive approaches to language study in research), in other contexts different ways of knowing are of value (e.g., community-situated prescriptivist understandings of language in use). We discuss these points not as a way of undermining the linguistic enterprise, but to draw attention to the cultural politics involved in the study of language, and the tensions that can arise from the coming together of institutionally-situated ways of knowing with locally-situated ones. Beliefs about language are tied up with beliefs about moral ways to live (McEnery, 2006), linguistic and literacy norms can be challenged by researchers, but they still have to be negotiated in the everyday by speakers (see Clark, 2013 on this tension). Ideologies of 'correctness' are lived in most social spaces, outside of the work of the descriptive linguistic researcher,

and so surfacing embodied understandings of language and literacy is of importance when considering how to respond to linguistic inequalities.

3.3. *Co-production and shifts in the valuing of everyday knowledge*

Qualitative social sciences research has a history of being attuned to the belief that 'all research is political inasmuch as it comes out of a particular view of the world, makes claims about reality, and supports or refutes existing knowledge claims' (Joshee, 2008). However more recent discussions in collaborative research, concerning the politics, and power inequalities involved in research, have drawn attention to the way that academic knowledge production is shored up by the institutionally situated nature of research (see Ref. Campbell & Lassiter, 2015 for discussions of this in relation to ethnography), the economic, social, and cultural influences on access to these institutional spaces (Facer & Enright, 2016; Facer & Pahl, 2017), and the implications this has for whose knowledge can be seen to 'count' (Bell & Pahl, 2017; Marshall & Pahl, 2015).

Drawing attention to these central, but often hidden, dimensions of research emerges from our engagement with co-production, and the ways in which '[c]o-production destabilizes academia as a privileged site for the production and dissemination of knowledge' (Bell and Pahl, 2018). Orienting towards what the children privilege in their films traces an understanding of prescriptivism that falls outside the scope of the traditional descriptive linguistic framing. This scrutiny raises complex issues relating to traditional research ontologies, epistemologies, ethics and politics. These issues feature in a number of discussions relating to co-production, but also in wider research discussions relating to the future of qualitative enquiry (see Ref. Springgay & Truman, 2017). These issues are mirrored in current research relating to Citizen Sociolinguistics.

3.4. *Citizen Sociolinguistics and valuing non-linguists knowledge*

The children's films included an explicit commentary on poor spelling - the job application is rejected as it is poorly spelled - and an implicit commentary which was situated in *how* it was materialised. These accounts reflect the children's perceptions of correct language practices. Citizen sociolinguistics, 'traces the ways citizens, more so than trained sociolinguists, understand the world of language around them' (Rymes & Leone, 2014: 25) and draws on the pre-existing tradition and model of citizen science in order to do so. For example, Svendsen (2018) employed a citizen sociolinguistics methodology in the investigation of young people's perceptions of linguistic diversity in Norway. Non-professionals responded to surveys and surveyed their peers, acting as 'citizen scientists' in the collection of a large-scale data set. The push for a methodologically sound citizen sociolinguistics that involves 'the inclusion of non-professionals in doing sociolinguistic research' (Svendsen, 2018: 139) and the challenge to research activities that this creates, reflects current concerns relating to the civic role of universities and public engagement with research (Svendsen, 2018: 156). Svendsen's work raises an ontological (e.g., reality-related) challenge to traditional conceptualisations of the socio-linguistic researcher and their participants.

Svendsen raises questions about what constitutes 'legitimate' data (2018: 130) when shifting the framing of participants' involvement in socio-linguistic enquiry to 'an ontology where laypeople are conceived as competent and not as an uneducated homogeneous mass', and young people are valued as possessing awareness of 'their own language competence and practices' (Svendsen, 2018: 141). This echoes Rymes and Leone's consideration of the shared

participation of researcher and participant in a collective enquiry and their gentle prodding of ‘the desire to measure “unmonitored” subject behaviour’ through the reduction of the observer’s paradox, as implying ‘an outdated distinction between the researcher as expert analyst and the researched as unconscious dope’ (2014: 31). We are interested in this playing with the positioning of expert researchers and participants, simply because linguists and non-linguists can experience and describe everyday language in different ways. Svensen advocated for ‘a (partial) transfer of the research role’ (2018:156), in this case, as a means of involving the wider public in considering their language use, and educating them in relation to socio-linguistic research methods, whilst also generating a large-scale dataset. Svensen argues that the epistemological (e.g., knowledge-related) and ontological issues she discusses, relating to participants involvement in *doing* research with researchers, involves a significant shift in methodological and theoretical apparatus. Participants’ competence and awareness with language has to be foregrounded as having pre-existing value, before their involvement with professional researchers in research activity. Curzan draws attention to how the value that is placed on linguistic knowledge over that of lay-people is predicated on ‘rigor[ous] academic study, empirical evidence, and disciplinary authority’ (2014: 20). Whilst it is easy to identify academic disciplinary notions of rigour, evidence and authority, non-linguists’ understandings of language are developed through significantly different engagements with myriad notions of rigour, evidence, and authority. These elements of scientific research, are themselves socially constructed (Law, 2004), and participating in academic research involves being socialised into the norms and values that inform these notions.

We wish to foreground the ways in which the children-as-students’ expertise, knowledge, competence, and awareness of language and literacy is also rigorous, evidenced, and informed by notions of authority. In that it reflects situated notions of trustworthiness (e.g. schools and many adults are seen as trustworthy sources of information), draws on a large body of information from lived experience to support ideas about valid beliefs about language (e.g. previous years of formal schooling, family socialisation, and participation in discourses of correctness), and respects the authority of teachers and adults in their lives. (e.g. participation in school spaces involves explicit and implicit deference to authority). The sophisticated linguistic understanding that these children possess comes into academic research through a filter of academic structures, literacies, theoretical perspectives, and norms relating to research activity, and are already constructed as of less value in this context because they reflect ideologies and value-judgements about language. Participants’ beliefs about language can be seen as problematic when articulated in a descriptivist socio-linguistic research context. These beliefs support their negotiation of social life, and if we want to change them it is important to explore how: they are understood; they inform beliefs about identity; and how they materialise in social contexts. Taking participants’ awareness of language use seriously involves a shift in the participant-researcher relationships that support research activity, and this shift, as outlined in discussions of Citizen Sociolinguistics research, leads to methodological, epistemological, and ontological challenges.

In co-produced research, different research relationships developed which attempt to reconfigure how everyday knowledge is positioned in academic research. This work speaks to many of the concerns that are being articulated in the literature on citizen socio-linguistics. Our interest is in what happens when children’s perceptions of spelling are taken seriously in relation to academic debates on the merits of non-standard English versus prescriptivist perceptions. Our interest is in valuing the children’s perceptions and what the implications of that stance could be for linguistic

scholarship. One means through which we have attended to the ontological and epistemological challenges involved in valuing our participants epistemologies is through engaging with affective and material-discursive approaches to research.

3.5. Attending to the affective, material-discursive means through which social interaction emerges

We draw on posthuman explorations of the material discursive and affective ‘intra-action’ in the *in-the-moments* of educational research (Wargo, 2018, p. 504). This involves orienting towards the relational ways in which they make meaning with each other and the more-than-human. Attending to what emerged in the children’s films provided a means through which to engage with the ‘nuanced social value that people put on certain ways’ of using language and literacy, and how this value is developed through participation in social interaction (Rymes & Leone, 2014: 38–39).

The narrative of all the films we discuss involved the construction of a job application that was poorly spelled and led to various negative outcomes for the applicant. When we watched the children’s films, we were presented with ‘chaos’ and ‘background noise’ recorded by the camera. The job application was also scrunched up and then flung into a bin that clanged. This ‘noise’ and physicality had a significant impact on the unfolding of action through which our participants articulated their understanding of spelling. This situated literacy-related activity, not only within the social context in which it has been produced (Barton, 1994), but also in relation to the body (Leander and Boldt, 2013). Embodied, situated, and contextual understandings of social action inform how our participants materialised their commentary on spelling. Turning towards the body involves considering the affective qualities of literacy-related activity (Burnett & Merchant, 2018) and the emergence of meaning-making between individuals. Social meaning and discourses are materially-discursively co-constituted through emergent relational activity between bodies and material environments (Ehret et al., 2016). Stewart’s (2007) work on ordinary affects provided insights into how affect is part of the meaning making process. Her description of the, ‘charged particularly of the objects’ (2007:21) highlights the links between the everyday, material and the ideological. This led us to consider the different embodied and material modes through which they materialise their commentary (cf. Kress, 2009).

4. Methodology

4.1. Overview of the data

The children were asked to respond to the prompt ‘What do you think is important about spelling?’. The importance of spelling was presupposed for the students by their teachers, in light of its central role in their formal learning. We asked them to consider what it was about spelling that *they* felt was important. The five children were given cameras to use, the use of a room in school with flip-charts, and the school grounds. After some training and practice with the cameras from Escott, the group discussed their thoughts on the topic. They then brainstormed their ideas on a flip-chart, in order to plan the roles and narratives they would perform in their films. All the children agreed spelling was important, but varied in whether they saw themselves as ‘good’ or ‘bad’ spellers, and in how enjoyable they found their experiences of focussing on spelling in school. After creating each film, the group considered what they had done, discussed it amongst themselves and with Escott, and then created a new draft. They developed two narratives, one about a job interview, and another about a car-accident. This happened over the course of an afternoon.

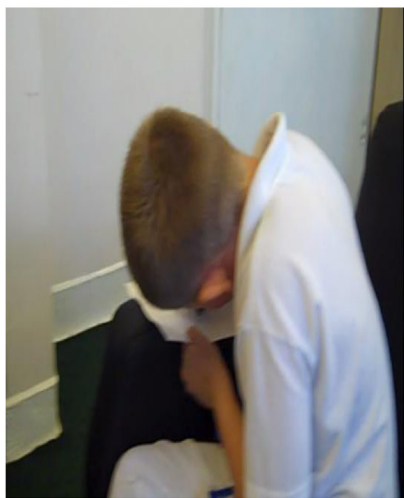
Time and Scene	Speech Vocalisation // (overlapping)	Action [Arrows added for Gaze]	Gaze, Gesture, Facial Expression	Posture, Proxemics, Haptics
00.00-00.07	Camera Operator: (sniffing)		Applicant: looking at paper, makes writing actions with pen on the paper	Applicant: Sat on sofa as if at a desk writing

Fig. 1. Example of Initial approach to multimodal transcription (Film 2).

We focus in this paper on the narrative about the job application. An applicant applies for a job and does not get it because of his incorrect spellings. The children filmed this narrative three times, reflecting on what they did each time and adapting their work. In all three, the Applicant submits his application to the Secretary who gives it to the Boss who rejects it. The Camera Operator films the first two films and then plays Applicant 2 in the third (all names of participants changed to names of acting roles). Below is a recount to clarify the action in the films:

Characters/Participants:

Applicant (in films 1, 2 and 3)
 Boss (in films 1, 2 and 3)
 Secretary (in films 1, 2 and 3)
 Camera Operator (in films 1 and 2), then plays Applicant 2 in Film 3

Film 1: The Applicant is called to the Boss's office to explain why his application is full of incorrect spellings, whilst tapping on the application. The Boss finds his explanation confusing and shouts at him. The Applicant leaves upset and confused. The Camera Operator chases the Applicant taunting him and then commanding him to return.

Film 2: The Boss tears up the Applicant's application almost immediately, he calls the Applicant into his office, shouts at him, and then stuffs the torn application down the front of the Applicant's shirt. The Applicant removes the application and slams it into a waste paper bin (held by the Secretary) which then clangs to the floor, he leaves the room annoyed and angry. The Camera Operator asks him what he is thinking. The Applicant says the Boss is 'weird' and then walks away.

Film 3: The Applicant never meets the Boss, his application is calmly put into the bin by the Boss with little explanation. The Boss considers another more suitable application from Applicant 2. The Secretary rings Applicant 2 offering her the job. Applicant 2 is

overjoyed. The Secretary rings the Applicant to say he hasn't got the job. The Applicant is confused and disappointed.

Film 3 provides a 'final draft' of the narrative, in the sense that the characters act more 'like adults'. It is less noisy and 'chaotic' (in terms of camera framing, distance from object and camera steadiness) for someone watching the film than *Films 1* and *2*, and comes after periods of practice, reflection and discussion around the making of the films. In *Films 1* and *2*, the children are clearly having more fun as they laugh and smile, dropping out of their dramatic personas in order to do so. The footage comprising *Films 1* and *2* reflect this enjoyment, and in our transcriptions (and comics) below we have used this footage without embellishment or editing. Central to the narrative of all three versions of the film are the real-life employment-related consequences of the Applicant's inability to spell correctly.

The films contain a commentary on prescriptivism, by the children-as-students that speaks to the embodied experience of being subjugated and humiliated by prescriptivist systems. We also felt that part of this commentary is situated in *how* their narrative materialises and is enacted, rather than simply in the narrative itself. What the children say expresses explicit mainstream beliefs about spelling, (e.g. that if they were poor spellers, they would not get jobs). Yet, what they do and how they interact with humans and non-human objects trace how implicit beliefs about spelling influence their actions (e.g. ideological views of literacy as a means of categorising some people as 'less-than'). This perception was played out in their films. Across the analytic and exploratory work below, we draw on the notion of 'sedimentation' to provide a means through which to think about how text-production, involves the coming together of language, literacy, affect, materiality and identity: 'text making [is] a process involving the sedimentation of identities into [a] text, which then can be seen as an artifact that reflects, through its materiality, the previous identities of the meaning maker' (Rowse & Pahl, 2007: 388). We extend this to think about how identities and discourses can become sedimentated into artefacts or contexts.

In looking at the materiality of the emergent unfolding of these films, we were provided with insight into the children's affective understanding of how it can feel to negotiate prescriptivist systems. In our analysis, we explore how our research apparatus provided us with the means through which to attend to this embodied everyday understanding.

4.2. Overview of analytic procedure

Here, we consider how the children's understanding of spelling is materially-discursively constituted in the moment. Throughout this analysis we consider the ways in which we worked to attend to both the socially symbolic and material-discursive elements of the children's videos. In Section 5.1, we discuss how we began our process by using a form of multimodal transcription, based on the work of Taylor (2016) and our previous work (Escott and Pahl, 2017) to consider the socially symbolic meaning of the children's films (see fig. 1). We firstly explore the social significance instantiated within the paper job application. We do this by looking across all the films, and then in detail at social meaning in *Film 1*.

We felt that there was a significant material-discursive element involved in how the children materialised their understanding in *Film 2*. We were struck by the noise created by and the interactions facilitated by objects in the films. This led to us exploring ways of visualising the volume and quality of sounds, and accounting for the nature of the interaction with and around objects, in the children's films. In Section 5.2, we detail how we began to think about how to attend to the affective impact of objects and sounds through exploratory activities (object scoring and comics). Here we look in detail at sound in *Film 2* by considering visualisation processes. Initially, we attempted to augment this form of transcription by focussing on material objects in the transcription process. We considered how to attend to the soundscape captured in the recordings by thinking about the figurative and literal *resonance* (Smith et al., 2015) of the objects.

This exploration fed back into our transcription process as we have augmented Taylor's (2016) transcription processes by making a distinction between what we have positioned as *material modes* to allow us to consider sound and objects. We reflect on these explorations by considering a form of transcription that accounts for:

- *Embodied modes* (speech, action, gaze, gesture, facial expression, proxemics, haptics, and posture).
- *Material modes* (sonic and tactile).
- and *Sedimentation* (instantiations of identity or discourses into material objects or contexts).

We provide this exploration of data as a means of reflecting on the complex shifts in methodology raised by seeing participants as knowledgeable about their own language use. In this case through a consideration of both socially symbolic meaning, affect, and the material-discursive.

As our participants are both producers and collectors of data, they are not separated from what they observe and we cannot assume that their 'modes of data collection/generation are transparent', both of which being commonplace beliefs about the role of social-science researchers (Davies, 2018: 115). This is also reflected in the way the Camera Operator interacts with the Applicant from behind the camera; they are not simply observing the action they are part of its generation. Below we explore how we made effort to attend to the children's 'own language competence and practices' (Svendsen, 2018: 141).

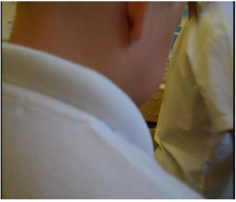

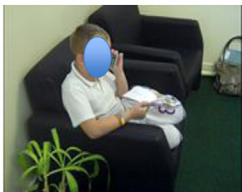
Time and Scene	Speech Vocalisation (// overlapping)	Action [Arrows added for Gaze]	Gaze, Gesture, Facial Expression	Posture, Proxemics, Haptics
<i>a: Film 1</i>				
00.09-00.10	Secretary: I'll send it off for you to the person // [indistinct] Applicant: //Ok		Applicant and Secretary look towards each others faces Secretary: takes paper Applicant: looks down	Secretary: turns and moves away from Applicant Camera Operator: Standing close to Applicant
<i>b: Film 2</i>				
00.25			Camera Operator: turns camera to follow Applicant Applicant: looks in direction he is walking, he puts arms behind back and holds right arm in his left hand just above the wrist	Applicant: Continues to move forward in the same direction
<i>c: Film 3</i>				
Scene 6 00.00-00.01	Applicant: How come I ain't got the job?		Applicant: holds calculator to ear like a phone in left hand, and holds a book in right hand, he looks ahead with an expression of confusion	Applicant: sits on sofa

Fig. 2. Application as material instantiation of social identities - trepidation and disappointment.

5. Data exploration

5.1. The social significance of the paper application: negative emotions and violence across Films 1, 2, and 3

When the completed application is handed to the Secretary it operates as an extension of the Applicant's social identity sedimented into text (Rowse & Pahl, 2007) particularly in the sense that presenting it to others leaves the Applicant socially vulnerable and is potentially face-threatening for him; Fig. 2 illustrates this. In the first two films this can be seen in the Applicant's deferential gaze and pose when his application is handed to the secretary (Fig. 2A and B). This is also evident across all three films in the varying ways in which the Applicant responds to being unsuccessful in his application (*Film 1*: upset and confused; *Film 2*: angry; *Film 3*: confused and disappointed). This is particularly evident in

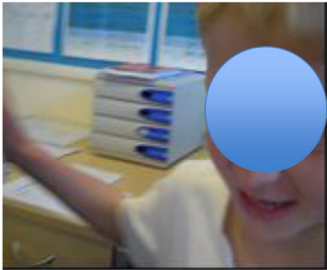


Time and Scene	Speech Vocalisation (// overlapping)	Action [Arrows added for Gaze]	Gaze, Gesture, Facial Expression	Posture, Proxemics, Haptics
<i>a: Film 1</i>				
00.45-00.46	Boss: (half-shouted, stylized 'American' voice) Aw get...		Camera Operator: moves camera from Boss to Applicant Boss: looks down towards paper and reaches right arm out towards Applicant in a pushing motion	Boss: begins to push Applicant away
<i>b: Film 2</i>				
00.39-00.40	Boss: You're not having the job		Applicant: looks towards Boss Boss: looks towards Applicant , he shoves the paper down the front of Applicant's top	Boss: takes hold of Applicant's shirt and pushes the paper down the front of it. Boss gets quite close to do this and the paper pushes against Applicant's face as he shoves it
<i>c: Film 3</i>				
00.04-00.08	Secretary: Hi (Applicant's first name) just to let you know you haven't got the job I'm sorry Applicant: What?!		Secretary: looks down at the desk as she talks on the phone	Secretary: Sits in chair

Fig. 3. Poor-spelling as justification for poor treatment of people.

Film 3 where he asks for justification about how the decision was reached, potentially as a way of saving face by being better able to rationalise the decision (Fig. 2C).

Throughout the three different film drafts the application operates as a socially significant instantiation of the applicant's identity (and perceived worth). As an artefact, it is also imbued with the

quality of being 'poorly spelled'. This leads to a number of communicative encounters where the paper's socially symbolic meaning plays out in different ways in the three films, operating as an extension of the applicant's social identity.

This is how we would expect a job application to operate— as a written instantiation of a public persona, which presents a curated biographical trajectory of the applicant with the general aim of securing employment. This instantiation of the applicant's identity intersects with the children's understanding of the negative impact of 'poor spelling' on how individuals can be treated. For example, as illustrated by Fig. 3, in *Film 1* the Boss pushes and shouts at the Applicant when it becomes apparent that he cannot justify his use of incorrect spellings (Fig. 3A). He is then chased and taunted by the Camera Operator as he tries to leave. In *Film 2*, the Applicant has his application returned to him in a humiliating gesture as it is shoved down his top (Fig. 3B). In *Film 3*, the potential that poor spellings have for mistreatment and humiliation are mediated by a polite phone call from the Secretary (Fig. 3C), who does not mention that it got thrown in the bin very soon after the boss looked at it.

5.2. Participants' social and emotional understanding of spelling

In considering the films through this form of multimodal analysis, we can 'zoom in' (Jewitt, Price, & Xambo Sedo, 2017: 44–45) on how our participants perform their understanding of the social and emotional significance of spelling. The socially symbolic meanings and identities instantiated into the applicant's 'poor' application motivate a number of emotional reactions. The character of the Applicant is initially hopeful that his application will be accepted (particularly in *Film 1*), although the child playing this character is well aware that his application will be perceived as poor. This reflects the children's understanding that applications can bring about positive outcomes, yet in the case of 'poorly spelled' applications, they can lead to disappointment, derision and confusion. The socially symbolic meanings recognised by the group as sedimented into and materialised by the paper application influence how they affectively react to the application and each other. These meanings include:

- 1 Spelling as involving an embodied response to materials and contexts
- 2 Written artefacts as extensions or sedimentations of individual identity
- 3 The creation of written artefacts as embodying notions of hope or reflecting emotional investment
- 4 Poor spellings as the basis for miscommunication and confusion
- 5 Poor spellings as the justification for expressions of contempt and mocking behaviour
- 6 Being able to recognise poor spellings acting as a means of bolstering authority

Attending to the detail of *Film 1* in relation to the negative emotions and violence across all the films draws out a complexity in how spelling is linked to bodies, materials, and emotions. What our participants demonstrate, through their actions with and around the application, is their understanding of how prescriptivist norms influence the ways of being that are available to them. Failing to adequately negotiate institutionally prescriptive norms means that you leave yourself open to public humiliation, deserved disappointment, and justified exclusion from positions of authority. Taking these understandings seriously involves orienting towards prescriptivism as a means through which individuals are able to live 'successful' lives (i.e. lives potentially free from humiliation, disdain, and exclusion, or where you free yourself from judgements by having the authority to judge others).

Our situating of the paper application as central to our understanding of the children's perception of spelling emerged in the course of our analysis (Masny, 2012). The application operated as a 'cultural tool' (Michaels & Sohmer, 2000) that had social resonance. Discourses of prescriptivism resonate through what the children say and do in the analysis above. In order to attend further to the materially situated nature of these videos, we chose to consider this cultural and social resonance in relation to the physical resonance of the objects in the videos. We did this by attending to the soundscape of the films created through the children's use of objects, and which plays a role in the emergent affective action involved in *Film 2*

5.3. Visualising the sound of material objects in the communicative encounter

5.3.1. Situating Children's ontologies within material-discursive relations

In exploring how the involvement of participants in research around language and literacy shifts our understanding of the field of linguistics, we have employed approaches that de-centre the researchers' gaze. This leads to an onto-epistemological (e.g. knowing through being) shift which, 'understands posthumanism as a material turn which builds upon (not leaves behind) the linguistic turn that literacy education is so heavily rooted in' (Kuby, Spector, & Thiel, 2019: 7). We identify this approach as one that is 'material/discursive'. This has led us to using perspectives from posthumanism and new materialism to aid our understanding of the role of the objects in the films, particularly the paper job application and the bin (Bennett, 2010; Braidotti, 2013). We oriented towards the clanging of the bin and the scrunching of paper as co-constituting the understandings of spellings the children were exploring. Our analysis moved from a multimodal depiction of the films to a more speculative enquiry in which we used drawing and comics to explore the affective and tonal dimensions of what was being presented in the films

Committing to the exploration of affect has led to a turn to non-representational approaches (Leander & Boldt, 2013). For example, Ehret, Hollet, and Jocius (2016) argue that:

Language, discourse, culture, and, indeed, new media making, are emergent phenomena that are more than locally and transnationally situated: they are materially entangled in the world's becoming. They matter in discursive-material relations, where there is no ontological gap between discourse-and-material. (Ehret et al. 2016: 348)

We focused on *how* the children's understandings emerged. This is a way of attending to the emergent living of life in the present, from which our participants' understandings of language and literacy are always situated, and work towards 'an emergent mapping of affective intensities and their effects produced across texts, bodies, and interaction' (Leander & Boldt, 2013: 38). We therefore present a different way of looking at the data that informed how objects, and their resonances and echoes, came to the fore.

5.3.2. Object scoring and comic making

One means through which we worked to attend to affective qualities of the films was through considering the soundscape created by the children's actions (Gallagher, Prior, Needham, & Holmes, 2017). In order to make sense of the material parts of the films, we initially drew on Smith, Hall, and Sousanis' (2015) discussions of visualising as a form of enquiry in literacy studies, particularly Hall's examples of scoring aural and physical interactions (2015: 4–6), to trace the audibility of objects in moments of interaction and how their agency related to each other. We

were motivated by arts-based discussions of drawing as 'inherently collaborative between individuals, between an individual and an emergent world that is always in formation' (Douglas, Ravetz, Genever, & Siebers, 2014: 3), which positioned drawing as a research method that was in alignment with the material-discursive enterprise we were engaged in. This began with a listing of the objects that could be heard in *Film 2* and considering their sonic qualities (e.g., the initial, gentle rustle of the paper application and the louder tearing of the paper).

The audibility of the objects, their loudness and the action that their audibility signals, are part of how the unfolding action is co-constituted and so we worked to attempt to bring this into our analysis.

Using comics allowed us to think through the coming together of people, places, and things that constitute the children's exploration. The representational logic and affordances of comics provided different communicative affordances and spatiality, which illuminated the co-presence of bodies, places, and things entangled in the assemblage that co-constitutes the 'chaotic' narrative of the applicant in *Film 2*. Comics also provided a way of mapping the audibility of laughter in relation to action and these other noises (see Fig. 4).

These exercises helped draw attention to the sonic, but also the tactile, qualities of the objects making noise, and foregrounded how the engagement with objects and contexts reflected the ways in which they were imbued with social meaning. For example, the paper rustles because it has the affordances that it can be torn, and the feel of torn paper down the front of a shirt influences the affective intensities involved in the co-construction of action.

We then returned to our original transcriptions and made an attempt to augment our approach to multimodal transcription in order to account for these elements. This was not an attempt to reduce these affective and material-social elements to the representational logic of transcription, but an attempt to try and illustrate how transcription, drawing, and comic making, have served as heuristics with which we have explored the 'chaotic' elements of our data, through which we feel our participants materialised part of their embodied understanding of prescriptivist ideologies. We use these transcriptions to illustrate the materialisation of the children's action around the application in *Film 2*.

5.3.3. *The paper in the bin in Film 2*

In Fig. 5a the Applicant's hopeful, patient engagement with the job application has resulted in the Boss tearing the application and proceeding to shout at the Applicant. The Boss's waves the paper in the Applicant's face whilst questioning him about what he 'thinks' he has been doing. The incorrectly spelled application is worthy of being destroyed by the Boss, and his fury suggests that its existence undermines the application process. The Applicant's identity, sedimented into the application and proffered to the Boss for appraisal, is thoroughly rejected. The incorrect and destroyed application, once a hopeful instantiation of the Applicant's identity is now valueless, but is stuffed down his shirt, an action that serves as public humiliation. The Boss' authority, which is bolstered by prescriptivist norms, resonates across the bodily and spatial dimensions of this encounter, as his ability to recognise the incorrect spellings bolster his authority, and the incorrect nature of the spellings themselves 'justify' his violent actions. The rage that the boss displays comes from recognising poor spellings in a job application. The public humiliation and physical abuse that the applicant experiences, is deserved because he produced an artefact that is incorrect. These understandings are materialised in the coming together of social, affective and material element in this moment. Seeing affect in terms of intensities that come together in a moment means that the children's affective understandings can be seen as located in the coming together of people, place and objects. 'The potential stored in ordinary things is a network of transfers and relays' (Stewart,

2007:21) and affective intensities lie within these networks. It is through these networks that the children co-constitute, an understanding of spelling that is linked to rage, humiliation, and abuse.

The stuffing action creates an intensity that begins to direct the flow of the emergent action (Massumi, 2015: 8–9). In Fig. 5b, the way the paper nestles in the applicant's shirt and rustles against his neck forms part of this humiliation but also concurrently features as an amusing situation for both the Applicant and the Camera Operator. The Applicant moves rapidly away from the site of his humiliation, whilst also enjoying himself, and then works to quickly pull the paper out of his shirt. The speed at which the Applicant begins to move and the way he handles the paper and his movements begins to break from what we would recognise as 'good-behaviour'. The humiliation, lack of value the paper now has for the Applicant, its physical position inside his shirt, laughter and camera come together in the emergence of more 'rebellious' action. This materialises in the way in which the Applicant violently 'dunks' the paper into the bin, held by the Secretary, causing it to crash to the ground

In Fig. 5c the emergence of this rebellious identity is momentarily put in check by the loud clanging of the bin. The Applicant slows their movement briefly to look towards the bin. There is a brief moment of silence as the Applicant appears to reflect on whether their actions have gone too far. The performance of a 'rebellious' identity in a narrative, is different to the real materialisation of 'rebellious' behaviour, such as creating loud banging noises, in a school context. The clanging of the bin interrupts the flow of action momentarily, but also creates new potentialities in that it pauses the Camera Operators laughter, and then provokes the renewed laughter of the Secretary and Camera Operator. The Applicant resumes his rapid movement out of the door, flinging it open, but then also clearly stops it from swinging too wildly. He continues to enact a rebellious identity, but does not build on the noise created by the bin to create more or even louder noises. The Applicant's actions are situated in the creation of a rebelliousness within the context of the video, but the noise of the bin serves as a reminder that within the context of the school his actions could be seen as rebelliousness in the eyes of adults or teachers. Once the Applicant, Secretary, and Camera Operator have attended to this noise and seen that it does not warrant abandoning the narrative of the film, the Applicant resumes his movement and the Camera Operator and Secretary laugh. The applicant now reverts back to his initial rapid indignant movement through the room and out of the door. The social significance of the wrongly spelled application resonates throughout the film, but other resonances interrupt, escalate, draw focus, and shift the unfolding of this social action, within which the social significance of the application is situated.

5.3.4. *Being in the bin: discussion*

In this discussion different elements of the interaction are socially or modally significant (i.e. in terms of design), and are more or less affective (i.e. not about conscious design but emergent). Both the designing and bodily affective elements are involved in the co-constitution of this narrative. Materiality and participation in discourses are involved in the sedimentation of identity. The means through which the children materialise their sense that poor spelling justifies the poor treatment of people is through what the Boss says to the Applicant, but also through the way he tears, waves, stuffs, and returns the application to the applicant.

We have considered how our transcriptions trace action, interaction, and meaning-making practices that are visible in, and emerge from, the different modes that are concurrent in the video. Our framings are presented to help make visible the numerous ways that as researchers we can chose to 'cut' a video such as this into particular 'slices' in order to undertake our analysis at

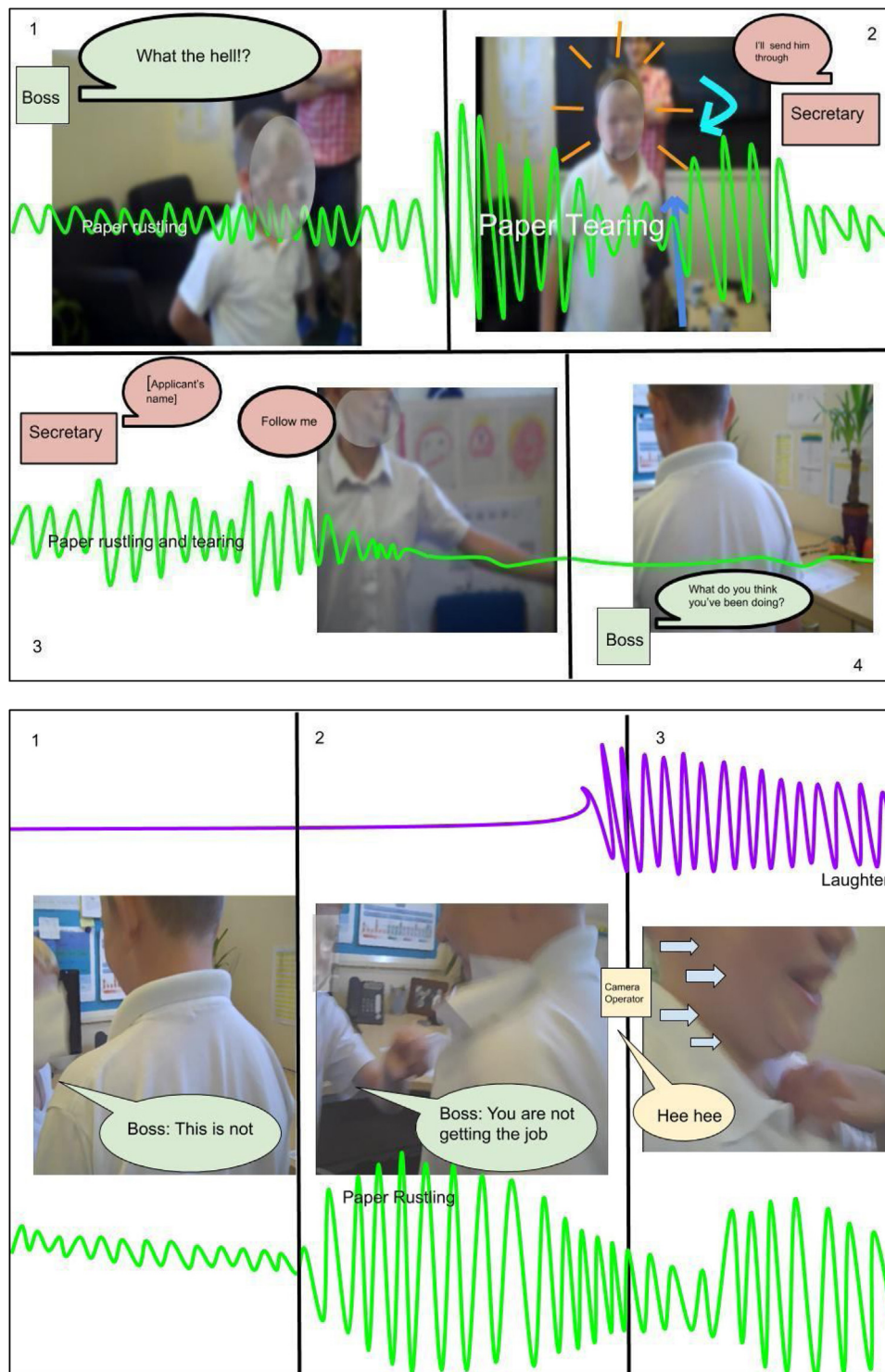


Fig. 4. The moment in Film 2 when the application is torn up.

another time. In considering the affective potentialities that sonic noises and tactile objects provide, we have used multimodal transcription as a means of attending to the 'an emergent mapping of affective intensities' discussed by (Leander & Boldt, 2013: 38). We have attempted to orient towards the affective qualities we felt were in the childrens' videos by nuancing our engagement with multimodal transcription. Kress (2009) talks about the material affordances that modes have, but that not all of the material affordances of modes are socially or culturally meaningful in any one

context. This changes across contexts and cultures. Thinking about the materiality of modes provides a useful point of connection between socially semiotic and affective approaches. The distinction between sound as embodied speech or materially produced, or touch as part of haptic interaction or action facilitated by tactile elements, are distinctions that multimodal analysis is already able to account for, in terms of being able to consider embodiment and materiality (see Kress and Van Leeuwen, 2001: 31–32 and 'Embodiment' and 'Materiality' MODE, 2012). We attempted

to 'zoom-in' (Jewitt et al., 2017: 44–45) on what we felt were significant moments of material-discursive complexity, so that we could also 'zoom-out' to situate these moments within the wider context of children in school in a post-industrial area of the UK. We considered particularly the role of the job application in the films. How did it move through the action? What happened to it? Why was it the subject of so much distress? Here we were able to locate the relationship between spelling, and the mistreatment of people and poor job outcomes, as part of the embodied understandings of the children. Within the films the children's understanding is partly materialised through their engagement with non-human objects.

On one level, the bin provides us as researchers with a useful figurative image to discuss, which reflects many straightforward criticisms of capitalism and class inequalities; if you can't spell you may as well 'be in the bin'. Yet we are not engaging with this research process simply to make this point. The material means through which symbolic meaning and affective intensities are created, become the context and catalyst through which children come to understand the world around them and construct their meta-commentaries about the role of spelling in their lives. The children's films trace the 'nuanced social value' (Rymes & Leone, 2014: 38–39) that they recognise as being placed on the ways of using language and literacy that they explore. The implications of spelling poorly

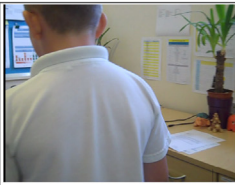

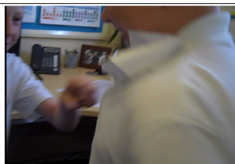
		Embodied Modes			Material Modes		Sedimentation
Time and Scene	Speech Vocalisation (// overlapping)	Action [Arrows added for Gaze]	Gaze, Gesture, Facial Expression	Posture, Proxemics, Haptics	Sonic	Tactility	Sedimentation (sedimentation of identities or discourses into artefacts, responses to the instantiations, and identities made visible by these features.)
a: Rejection of the application							
00.36-00.37	Boss: What do you think you have been doing?		Applicant: looks in the direction of Boss Camera Operator: follows Applicant with camera	Secretary: stops moving and takes hand off Applicant's shoulder Applicant: continues moving in the same direction and stands close to Boss	Shouting Paper quietly rustles		Boss incredulous at Applicant's proffered identity and so begins questioning him
00.38-00.39	Boss: This is not		Camera Operator: follows Applicant with camera Boss: Looks at Applicant , he holds up paper in his right hand towards Applicant's face and then waves it Applicant: smiles slightly	Applicant: holds scrunched up paper very close to Applicant's face and then pulls it away from Applicant's face by a couple of inches.	Shouting Paper quietly rustles	Boss holds up crushed paper, it sways with the movement	Crushed ripped paper is made clearly visible to Applicant (and others) in a public exhibition. Boss's actions imply that the proffered identity has been negatively appraised, rejected, and Applicant's destroyed application is used as the basis for a public display of B's authority..
00.39-00.40	Boss: Your not having the job		Applicant: looks towards Boss Boss: looks towards Applicant , he shoves the paper down the front of Applicant's top	Boss: takes hold of Applicant's shirt and pushes the paper down the front of it, he gets quite close to do this and the paper pushes against	Shouting Paper rustling increases in volume	Paper is crushed and stuffed into a shirt, Applicant seems to pull in chin as the paper comes into contact with his chest	Boss: gives paper failed application back into Applicant's possession in a humiliating gesture. Applicant is publicly humiliated.

Fig. 5. Multimodal ranscription attending to embodied and material modes, and sedimentation.

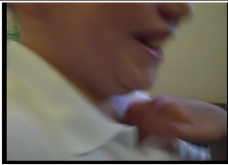
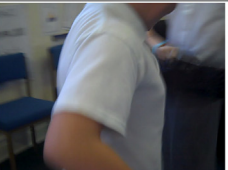
				Applicant's face as he shoves it		and neck	
b: Emergence of rebellious identity							
00.40- 00.41	CO: (laughs)		A: smiling, looks towards the camera and the off to the right, begins to pull paper out of shirt.	A: moves past CO quite close, paper is inside shirt and sticking up against neck before it is pulled out	Laughter Paper rustling loudly Movement and sound of clothes A: paper is in A's possession but uncomfortably so, it has been completely transformed in terms of its form. Paper scratches against A's chest and neck forcing him to remove it from his shirt	Crushed paper sits between shirt and body. A's smile and chin position suggest that it is tickling him. Paper is grabbed and pulled from shirt, it catches slightly on shirt and causes some resistance.	Preferred applicant identity has been completely rejected. Paper is now useless, and applicant has been shouted at by an authority figure because of it. Applicant is having fun, his Applicant persona 'breaks' as he smiles and the Camera Operator laughs.
00.41- 00.42			Applicant: moves forward fully pulls the paper out of his shirt, he raises it in his left hand and drops it into the bin with a swift dunking motion Camera Operator: follows Applicant with camera	Secretary: holds up the bin for Applicant to drop paper into	Laughter Paper rustling loudly Movement and sound of clothes Loud clanging of bin The bin makes a resonant clanging sound as the paper is dropped in. Paper moves up and then down very quickly, in doing so A lets go of the paper, the paper causes a clanging sound as it travels into the bin	Paper is held aloft in a ball and then brought down through the air and thrown into the bin. Applicant is able to dunk paper as it is now in a sort of ball shape. Bin is held up by Secretary Paper is thrown into the bin, but the force involved causes the bin to slip from Secretary's	Application is now valueless to the Applicant identity. Applicant enjoys tearing it from his shirt and throwing it into the bin, paper gets caught up in the enacting of a 'rebellious' response to Boss's authority

Fig. 5. (Continued)

in these videos are materially, physically, and affectively manifested, as they trace their understanding of prescriptivist ideologies surrounding spelling.

6. Conclusion

We have explored the implications of taking seriously the awareness of what spelling means and its 'ordinary affects' that, is the affective resonances of the experience of having a job application rejected (Stewart, 2007) from the position of non-linguists. We recognise both the limitations and affordances of this stance, in that we would also like to focus on children's perceptions of what is going on, and this takes us to the consideration of new ontologies

from citizen sociolinguistics and material-discursive approaches. This has involved exploring data-produced by children in a school in which they explore their understanding of spelling, through a lens that has focussed on the materials involved in the construction of these narratives. We have connected with Rymes and Leone's (2014) call for a shift in perception from linguists as language experts, to ordinary people as experts, with their lived affective understanding of language coming to be seen as expertise, but we recognise that we have provided a particularly distinct way of attending to this shift. We have seen the children as experts, but with a particular focus on their filmed actions. We have drawn on the recent material-discursive turn in literacy studies, with a particular focus on thinking 'with' children (Wargo, 2018). We have highlighted a number of areas of exploration:

						grasp	
c: The bin interrupting the flow of action							
00.42-00.43			Applicant: walks past Secretary and the bin and then looks back at them Secretary: drops the bin	Applicant: turns back towards Secretary as she drops the bin, still moving forward but not as fast Secretary: stands with knees bent	Loud clanging of the bin Laughter Rustling of bin bag and rubbish The bin bangs resonantly on the floor Applicant looks in the direction of the noises	Bin is in a lopsided rolling position on the floor inviting someone to pick it up	Application has been appraised, rejected, used to humiliate, and discarded by its author. Applicant has angrily discarded the paper Proffered applicant identity is worthless. Rebellious identity is instantiated in the fallen bin. Applicant hesitates in response to noise. Rebellious actions potentially have gone too far.
							Level of noise invites potential for further real chastisement from an authority figure (adults or teachers)
00.43-00.44	Camera Operator and Secretary: (laughing)		Applicant: turns back towards the right of the camera and carries on walking Camera Operator: follows Applicant with camera	Applicant: keeps moving in the same direction the whole time but slows down momentarily and then rapidly moves forward Secretary: moves away from Applicant	Rustling of bin bag and rubbish Clanging of bin Paper and bin lie on the floor together causing laughter from S and Camera Operator , and for Applicant to start moving quickly towards the door	Bin is in a lopsided rolling position on the floor inviting someone to pick it up	Applicant continues to reject application, and to continue to rebelliously remove self from application process.
00.44-00.45			Applicant: moves towards door, opens it with right hand and goes through, keeping his right hand on the door Camera Operator: follows Applicant with camera	Applicant: leans forwards towards the door places his left hand on the wall and right hand on the door, keeping his right hand on the door as it opens	Rustling Door opening Movement	Door is grabbed and flung open, but kept from swinging wildly and banging	Applicant responds negatively to the outcome of the application process. Application is discarded and application context is abandoned

Fig. 5. (Continued)

Firstly, recognising the situated nature of 'knowledge about language'. Through our engagement with co-production practices, our participants are situated in a position as curators, producers, and collectors of data. This draws attention to how the professional distinction between researcher and participant recognises

the knowledge about language that non-linguists possess. Everyday knowledge about language has traditionally been positioned as of less importance than that of professional researchers (Curzan, 2014), regardless of the fact that this knowledge is complex in that it combines both social and affective understandings, whilst also

being involved in how individuals live successful lives. We have engaged with this issue a process of taking seriously their filmic commentaries on the social significance of spelling.

Secondly, *recognising understandings of prescriptivism as sedimented across talk, literacies and materials*. We have explored the children's understanding of the paper job application as instantiating a complex social recognition of how beliefs about correct and incorrect spellings resonate across the social and material action they are involved in. The cultural laws that surround prescriptivism, make many people who they are and how they are able to negotiate society; this means recognising that just because we are able to 'step outside' of them in descriptivist framings this does not mean that they are going to go away (see Ref. [Massumi, 2015](#): 14).

Thirdly, *recognising the lived, embodied, multimodal, and affective means through which non-linguists relate to each other and the world around them*. Orienting towards awareness of language as being involved in the living of life in these terms causes significant issues for the apparatus available to us to represent this knowledge. Recognising the complexity of understandings, concerning something as seemingly straightforward as spelling, that non-linguists possess involves orienting towards what participants recognise as important. We have visualised the affective means through which our participants understanding has been enacted.

Fourthly, *recognising the potential for poor treatment of others, justifications for perceived authority, and inhumanity that can be tied into mainstream literacy practices*. The assemblage involved in the children's exploration of spelling is the means through which they demonstrate the complexity of literacy and language practices in their everyday lives. This disrupts the settled knowledges of prescriptivist attitudes towards language. The correctness of language and spelling is provisional on a multiplicity of people, places and things coming together in particular ways. With the rapidly changing nature of communication, digital technologies and migration in superdiversity, and the influences of globalisation on labour and community, this provisionality is being disrupted. However, critically engaging with everyday understandings of language, such as prescriptivist beliefs, involves a care and compassion that recognises that this critical work is involved in challenging how people understand themselves, their communities, and their interactions with the world around them. Surfacing the ontologies and epistemologies of individuals and communities provides a means of encouraging dialogue that is already situated in the ways of knowing that these individuals and communities value.

Conflicts of interest

None declared.

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