

Chapter 5 – Right Dislocation and Interactional Stance

5.1 Introduction

The English Dialect Grammar states:

In all the dialects of Sc[otland] and Eng[land] there is a tendency to introduce a redundant personal pronoun after a noun when emphasis is required; this is especially frequent after a proper name, as *Mr. Smith, he came to my house*.

In the northern dialects the personal pronoun is often repeated in recriminatory talk, as *thou great lout thou*.

(Wright 1905b:270).

The phrase ‘redundant personal pronoun’ is unfortunate, having rather negative connotations (‘useless’, ‘unnecessary’), and is not an expression a modern linguist would use. The linguistic feature to which it refers, however, occurs in different guises in several dialects of British English, as well as ‘New Varieties’ of English. In fact, Lambrecht (2001:1051) states that this kind of construction ‘can be identified in most, if not all, languages of the world, independently of language type and genetic affiliation’. This linguistic feature has been discussed in the literature under various headings: ‘left/right-dislocation’ (Greenbaum 1996; Lambrecht 2001; Huddleston and Pullum 2002); ‘anticipated’/‘postponed identification’ (Quirk et al. 1985); ‘pronoun copying’ (Platt et al. 1984:120). I have chosen to refer to this phenomenon as ‘left/right dislocation’. Both types of dislocation involve ‘a definite noun phrase occurring in a peripheral position, with a co-referent pronoun in the core of the clause’ (Biber et al. 1999:956). With left dislocation, the noun phrase occurs in initial position (e.g. *Well Ashley’s sister, she saw him.*), and in right dislocation the noun phrase occurs in final position (e.g. *It’s tiny, the mic.*). I accept Carter and McCarthy’s (1995:149) point that the term ‘dislocation’ may be slightly misleading in that ‘it suggests that something has been pushed out of place to a somewhat

aberrant position’ when, in fact, both left and right dislocation are ‘perfectly normal in conversational language’, but I feel that creating new terms would further splinter the already diverse range of vocabulary on this topic. For now, the terms left and right dislocation are useful in that they make direct reference to the form of the linguistic feature without making assumptions about its function (cf. ‘anticipated’/‘postponed identification’). A variety of names have also been applied to the dislocated constituents in left and right dislocation. The right dislocated constituent, for example, has been referred to as a ‘tail’ (Carter and McCarthy 1995; 1997; Carter et al. 2000), ‘tag’ (Biber et al. 1999), ‘amplificatory tag’ (Quirk et al. 1985), and ‘explanatory noun phrase’ (Greenbaum 1996). In line with Biber et al. (1999), I will adopt the term ‘tag’. When referring to the discussion of this feature by other linguists, I will use my own terms to prevent confusion.

5.2 Dislocation: terminology, distribution and form

The proliferation of terminology, combined with a lack of empirical work in this area, has led to a rather confusing picture of left and right dislocation. Table 5.1 aims to unravel part of the puzzle with a summary of the types of English in which different grammars and empirical studies have identified left and right dislocation. Taking left and right dislocation in turn, I will then consider the different forms that this linguistic feature can take and the terminology associated with those forms.

Table 5.1: Summary of previous findings on left and right dislocation

	Left Dislocation	Right Dislocation
Pronoun		<p>Informal speech (Greenbaum 1996).</p> <p>General Northern (Wright 1905b); Tyneside (Beal 1993; 2004); Bolton (Moore 2003; Shorrocks 1999). Manchester (Edwards and Weltens 1985).</p> <p>(Demonstrative pronoun: conversation and written representations of speech (Biber et al. 1999)).</p>
Noun Phrase	<p>Informal speech, conversation etc. (Biber et al. 1999; Carter and McCarthy 1997; Carter et al. 2000, Greenbaum 1996; Quirk et al. 1985; Wales 1996).</p> <p>Especially narrative genre (Carter & McCarthy 1995).</p> <p>Oral personal narratives and informal writing (Huddleston and Pullum 2002).</p> <p>General dialectal speech (Wales 1996). All the dialects of Scotland and England (Wright 1905). Bolton (Shorrocks 1999). Various ‘New Englishes’ (Platt, Weber and Ho 1984).</p>	<p>Informal speech, conversation etc. (Biber et al. 1999; Carter and McCarthy 1995; Carter et al. 2000; Greenbaum 1996; Quirk et al. 1985; Wales 1996).</p> <p>Oral personal narratives and informal writing (Huddleston and Pullum 2002).</p> <p>General dialectal speech (Wales 1996). Bolton (Shorrocks 1999; Moore 2003).</p>

5.2.1 Left dislocation

There are only 2¹ examples of left dislocation in my data, both of which are presented in (1) below:

- (1) (a) *Off peak (.) what's it mean?* (Harry, Ironstone Primary)
- (b) *Well Ashley's sister, she saw him.* (Mary, Murrayfield Primary)

Example (1a) is slightly ambiguous. In his previous turn, Harry had asked: *Miss what's off peak mean? (1.6 seconds) Miss what's off peak mean?* Miss Snell replies *Hey?* and Harry asks his question again. In this utterance, *Off peak* could be a left dislocated noun phrase which serves as a link to the prior discourse. Alternatively, the noun phrase could be a stand-alone item, with Harry believing that Miss Snell had heard enough of his previous questions to be able to provide the answer with only a minimal prompt; realising that this was not the case, Harry then repeats *what's it mean?* Example (1b), however, is a clear case of left dislocation, the function of which is to avoid having a discourse-new element in subject position. This is one of the main pragmatic functions of left dislocation (Huddleston and Pullum 2002:1410). The same function can be performed by other means, however, such as introducing the new entity in a separate clause: 'You know those letters we did this morning? They have to go off in today's mail' (Huddleston and Pullum 2002:1410; also Biber et al. 1999:958). The children in this study do not generally use left dislocation but they do have other means to express the same kind of discourse function. Examples are given in (2) below:

¹ A summary of the total occurrences of left and right dislocation in the data can be found in Appendix 3.

- (2) (a) *Ere Adam, do you know Joanne Bracken's car? She sold it to me. My Dad.* (Sean, Ironstone Primary)
- (b) *Know one of my friends? (0.8 seconds) Glasses (2.2 seconds)*
One of my friends at home has got glasses. (Andrew, Ironstone Primary)
- (c) *Do you know Becca? She had sausages, chips and banana-bananas and milk ((laughs)) for her tea.* (Danielle, Ironstone Primary)
- (d) *Tara you know Miss Lee? She wrote in my book (.) in my work book (.) look.* (Holly, Murrayfield Primary)

In fact, constructions of the sort 'Do you know X?' function not only to avoid having a discourse-new element in subject position but also to grab the attention of the intended addressee and arouse interest in the subsequent utterance. These kinds of constructions thus serve a dual purpose for the speaker. Given that there are only 2 examples of left dislocation in my data, the remainder of the chapter will concentrate on right dislocation.

5.2.2 Right dislocation

Unlike Wright, later sources do not imply that right dislocation is a specifically northern English feature. It has been suggested, for example, that it is simply part of 'informal spoken English' (e.g. Quirk et al. 1985:1310). As with possessive 'me' and singular 'us' (see discussion in Chapter 3.1), there is no real agreement as to whether right dislocation is dialectal, and hence region specific and to some extent non-standard, or is simply a feature of informal, colloquial usage.

Table 5.1 makes a distinction between whether the dislocated constituent (i.e the tag) is a full noun phrase or a pronoun. When the tag is a pronoun, it is always in its objective form (e.g. *I hate this book bag, me*). Quirk et al. (1985:1310, 1417), Huddleston and Pullum (2002:1411) and Wales (1996:43) only give examples with full noun phrase (as distinct from pronoun) tags in their discussions of right dislocation. Greenbaum (1996:230) does allow for the possibility that the tag may itself be a pronoun, though he does not provide examples. While pronoun tags are largely absent from descriptive accounts of right dislocation, they are evident in empirical research. Moore (2003), for example, found examples of pronoun tags in her investigation of right dislocation in the speech of Bolton teenagers, and Beal (1993; 2004) comments on this usage in Tyneside English. Perhaps, then, it is the pronoun variant which is dialectal (and potentially more prevalent in northern Englishes), while right dislocation with full noun phrase tags is more widespread and essentially part of any informal spoken English. Beal (1993; 2004) also makes the point that the type of construction favoured in right dislocation varies from one dialect to another: ‘[i]n the North-east, typically only the noun phrase or pronoun is repeated, sometimes reinforced with *like*² [*I’m a Geordie, me, like*] ... whilst in Yorkshire, an auxiliary verb precedes it [*He’s got his head screwed on, has Dave*]’ (Beal 2004:135-136). Durham (2007) finds this latter form of right dislocation (which she refers to as ‘reverse right dislocation’) to be the most frequently occurring variant in the York data she analyses. In my data, there are no examples in which the tag includes a verb, and intuitively, as a native speaker of Teesside English, I would suggest that this variant is not an option in Teesside. So while right

² I will return to the issue of how dislocation works together with other discourse features in Section 5.7.

dislocation in its widest sense may be shared by spoken varieties throughout England (and possibly further afield), the specific forms of right dislocation that are available for use in a particular locality may depend on the dialect spoken in that area.

The pronoun in the core of the clause in right (as well as left) dislocation can have a wide range of syntactic functions: subject; direct object; indirect object; object of a preposition; subject determiner; and a subject in an embedded clause (Huddleston and Pullum 2002:1411). Biber et al. (1999:957) state that while the relationship between the left dislocated constituent and the clause it is attached to may vary, the right dislocated constituent 'is normally co-referent with the subject of the preceding clause'. In his study of the dialect of the Bolton area, Shorrocks (1999:87) finds right dislocation in the syntax of the object as well as the subject (e.g. 'I never saw nothing like it, that shop window'). Moore (2003) also found right dislocated tags which were co-referential with the object of the clause in her Bolton data, though such occurrences were relatively rare compared to subject tags (3.4% versus 96.6%). In my data, there are just 3 (out of 64) examples of right dislocation in which the tag is co-referential with the object in the preceding clause (e.g. *Do you want it, that card?*) (Appendix 3). These represent just 4.7% of the total occurrences of right dislocation in the data.

All 64 examples of right dislocation are listed below, arranged according to type of tag.

(3) Noun phrase

- (a) *Is it brown or blonde, **your hair**?* (Ben, Murrayfield Primary)
- (b) *Yeah **that** is a sound, **birds**.* (Daniel, Murrayfield Primary)
- (c) *It's tiny, **the mic**.* (Michelle, Murrayfield Primary)

- (d) *Michelle, it's pulling my trousers down, **this thing**, you know.*
(Beth, Murrayfield Primary)
- (e) *Shall we get **it** (1 second) **that picture**?* (Tara, Murrayfield Primary)
- (f) *Miss (0.8 seconds) Can you turn **that** up, **volume**?* (Ben, Murrayfield Primary)
- (g) ***They** do have guns, **police**.* (Harry, Ironstone Primary)
- (h) ***They** just don't go, **bananas and milk and sausages and chips**.*
(Danielle, Ironstone Primary)
- (i) ***It's** class, **Clare's** [picture], isn't it?* (Harry, Ironstone Primary)
- (j) ***We're** just going to visit the boys now, **me and Courtney**.*
(Charlotte, Ironstone Primary)
- (k) *Do you want **it, that card**?* (Andrew, Ironstone Primary)
- (4) First person singular personal pronoun
- (a) *I want that one, **me**.* (Ben, Murrayfield Primary)
- (b) *I'm being first in line, **me**.* (Ben, Murrayfield Primary)
- (c) *I'm not playing, **me**.* (Neil, Murrayfield Primary)
- (d) *I've never been on it, **me**.* (Caroline, Ironstone Primary)
- (e) *I'm- I'm-I'm a magician, **me**.* (Clare, Ironstone Primary)
- (f) *I look stupid, **me**.* (Sam, Ironstone Primary)
- (g) *I hate this book bag, **me**.* (1.4 seconds) Proper gay. (Robert, Ironstone Primary)

- (h) *I'm off, **me**.* (Robert, Ironstone Primary)
 - (i) *Howay I'm going, **me**.* (Robert, Ironstone Primary)
 - (j) *I like the old ones, **me**.* (Andrew, Ironstone Primary)
 - (k) *I don't get this one, **me**.* (Charlotte, Ironstone Primary)
 - (l) *I hate everyone, **me**.* (Harry, Ironstone Primary)
 - (m) *I have a bad voice, **me**.* (Danielle, Ironstone Primary)
 - (n) *I think Clare is, **me**.* (Harry, Ironstone Primary)
 - (o) *I can't, **me**. Look.* (Joanne, Ironstone Primary)
 - (p) *I like jam doughnuts, **me**.* (Danielle, Ironstone Primary)
 - (q) *I'll stand up, **me**.* (Andrew, Ironstone Primary)
 - (r) *I want to get through, **me**.* (Andrew, Ironstone Primary)
 - (s) *I did it, **me**.* (Billy, Ironstone Primary)
- (5) Second person singular personal pronoun
- (a) *Nathan **you're** (xxxxxx spoiling it), **you**.* (Andrew, Ironstone Primary)
 - (b) ***You** are a copy-cat, **you**.* (Sam, Ironstone Primary)
 - (c) ***You're** dead nasty, **you**, now.* (Aaron, Ironstone Primary)
 - (d) *God, **you're** gay, **you**.* (David, Ironstone Primary)
 - (e) *I think **you're** going to get (0.7 seconds) uh second, **you**.*
(Harry, Ironstone Primary)
 - (f) *God, **you're** gay, **you**.* (Harry, Ironstone Primary)

- (g) ***You** love doing that, **you**.* (Joanne, Ironstone Primary)
- (h) *Give us that lid, **you**.* (Harry, Ironstone Primary)
- (i) *Get off, **you**.* (Billy, Ironstone Primary)
- (6) Third person singular personal pronoun
- (a) ***She's** horrible, **her**.* (Michelle, Murrayfield Primary)
- (b) ***He's** shit, **him**.* (Aaron, Ironstone Primary)
- (c) ***She's** a liar, **her**. I hate her.* (Danielle, Ironstone Primary)
- (d) ***She's** like Jamie Oliver now, **her**.* (Danielle, Ironstone Primary)
- (e) ***He's** mad, **him**.* (Robert, Ironstone Primary)
- (7) Third person plural personal pronoun
- (a) ***They're** our colours, **them**.* (Danielle, Ironstone Primary)
- (b) *Aw **they're** rubbed out (0.7 seconds) **them**.* (Harry, Ironstone Primary)
- (8) Demonstrative singular pronoun (That...that)
- (a) *I think **that** looked good, **that**.* (Ben, Murrayfield Primary)
- (b) ***That's** cool, **that**.* (Tara, Murrayfield Primary)
- (c) ***That's** just weird, **that**.* (Beth, Murrayfield Primary)
- (d) *No **this** isn't funny, **this**.* (Rachel, Murrayfield Primary)

- (e) *That sounded manky³, that.* (Neil, Murrayfield Primary)
 - (f) *That's Miss Kavanagh's niece, that, you know.* (Danielle, Ironstone Primary)
 - (g) *That aches your arms, that.* (Robert, Ironstone Primary)
 - (h) *That wasn't my finger, that, you know.* (Robert, Ironstone Primary)
 - (i) *That's just stupid, that.* (Helen, Ironstone Primary)
 - (j) *Aw yeah that is nice, that.* (David, Ironstone Primary)
 - (k) *Aw that's nice, that.* (David, Ironstone Primary)
 - (l) *That nearly hit your head, that.* (David Ironstone Primary)
 - (m) *That is cute, that.* (Hannah, Ironstone Primary)
 - (n) *Miss this is getting a bit hot, this.* (Andrew, Ironstone Primary)
- (9) Demonstrative singular pronoun (It...that)
- (a) *It's good, that, isn't it.* (Ben, Murrayfield Primary)
 - (b) *It was good, that.* (Tara, Murrayfield Primary)
 - (c) *It's much better, that.* (Danielle, Ironstone Primary)
- (10) Demonstrative plural pronoun
- (a) *These hurt your back, these.* (Caroline, Ironstone Primary)

Full noun phrase tags occur in 11 of the 64 examples (i.e. 20.8%) (Appendix 3). In the remaining examples, the dislocated constituent consists either of a personal

³ British colloquial word for dirty, unpleasant etc.

pronoun in its objective form or a demonstrative pronoun. The examples represented in (9) are treated separately because, while the dislocated constituent is a demonstrative pronoun, these utterances are of the form *It...that*, that is, PERSONAL PRONOUN...DEMONSTRATIVE PRONOUN. Biber et al. (1999:139, 958) give a couple of examples which follow this pattern (e.g. *It was a good book this*) and state that such examples serve to ‘emphasize the proposition’. This particular construction is also commented on specifically by Shorrocks (1999:87) who describes the pattern PRONOUN...DEMONSTRATIVE PRONOUN as being particularly emphatic. Moore (2003:188-189) points out, however, that there is no clear reason why these tags should be any more or less emphatic than other types of tag, or why they should be treated any differently to examples such as those in (2) to (6) given that *it* is commonly replaced by *this* or *that* when a stressed nonpersonal pronoun is needed (Quirk et al. 1985:348) (see Section 5.4 for further discussion of the ‘emphatic’ function of right dislocation).

Examples (3e) and (7b) are unusual in that there is a short pause between the main clause and the tag. With Example (7b) it is not clear whether Harry’s *them* is functioning as a right-dislocated tag or whether he uses it to point to something (either to the same referent as the antecedent *they* or to another referent), perhaps in response to a facial expression, gesture or comment from one of the other children which occurs during the pause but which is not picked up by the microphone. In 3(e), there is no doubt that *that picture* and *it* refer to the same object, but the delayed ‘tag’ makes this example stand apart from the other examples in (3). This point will be discussed further in Section 5.4.1 in relation to the notion of ‘afterthought’. Examples (5h) and (5i) are also unique, this time because the pronoun tag does not have an overt antecedent in the main clause. These clauses are

imperatives and as such the subject is omitted. The implied ‘you’ is explicitly articulated, however, in the right dislocated pronoun tag (see Section 5.4.2 for further discussion).

5.3 Right dislocation: a comparison between schools

In Section 5.2.2 I suggested that it may be the pronoun tag that is dialectal while noun phrase tags are simply part of colloquial usage. This point was based on previous descriptions of right dislocation, but it gains further significance when the distribution of right dislocation between the two schools in this study is considered. Table 5.2 shows that there was no difference between the two schools in the children’s use of right dislocation with noun phrase tags. There is a clear difference, however, in their use of pronoun tags: the participants from Murrayfield Primary used this form (which might be dialectal) much less frequently than the children at Ironstone Primary.

Table 5.2: Right dislocation – distribution between schools

	Ironstone	Murrayfield	
NP	5	6	11
Pronoun	42	11	53
TOTAL	47	17	64

5.3.1 Pronoun tags

Table 5.3 focuses specifically on the 53 examples of right dislocation with pronoun tags. The examples are organised according to the type of pronoun involved in right dislocation. The data in this table can be compared with Table 5.4, which shows the general distribution of personal and demonstrative pronouns in the corpus of conversational speech used in the *Longman Grammar of Spoken and Written English* (Biber et al. 1999).

Table 5.3: Type of pronoun used in right dislocation

	Ironstone		Murrayfield	
	#	%	#	%
1P sg. (<i>I...me</i>)	16	38.1%	3	27.3%
2P (<i>You...you</i>)	9	21.4%	0	0.0%
3P sg. (<i>S/he...her/him</i>)	4	9.5%	1	9.1%
3P pl. (<i>They...them</i>)	2	4.8%	0	0.0%
3P/Dem. sg. (<i>It...that</i>)	1	2.4%	2	18.2%
Dem. sg. (<i>That...that</i>)	8	19.0%	4	36.4%
Dem. sg. (<i>This...this</i>)	1	2.4%	1	9.1%
Dem. pl. (<i>These...these</i>)	1	2.4%	0	0.0%
	42		11	

Table 5.4: Distribution of pronouns in conversation (occurrence per million words)
(adapted from Biber et al 1999: 334, 249)

1P sg. <i>I/me</i>	42,000
2P <i>you</i>	30,000
3P sg.f. <i>she/her</i>	9,000
3P sg. m. <i>he/him</i>	13,000
3P sg. n <i>it</i>	28,000
3P pl. <i>they/them</i>	14,000
Dem sg. <i>this</i>	1,500
Dem sg. <i>that</i>	11,000
Dem pl. <i>these</i>	500

Ironstone Primary participants made greatest use of right dislocation with the first person personal pronoun (e.g. *I look stupid, me*). This is as we would expect given that the first person pronoun is the most frequently occurring pronoun in conversation (Table 5.4). Right dislocation with the second person pronoun (e.g.

You are a copy-cat, you) was the next most frequently used variant at Ironstone Primary. Again, this finding tallies with the distribution represented in Table 5.4. The first and second person pronouns are frequent in conversation; therefore, we would expect them to be used frequently in right dislocation, a feature of informal spoken discourse.

In Murrayfield Primary, there were no examples of right dislocation with the second person pronoun, and only 3 with the first person pronoun. In fact, personal pronoun tags generally were rare in the Murrayfield Primary community of practice. In the Murrayfield data, another type of pronoun was preferred in pronoun tags: 7 of the 11 (63.6%) examples involved the demonstrative singular pronoun. This is significant given the finding in Biber et al. (1999:333) that personal pronouns were ‘many times more common than the other pronoun types’ (including demonstratives) in the Longman Spoken and Written English (LSWE) Corpus. Even within Ironstone Primary, there were more examples of right dislocation with the demonstrative singular than we might expect given the frequency with which this type of pronoun occurs generally in speech (Table 5.4). There is evidence in the data, then, that the demonstrative singular pronoun favours right dislocation. This type of right dislocation is also acknowledged by grammars (e.g. Biber et al. 1999:958) in a way that right dislocation with other types of pronoun tag is not. So, we might refine the hypothesis stated earlier and suggest that tags using a full noun phrase or demonstrative pronoun are part of general colloquial usage while personal pronoun tags are more socially marked. We might hypothesise further that personal pronoun tags will therefore be particularly useful resources in the construction of social meaning. This will be explored in Section 5.5.

5.4 The pragmatic functions of right dislocation

5.4.1 Noun phrase tags

Right-dislocation is common in informal spoken discourse. Indeed, this linguistic feature is well suited to the needs of conversation. Right dislocation can be used, for example, to ensure that an utterance adheres to the principle of end-weight, in which the favoured position for long and complex elements is the end of the clause (Biber et al. 1999:898, 958; also Quirk et al. 1985:1362). This is illustrated in Example (3h), where the weight of *bananas and milk and sausages and chips* makes the preferred position for this noun phrase the end, rather than the beginning, of the clause. Another function of right dislocation identified by grammars is that of ‘clarification’, ‘establishing beyond doubt the reference of the preceding pronoun’ (Biber et al. 1999:957). This is one of the main functions of right dislocation and is important given ‘the evolving nature of conversation’ (Biber et al. 1999:958). Huddleston and Pullum (2002:1411) similarly cite ‘clarification of reference’ as one of the pragmatic functions of right dislocation: the speaker utters the pronoun but then realises that the reference may not be clear and so adds the additional noun phrase in clause-final position, as an ‘afterthought’.

Ziv (1994:639) uses the term ‘afterthought’ to refer to a different kind of phenomenon:

Intonationally, RDs [right dislocations] constitute a single contour with no pause preceding NP₁ [the NP tag]. Afterthoughts, by comparison, are characterized by a distinct pause preceding the final coreferential NP. They clearly display two different intonational units ... [I]n RD, NP₁ must necessarily occur in clause-final position, whereas the corresponding entity in Afterthoughts may be added as a parenthetical in other positions in the sentence as well ... [e.g. I met him, your brother, I mean, two weeks ago].

Following this definition, Example (3e) might better be categorised as an ‘afterthought’: *Shall we get it (1 second) that picture?* The discourse function of afterthoughts is corrective: ‘[t]he speaker assesses in mid utterance that s/he has made some error of judgement with respect to some aspect of that which s/he wants to communicate ... [such as] the relative ease of retrievability of the discourse referent in question’ (Ziv 1994:640). In Example (3e), Tara perhaps realises that her interlocutors are not able to retrieve the referent of *it* and hence adds *that picture* as an ‘afterthought’.

Right dislocation is different from afterthought in that it *recovers* entities that are either ‘textually evoked’ (i.e. recoverable from the preceding discourse) or ‘situationally evoked’ (i.e. recoverable from the immediate speaking context) (Ziv 1994:640). In relation to the former, the pronoun in the main clause refers anaphorically to an entity that has been mentioned in the preceding discourse. There may be significant distance between the pronoun and its antecedent, however, and in this situation, the noun phrase tag functions to recover the distal referent and reintroduce it as a potential topic. Consider Examples (3b) and (3g) which are given in context in Extracts 5.1 and 5.2 below.

Extract 5.1

(The children have been asked to write a description of somewhere they have been on holiday. Mrs Miller has asked Daniel to think of some adjectives to describe the sounds he heard at his holiday destination)

- 1 Mrs Miller: Go on Daniel.
- 2 Daniel: Birds: (2.2 seconds)
- 3 ((Classroom noise and inaudible talk – 8.1 seconds))
- 4 Mrs Miller: No bird isn’t an adjective.
- 5 Daniel: What do you mean?
- 6 Mrs Miller: It’s a noun.
- 7 Daniel: No bu-

- 8 Mrs Miller: No (0.9 seconds) you need a sound.
 9 Daniel: Mi- yeah **that** is a sound, **birds**.
 10 Mrs Miller: No bird isn't a sound. Bird is the name of something.

Extract 5.2

- 1 Joanne: Miss (1 second) Miss (.) have police got guns?
 2 Anon: Yeah.
 3 Mrs Herrington: No not in this country.
 4 ((Classroom noise – 2 seconds))
 5 Harry: Yeah they do.
 6 ((Classroom noise – 3 seconds))
 7 Harry: **They** do have guns, **police**.

In Extract 5.1, Daniel's utterance on line 9 (*yeah that is a sound, birds*) comes 9 seconds after the last previous mention of 'bird' (Mrs Miller's *No bird isn't an adjective* on line 4) and 17 seconds after Daniel first introduces this topic on line 2. Further, in the intervening period, the discussion has moved onto the difference between nouns and adjectives. It makes sense, therefore, that Daniel should add the noun phrase tag in order to reintroduce 'birds' as a topic and clarify the reference of the demonstrative pronoun. Similarly, in Extract 5.2, Harry's *They do have guns, police* occurs 10 seconds, and 4 turns, after the antecedent *police* in Joanne's question on line 1. Harry therefore makes use of right dislocation to clarify the reference of the pronoun in line 7.

Huddleston and Pullum (2002) also require that the noun phrase tag in right dislocation represent 'discourse-old' information; that is, it must refer to entities that can be recovered from the foregoing discourse. It seems, then, that they were not using the term 'afterthought' in the same way as Ziv (i.e. to refer to a linguistic construction which corrects an error in judgement). In the examples that Huddleston and Pullum (2002) give, the noun phrase tag is necessary, not because of the distance between the pronoun and its antecedent, but because there is more than one

potential antecedent in the preceding discourse. Example (3i), which is given in Extract 5.3 below, illustrates this point:

Extract 5.3

- 1 Harry: Clare's [picture](.) is going to be first. You know why? Look.
2 (1.5 seconds) Look at her person. Her person's (.) class. (1.2
3 seconds) **It's** class, **Clare's**, isn't it?

In this example, Harry is discussing whose picture he thinks will win the art competition that the children at Ironstone Primary are about to enter. The referent of *It* on line 3 may be unclear in light of the presence of two potential antecedents: *Clare's* (i.e. Clare's picture) on line 1 and *her person* on line 2. The noun phrase tag, *Clare's*, provides the necessary clarification.

In each of these examples, the speaker could simply have used the full noun phrase in subject position in the main clause. Example (3i), for instance, might have been formulated as *Clare's is class, isn't it?* This formulation would suggest, however, that the entity in question, Clare's picture, had not occurred in the context at all. As we can see from Extract 5.3, this was not the case; Clare's picture is not only present in the physical surroundings of the interlocutors but has also been explicitly referred to in the preceding discourse (*Clare's (.) is going to be first*). The noun phrase tag in right dislocation is therefore not merely an 'afterthought', a way of correcting an error in judgement that occurred when the pronoun in the main clause was selected; it arises as part of carefully planned discourse (Ziv 1994:641).

The 'discourse-old' condition does not apply to Example (3a), which is represented in Extract 5.4 below:

Extract 5.4

(Ben is working on a computer in the ICT suite)

- 1 Ben: Start
- 2 ((Background noise – 6.2 seconds))
- 3 Ben: Aw damn.
- 4 ((Background noise – 14.2 seconds))
- 5 Ben Mi:ss
- 6 ((Background noise – 3.6 seconds))
- 7 Ben: Is *it* brown or blonde, **your hair**?

The pronoun *it* on line 7 appears to introduce ‘discourse new’ information; it refers forward (i.e. cataphorically) to the noun phrase *your hair*. As it is uttered, the reference of the pronoun is unclear (and hence requires clarification), not because the distance between the pronoun and its antecedent is too great, or because there is more than one potential antecedent, but because there is *no* potential antecedent in the preceding discourse. Perhaps in this case what we have is outward or ‘exophoric’ reference (Wales 1996:41), whereby both *it* and *your hair* are referring outward to something in the immediate context (in this case, my hair). In Ziv’s terms, the use of right dislocation here could be interpreted as an instruction to the addressee to search their surroundings for the appropriate situationally evoked entity and attend to it (Ziv 1994:640). In this example, the use of the adjective ‘blonde’ gives Ben’s addressee(s) a clue as to what he is referring to. But why doesn’t Ben use the alternative construction ‘Is your hair brown or blonde?’ given that the topic of ‘hair’ had not arisen in the previous discourse (or indeed in any previous conversations) and has no particular prominence in the non-linguistic context? In this situation, we might hypothesise that Ben uses the construction to build up anticipation so that greater weight falls on the noun phrase following the principle of ‘end-focus’ (Quirk et al. 1985:1356). After all, his question is not entirely innocent (and perhaps is not a

question at all). Being careful to avoid rebuke for being ‘cheeky’, Ben uses an indirect speech act to point out that the roots of my hair were giving away the fact that I was not a natural blonde. This interpretation certainly fits with my knowledge of Ben as an individual. His behaviour at school was generally good, but he was playful and enjoyed pushing the boundaries in his relationships with other children as well as with the teaching staff. He was particularly creative with language (compare Extract 3.8 in Chapter 3.6) and was the most prolific user of right dislocation in the Murrayfield Primary data. He uses this linguistic feature 6 times in the data, twice as many as the next most frequent user at Murrayfield, Tara.

Huddleston and Pullum (2002) acknowledge that there are examples where the function of the dislocated phrase cannot be one of clarification but they do not discuss other possible functions. Biber et al. (1999:958) concede that, in contrast to left dislocation, ‘[t]he discourse functions of noun phrase tags [i.e. in right dislocation] are more difficult to pin down’. Ben’s use of right dislocation in Extract 5.4 highlights the point that, while we can make generalisations regarding the use of right dislocation with noun phrase tags (e.g. it is used to reintroduce textually or situationally evoked entities into the discourse), speakers still retain the freedom to be creative with this feature as they negotiate social relationships and style themselves linguistically. As Moore (2003:85) makes clear in her discussion of right dislocation, evidence for the saliency of a given discourse function ‘must be found in the data itself and not imposed as a consequence of standardised notions of how language functions’.

5.4.2 Pronoun tags

Pronoun tags (e.g. *me* in *I’m- I’m- I’m a magician, me*) do not add anything to the referential content of the main clause. Such tags do not function to clarify the

reference of the pronoun in the main clause or reintroduce a previously evoked topic, as was the case for the noun phrase tags analysed in Section 5.4.1. Some grammars suggest an emphatic reading of pronoun tags, but these explanations tend to be vague; others are silent on this issue. In fact, there appears to be no comprehensive description of this type of right dislocation. What, then, is the function of right dislocation with pronoun tags? To answer this question, we must move away from the ‘information management component of language’ (Cheshire 2007:158), which was foregrounded in Section 5.4.1, to the interpersonal domain.

All of the examples in (3) to (10) have a pronoun as the subject of the clause. As Quirk et al. (1985:1363) note, the subject of a clause, in particular a pronominal subject, ‘is likely to be contextually ‘given’ information and hence to carry least communicative dynamism’. By ‘communicative dynamism’, Quirk et al. are referring to the communicative value each part of an utterance has, which corresponds to the level of prosodic stress. This can range from high to low, with high communicative value usually falling at the end of the message. This is the principle of ‘end focus’. It is possible to change the focus of an utterance by moving the tonic (Quirk et al. use the term ‘nuclear’) intonation/stress from the expected end position to another position in the sentence (see also discussion of stress in Chapter 3.3). Quirk et al. refer to this as ‘marked focus’. Marked focus frequently arises when special emphasis is required ‘for the purposes of contrast or correction’ (Quirk et al. 1985:1365). For example, during an art lesson in Ironstone Primary, Harry issues the following directive to Gemma: *Pass us it. I need it.* Gemma’s response is *I [a:] need it*, with tonic stress on ‘I’. In this example, Gemma uses stress to place emphatic focus on ‘I’ in order to encode contrast with Harry’s ‘I’. The force of Gemma’s utterance is ‘you might need it, but you can’t have it because I need it’. In

Example (4e), *I'm- I'm- I'm a magician, me*, Clare's use of the pronoun tag *me* seems to suggest that she wishes to draw special attention to the subject of the clause. She could have done this prosodically by placing tonic stress on the pronoun, but she actually uses the unstressed and reduced form [ə] on each repetition of 'I'. In this example⁴, Clare uses the pronoun tag to emphasise the subject. Emphasis can occur in a number of different forms, however, and is a complex issue that is difficult to separate from related phenomena such as evaluation.

In Example (4g), Robert's use of the pronoun tag *me* seems to suggest, again, that he wants to emphasise the subject of his utterance, and again, he could have done this prosodically with tonic stress on 'I'. This would have conveyed a different meaning to that intended, however, suggesting that Robert's utterance had come in response to another child's declaration that it is not Robert but he/she who hates the book bag. Robert's utterance comes in response to him nearly falling off his chair (from which the book bag is hanging), and is said to no one in particular; so this contrastive/corrective interpretation does not work (none of Robert's classmates have mentioned their book bags). The meaning of Robert's utterance seems to be more along the lines of 'I *really* hate this book bag'; such an interpretation is backed up by his add-on *Proper gay*. The function of the dislocated element in this case therefore seems to be to emphasise Robert's evaluation of the book bag. Ochs notes that 'in addition to indexing particular kinds of affect (e.g. positive affect, negative affect), languages also index degrees of affective intensity' (Ochs 1996:411).

In Example (5g) Joanne addresses her utterance to Danielle who is busy singing and making up dances in the playground. Joanne could have drawn attention to the subject of her utterance with a stressed /ju:/, but again, this could have led to an

⁴ I will return to this example, and to the motivations for Clare's utterance in Section 5.5.

unintended contrastive meaning along the lines of ‘It’s not me but you who loves doing that’. Such an utterance would be appropriate as a corrective if, for example, Danielle had first suggested that Joanne loved making up dances; but this is not the case. As with the last example, the pronoun tag appears to emphasise Joanne’s evaluation of Danielle. This evaluation carries more risk than Robert’s evaluation in Example (4g) given that the speaker is directly evaluating her addressee. Joanne is able to do this because she has a close relationship with Danielle (the two girls are best friends), and in fact Danielle accepts Joanne’s evaluation by laughing and replying *I know*. The use of right dislocation in this way might not be appropriate, though, where the relationship between speaker and addressee is low in solidarity and intimacy. Offering an evaluation of an interlocutor for public consumption is inherently face-threatening for the target of the evaluation, and hence risky for the speaker. This threat/risk increases when right dislocation is used to give greater weight to the proposition. Perhaps because of this, second person pronoun tags were often used to emphasise unequivocally negative propositions in which the speaker had little regard for maintaining social relations with their interlocutor: (5a) *Nathan you’re (xxxxxx spoiling it), you*, (5b) *You are a copy-cat, you*, (5c) *You’re dead nasty, you, now*, (5d) *God, you’re gay, you*.

Carter et al. (2000:148) write that right dislocation often occurs ‘in statements in which the speaker is evaluating things and saying positive or negative things’. Many of the examples of right dislocation in my data express an evaluative stance. Stance meanings can be conveyed through lexical choice alone (Biber et al. 1999:966): *hate* (4l); *love* (5g); *stupid* (4f, 8i); *nasty* (5c); *horrible* (6a); *shit* (6b); *cool* (8b); *manky* (8e); *good* (9a,b); *gay* (4d). But evaluation can be grammaticalised, that is, integrated into the structure of the clause. Biber et al. (1999:969-970) review different ways in

which the grammatical marking of stance may be encoded. The clearest cases, for them, are stance adverbials (e.g. ‘**Unfortunately**, we cannot do anything about it.’) and complement clause constructions (‘I’m **very happy** that we’re going to Sarah’s’). In both cases ‘there are two distinct structural components: one expressing the stance, while the other is a clause that presents the proposition framed by the stance expression’ (Biber et al. 1999:969-970). Right dislocated utterances, which have two distinct structural components (i.e. the main clause and the tag), appear to fit this criterion and may be one way in which the speakers in this study encode stance grammatically.

In Example (8c) Beth (from Murrayfield Primary) is expressing her evaluation of something she has encountered in the class library. This utterance is placed in context in Extract 5.5.

Extract 5.5

(The children have just come back to the classroom after the lunch break and they start the class, as usual, with a period of ‘silent reading’. At this point, Beth and some other girls are in the library section of the classroom where the children can go to choose new books.)

- 1 Beth: Aw there’s two family stuffs
- 2 Anon: I was looking for family stuff
- 3 Beth: Oh **that**’s just weird, **that**.
- 4 Anon: What?
- 5 Beth: That (0.8 seconds) and that.
- 6 Anon: (Doesn’t work).
- 7 Beth: That’s just weird.
- 8 Anon: Why?
- 9 Beth: Family stuff’s there (0.5 seconds) and then Horrid Henry’s
- 10 next to there (1.2 seconds) (hhhh) That is just so weird.

Beth’s evaluation on line 3 is encoded to a certain extent in the lexical item *weird*. Beth uses right dislocation to emphasise this evaluation. An emphatic reading is

supported by her reformulation three turns later to *That is just so weird*. In its grammatical role as intensifier, *so* emphasises the evaluation inherent in the adjective *weird*. Biber et al. (1999:970) point out, however, that adverb premodifiers of this type are less clear representations of the grammatical marking of stance since they ‘are incorporated into a phrase and have local scope only within that phrase, rather than reporting stance towards an entire proposition’. So perhaps Beth’s use of right dislocation in line 3 serves not only to emphasise the evaluation conveyed by the adjective *weird* but also to express Beth’s stance in relation to the proposition as a whole. Following Beth’s utterance on line 3, the listener is aware that Beth feels that the situation she is highlighting is *weird*, but further, that she is uneasy with this state-of-affairs. Beth is intent on rectifying the problem she has encountered in the library corner. This is not out-of-character for Beth, a girl who the class teacher described as always wanting ‘to do the right thing’. Beth’s stance is one of concern, and her further comments on the subject (in lines 7 and 10) are framed by this stance.

The evaluative stance encoded by right dislocation does not always co-occur with items of evaluative lexis. There are 2 examples in the data in which second person pronoun tags are used to encode evaluation into an imperative: *Give us that lid, you* (5h); *Get off, you* (5i). In both examples, the speakers’ tone of voice would suggest that the purpose of the tag is to reinforce and intensify the command. This interpretation of Example (5h) is problematic, however, given that this utterance incorporates singular ‘us’, a feature which is often used by the children to *mitigate* the force of an imperative (Chapter 4). The utterance is set in context in Extract 5.6 below:

Extract 5.6

- 1 Harry: (Gosh a chain) (0.8 seconds) David pass us that (.)
2 [lid
2 Danielle: [(Give us that book too)
3 Harry: Give us that lid, **you**.

My interpretation of this interaction is that David, who is sitting diagonally opposite Harry, does attempt to pass Harry the lid, but the lid is mischievously intercepted by Danielle (who is sitting next to Harry and opposite David). Harry's utterance on line 3 is then addressed to Danielle, rather than David. It is not possible to know for certain whether this interpretation accords with what actually happened due to a lack of visual information – this is one of the disadvantages of audio radio-microphone recordings – but it does seem sensible. Harry's use of singular 'us' may simply be an echo of his initial directive to David, with the right dislocated *you* serving to pick out/clarify the target of the directive (i.e. Danielle rather than David) while also intensifying the force of the directive. There may be further significance to Harry's use of singular 'us', however. I noted in Chapter 4 that features of the local dialect, like singular 'us' and 'howay', can signal in-group identity and a sense of what is right/fair/acceptable within that group. It could be, then, that Harry's use of singular 'us' in line 3 is not merely a mirror image of his directive in line 1 but an example of 'inclusive 'we'', and as such, a reminder to Danielle that her actions are not part of acceptable in-group practice. Or, singular 'us' could be functioning as an example of 'exclusive 'we'', a way for Harry to gain group support by aligning himself with David (and against Danielle). Indeed, these interpretations are not mutually exclusive; any one (or some combination) of these meanings may be indexed by Harry's use of singular 'us'. The functions associated with singular 'us' work in tandem with the right dislocated pronoun tag. As noted in Chapter 4,

imperatives are very common between intimates in casual conversation and are not necessarily face-threatening. In Examples (5h) and (5i), the ‘you’ that is merely inferred in most imperatives is explicitly articulated and given added emphasis at the end of the utterance (end focus). The right dislocated tag therefore intensifies the command, enhancing the face-threatening potential of the imperative form. This tag also encodes the speakers’ feelings (e.g. of anger, annoyance, frustration) towards their addressee. The resulting imperative, then, probably has dual function both as command and reprimand.

Example (8i), which is repeated in Extract 5.7 below, provides an interesting example of the way in which right dislocation can be used, seemingly deliberately, to emphasise a negative evaluation, this time one which the speaker attributes to another person.

Extract 5.7

(The children are coming back into the classroom after break and are putting away the outdoor toys)

- | | | |
|---|-----------|--|
| 1 | Jane: | They’re all stupid according to you aren’t they? |
| 2 | Helen: | Oo don’t because that might get recorded. It might have heard |
| 3 | | you. |
| 4 | Caroline: | Heard what? |
| 5 | | ((Background noise – 1.7 seconds)) |
| 6 | Helen: | Her when she said ‘ that ’s just stupid that ’. ((Emphatic stress on ‘that’, ‘stupid’ and ‘that’)) |

Helen is known to be a bit of ‘a stirrer’, that is, someone who likes to tell tales and encourage gossip and conflict. There are several points in the recording where Helen can be heard complaining to the teacher that one of her fellow pupils has done or said something that warrants disciplining, though the recording clearly shows that

they have done no such thing.⁵ She seems to be playing this role here when she deliberately misrepresents Jane and exaggerates the force with which Jane's comment was made. It is interesting that to do this she uses the right dislocated demonstrative pronoun, which was not actually present in the initial utterance (compare Helen's revoicing of Nathan in Chapter 3.5.1). Helen uses right dislocation to reinforce the negative evaluation of the adjective *stupid* and, therefore, to mark the quoted speaker's (i.e. Jane's) stance of disdain. In doing so, Helen 'recontextualises' (Ochs 1992) the past speech event in order to suit her present aims. This use of right dislocation, along with paralinguistic features such as stress and tone of voice, indexes Helen's orientation towards the proposition as a whole and also to Jane, the speaker to whom Helen attributes the utterance: 'this was an inappropriate comment to make and Jane was wrong to make it'. Drawing on the theoretical perspective of Bakhtin (1981), Ochs (1992:338) notes that the voice of the speaker, the voice of the someone referred to in the utterance and the voice of the person for whom the utterance is conveyed may blend and become part of the social meanings indexed within the utterance. In this interaction, the multiple voices include those of Helen, Jane and Helen's interlocutor, Caroline. Helen uses the right dislocated utterance to negotiate her relationship with Caroline. She draws Caroline into alliance with her in mutual distaste for Jane. As Thompson and Hunston (2000:8) point out, evaluation can be used to manipulate your interlocutor, 'to persuade him or her to see things in a particular way'. Evaluation is an interpersonal phenomenon; the speaker hopes that their addressee will share their opinions, thus

⁵ For example, Helen can be heard making the following complaint to the teaching assistant, Mrs Moon: *He called me a saucy little- (1.1 seconds) little twit- (0.9 seconds) twat. (1.5 seconds) Called me a saucy little twat (0.6 seconds) and twit.* It is clear from the recording however that the boy in question did not use any of this language.

creating a bond of solidarity. Of course, the opposite effect (i.e. alienation) is possible if the addressee does not share the speaker's point-of-view (Martin 2000). There was little risk of alienation for Helen in this exchange, however, given her status in relation to Caroline (see analysis of Extract 4.2 in Chapter 4.4.1.1). Examples such as this one demonstrate that different kinds of stance can (and often do) occur simultaneously in a single interaction (Bucholtz and Hall 2005:593).

Right dislocation can encode a number of other affective stances in addition to positive/negative evaluation. In Example (4n), for example, Harry is expressing his opinion that Clare is going to win an art competition that the children have entered. In (4p) and (4j) the speakers are stating a preference. When Andrew says *I like the old ones me*, he's referring to a style of sports shoe and is emphasising his preference in relation to the other boys, specifically in relation to his direct addressee Robert. As well as affective stance, we might also say that the pronoun tag here encodes epistemic stance in that Andrew is reinforcing the subjectivity of his utterance: this is his opinion, no one else's. Ochs (1996:412) points out that affective and epistemic stance are grammaticalized more often than other 'situational dimensions' across language communities.

All of the examples discussed in this chapter so far make clear that right dislocation is an important part of what Carter and McCarthy (1995:151) term 'interpersonal grammar'. Interpersonal grammar refers to 'speaker choices which signal the relationships between participants and position the speaker in terms of his/her stance or attitude'. This notion of positioning is one that will be explored further in Section 5.5.

5.5 The social meaning of pronoun tags

Section 5.4.2 considered the pragmatic functions of pronoun tags, that is, the ways in which this linguistic feature was used for emphasis and/or the grammatical marking of stance. The utility of right dislocation extends further, however. In evaluating something or expressing an attitude or opinion, the speaker ‘position[s] themselves and others as particular kinds of people’ (Bucholtz and Hall 2005:595). Even in these small interactional moves, then, the children are doing social identity work. This kind of meaning-making was apparent in the analysis of Extract 5.7. In this section I will explore further how pronoun tags are involved in the negotiation of social relationships and the construction of individual and group identity.

I have made an analytical distinction between the pragmatic and social functions of pronoun tags, but in practice, these two dimensions work together. Recall Example (4g), which is represented in Extract 5.8:

Extract 5.8

- | | | |
|---|--------------|--|
| 1 | Mrs Johnson: | Aw homework. I’m going to do- Get your homework books |
| 2 | | out first. |
| 3 | Robert: | I nearly fell off a chair then (1.4 seconds) I hate this book bag, |
| 4 | | me . Proper gay. |

Robert has just turned around to get his homework book out of his book bag (which is hanging from the back of his chair) and this action has caused his chair to rock back and almost made Robert fall. In order to save face, Robert demonstrates self awareness by first publicly admitting what has happened and then attributing blame to the book bag. As discussed in Section 5.4.2, the pronoun tag in this example serves to emphasise the negative evaluation of the book bag. The pronoun tag also marks epistemic stance by making the perspective from which this evaluation comes

very clear: other children in the class might like their book bag, but Robert hates it. The standard blue book bag, complete with school logo, is a compulsory part of the school uniform. Robert uses right dislocation to assert his dislike for this shared practice; in doing so, he positions himself against school authority. This represents an important part of Robert's identity. Despite the fact that Robert did well in class and his behaviour was rated as 'above average' by the teacher, he often aligned himself with an anti-school stance in the presence of his peers. This anti-school stance is evident in the side comments that Robert made in response to the teachers' utterances (see Extract 5.9 and 5.10):

Extract 5.9

- 1 Mrs Trotter: Right get your reading books back out.
- 2 Robert: **Back out, we never even got it out.**

Extract 5.10

(Mrs Johnson has asked the class what 'the holy Catholic church' means)

- 1 Robert: School
- 2 Anon: Heaven.
- 3 Mrs Johnson: Kelly (0.8 seconds) No it's not heaven. It's something on
- 4 earth. Kelly I don't know what you're doing but I don't like it.
- 5 ((Classroom noise – 3.9 seconds))
- 6 Mrs Johnson: It's not a cathedral. It's not a building.
- 7 Various: Us. People.
- 8 Mrs Johnson: It's people, yes. The church is people because what good is a
- 9 building if people don't go into it? So-
- 10 Robert: **It's not *made* out of people.**

In class, Robert appeared quiet and conscientious. This was certainly the view I initially had of him, and this view was reinforced by the teachers' judgements. Outside of formal classroom activity, though, Robert was a clear leader and very popular amongst his peers. He appeared to be able to achieve the difficult balance between being studious and well thought of by teachers whilst also maintaining

kudos within the peer group. Notice that in Extract 5.10 he positively contributes to the lesson by trying to answer the teacher's question (line 1) but then later makes a sarcastic comment at the teacher's expense (line 10). Similarly, in Extract 5.8, Robert has done his homework and is complying with the teacher's directive by getting his homework book out of his bag, but he subsequently asserts an anti-school stance in lines 3-4. While the projection of an anti-school stance in interaction may be momentary, individuals who repeatedly take such stances (like Robert) may be viewed as having a cool, anti-school identity within the community of practice.

Robert uses right dislocation 6 times in the data, and all of these examples include pronoun tags. The most prolific users of right dislocation with pronoun tags were generally the outgoing, confident children. Robert used pronoun tags to assert his individuality and high status within the peer group. Examples (4h) and (4i) both occurred while Robert was taking part in a game of 'Bull dog' in the playground. Example (4i) is set in context in Extract 5.11:

Extract 5.11

- 1 Robert: Howay, I'm going, **me**.
- 2 Billy: I'm going with you.
- 3 Robert: Without Sam seeing us.

In Chapter 4.4.3, I argued that 'howay' functions as a directive but that it also marks in-group identity within the Ironstone Primary community of practice. In Extract 5.11, the meanings associated with 'howay' work in concert with the right dislocated pronoun tag. Robert wants to take his chance and run over to the other side of the playground without being caught by Sam (the person who is 'on'), and he wants Billy to come with him (perhaps to distract Sam's attention away from himself). Robert announces his intention to run and uses right dislocation to set himself apart

from Billy and style himself as a confident leader: ‘I’m going with or without you, but you can join me if you want to’. The use of right dislocation also implicitly contrasts Robert’s intended future action with Billy’s – if Billy does not run he will be left behind, and this may not be desirable for him. Together, the use of ‘howay’ and the right dislocated pronoun tag combine to form a cloaked directive which appeals to Billy on the grounds of solidarity and in-group/team membership. Billy buys into this appeal: *I’m going with you*.

Parallels can be drawn between Robert’s linguistic behaviour and that of one of the Murrayfield Primary participants, Ben. I noted earlier (Section 5.4.2) that Ben used right dislocation more than any of the other Murrayfield pupils. Of the 6 examples of right dislocation used by Ben, 4 involved pronoun tags. Like Robert, Ben was well-behaved in class but was more mischievous outside of the formal lesson and was a leader amongst his peers. Ben used pronoun tags on several occasions to assert his own opinion (*I think that looked good that* (68a); *I want that one me* (4a) or simply to assert himself (*I’m being first in line me* (4b)).

Robert’s counterpart amongst the *girls* at Ironstone Primary was Danielle. Danielle was a favourite with the teachers, being described by Mrs Johnson as ‘a shining star’. She was also very popular with her peers (boys as well as girls). There were some children in the class, though, who felt that the methods Danielle used to maintain her popularity were underhand. Charlotte, for example, confided in me that Danielle could be a bully and appeared to have some of the other girls (Jane, Gemma, Hannah and Clare) ‘hypnotised’. Danielle was the most frequent user of right dislocation at Ironstone Primary. She used this linguistic feature 8 times in the data, and 7 of these examples included pronoun tags. In Example (8f), *That’s Miss Kavanagh’s niece, that, you know*, Danielle uses right dislocation in a statement

which introduces new information into the conversation. Danielle is sitting at the lunch table with a number of her friends (Clare, Tina, Jane, Gemma). Her use of right dislocation serves the pragmatic function of giving greater prominence to the fact that she is providing. Further, the pronoun tag, in addition to the discourse marker *you know*, draws attention to Danielle's knowledge, styling her as someone 'in-the-know' and hence a useful friend to have.

Danielle also used right dislocation to encode evaluative stance: *She's a liar her. I hate her* (4c); *She's like Jamie Oliver⁶ now her*. In making negative evaluations of other people (see also (4a), (4b), (4c), and (4d), (6a), (6b), (6d)), we might suggest that speakers are implicitly positively evaluating themselves (Bucholtz and Hall 2005:593). Further, as Thompson and Hunston (2000:6) point out, '[e]very act of evaluation expresses a communal value-system, and every act of evaluation goes towards building up that value-system'. In this way, the use of right dislocation contributes to the construction of group as well as individual identity. In fact, individual identity was often inextricably linked to the individual's place within a wider social grouping. In Extract 5.12, Clare uses right dislocation to negotiate her place within a task-based partnership.

Extract 5.12

(Clare and Hannah are working together to make a torch as part of their design technology class. They are struggling with one particular part of the construction.)

- 1 Hannah: I left you to do it and what do you do you do it wrong.
- 2 ((laughs))
- 3 ((18 seconds later))
- 4 Clare: It's going away look. See I'm a mag- I'm a magician, you

⁶ Jamie Oliver is a 'Celebrity Chef' who launched a campaign in Britain to make school dinners healthier. Danielle is here referring to one of the dinner ladies (who I think might actually be her mother) who is trying to get Danielle to eat her lunch.

- 5 know.
- 6 Gemma: Hold your thing where it hasn't got any glue on.
- 7 Clare: Why didn't we think of that?
- 8 ((Classroom noise -- 5 seconds))
- 9 Hannah: Clare why don't you just use that bit where there isn't any
- 10 glue on it?
- 11 Clare: Are you two twin sisters? (2.6 seconds) No because I've just
- 12 done it- (.) I'm- I'm- I'm a magician, **me**. (1.1 seconds) Now
- 13 what do you do? (0.6 seconds) You can do that. (.) Oh just let
- 14 me (paint a sparkly one).
- 15 ((Classroom noise – 2 seconds))
- 16 Clare: Just give me a little bit of glue.
- 17 Hannah: You're a very good magician there.

When Clare says *I'm a magician, me*, she is emphasising her success and is positioning herself in relation to her partner, Hannah. Earlier, Clare had told me that in the last Design Technology lesson she had not done any work at all; Hannah had done it all. It seems that even if Clare does do some work, she is accused of doing it wrong: *I left you to do it and what do you do you do it wrong ((laughs))* (line 1). When Clare says *I'm a magician, me*, then, she is challenging preconceived notions of her own identity and asserting her role in this partnership as someone who *is* capable of contributing. Clare's utterance on line 12 is a reformulation of *I'm a magician you know* on lines 4-5. There appears to be a relationship between right dislocation and the discourse marker 'you know' (see (8f) and also Section 5.7).

In addition to reinforcing group membership, right dislocation was also used to highlight an individual's exclusion from the in-group. Consider, for example, Extract 5.13 below:

Extract 5.13

- 1 Caroline: Who's on the- who's on the [erm microphone?
2 Clare [Me:: me.
3 Miss Snell: Clare
4 Caroline: Are you? ((Laughs))
5 Clare: ((To Caroline)) You didn't notice. ((to Miss Snell)) Do I have
6 to give you it back now o::r [at home time?
7 Miss Snell: [No just keep it on t-
8 u- till home time.
9 Clare: E::r oo:: (hhhhhhh) oo the register that's what I need.
10 Caroline: I've never been on it, **me**.

Caroline's use of right dislocation on line 10 singles her out in comparison to other children, such as Clare, who have had the radio-microphone (see also the discussion of Extract 4.2 in Chapter 4.4.1.1). She is perhaps asserting her identity as someone who often misses out on such things, thereby distancing herself from other children in the class whom she perceives as being more fortunate. This interpretation is supported by ethnographic information. Caroline is not as outgoing as some of the other girls in the class. She's a quiet girl, perhaps lacking in confidence, who can appear at times to be a bit of a loner. She's part of an unstable friendship group who often get into trouble for bickering with each other in class; on at least one occasion their arguments and the resulting fall-out were brought to the attention of the headmistress. I worked with Caroline in class on a number of occasions when group work was required. For example, as part of a Design Technology (DT) lesson, the children were making torches and were asked to find a partner to work with. Caroline found herself without a partner and so asked for my help. After the interaction with Clare reported in Extract 5.13, the conversation turns to the upcoming lesson when the children will be continuing with their DT project. During

this conversation Caroline repeats *I'm on my own* three times to emphasise the fact that she does not have a partner to work with.

Extract 5.13 shows that right dislocation could be used to differentiate the speaker from other children in the class. This was not always done from a negative perspective, however. Sometimes the children wished to differentiate themselves in a more positive way. In the following example, Andrew, along with some other children, has gone to audition for clarinet lessons. There are not enough chairs in the room and the school secretary, Mrs Kavanagh, says she will go and get some more:

Extract 5.14

- 1 Andrew: I'll stand up
- 2 Olivia: You'll get a big chair won't you.
- 3 Andrew: I'll stand up, **me**.
- 4 Chris: Andrew, there's a seat.
- 5 Andrew: I'll stand up.
- 6 Anonymous: Andrew
- 7 Andrew: Let Miss- Let Dan sit on there.

Andrew says *I'll stand up* but there is no reaction so he says again *I'll stand up, me*. Chris points out that there is a chair but Andrew repeats *I'll stand up* and then *Let Miss- let Dan sit on there*. This is an audition and Andrew wants to differentiate himself from his classmates, if not by his skill with the clarinet, then by his politeness and deference to the teacher (something he does not often exhibit). I probably would not have expected this from Andrew, but he was actually very keen to be picked. Later in the recording, when the children were back in the class, Andrew told his classmate, Sam, *I want to get through, me*, again using right dislocation. When he found out that he was unsuccessful, he told me *Miss I wanted to get through to that (.) thingy*, and explained that he had never been to any instrument lessons. In this example, then, I would suggest that Andrew uses right

dislocation because he wants to differentiate himself from the other children in order to achieve a particular goal – to get picked for clarinet lessons.

5.6 Cross-school comparison revisited

In Section 5.3 I highlighted differences between the two schools in terms of the children's use of right dislocation, specifically in relation to their use of pronoun tags. Having identified some of the functions of right dislocation, is it now possible to explain these differences?

One potential explanation is that the children at Murrayfield Primary tend not to use pronoun tags because they have other linguistic resources which fulfil the same functions, and which they prefer. The children at Murrayfield Primary may disfavour the use of pronoun tags because they do not add anything to the referential content of the speech and, as such, leave the speaker open to criticisms of redundancy and inarticulateness in their use of language. Dines (1980) studied clause terminal tags of the form AND/OR [PRO-FORM] (LIKE THAT) as in “and stuff like that”. She claims that clause-terminal tags are judged to be vague and are stigmatised for their association with working-class speech. Discourse markers generally are often the subject of prescriptive criticism (Mendoza-Denton 2008:285). The strength of feeling towards many discourse markers makes them available for parody in the speech of comedy characters such as *Little Britain's* Vicky Pollard⁷ (Snell 2006; Snell forthcoming), where their diverse social and interactional functions are heavily oversimplified. For these reasons, the Murrayfield Primary participants may avoid right dislocation with pronoun tags in preference for other (more socially acceptable) linguistic strategies. For example, a speaker could choose to encode emphasis by using an adverb. The

⁷ *Little Britain* is a television comedy sketch show in which recurring characters enact situations that parody British society. Vicky represents the stereotype of a working-class teenager.

following examples are taken from a brief search in the Murrayfield Primary data set. They include standard (e.g. ‘really’) as well as non-standard (e.g. ‘dead’) intensifiers.

- (11) (a) *Ow that really hurts.* (Tim, Murrayfield Primary)
- (b) *I don’t think I’ve ever ever really actually read a library book before.* (Mary, Murrayfield Primary)
- (c) *I’m really thirsty.* (Sarah, Murrayfield Primary)
- (d) *This is really really bad.* (Craig, Murrayfield Primary)
- (e) *I’m not very good at drawing.* (Craig, Murrayfield Primary)
- (f) *I’m so thirsty.* (Mary, Murrayfield Primary)
- (g) *Aw it’s dead boring.* (Michelle, Murrayfield Primary)

All of the examples in (11) could have been expressed using right dislocation (e.g. ‘Ow that hurts that’; ‘I’m thirsty me’; ‘Aw it’s boring this’). Although speakers in Ironstone Primary used right dislocation more often than those at Murrayfield Primary, they also made use of intensifiers, as the examples in (12) demonstrate.

- (12) (a) *He’s being really funny.* (David, Ironstone Primary)
- (b) *God this is heavy (1 second) God this is very heavy.* (Harry, Ironstone Primary)
- (c) *That’s so bad.* (Danielle, Ironstone Primary)
- (d) *Because I get stuck- dead stuck on the hands.* (Hannah, Ironstone Primary)
- (e) *Gemma you’re dead good at this.* (Harry, Ironstone Primary)

(f) *It's proper easy.* (Clare, Ironstone Primary)

(g) *I have it proper light as.* (Jane, Ironstone Primary)

Macaulay (2002; 2005) has suggested that different social groups adopt different discourse styles (measured in terms of frequency of occurrence of discourse features). In his analysis of the speech of socially differentiated groups in Ayr and Glasgow, Macaulay (2002; 2005) found that middle-class speakers used adverbs more frequently than working-class speakers. He explores the hypothesis that the middle-class speakers make greater use of adverbs in order to express intensity and to signal evaluation. Macaulay (2002; 2005) examines extracts from the data and shows that the middle-class speakers used evaluative adjectives and adverbs to give an evaluative interpretation of experience. In contrast, with the working-class speakers there was 'no expression of the speaker's "attitude or stance towards, viewpoint on, or feelings about the entities or propositions that he or she is talking about" (Hunston and Thompson 2000: 5)' (Macaulay 2005:177). Macaulay argues that rather than giving their own interpretation, working-class speakers relied on details to provide the hearer with the information necessary to understand the situation set out in their talk: 'the working-class speakers are much less anxious than the middle-class speakers to inform the hearer directly how they feel about the situation' (Macaulay 2005:182). This explanation does not fit with the data in my study. As the above analysis shows, the speakers at Ironstone Primary were keen to encode attitude, evaluation and emphasis into their utterances. If the working-class speakers in Macaulay's study *were* less inclined to express emphasis and evaluation, it may be due, in part, to the nature of the data. The Ayr recordings are from interviews conducted by Macaulay and the more recent Glasgow data is made up of same-sex dyadic conversations organised by the researcher (though the researcher

was not present in the actual recording). Both sets of data represent formal recording situations compared to the (arguably) more naturalistic radio-microphone data used in this study. Perhaps the working-class speakers in Macaulay's study would have felt more inclined to offer subjective comments in a less restrictive setting. Or, one alternative explanation is that the speakers in Macaulay's study were using different means to encode something like intensity and evaluation. Macaulay (2002, 2005) found, for example, that the lower-class speakers used right dislocation, along with several other syntactic constructions (e.g. demonstrative focusing, noun phrase preposing, clefting and left dislocation), for the purpose of highlighting or intensifying their utterances. The middle-class speakers also used right dislocation but with a much lower frequency. Macaulay does not differentiate between right dislocation with full noun phrase tags and right dislocation with pronoun tags. The two examples he gives involve full noun phrase tags. It is therefore not possible to identify whether the difference lies mainly with pronoun tags, as in this study, or with right dislocation in general.

Given that the frequency of use of right dislocation was in complementary distribution with the frequency of use of adverbs across the working- and middle-class groups in Macaulay's analysis, is it plausible to suggest that right dislocation and intensifying adverbs are alternative ways of 'saying the same thing' (i.e. variants of the same linguistic variable)? And is there evidence for the same kind of distribution in my study?

As has often been discussed (e.g. Lavandera 1978; Romaine 1984b), variation analysis at the level of discourse cannot adopt the standard model (initially developed by Labov 1969) used for the analysis of phonological and morphological variables. The first step with this model involves identifying a linguistic variable by

isolating a set of variants that are semantically equivalent. To take an example from this study, possessive ‘me’ [mi] is one variant of the possessive singular; others include [mai], [ma] and [mə]. These variants are all alternative ways of ‘saying the same thing’. The speakers in this study *must* use one of these forms for the first person possessive singular. It is therefore possible to identify the precise number of environments in which a given variant could occur and so express the frequency of occurrence of one particular variant, such as [mi], as a proportion of total potential occurrences. Right dislocation is different in that it is not part of a discrete set of variants which are semantically the same. Dines (1980:15) proposes, however, that ‘variables may be postulated on the basis of *common function in discourse*’. Dines suggests that the researcher’s attention may be drawn to one particular discourse feature because it is salient in some way (e.g. as a prestige or stigmatized variant) and is used differentially by different social groups. The researcher then postulates a variable (based on discourse function) and proceeds to identify the alternative variants. My analysis of singular ‘us’ and directives in Chapter 4 followed a similar pattern.

In relation to right dislocation, the kind of investigation proposed by Dines (1980) is outside of the scope of this thesis, but it could form the basis of future work. Such a study would be problematic, however, for a number of reasons which I will outline here (see also Cheshire (2007) for a discussion of the issues associated with a quantitative analysis of discourse variation). The first problem relates to the multifunctional nature of right dislocation. In terms of pragmatic functions, right dislocation can be used for clarification, emphasis, and the encoding of evaluative and other types of stance. What, then, would we isolate as the ‘common discourse function’ of right dislocation? It would not be useful to prioritise one function over

another; this would oversimplify the situation. Perhaps, alternatively, we could take each function in turn and propose several variables. So, for example, variants for the emphatic function would include standard and non-standard intensifiers as well as right dislocation; there would be a different set of variants for the marking of epistemic stance, and so on. We have seen, however, that even within a single utterance right dislocation (with pronoun tags in particular) can fulfil several different functions simultaneously. Separating functions in the way just described, therefore, would not only be laborious but would create artificial analytical distinctions which do not reflect the speakers' reality. Moreover, while there may be other means of encoding some of the pragmatic functions expressed by right dislocation, there seem to be no obvious alternatives which can index the kinds of *social* meaning Caroline constructs when she says *I'm on my own, me*, for example.

A second (and connected) issue relates to the speakers' agency in their use of right dislocation. We have seen that the same linguistic feature could be used by different speakers in subtly different ways. Ultimately the meanings attached to right dislocation depend upon the specific context of use, where it may also interact with other linguistic forms in the process of meaning making (e.g. singular 'us' in Extract 5.6, Section 5.4.2, and 'howay' in Extract 5.11, Section 5.5).

Taking into consideration all of the above, it might still be possible to tentatively propose a set of quasi-variants for investigation, and a quantitative analysis of these variants might spotlight a linguistic form/forms which is/are used more often by the Murrayfield Primary participants than by those at Ironstone Primary (i.e. the reverse of the situation with pronoun tags). The fact that linguistic features occur in complementary distribution, however, does not necessarily entail that those features are variants of the same linguistic variable. I would like to propose a second

possibility,⁸ that the children in these two schools use language to fulfil *different* functions and that this accounts for the different frequencies of use of certain linguistic forms. Dines (1980:20-21) begins to consider this possibility but rejects it:

There is of course the possibility that there would be nothing in middle-class speech which functionally corresponds to the frequent use of tags in working-class speech. *The corollary of this view would be that the tags are redundant elements.* This hypothesis is considered and rejected...Thus the question arises as to what those speakers who do not use the tags do indeed use. [my emphasis]

Macaulay (2005:9) makes a similar point, albeit from a different perspective:

It is clear from a variety of studies, including the present one, that speakers are highly idiosyncratic in their use of these [discourse features such as *like* and *you know*] features. Some speakers use them very frequently and others seldom, if at all. If these items carry a heavy semantic or pragmatic load, it would be necessary to identify the alternative means by which speakers who do not use them convey the same information.

I do not accept that pronoun tags in my study must be regarded as ‘redundant elements’ (or ‘idiosyncrasies’) should there be no functionally equivalent constructions in the speech of the Murrayfield Primary participants. The children at Ironstone Primary may be using language to meet a particular need that generally does not arise, or is not considered salient, in the Murrayfield Primary community of practice. In using right dislocation, then, I would suggest that the Ironstone Primary speakers are doing different or additional (rather than ‘redundant’) work. Let’s consider an example. When Aaron from Ironstone Primary says *He’s shit, him* (6b), one use of the right dislocated pronoun tag is to emphasise the negative evaluation.

⁸ I was prompted to think about this following a question from Emma Moore at the third Northern Englishes Workshop, Salford University, March 2008.

A similar effect could have been achieved with an intensifier such as ‘really’ (e.g. ‘He’s really shit’). In the reformulation, however, the focus is on the intensity of the evaluation inherent in the adjective ‘shit’ (e.g. ‘He’s really shit’ as opposed to ‘He’s quite shit’, ‘He’s a bit shit’, etc.). As such, the reformulation is a less clear example of the grammatical marking of stance (see discussion in Section 5.4.2 in relation to Biber et al. (1999)). In the original, on the other hand, the focus is less on the strength of the evaluation (i.e. the emphatic function) and more on the nature of the relationship between the speaker and the target of his utterance (i.e. the interpersonal function). The right dislocated version explicitly sets the target of Aaron’s utterance apart from Aaron and from the other children in the Ironstone Primary community of practice. That right dislocation and intensifiers are not functional equivalents explains why these two linguistic features can co-occur (e.g. *You’re dead nasty, you now* (5c)). This kind of social positioning is perhaps clearer when right dislocation occurs with first person pronouns (e.g. *I hate this book bag, me*) and in particular with examples in which the function of the pronoun tag is not to emphasise an evaluation (e.g. *I’ve never been on it, me*).

Right dislocation serves an important social function in the Ironstone Primary community of practice then. This linguistic feature explicitly sets the speaker apart from some individuals while simultaneously aligning him or her with others, and moreover, it explicitly signals the speaker’s desire to be so grouped. There is no a priori reason why speakers at Murrayfield Primary would want or need to use language to signal the same kinds of social meaning: ‘[p]eople at different places in the political economy see the world differently, do different things, have different preoccupations, and say different things’ (Eckert 2008:467). The differences between the two groups may not be a case of different discourse styles, then, but rather a case

of speakers negotiating different social and communicative needs within their community of practice.

The question of whether and to what extent children from different social backgrounds are socialised into different ways of speaking is a controversial issue and one which sociolinguists have largely avoided following the political fallout from Basil Bernstein's (1971) early work. The fear is that descriptions of communicative differences between social groups will be misinterpreted as evidence for linguistic deficit on the part of one of those social groups. Lavandera (1978) picks up on this issue in her discussion of the linguistic variable:

One of the reasons for restricting the study of variables to referentially meaningless surface variants is the fear of providing arguments which can be used irresponsibly to support ethnic, racial, and class-based prejudices...the 'dangerous' hypothesis would be that forms which clearly differ in referential meaning are at the same time socially and stylistically stratified. This kind of evidence would show that different social groups exchange different types of messages for which they make use of forms with different meaningful structures...this evidence could be used incorrectly to attribute to some groups the inability of thinking certain meanings...However, I will argue that the hypothesis is perfectly reasonable and that the misinterpretation of the evidence will have to be prevented by further evidence and direct argumentation against these kinds of prejudices.

(Lavandera 1978:179-180)

The 'further evidence' to which Lavandera refers can be provided by ethnography. For example, in her ethnographic study of three socially differentiated communities in the south-eastern United States, Heath (1982) showed that children's language was shaped by the different patterns of language socialisation prevalent within the three communities, and that this subsequently resulted in three different responses to school-based learning. Rampton (2008) points out that Heath (1982)

was engaging with many of the same issues that had preoccupied Bernstein (1971) in his discussion of a class-based distinction between what he termed a ‘restricted’ versus an ‘elaborated’ linguistic code. The wholesale celebration of Heath’s work contrasts markedly, however, with the general condemnation of Bernstein’s. Rampton (2008) suggests that different positions on ethnography might help to explain this difference. Unlike Heath’s ethnographically sensitive community comparison, Bernstein’s formulation of the relationship between linguistic code and social class was based on a limited sample of data from a small group of adolescent boys and was not supported by detailed observation of the ways in which these participants actually interacted in their own home or school environments. Milroy (1987b:35) similarly notes that Bernstein’s work is a clear example of ‘a theory based on very little properly collected and analysed linguistic data’.

There are lessons to be learned here for sociolinguistic studies of language and social class which involve the kind of approach I have outlined in this section. A great deal of ethnography is required in order to understand and describe differences in the communicative practices of different social groups if we are to avoid the potential misinterpretation of difference as deficit.

5.7 Pre- and post-clausal discourse features

Biber et al. (1999) make a distinction between what they refer to as ‘utterance launchers’ and ‘tags’. ‘Utterances launchers’ have a special function at the beginning of a turn or utterance. They include the use of left dislocation, discourse markers (e.g. ‘well’, ‘right’) and other prefatory expressions (e.g. interjections such as ‘oh’, stance adverbs such as ‘anyway’) (Biber et al. 1999:1073-1074). ‘Tag’ is a generic term Biber et al. give for elements added retrospectively to a grammatical unit. They

include the use of right dislocation as well as tag questions and ‘vagueness hedges’ (e.g. ‘sort of thing’) (Biber et al. 1999:1080-1081). Gupta (2006:247) notes that discourse markers serve two major functions (discourse management, and the marking of speaker’s attitude), but that the ‘post-clausal slot appears to be especially associated with the marking of speaker’s attitude’. The evidence from my study certainly suggests that there is a distinct functional difference between left dislocation and related constructions (such as ‘Do you know X?’), which serve to organise discourse and orient the listener to the following utterance, and right dislocation, which serves a more interpersonal, affective purpose (Carter and McCarthy 1997:16). In fact, the relationship between left dislocation (and other pre-clausal discourse markers) and right dislocation (and other post-clausal discourse markers) is an interesting one which warrants further work.

There are now a number of grammars which focus on spoken language (e.g. Carter and McCarthy 1995; Carter and McCarthy 1997; Biber et al. 1999), largely thanks to advances in methodologies for corpus linguistics. As a result, greater attention has now been given to elements of language which work outside of traditional grammatical units. A number of sociolinguists, of course, have long been interested in these kinds of discourse features. Tag questions, in particular, have been the focus of a number of studies (Holmes 1982, 1995; Cheshire 1982b, 1996; Moore 2003; and more recently, Moore and Podesva forthcoming). Like right dislocation, tag questions have a number of applications and they may fulfil several different social and pragmatic functions simultaneously. Again, like right dislocation, what all of these functions have in common is a focus on interactivity and social relationships (Cheshire 1996). Thinking about how different kinds of discourse features work together may help us to further understand the role each plays in

linguistic meaning-making (though this interrelationship between different discourse features presents another problem for a traditional variation analysis (Section 5.6)). In my study, for example, left dislocation can be seen to be working with other pre-clausal discourse features (e.g. ‘well’ (1b)), and right dislocation with other post-clausal discourse features (e.g. tag questions (9a) and ‘you know’ (3d, 8f, 8h)). I mentioned earlier (Section 5.2.2) Beal’s (2004a) example, in which right dislocation was reinforced with ‘like’: *I’m a Geordie, me, like*. Right dislocation also occurred on a number of occasions with a pre-clausal discourse marker that is used very frequently in this data, ‘aw’ [ɔ:]: *Aw they’re rubbed out them* (7b); *Aw yeah that is nice that* (8j); *Aw that’s nice that* (8k). Like other pre-clausal discourse markers, ‘aw’ seems to function as an ‘utterance launcher’. Whether or not this discourse marker is unique (or at least distinctive) to the Teesside dialect remains to be seen. There is certainly much more work to be done within this fruitful area of style, dialect and discourse.

5.8 Conclusion

I have shown in this chapter that right dislocation can fulfil a variety of pragmatic and social functions including clarification, emphasis, evaluation, the grammatically marking of stance and social positioning. Different types of right dislocation can be (and are) used in different ways by different speakers. Perhaps now we can understand why grammars have been unable to pin down this particular linguistic feature. Ultimately though, I must agree with Moore (2003:193) that:

Context is paramount to our understanding of the work that variables do. Like tag questions, right dislocated tags have the potential to indicate something about the speaker’s social identity *and* something about the nature of the discourse that contains them

(and both of these factors will contribute to our understanding of contextualised meaning).

I have also considered the nature of the linguistic variable in relation to right dislocation and arrived at the conclusion that traditional variation analysis is not suitable for this kind of linguistic feature. In fact, rather than postulating a linguistic variable on the basis of common discourse function, it may be more useful to consider the possibility that the children in these two schools are using language to fulfil *different* functions, and that this (rather than a preference for one variant over another) accounts for the different frequencies of occurrence of right dislocation in the two sets of data. The place of social class in such an explanation is by no means clear. I have suggested, though, that any link between an individual's use of discourse features and macro social categories (such as social class) must be mediated by analysis at the meso-level of social structure (e.g. community of practice), and, moreover, this analysis should be situated firmly within an ethnographic framework.

