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Understanding Verbal Accounts of Racism

by

Sandra A. Cross

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment  
of the requirements of the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

University of Washington

1997

Approved by Gary Phin  
Chairperson of Supervisory Committee

Program Authorized  
to Offer Degree Department of Speech Communication

Date May 23, 1997

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**Doctoral Dissertation**

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Abstract

Understanding Verbal Accounts of Racism

by Sandra A. Cross

Chairperson of the Supervisory Committee  
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Racist and covert racist acts have generally been researched from the perspective of dominant group members. The focus of this dissertation is on the little-researched point of view of non-dominant members who believe they have been affected by racism or by racist acts. The following study examined the narrative explanations of out-group interview participants who believed they had been affected by specific racist acts. The interview data analysis was guided by discourse analysis methodology, the work of Essed (1988, 1990, 1991) who examined interview statements of those affected by racism, and account research.

One result of this project suggested that the interviewees viewed racist acts as stigmatizations of their presented individual identities. That is, incidents of racism were described as individually-based rather than group-based. Moreover, non-dominant group members believed that dominant group members viewed their charges of racism as unjustified over-reactions. A second result, however, suggested that non-dominant group speakers did not make unsubstantiated charges, but used consistent discourse

structures. These structures, such as account sequence formulations and in-group and out-group comparisons, were used (a) to highlight the unacceptability of the racist act committed by in-group members, (b) to legitimize the out-group speakers' individual identities in both the initial racist incidents and in the narrative reconstruction of them in the interview, and (c) to substantiate the reliability of the speakers' interpretations that the acts committed against them were, in fact, racist.

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### **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

The author wishes to express sincere appreciation to Professor Gerry Philipsen for his considerable support and assistance. In addition, special thanks to Kathy Murphy and Professors Bosmajian, Staton, and Vasquez for their help in the completion of this undertaking.

## DEDICATION

I wish to dedicate this work to my mother and father, Janet and Stanley Okamoto; my husband, Steve; and, my son, Justin. My family supported and encouraged my efforts in more ways than I could possibly express. I also wish to acknowledge the teachings of the Buddha and words of Shinran Shonin who recognize the false dichotomies humans impose on their world.

False imagination teaches that such things as light and shade, long and short, black and white are different and are to be discriminated; but they are not independent from each other; they are only different aspects of the same thing, they are terms of relation not of reality. Conditions of existence are not of a mutually exclusive character; in essence things are not two but one. Even Nirvana and Samsara's world of life and death are aspects of the same thing, for there is no Nirvana except where there is Samsara, and no Samsara except where there is Nirvana. All duality is falsely imagined.

-Lankavatara Sutra

Let us cease from wrath, and refrain from angry looks. Nor let us be resentful when others differ from us. For all people have hearts, and each heart has its own leanings. Their right is our wrong, and our right is their wrong. We are not unquestionably sages, nor are they unquestionably fools. Both of us are simply ordinary people. How can anyone lay down a rule by which to distinguish right from wrong? For we are all, one with another, wise and foolish, like a ring which has no end.

-Shotoku Taishi

## CHAPTER ONE

### Introduction

Racism has been the subject of a wide range of scholarly studies and from this research many ideas about racism have been formulated, such as how racism is perpetuated, by whom, and for what ends. Racism has been studied from individual, ideological and social perspectives, through the use of both quantitative and qualitative methods (Adorno, Frenkel-Brunswick, Levinson, & Stanford, 1950; Allport, 1962; Bobo, 1988; Dovidio and Gaertner, 1986; van Dijk, 1984, 1987, 1988, 1993; Essed, 1988, 1990, 1991; Gramsci, 1971; James, Lovato, and Cropanzano, 1994; Katz, Wackenhut, & Glass, 1986; Louw-Potgieter, 1989; Myrdal, 1944; Omi and Winant, 1986; Potter and Wetherell, 1987, 1988; Ruggiero and Taylor 1994; Sears, 1988; Sidanius and Pratto, 1993; Sniderman, 1993; Summers, 1995; Wetherell and Potter, 1992).

A significant part of the increasing knowledge about racism is an exploration of the discourse of racism. This developing area of research applies narrative and discourse analysis techniques to explanatory talk about racism and racist incidents (Corson, 1993; van Dijk, 1984, 1985, 1987, 1988, 1993; Essed, 1988, 1990, 1991; Potter and Wetherell, 1987, 1988, 1989; Wetherell and Potter, 1988, 1992). These studies focus attention on the structure of the explanations proffered by an interlocutor. Narrative analysis studies concentrate on the structure of the discourse used to

describe an event (van Dijk 1988, 1993; Essed 1988, 1990, 1991; Sarbin, 1994). Discourse analysis research centers on the social and political knowledge that interlocutors bring to discourse structures in interactions concerning racism or race attitudes (van Dijk, 1984, 1985, 1987, 1988, 1993; Potter and Wetherell, 1987, 1988, 1989; Wetherell and Potter 1988, 1992). The goal of this developing area of research is to discover how interlocutors understand or recognize racism as it exists, or when a racist act is committed by those in a position to do so. This developing area of racism study as well as much previous research is centered on the perpetrators of racist acts such as the dominant or in-group (van Dijk, 1988; Potter and Wetherell, 1988; Wetherell and Potter, 1992) and that group's understanding of race relationships and attitude toward minority or out-groups.

An important part of the growing body of knowledge about racism is an emerging literature on covert racism and how it is expressed in everyday life (Billig, 1988; Condor, 1988; van Dijk, 1984, 1987, 1988; Essed, 1988, 1990, 1991; Louw-Potgieter, 1989). It has been the goal of scholars who have initiated this research to examine how communicative actions which might not necessarily seem to be racist to those who perform them are, nonetheless, experienced as racist by some interpreters of those actions.

This growing research literature substantiates the

proposal that what some take to be innocuous acts may be interpreted by others as racist. That is, a seemingly innocuous statement by person B becomes worthy of notice when only one part of person A's identity--race--is evaluated by the person B as problematic, offensive, or deviant. This interpretation by person A who hears the statement or experiences a particular action, precipitates a conflict between what person A expected to hear or have occur in that situation and the fact that person B has altercasted person A in terms of race. The covert racist encounter may look like this:

- | Person A  | Person B   |
|---|--|
| 1) Presents a physical racial appearance  | 2) Presents some type of behavior that appears, to A, to be based on A's race (physical appearance)  |
| 3) Makes an attribution of racism on the part of B; may or may not express this interpretation with B in order to effect an account; justifies her or his attribution or interpretation | 4) Denies the attribution or denies that race is the basis for step 2 behavior (This step may or may not occur. If it does not occur, person A moves to step 5.) |
| 5) Communicates the racist attribution or interpretation of racism with others in order to repair his/her dishonored identity.  |  |

Two issues emerge when such charges of racism are made. First, when an incident is described as racist by person A, it is an evaluation based on expectations and knowledge of how the social interaction should have been accomplished if race were not made a salient issue. In a racist incident, person A believes that certain norms of interaction have been violated because his or her racial identity has been made the most important aspect of that particular social exchange. The apparent violation is viewed as a breach of the interactional code and is evaluated as being based solely on a perceived racial identity. The conflict is that person A presents an identity which may offer preeminence to other roles besides race; however, presumably, no other roles or identities were salient to person B who committed the violation. Person A, who brings the charge of racism, must negotiate a new identity that is not solely based on a racial appearance but relies on other roles and identities. That is, person A must present an identity as someone who is able to make a believable and reasonable evaluation of racism.

Second, one commonsensical response to the charge that some act or another is racist is that person A's charge is not reasonable or that he or she has misunderstood the action. If asked to provide an explanation, person B, the perpetrator of the perceived racist action, may deny the interpretation of racism. The burden of proof for a racist

interpretation of an act, in such a case, falls upon person A, who is the target of the action(s). If a charge of racism is made, it must be formulated to justify the claim and to be both believable and understandable to those with whom the incident might be shared. For example, if person A charges that she or he has been a target of racist actions committed by another, the veracity of the charge must be shown in a manner that is reasonable and understandable to those who hear of it. If the explanation is not formulated in a manner which justifies the charge, the claim will be dismissed as unbelievable and unreasonable. In addition, person A must be viewed as a reasonable and believable evaluator of the incident.

In summary, there are two issues involved in perceptions of racist actions. The first issue involves the loss of face concerning a presented identity which is not accepted by one of the interaction participants. Secondly, the charge of racism must be formulated to be believable and reasonable to those who hear it and it must appear to be presented by a believable and reasonable speaker.

The focus of my interest is person A's narrative of what occurred in the interaction with person B. Person A has experienced person B's action or statement as racist, and has made an evaluative utterance to that effect. That is, person A has charged another's behavior to be racist and is willing to share that evaluation with others. Thus, I

have focused on a particular type of oral utterance: person A's narrative of what occurred to bring a charge of racism against person B and person A's discursive choices in constructing this narrative.

In regard to person A's narrative, I asked two questions:

- 1) What discourse constructions are used by person A to explain and resolve perceived breached social expectations and a perceived problematized racial identity in the described situations?
- 2) What discourse modes are used by person A to construct a believable and reasonable narrative for an audience?

In order to study the statements of those who have made interpretations of racism, I turned to the work of other racism researchers.

Philomena Essed (1988, 1990, 1991) is a scholar who has proposed an original way to categorize the reasonableness or coherence of interpretations that an act is racist. Essed's test is the internal coherence or logical justification of the charge. She proposed an evaluation and categorical framework with which to analyze the internal coherence of charges of racism. In a series of empirical studies, Essed illustrated and implemented her framework for examining the coherence of speakers' oral proposals that an act is racist. Her research explored the understanding that Black female

interviewees from the Netherlands and the United States had expressed about racism in their lives. Essed's approach consists of examining the explanatory discourse of a speaker who makes a charge of racism. Essed did this by using the classification categories of context, complication, evaluation, argumentation, and decision. Essed's application of these classification categories to a body of elicited accounts of racism showed that the speaker's accounts are not unreasonable but possess a justification for the charge and were formulated in such a way as to be coherent and believable. Under "circumstances of uncertainty" (Essed, 1988, p. 7), such as when charges of racism are disputable or could be viewed as unreasonable, Essed's classification framework offers one way to evaluate the justification of the speaker's interpretation and to analyze its effectiveness as a discourse account. Another researcher, Louw-Potgieter (1989), successfully applied Essed's framework to interviews with South African university students. Louw-Potgieter's findings are similar to Essed's. These two studies support the use of justification statements in accounts which were formulated to substantiate the interpretation of an act as racist. Furthermore, the studies by Essed and Louw-Potgieter support the usefulness of Essed's classification framework.

Essed's research goal was to understand everyday racism as it is experienced by Black women in specific contexts

(such as job application and employment interviews).

"Everyday racism" is the term Essed employs to describe the social and institutional forces which work to maintain racial conflict, racist attitudes, and racism. These forces operate on multiple and heterogeneous levels. Essed states that everyday racism involves "systematic, recurrent, familiar practices...that can be generalized, socialized attitudes and behaviors, and cumulative instantiation" (Essed, 1991, p. 3). This definition implies that social institutions, attitudes, and structures interact to produce particular instances of racist actions, rather than that these actions are the product merely of the actions of single individuals.

To accomplish her research goal of understanding everyday racism, Essed examined the descriptive statements or explanatory narratives of women who have experienced covert and blatant acts of racism. By investigating these statements against the social and historical bases of racism in both the Netherlands and the United States, Essed located her informants and data within a well-developed social context.

Essed used the rich data of interview reconstructions of racist incidents to determine how racist acts are committed, how racism is interpreted by recipients of racist comments, and how racism was perceived as being perpetuated on a daily basis. Briefly, Essed's elicited interview data

revealed daily experiences of racism founded on an ideology of dominance based on the dominant group's preference.

Supported by the data provided by her informants, Essed's studies showed that three racist processes based on ideologically based exclusion, repression, and oppression - marginalization, containment and problematization - worked to maintain racism and ethnicism. Essed contended that these processes are "ideologically structured [but] their specific manifestations are situationally construed" (p. 10).

Essed proposed that cultural and structural ideology are manifested in everyday instantiations of racism. In a report of her findings, twenty-one interviewees from the Netherlands and fourteen from the United States reported knowledge of marginalization, a process which Essed described as color differentiation, nonrecognition of Blacks, nonacceptance, undervaluation, and the obstruction of mobility by the dominant white group and its institutions. Twenty-four women from the Netherlands and five from the United States reported being affected by problematization - the process by which "ideological notions rationalize the marginalization of Black traditions and values...the exclusion of Blacks from access to material and nonmaterial resources, and...the suppression of Blacks in order to contain them in relations of dominance" (Essed, 1991, p. 114). The last process of racism, containment, was

reported by seven women from the Netherlands and thirteen from the United States. Containment occurs when the dominant group suppresses other groups' efforts to obtain equal power and resources through denial of racism, physical aggression, verbal aggression and law-enforcement aggression.

Essed's research and conclusions are valuable. Her work has added to the body of knowledge of racism through a cross-cultural study of Black females' understanding of racist actions. In addition, Essed's research establishes the usefulness of using her categories to organize the reasonableness of reconstructions of racist incidents. However, these categories do not directly address the mechanisms of discourse implied by the two issues I raised earlier about person A's narrative--(1) violations of identity and social expectations, and (2) the reasonableness of an interpretation of an act as racist.

My first research question, then, centers on the discourse structures chosen by interlocutors to explain and resolve their altercasted racial identity and perceived breached social expectations in interactions that they have interpreted as racist. This question can be stated as:

RQ1: What discourse constructions and social knowledge are used by the study participants to explain and resolve perceived breached social expectations and problematized racial identities in the described

narrative situations?

My second research question centered on how narratives of events described as racist by person A are constructed to be reasonable and believable. This question can be stated as:

RQ2: What discursive modes are used by the study informants in their narratives to construct a believable and reasonable narrative for an audience?

Essed used narrative categories (a) to organize her interview questions and (b) to frame and organize the data for the purpose of discovering how Black women experienced racism. However, Essed used these data to determine the mechanisms of racism by imposing her categories on the discourse material. Although these narrative categories allude to how the informants' explanations were organized, this issue is not specifically addressed.

My questions, then, differed from that asked by Essed in her studies. Essed asked the question What is racism?. By contrast, I asked the questions What discursive resources do interlocutors use to construct evaluations of racism in order to resolve breached social and identity expectations, and to construct reasonable and believable evaluation narratives of racism? Essed focused her research attention on determining the mechanisms of covert racism by examining the narrative statements of speakers who had made charges of racism.

My research attention is on the discursive resources interlocutors used (a) to resolve the effects of perceived breached social expectations and problematized racial identity in events which have been described as racist by them and (b) to construct an identity and a narrative which is believable to an audience. That is, the speakers believe that their narratives will encourage the audience to view them and their charge of racism as believable. These questions considered person A's perceived violation of a presented identity or social expectation as the precipitating event which was resolved through the use of particular discourse constructions. Further, I examined person A as a speaker who constructed an identity that was viewed as capable of presenting a believable interpretation of racism.

I assume that racism exists and is occurring in the ways that Essed and other researchers suggest it does. My research is based on the data collection and data analysis methods successfully used by Essed. However, I believe that Essed's methods do not examine fully the discursive goals of those who report racist incidents or internal coherence of their reports. My examination of my own independent corpus of interviews revealed additional discourse goals operating in the verbal recountings of racist incidents and an additional mechanism interview speakers used to lend coherence to their explanations. Specifically, my data

revealed that speakers' perceptions of racist encounters were not centered on cultural or institutional racism alone but on the conflict evolving from an individual's identity being dishonored. Race was the precipitating event of the interview speakers' narratives but the discourse goal in telling me about it, was, for these speakers, to construct a believable speaker identity and story of the racist experience. The interviews revealed that accounts of conflict encounters, as previously described, do not detail fully what occurs in racist encounters. This is the concern of RQ1. Furthermore, informants used specific examples of racist encounters to support their individual claims. These examples, although descriptive of how the informants viewed racism as occurring, were not used only to describe racism but to support the informant's interpretation and charge of racist behavior. This attention to the argument structure of racist event narratives addresses the concern of RQ2.

## CHAPTER TWO

### Understandings of Racism

Racism has been the subject of much scholarly research using a variety of approaches in several disciplines. Allport (1954), for example, identified six research approaches to racism: the historical, the sociocultural (the total context which forms, supports and perpetuates racism), the situational (current social forces and history interact to create a current context for racist actions), the personality structure (an individual's background and upbringing contribute to particular personality dispositions that support prejudiced behaviors), phenomenological (an individual's actions conform to his world view), and the stimulus-object (actual behaviors and group differences are the concrete basis for certain prejudiced behaviors). For the purposes of this review, however, most research can be characterized as focusing on individual or social perspectives using either quantitative or qualitative methods.

An individual perspective in racism research centers on determining what causes an individual to hold and act upon racist attitudes. Adorno, et al. (1950), for example, used the concept of an authoritarian personality to account for racist attitudes. An individual's personality and disposition, related to child-rearing practices, contributed to prejudice and ethnocentrism through a support for traditions and institutions.

Myrdal (1944), on the other hand, proposed that racism was a moral conflict. The "American creed" or belief in national and Christian maxims (societal belief) were in conflict with individual and group existence (working, education, community, and so on). An individual's everyday existence fostered prejudice and ethnocentrism which disagreed with his or her belief that every American should be able to live the principles of individual dignity, equality and liberty. Myrdal believed that this conflict lead to an ambivalence of attitude that was neither completely negative nor positive.

According to Allport (1954), prejudice and discrimination were an individual's response to his or her world view and could be combatted by examining the social influences exerted upon those afflicted by racial prejudice. Individual cognitive processes were not the focus. There were other root causes to account for the development of racism.

The individual versus societal level analysis of racism continues unabated. The body of racism research variously poses the question as to whether racism, prejudice, and discrimination are fostered by group relationships, by the social influences exerted upon individuals, or by institutions or political ideologies. The debate continues. It is not possible to review all the approaches to racism research here. Rather, I will concentrate on presenting a

review of some types of racism and the approaches used to study them.

### Racism - Covert, Modern, Aversive, Symbolic

Essed (1990) describes the three main types of racism as cultural, institutional, and individual. Cultural racism refers to the images of Blacks as portrayed in text, visual images, the arts, periodicals, school texts, and news media. Essed also refers to this as ideological racism in that negative images of Blacks are easily portrayed and believed through the above mechanisms (van Dijk, 1988), while Whites or the dominant group are represented in more positive terms.

Institutional racism refers to the active discrimination of institutions such as businesses and government agencies to limit the opportunities and rights of Blacks. Essed distinguishes between direct or overt, and indirect or covert discrimination. Direct or overt discrimination operates in a straightforward manner in that there is no doubt that the reason for differential treatment or lack of certain behaviors is based on race. Such openly expressed negative attitudes towards Blacks may occur as words or names of derogation or behavior based on racial evaluation. Indirect or covert discrimination, however, cannot be directly assumed from an action. Indirect situations have an ambiguous context and seem open to variable interpretations. Covert discrimination functions

in a surreptitious mode, such as when a regulation affects minority groups more than the dominant group. An example of this would be "English only" workplace regulations which affect only those who possess fluency in another language in addition to English and who are working with others who also speak both languages. The regulation may seem neutral and for the good of all--to increase workplace safety, for example--but affects only selected populations who are different from the dominant group. Another example of indirect or covert racism occurs when job openings or housing opportunities are ostensibly closed when minority group members apply. These two examples demonstrate that indirect or covert racism is difficult to pinpoint and verify.

Cultural racism and institutional racism mutually interact and support discriminatory practices. Individual racism is more difficult to quantify. An individual could pursue a personal preference for dealing or not dealing with someone who is from a minority group. However, that differential treatment supports the ideology of cultural racism and further exemplifies the disparity in institutional racism. Thus, Essed distinguishes between passive and active racism. Active racism "refers to all acts, both conscious or unconscious, that emerge directly from the motivation to exclude or to make Blacks feel inferior because they are Black. "Passive racism is

complicity with someone else's racism" (Essed, 1990, p. 25). Within a societal climate which views active discrimination as bigoted and unacceptable, passive racism is seen as more honorable. Passive racism behavior can seemingly be excused more easily because it is not active. It is the difference between telling a racist joke versus just laughing at it or not voicing an objection to it. Being passive makes it much easier to explain or excuse your behavior by claiming that you had no active agency in perpetuating racism. However, in terms of supporting cultural and ideological racism, Essed sees passive racism as equally as damaging as its more active forms.

Essed employs the term everyday racism to describe the cultural and institutional forces which work to maintain negative racial attitudes and racism. Everyday racism refers to the daily experiences of direct, covert, and passive racism that minority group members have with the dominant white group. These daily instantiations of racism are "racism from the point of view of people of color, defined by those who experience it" (Essed, 1990, p. 31). Thus, the negotiation of the potential negative assessment of racism is embedded in the establishment of the conflict situation. Passive and covert acts of racism can best be understood by delineating the situation or context of the incident as presented in an actor's discourse. The definition of everyday racism recognizes the interaction

between cultural, institutional and individual racism to support the actions and attitudes of the dominant group.

Consistent with the attitude ambivalence portrayed by Myrdal (1944), Gaertner and Dovidio (1986) used the term aversive racism to describe the type of attitude held by Americans who strongly believe in equality and personal dignity. Aversive racists are characterized as persons who sympathize with the victims of past injustice; support public policies, that, in principle, promote racial equality and ameliorate the consequences of racism; identify more generally with a liberal political agenda; regard themselves as nonprejudiced and nondiscriminatory; but, almost unavoidably, possess negative feelings and beliefs about Blacks (p. 62). Their strong belief in egalitarian principles prohibits an active display of their antipathy toward Blacks in situations of public judgment. However, the authors believe that the aversive racial attitudes held by these racists will display themselves in more subtle ways in the proper contexts. Gaertner and Dovidio (1986) tested their hypothesis in several studies designed to observe intensity of discriminatory behavior in contrived experimental situations. The experiments indicated that when norms of behavior were unclear and ill-defined, subjects exhibited racial bias. Thus, these researchers concluded that aversive racism is subtle, indirect, and "more insidious"

(p. 85) than old-fashioned (overt or blatant) racism because attitudes are less likely to be displayed in interracial situations. Similar to Essed's (1990) description of passive and covert racism, Gaertner and Dovidio's aversive racism is a reaction to current societal norms prohibiting the active display of racism.

Modern racism is described by McConahay (1986) as being characterized by beliefs that discrimination is no longer an important consideration, that Blacks are pushing for too much in ways that are unfair, and that any social gains or recognition of Blacks is undeserved. These beliefs are coupled with the considerations that "racism is bad and the other beliefs (above) do not constitute racism because these beliefs are empirical facts" (p. 93). In contrast to Gaertner and Dovidio, who studied interpersonal effects, McConahay focussed on voting behavior, social policy preferences, and hiring inclinations.

McConahay developed the Modern Racism Scale to evaluate White attitudes. Based on the hypothesis that racial ambivalence may cause a difference in stated opinion depending on the context and situation, the Modern Racism Scale proposed "wording of the items [to] permit the expression of negative affect because giving the prejudiced response in each instance can be explained by racially neutral ideology or nonprejudiced race-relevant attributions" (p. 100) which was in contrast to the

hypothesized reactivity of the Old Racism Scale. Using paper-and-pencil survey instruments as well as experimental situations (for example, participant responses to resumes submitted by a Black employment prospect versus a White candidate), McConahay found his scale to be sensitive to the racial ambivalence of modern racism in voting, social policies, and employment practices. The modern racism scale, then, was designed to uncover covert racist attitudes towards minority group members by examining the responses of whites in a social climate where it is assumed that overt racist actions are normatively prohibited.

In 1970, Sears coined the term symbolic racism to explain the political effect of the racial attitudes of Whites. Negative White attitudes towards Blacks were not based on a personal antipathy but on a support of their own group-based or institutional beliefs. Sears' description of the phenomenon follows.

This was not racism composed of derogations of and antagonism toward Blacks per se, or of support for formal inequality. Rather it blended some anti-Black feeling with the finest and proudest of traditional American values, particularly individualism. (p. 54)

Symbolic racism occurs when White self-interest is threatened through an attack on White group-interest. When the symbols of White traditions (such as individual values versus egalitarian ones) are under attack, racist bias will

become apparent. Open antagonism and direct derogations are descriptions of overt or "old-fashioned" racism (p. 65). Similar to the definition used by Essed (1990) above, Sears indicated that it would be naive to assume that such derogations would be fully or directly expressed. Symbolic racism was operationalized as (a) antagonism toward Blacks' demands, (b) resentment about special favors for Blacks, and (c) denial of continuing discrimination. Surveys were used to ascertain White attitudes towards Blacks. Symbolic racism, framed in the definitions provided by Essed, focused Sears' research attention on the interaction and mutual support between a racist cultural ideology and individual racist actions of the dominant group.

Bobo (1988) preferred the term sophisticated prejudice to symbolic racism. After analyzing national survey data, he postulated that the same phenomenon studied by Sears can be explained by group interest rather than symbolic racism. Changes in economic influences, social climate, and the current political mood mean a change in a group's relative position. This change equates with a shift in identity, discourse, issues of concern, and ways of differentiating between dominant and non-dominant groups. Bobo furthers Allport's position that it is not solely group norms or individual psychology that contribute to racism, but an individual's conformity to group norms for his or her values and standards of behavior. Although Bobo attempted to make

the case for the inadequacy of the positions put forth by Sears (1970) and Adorno (1950), his position appeared to be closer to the concept of symbolic racism proposed by Sears. He pointed out the conflict between individualism and group characteristics. For example, social policy changes that are based on group characteristics (affirmative action, for example) are resisted because they violate the ideal of individualism. On the other hand, policies that helped individuals will be supported.

In response to White attitudes and ascribed behavior in modern or new racism climates, Sniderman (1993) used survey instruments and situational experiments to investigate White attitudes. For example, a series of survey questions asked respondents to react to negative stereotypes about Blacks and to policies which applied to Blacks. Sniderman suggested that "the contemporary discussion of race confuses what White Americans think about Blacks with what they think about policies dealing with Blacks." (p. 7) In his analysis of White attitudes, Sniderman concluded that there are White-held negative stereotypes towards Blacks and that White respondents will openly agree with these negative assessments. He used these results to conclude that subtle racism or the group norms against open antagonism towards Blacks do not really exist. He pointed out that because many negative stereotypes are truthful and real, stating them does not make the speaker a racist. For example, it is

demographically and statistically true, based on crime statistics and SAT results, that Blacks have a higher incarceration rate and lower test scores than Whites. According to Sniderman, to make a statement based on the above reflects a reality and not covert racism. Sniderman's position, however, ignores social factors which may have contributed to such conclusions and promotes the perspective of the dominant group.

Similar to the positions of Sears (1970) and Bobo (1988), Sniderman addressed the conflict between traditional values and individualism. Sniderman stated that traditional values such as the obedience and conformity of the "traditional authoritarian values" (p. 6) promoted an opposition to Blacks and to the policies which support them. Furthermore, Sniderman suggested that racism research should focus on the policies associated with race (such as affirmative action regulations) and not just with race itself. Thus, according to Sniderman, group ideological and political beliefs, not race, cause social disparity.

Sniderman doubted the existence of covert or modern racism because he did not detect the development of a strong pro-Black bias nor did he note any hesitation on the part of his survey participants in sharing their anti-Black attitudes. Sniderman suggested that there are two different realities. Whites were willing to help a Black individual (support for individualism values) but are less likely to

support group benefits for Blacks.

In another study concerning the acceptance of affirmative action policies, Summers (1995) confirmed that, based on an individual's self-interest, such policies were viewed as either beneficial or unfair. Summers surveyed university students to discover if they were more in favor of affirmative action policies which (a) offered training for targeted group members, (b) altered selection criteria for targeted group members, or (c) involved setting quotas for such programs. Summers' results indicated that those surveyed were more willing to help individual target group members receive training than alternatives (b) and (c) above which were aimed at group membership characteristics. Furthermore, if those surveyed were part of the targeted group, they tended to view such programs more favorably than those who were not part of the targeted group.

James, Lovato and Cropanzano (1994) developed a Workplace Prejudice/Discrimination Inventory (WPDI) as a means to examine systematically workplace perceptions of racial and ethnic discrimination. Their sixteen-item inventory was found to predict perceptions of racial/ethnic prejudice and discrimination on the part of out-group members. As well validated as the items in this inventory were found to be, the inventory itself presented a circular argument that may or may not be particularly useful in furthering the study of workplace discrimination.

James, Lovato, and Cropanzano suggested that an individual's desire to maintain a positive identity in social situations was a driving force in that individual's formation of cognitions and perceptions. Their inventory was based on the assumption that racial and ethnic identity was the foremost and sole identity that a worker would want recognized in the workplace. Thus, for the purposes of their inventory, a worker's identity was equivalent to that of his or her group membership and workplace discrimination occurred when positive identity needs of that membership were not fulfilled. All items on the inventory reflected this perspective. For example, if workers strongly agreed with statements from the inventory such as "I have sometimes been unfairly singled out because of my racial/ethnic group" (item 1) or "There is discrimination where I work" (item 13), their score would positively indicate that they had a perception of racial or ethnic prejudice and discrimination. This conclusion does not seem to be particularly useful because it does not take into account that the actions which were perceived as discriminatory did occur. However, the results of a correlation of their inventory with other factors such as ethnicity, previous history with making perception statements of prejudice and discrimination, the number of minority group members within the organization, and self-esteem offered more promise in describing workplace racism.

Perrott and Taylor (1994) examined the interaction among stress factors, ethnocentrism, and authoritarianism and their effect on police and community relations. Their hypothesis contended that the characteristics of authoritarian personalities in interaction with in-group membership identification affect out-group and community relationships. The community group in this study was composed largely of ethnic and racial minorities while the police force was made up of predominantly White, middle-class male officers.

In this study, authoritarianism was evaluated using the Right-Wing Authoritarianism Scale (Altemeyer, 1981, 1988). Several psychometric scales were used to determine each participant's social nearness or alienation to community and social groups such as police managers, poor Whites, middle-class Whites, poor Blacks and middle-class Blacks. Contrary to the commonly held stereotype of police officers with highly authoritarian characteristics being inflexible, having a strong "us versus them" (p. 1643) in-group identification, and highly negative out-group stereotypes, this study proposed that such characteristics are not necessarily applicable to all police officers and that high in-group identification would lead to positive community relationships.

Perrott and Taylor found that police officers who were evaluated as highly authoritarian and ethnocentric "did not

reflect this bias in their judgments of social proximity to in-groups and out-groups" (p. 1660) and that there was a significant positive correlation between high in-group and out-group identification. This last conclusion runs counter to the common sense idea that ethnocentrism would lead to negative perceptions of out-group members. Perrott and Taylor concluded, however, that this finding does not totally relieve police departments of continuing community relations efforts and, based on other indicators in their results, they advocated further education of police officers in improving working relationships within a multiethnic community.

The above studies have examined the racism phenomenon by using various survey instruments. Ruggiero and Taylor (1994), however, examined the difference in personal discrimination versus group discrimination accounts by women respondents by utilizing both survey instruments and oral statements. The use of the protocol-analysis method (Ericsson & Simon, 1980) encouraged respondents to orally share their cognitive processes as they retrieved personal information in order to respond to the survey questions. These verbalizations were transcribed and analyzed for domain categories such as personal or self discrimination, competence, employment, politics, violence, family, and intimate relations (p. 1812).

The focus of their study was the apparent discrepancy between reports of the number of instances of self versus group discrimination (Taylor, Wright, Moghaddam & Lalonde, 1990; Taylor, Wright & Porter, 1994). Respondents generally believed that discrimination was aimed at their group more often and in greater intensity than that which occurred to individuals of that group. Ruggiero and Taylor contended that when respondents spoke of instances of individual or group discrimination, they were speaking of instances from different domains. This study disputed the commonly-held assumption that individual and group experiences are simply parallels of the same phenomenon.

Ruggiero and Taylor concluded that individual ratings of discrimination took a back seat to those occurring to the membership group as a whole; however, they did not propose a reason for this continuing phenomenon. This conclusion ignores the influence of discourse in forming cognitions of discrimination and domains of discrimination. Ruggiero and Taylor did not consider how each respondent may respond based on instances that had not been personally experienced. For example, respondents may recall discriminatory instances that were shared with them by a close relative. Although this instance of discrimination would not have been personally experienced, it may have informed how a respondent would react in a similar situation. van Dijk (1988) suggested that this type of discursive sharing would

build group scripts or beliefs and understandings of how discrimination operates from both the in-group and out-group perspectives.

In the above approaches to examining the phenomenon of racism, the resources used for analysis were experimental responses and survey question results (with the exception of Ruggiero and Taylor (1994) who also used oral responses) from which racial attitudes and beliefs were interpreted and interpolated. Due to limitations of codability and researcher interest, survey questions and instruments necessarily restrict the type of responses participants may give. The survey instrument is researcher-directed and what is reported are answers to direct questions only. Anecdotal or spontaneous respondent reports are usually not considered in these studies. These survey and interview data were viewed as a way to uncover cognitive beliefs such as the current attitudes of Whites towards Blacks. From these responses, cultural and institutional effects were noted.

There are two underlying assumptions in the above studies which may limit the fullest possible understanding of racism. The first is that group-based beliefs interact with individually held convictions in ways which can be displayed and recovered in racism surveys and experiments. The goal of the above researchers was to uncover contemporary White attitudes in an attempt to predict or explain current racial climates in voting or legislation

preferences, for example. The second premise of these studies is that what the researchers deemed to be racist acts were perceived in the same way by those they interviewed and surveyed. That is, the participants are only able to give limited responses to researcher created questions and scenarios on surveys and interviews. The focus in these studies was on those who commit racist acts, those who may hold strong beliefs or opinions against minority out-groups and those who shared their reactions to situations that the researchers believed to be racist. These limitations indicate that although survey and experiment-based research are useful, they do not provide access to respondent constructions of racism nor do they obtain the perspectives of those who are affected by negative racial attitudes. Subtly, these researchers may be compounding racist attitudes by not privileging the knowledge of those who experience racism.

Other researchers have examined covert or indirect racism using discourse as data. The following section reviews some of these studies. The perspectives of these researchers are not wholly incompatible with some of the previously reviewed researchers--such as McConahay (1986), Sears (1970), Bobo (1988), and Gaertner and Dovidio (1986)-- who view what is displayed in racism surveys and experiment as an interaction between group-based beliefs and individually held convictions.

### Covert Racism and Discourse

According to Smitherman-Donaldson and van Dijk (1988), the "new racism" began to materialize during the Reagan era of the late 1970's in the form of social and political policies, the negative effect of which has fallen disproportionately upon Blacks and other racial minorities. These authors describe symbolic racism as permitting "subtlety, indirectness, and implication...[to] be expressed by the unsaid, or be conveyed by apparent 'tolerance' and egalitarian liberalism" (p. 18). Smitherman-Donaldson and van Dijk give examples of everyday talk in which "underlying ethnic prejudices may indirectly appear in 'innocent' stories ...[which] claim to tell the 'facts' [and] at the same time, emphasize that [the speaker] has nothing against 'them', and they are [the speaker's] 'best friends'" (p. 18).

This type of discourse does not seem openly discriminatory nor does it appear openly antagonistic. However, Smitherman-Donaldson and van Dijk believed that covert racism exists and is perpetuated through discourse. The examples given by Smitherman-Donaldson and van Dijk illustrate the subtlety of this type of race thinking.

Thus, although racism itself is not new, this type has been described synonymously as new, modern, covert, symbolic, aversive or contemporary, to distinguish it from its more blatant and openly antagonistic predecessor. This

change in name implies that there is a variety of racism which has become less visible and more clandestine than that which had previously been noticed.

When there is a group social norm or group rules for racial and ethnic tolerance (university-imposed regulations, for example), the explicit expression of prejudiced opinions or attitudes might be curtailed. "Discursive strategies of face-keeping and positive self-presentation in talk about minorities ("I'm not a racist, but ..."), are typical manifestations of this complex and apparently 'ambivalent' process of social cognition" (van Dijk, 1988, p. 141). This view is compatible with the ambivalence described by Sears (1970), Bobo (1988), Gaertner and Dovidio (1986), and McConahay (1986). However, the difference in research perspective exists in the mechanism by which these attitudes and beliefs are maintained and perpetuated.

One basic premise is that a group creates and maintains its attitudes about other groups through socially shared discourse. van Dijk (1988) characterized a communication framework wherein group members used socially shared discourse to build models for social cognition and interpretations based on the group's ideologies. The process was dynamic and kept track of a group's current attitudes, topics and speech acts. Thus, on one hand, the group had the need to maintain current group ideologies and to organize information or evaluations about particular out-

groups. On the other hand, there was an ambivalence between the in-group's need to express information about an out-group and the normative need to express public tolerance and equality.

It was this ambivalence that moved current discourse about racism and prejudices from overt to covert and implied. The new or covert racism contrasts with the old in several ways. The old racism was overt and explicit (e.g., using names of derision and openly stating the reason why certain actions were committed or lacking). Covert racism, on the other hand, is more subtle and, seemingly, its discourse does not evaluate racial differences. Covert racism assumes the existence and significance of race categories as neutral. In the stories mentioned by Smitherman-Donaldson and van Dijk, for example, the negative stories about racial minorities were seen as facts and their negative impact was not recognized. Husband (1982) pointed to the widespread nature of "race thinking" which embodied the "commonsense assumption that 'race' is a real and self-evidently neutral fact, not to be confused with racism which is a special condition of a few disturbed bigots who abuse reality with their prejudice" (p. 21). One commonsense example of this type of thinking occurs when minority group members are tracked by racial categories for seemingly honorable purposes such as employment equality. On the other hand, if race is neutral, then, it cannot be used as a

justification for why a particular individual should or should not get a job. To admit the latter moves race thinking to the area of bigotry and racism.

Condor (1988) explored how covert racism, particularly the race stereotype, was perpetuated in discourse. According to old racism standards, some discourse would not seem overtly racist. Condor, however, explained how the assumption of racial categories as neutral contributed to a perpetuation of racist thought.

The discursive display of ideological beliefs was examined by Corson (1993) in three episodes from a Board of Trustees' meeting in an academic setting. Corson found that an analysis of prosodic qualities, second-order interpretations, and a group's ideology revealed that these attributes interacted and were displayed in the discourse of the Board of Trustees meeting. In a comparison display of transcribed data, Corson contended that distorted communication can occur when representatives of the group being discussed are not present to exert a normative or social constraints on a majority group's sharing of ideological beliefs. Thus, discourse is used to support, reinforce, and bolster the in-group's ideological beliefs particularly in situations where there is no external social constraint by an out-group. When related to matters of policy or governance (as was the case in Corson's study), such discourse served to justify a policy which was not

favorable to the absent out-group.

A study by Michael Billig (1988) investigated the denial present in the new racism. Billig posited that there is a cultural norm against being prejudiced, but that "the social norms cannot merely exist as constraints existing outside individuals. For social norms to function as social pressures, they must be internalized, and thereby form part of an individual's cognitive belief" (p. 96). Billig proposed that the tension between racially prejudiced beliefs and norms for constraint were displayed by the use of disclaimers. Racist persons are viewed as unreasonable, irrational, and not politically correct; however, if speakers can justify their comments to their group, they would not appear racist. Thus, those who deny their prejudice want to be seen as rational and correct by both out-groups and in-groups.

The new racism, as reviewed here, is characterized as covert, implied, and part of group-based attitudes. It may have become less overt because of the normative desire not to be seen as racist or bigoted. This does not mean that racism has disappeared; however, it is the perspective of these researchers that it only may have disappeared from active view. However, through a close examination of discourse, strands of the underlying attitudes may be revealed. As Billig (1988) suggested, unless there is some fundamental change in group attitude, the social norms of

not being prejudiced will not wholly suppress or change cognitive beliefs. In the next section, the work of researchers who have focused their attention on out-group interview and discourse data will be reviewed.

#### Essed's Framework for Understanding Racism

The studies by Essed (1988, 1990, 1991) and Louw-Potgieter (1989), in contrast, work with in-depth interview data and from the perspective of those who are affected by racist actions. Essed's examination of everyday racism, for example, is an investigation of "racism from the point of view of people of color, defined by those who experience it" (Essed, 1990, p. 31).

Essed's heuristic scheme and data sources tap into a perspective that has not been extensively researched. In contrast to previous racism studies (such as van Dijk, 1988; Potter and Wetherell, 1987; Wetherell and Potter, 1992), which examined racism from the perspective of the perpetrators, Essed's approach centered on the discourse of those affected by racism. The point of view of those who believe they are affected by racist acts differs from those who may be accused of committing them in that dominant group members "do not generally see themselves as members of a racist society" (Essed, 1991, p. 4). In this way, there may be a denial of racism or a denial of racist intent on the part of dominant in-group members.

An example of this type of racist denial was presented by Bosmajian (1974) when he described the interaction between a Black basketball player and a newsman.

When a reporter tried to get the attention of Elvin Hayes, star basketball player at the University of Houston, the newsman shouted, "Hey, boy!" Hayes turned to the reporter and said: "Boy's on Tarzan. I'm no boy..." The reporter apologized and said: "I didn't mean anything by it." (p. 52)

In the above example, the reporter apologized but did not claim culpability for his actions. The implication is that the reaction of the basketball star was unreasonable because the reporter had no intent to commit a racist act. This creates a "circumstance of uncertainty" (Essed, 1988, p. 7) because the interpretation of racism is disputed by the reporter and the athlete's charge could be viewed by some as unreasonable. The focus of much previous research has been on members of the dominant group (the newsman, for example) with much less research emphasis on the interpretations of those affected by their actions (the basketball player). Essed's research examined the interpretations of those who feel the effects of everyday racism and her use of classification categories exposed the coherency of interpretations of actions as racist.

In examining the reported experiences of college-

educated Black female informants in the United States and the Netherlands, Essed found that their narratives contained justifications or reasons for interpreting actions as racist as well as descriptions of racism. Louw-Potgieter (1989) successfully applied Essed's framework to interviews with South African university students with similar findings. These two studies supported the usefulness of Essed's classification framework to categorize interviewee's use of evidence and justification statements in accounts which were formulated to substantiate their interpretation of an act as racist.

Returning to the example provided by Bosmajian (1974) concerning the athlete and reporter, Essed's definition of racism would imply that social and institutional attitudes encouraged that instance of racism to occur and that the reporter would not feel culpable nor would he see the possible racist implications of his comment. In this way, an ambiguous situation exists in which variable interpretations can be presented.

In order to examine the proffered interpretations of ambiguous situations, Essed proposed a six-step evaluation procedure used by minority respondents and a five-part framework for analyzing respondent statements. The six-step evaluation process is a mental schema that Essed claimed minority group members used in order to assess whether their interpretation of an interaction as racist is an objective

one. Essed developed a flow diagram to simulate the possible procedure used to determine the interpretation of racism. The process includes six steps which make progressive decisions such as (1) if the behavior in this particular incident is acceptable; (2) if there is an acceptable excuse for the current unacceptable behavior; (3) if it is because I am Black; 4) if the specific event is excusable; 5) if the specific event is socially significant; and, 6) if, by comparison with previous and current group knowledge, this behavior can be interpreted as racist (Essed, 1991, pp. 80-81). This process is obviously not available to researchers; however, Essed suggests that it can be inferred from the reconstruction accounts of the precipitating incidents. I wish to point out that the reconstructions available to the researcher are often refined in that they have been processed repeatedly by the informant and, possibly, by the informant's group. Thus, what is available to the researcher are highly developed conclusions and interpretations about the events which would reflect the process described by Essed.

Essed reported that in oral reconstructions of the deviant act, speakers used the following five heuristic categories as part of their causal explanations: context, complication, evaluation, argumentation, and decision. Essed used these categories to illustrate the coherence within a speaker's account of an act perceived as racist.

Examples from her published cases are presented below to illustrate and explain these categories.

1) Context: This category establishes the social situation of the event, the actors participating in the event, as well as the time and place. That is, the speaker reports a racist act within some situational context. An example of the context category comes from an excerpt from Essed's report of an interview with a black job applicant:

Florence V. applies for a job at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to teach Dutch at a Finnish University for the period of 18 months. They stated a preference for a linguist with a background of English. Florence V. fits the description and she likes the challenge of new experiences. Her written application is accepted and she is invited for an interview. The interviewer happens to be a woman. (Essed, 1988, p. 31)

The context category provides the situational and social context for the event. This information is generally quite specific and is usually not subject to change.

2) A complication is a statement of what is wrong, deviant, or tense about a situation. It is at this point that the reconstruction of a particular event is relayed. The information presented in the context category might be made problematic in the reconstruction of the act. For example, the interviewer's gender, above, might be part of the complication.

Kress (1989) stated that "every text arises out of a particular problematic ... and the site of attempts to resolve particular problems" (p. 12). It is this problem or complication which causes the explanation of an event. Essed proposed that in order for an action to be judged acceptable or not, there must be a referent point. This reference is an individual's knowledge of the group and its social standards. Thus, there is a presupposition that the participant has knowledge about that which is correct or good in order to judge what is not. For example, in order to judge that an act is racist, there must be knowledge of acts which are not racist. This implies a comparison of an action against another preexisting standard.

Another part of the complication category involves statements of reinterpretation. Because covert racism is usually unmarked and implied, an event may be reinterpreted as racist if additional information becomes available. "Thus, some actions are only perceived as unacceptable as a result of more information, for instance, by making goal-directed observations" (Essed, 1988, p. 20).

A continuation of the excerpt from Essed's 1988 work illustrates the complication category and is followed by an evaluation and further clarification of the complication.

Complication:

"I entered the room and there is this Lady, looks at

me, stunned, and she says "Are YOU the one?" (Essed, 1988, p. 31)

Evaluation:

"Well, I don't think that needs any further explanation!" (Essed, 1988, p. 31)

Clarification of the Complication:

"She did not even say "good morning", but just: are you the one?" (Essed, 1988, p. 32)

Clarification of the Evaluation:

"You know, it wasn't like I wasn't dressed for the occasion." (Essed, 1988, p. 32)

Second Complication:

"The conversation we had was not businesslike at all, it was about discos and how to spend leisure, and she said things like: well they do not have any discos over there and I am sure you love dancing." (Essed, 1988, p. 32)

Complications are less concrete than the information presented in the context category. Actions and events may be reinterpreted by the interview speaker as new information or additional group knowledge becomes known.

3) Evaluation refers to explanations of why this event is evaluated as racist. Statements of expectations, social group knowledge, and beliefs may be expressed here. Other statements may indicate that only when alternate explanations are not available or reasonable are the events

characterized as racist. As illustrated in the example above, the speaker assumed that the racist interpretation is obvious and available to the interviewer. The further clarification of the evaluation displayed the speaker's knowledge of norms of appropriate dress for that particular occasion. In addition, the speaker indicates her knowledge that the job interview context has rules of behavior that are upheld by her but not by the job interviewer.

4) Argumentation: This category involves two concerns: (a) statements which justify the claim, and (b) statements which involve consistency and/or consensus within the participant, within the participant's group, and across groups. As with uses of Toulmin's (1958) model to analyze arguments, statements such as backings and warrants may be shown in Essed's model to function as justifications for why this event was evaluated as it was.

Because the event may have been subtly rather than obviously racist in nature, the respondent's discourse might reveal attempts to resolve the difference between what was perceived and what occurred on the surface. Thus, interpretive and evaluative strategies, involving social and group knowledge may be used to support a racist evaluation and test whether this was justified or not. This category focuses on comparisons for the consistency and consensus of the evaluation against the experiences of others in similar circumstances, against other experiences of the participant,

and against the historical context. This category directs the researcher to the speaker's support and justification for why an event was evaluated as racist.

5) Decision: This category focuses on the speaker's end result or resolution of the event. Plans, intentions, expectations, actions, and concluding statements concerning what happened or will happen as a result of the described event may be observed here.

Although Essed emphasized that "because the framework is only a hypothetical representation" (Essed, 1988, p. 24), these categories may occur in any order or not at all in each explanation of an event, the usefulness of this classification framework is apparent. These organizing categories offer a heuristic scheme with which to focus on everyday, participant explanations of racist events. When charges of racism are made, they are not made lightly or without forethought. Essed's classification categories display one type of internal coherence which exists within narratives of racist interpretations.

#### Rationale for the Study

Although Essed proposed a framework for examining interpretations of racist incidents, the use of this framework alone is not sufficient for a meaningful examination of racist interpretations. There are three significant reasons which justify a further application of Essed's framework.

1) Out-groups other than Blacks or African Americans have racist interpretations of social actions which are not apparently racist to those who perpetrate them.

This dissertation study focused on a different population from that studied by previous researchers. My study of racist interpretation accounts within a United States college setting differed from the others studied by Essed and Louw-Potgieter and adds a separate and new corpus of data. The American college context differs in several aspects from the South African university setting studied by Louw-Potgieter (1989) and the American and Dutch job applicant context examined by Essed (1988). One difference is the racial and ethnic diversity present within most American campuses. On the west coast of the United States, where the data for this dissertation study were collected, Asian American, American Indian (Native American), and Hispanic groups are as likely to be represented on a college campus as are Whites and Blacks. In addition, both women and men have access to higher education and are not solicited into or limited to particular college areas or programs.

The studies by Essed and Louw-Potgieter suggested that racism may be experienced only among Blacks and African Americans. Essed limited her study to the explanations of racist events in the discourse of Black female job applicants and Louw-Potgieter with Black South African

university students. However, I suspect that interpretations of racism may be made by other informants who are not African American or Black. Thus, unlike the studies done by Louw-Potgieter and Essed, this study did not focus solely on Black or African American informants.

Further, both Essed and Louw-Potgieter solicited their interviews directly. By this, I mean that they specifically asked certain people to be interviewed. Their interview data, then, were garnered from sources whom the researchers or their agents identified as having stories to tell about racist experiences. The methodology for this study is further discussed in Chapter Four; however, the data for this study are focused on the explanations offered by college students who self-selected themselves into the study based on race becoming problematized for them in specific contexts.

2) An examination of discourse explanations about racist actions must adequately account for the overall structure of such explanations.

Essed's framework does present unique research opportunities because it centers on situated discourse solicited from those who are directly affected by racism. The use of lay explanations makes covert racism overt particularly insofar as those explanations can be shown to have an internal rationale for the charge. Communicative events that may not have overt markers of racism or may not

seem to be racist to those who perform them, may be experienced as such by some communicators. The lay explanations of those who experience racist acts make these incidents problematic. The explanations given by the communicators who interpret these events as racist provide a different perspective from those who commit the actions. The out-group member's knowledge of the social norms of interaction and behavior for both the in-group and out-group is used to make a judgment of the acceptability of certain events.

Essed's framework, although useful, does not focus on the overall structure of a lay explanation. Explanations of events by those affected by racism might also reveal (a) what standards the speaker used to evaluate the communicative event, (b) what rationale was used to make the interpretation of racism, and, finally, (c) how the speaker's identity was presented and renegotiated in the interview situation. The internal coherence of Essed's categories create an account which justifies a particular interpretation with supportive warrants. However, by reducing the account to categories of racist knowledge, Essed does not recognize how racism was made problematic by the respondent, how the explanation was organized to be believable, nor how the respondent presented a reasonable identity to the interviewer. Thus, in addition to Essed's framework, this dissertation study examined interview data

for other variations within the formulation of a believable and understandable account that is presented to an audience. For example, what Essed delineated as examples of racism are also examples given as justification and support for an informant's claim of racism.

3) The interview with informants (as part of the data collection process) needs to be considered as part of the social act of reconstructing an event.

Neither Essed nor Louw-Potgieter attended to the properties of the interview as being a speech event. Essed (1988) suggested that social constructions of racism may be shared when talk focused on racism; but in her studies the roles of the interviewee and interviewer participating in a common context were not addressed. Briggs (1986) stated that with an interview, "What is said is seen as a reflection of what is 'out there' rather than as an interpretation which is jointly produced by interviewer and respondent" (p. 3). Briggs further suggested that "[components of the speech situation] be examined in terms of their role in shaping the meaning of what is said by both parties" (p. 101). A similar view from Wetherell and Potter (1987) added that "reflexivity...refers to the fact that talk has the property of being both about actions, events, and situations and at the same time part of those things" (p. 182). Further, Polanyi (1985) found constraints which operated on both the speaker and listener of a narrative

such that the speaker must construct a story that has a point that is significant, that moves ahead, and that is properly structured to be understood. The constraints on the recipient of the story are that he or she must agree to hear the story, to refrain from taking a turn except to encourage the speaker, and, finally, to demonstrate an understanding of the point of the story.

The above reflexivity or construction constraints were not addressed by the other researchers. For example, the thirty interviews used in Louw-Potgieter's study were accomplished by students enrolled in the researcher's course. The interview was a course requirement and each student was asked to interview Black "friends, acquaintances, fellow-residents, fellow-classmates, friends of friends, etc." (Louw-Potgieter, 1989, p. 311). The data from these interviews were treated as equivalent and differences in the contextual components of the interview were not addressed. Essed referred to the social-based knowledge necessary for making an interpretation of racism, but did not pay specific attention to the influence of the interview context. For example, in the example from Essed's 1988 study presented on pages 41 and 43, perceived incidents of racism made salient only one part of the Florence V's identity. This concern appeared in the discourse of the narrative as well as the interview. An awareness of this reflexivity is not accounted for in Essed's studies.

Thus, there are three major reasons why this study is warranted: (1) other out-groups may recognize covert racism and have racist interpretations of social actions, (2) an examination of explanations about racist events must account for the overall structure of the presented explanation, and (3) the interview must be considered as part of the social act of reconstructing an event. The first reason (the diffusion of discrimination and the inclusion of other racial groups) focuses on the type of data being collected and is presumably sufficiently different to provide examples for further examination of Essed's framework. The following two reasons focus attention on how the data are analyzed by proposing that attention be paid to the overall structure of an interviewee's explanations as well as the interviewee's identity as it is presented during discursive reconstruction of an event.

This dissertation study, then, examined the usefulness of Essed's heuristic framework with another population within an additional context and proposed further categories for data analysis. Specifically, in this study I (a) collected and analyzed a new corpus of verbal accounts of racism which adds incrementally to the research established by Essed and Louw-Potgieter, (b) applied Essed's framework to those accounts in order to discover whether they met the tests of consistency and coherence as did the statements examined by Essed and by Louw-Potgieter, and (c) assessed

whether the examination of the new corpus using discourse analysis methods and additional analytic categories revealed structures of racist interpretations and goals of study informants which were not previously reported by Essed (1988, 1990, 1991) and Louw-Potgieter (1989).

Thus, this study provided a further application of Essed's framework to a new corpus of verbal accounts of racism produced in a different social milieu than those previously studied and responds to the call for further critical analysis of discourse about racism. To find the phenomena uncovered by Essed and Louw-Potgieter in an additional corpus as well as to reveal additional mechanisms for understanding racist interpretations, adds incrementally to the scope of the approach they have implemented.

## CHAPTER THREE

### Foundations for Understanding Racism

A review of previous racism research shows that, in general, racism has been studied by using quantitative methods to measure the attitudes or beliefs of majority group members. One little-attended perspective is the examination, using qualitative methods, of the naturally-occurring narrative discourse produced by those affected by racism. As previously presented, Essed (1988, 1991) and Louw-Potgieter (1989) are two researchers who have productively explored the mechanisms of racism through an examination of discourse texts such as situated talk and everyday explanations given by minority group members. Chapter Three will review four such approaches: (a) the basis of discourse analysis (the study of spoken and written texts to increase understanding of social interactions) and its usefulness to racism research, (b) the value of everyday explanations (explanations or justification statements given by persons based upon their understanding of racism), (c) the use of accounts such as excuses and justifications to account for non-normative or disruptive behavior, and (d) the utility of narrative categories as a framework for analyzing discourse about racism. These four approaches provide the tools and foundation necessary to understand more fully the organization of statements explaining interpretations of covert racist action episodes as outlined on page 3 of Chapter One.

### Discourse Analysis

Discourse analysis makes language its object of study. Specifically, discourse analysis focuses on language organization at or above the sentence level which is used within specific social contexts to construct interactions between speakers. Stubbs (1983) suggested that language, its use, a shared awareness of social knowledge, and a shared understanding of the contexts of an interaction are important components in discourse analysis. In order to focus on the organization of naturally occurring talk or the discourse used to construct social interactions, Stubbs described three broad research approaches.

#### Interaction Focus

One approach concentrated on examining the transcribed data of an interaction in order to analyze its organization and structure as an interaction. A surface inspection of the data revealed how conversations were joint productions, that is, how interaction characteristics were attended to and how they were displayed within an interaction. Specific characteristics may include how a speaker assessed the interest and understanding of the other interactant, or how narrative events were bounded to introduce them, how narrative events were bounded to change them once they were introduced. Stubbs suggested that "ways in which information is selected, formulated and conveyed between speakers; or alternatively assumed to be known and shared

knowledge" (p. 30) were areas of concentration. Some exemplars include studies of turn-taking (Sacks, Schegloff, & Jefferson, 1974, for example), account sequences (Cody & McLaughlin, 1985; McLaughlin, Cody, & Rosenstein, 1983; and McLaughlin, 1986); classroom discourse (Sinclair & Coulthard, 1975); and the preference for adjacency pairs (Schegloff & Sacks, 1973).

#### Speech Events in Specific Settings

A second approach inspected a specific speech event within a specific context or setting (a classroom setting, for example, Edwards & Mercer, 1987) for discernible patterns of communicative behavior. This type of discourse research could be called ethnography (Saville-Troike, 1982). An example of this research approach would be to examine the patterns of language function or the illocutionary force of teacher-talk and student talk within a classroom in order to describe language use in that setting. That is, researchers asked if there were underlying functions or organization patterns for communicative problems or language use in a particular setting. Hopper, Koch, and Mandelbaum (1986) described this type of analysis as having a greater focus on developing descriptions of phenomena rather than on causality and that there was "coding [of] utterances into categories of function or illocutionary force" (p. 173) rather than a continued description of particular discourse phenomena.

### Function Analysis

If the first approach to discourse analysis examined the surface patterns of conversational data and the second focused on the underlying function of language in a particular setting, the third approach can best be characterized as a distribution and function analysis on the sentence level. For example, Stubbs suggested the possible uses of "well" in social interactions. From its use and placement, a researcher could posit that "well" is used as a boundary marker for specific speech acts and develop statements concerning the use and placement of this word in both theoretical and actual discourse constructions. However, this perspective is limited to the sentence level and does not explore the relationship among clauses and/or sentences in proximity, both in placement or meaning, to each other. Thus, there is an implicit assumption of the common understanding of the interactants.

As Stubbs described these broad approaches to discourse analysis, it is clear that differences exist in focus, concern, and method between discourse analysis racist research and quantitative racist studies (such as the attitude survey research reviewed in the previous chapter). Stubbs' description of discourse analysis delineated the differences among the approaches based on context, type of discourse studied, and level of analysis.

I wish to present two other descriptions of the types

of approaches within discourse analysis, and conclude with an endorsement of the discursive psychology approach for its effectiveness in analyzing descriptions of covert racist episodes. The first description of discourse analysis approaches is from Tracy (1995), who categorized the field according to type of texts, the type of central research questions and the level of transcription used. The second is from Fairclough (1992) who divided the approaches into critical or non-critical categories.

#### Tracy's (1995) Characterization of Discourse Analysis

In a preface description of discourse analysis approaches, Tracy (1995) divided the field into five approaches: conversation analysis, interactional sociolinguistics, critical discourse analysis, discursive psychology, and action-implicative discourse analysis.

Tracy's description of conversation analysis (CA) characterized its texts as mundane social interactions which are transcribed using high levels of detail in order to describe and explain the nature of social organization (see Stubbs' description above). According to Tracy, conversation analysis does not necessarily attend to other categories such as gender or race to inform its analysis of discourse texts. Furthermore, high levels of transcription detail are used because it is unknown which interaction element might have contributed to the social accomplishment of the interaction.

Interactional sociolinguistics (IS) is the term that Tracy used to describe the approach, developed by Gumperz (1982), in which the influence of culturally different backgrounds on social interactions is made evident. In contrast to CA, IS focuses on problematic situations, uses interview data to verify interpretations of interactions, and attends to background categories (such as race, ethnicity, and gender) as important to understanding interactions.

The third discourse analysis approach, critical discourse analysis (CDA), is described by Tracy as using a less inductive and more a priori method. CDA (Kress and Hodge, 1970; Fairclough, 1992, 1993; and van Dijk, 1987) typically examines written texts of public policy or volatile social issues to criticize the macrosocial processes which oppress or dominate some and are reproduced in specific interactions.

The fourth approach is the discursive psychology type of analysis conducted by Potter and Wetherell (1987, 1988) and Wetherell and Potter (1992). Discursive psychology takes a rhetorical approach to social interactions in which each communicative episode is assumed to address a specific purpose, audience, and situation. This approach to analysis is concerned with the interplay between reality and cognition, that is, "why are attitudes expressed in the very particular forms they take?" (Tracy, 1995, p. 206).

Discursive psychology recognizes that there are multiple purposes and problems in everyday interactions, which lead to variations in communicative actions in similar situations.

The final approach is Tracy's action-implicative discourse analysis (AID), which she described as closest to discursive psychology in that both approaches recognize that communicative acts have specific purposes and audiences, and that there are communicative dilemmas which occur in everyday life. However, AID is also similar to CDA in that it incorporates a strong contextual dimension which goes beyond the interaction being analyzed and a moral argument (although AID centers on what should be rather than what is and what is wrong with it).

#### Fairclough's (1992) Characterization of Discourse Analysis

Finally, Fairclough (1992) divided the approaches to discourse analysis according to their awareness and use of critical or non-critical orientation (see CDA above) toward texts or discourse. His criticism of the other approaches centered on their lack of discussion concerning the "relations of power and ideologies, and the constructive effects discourse has upon social identities, social relations and systems of knowledge and beliefs, neither of which is normally apparent to discourse participants" (p. 12).

Fairclough reviewed four discourse approaches: the

framework proposed by Sinclair and Coulthard (1975) for describing classroom interactions, conversation analysis (Sacks, Schegloff and Jefferson, 1974; Atkinson and Heritage, 1984), the therapeutic discourse model proposed by Labov and Fanshel (1977), and the discourse analysis approach developed by Potter and Wetherell (1988, 1992). Further, Fairclough criticized the critical linguistics approach (Fowler, Hodge, Kress & Trew, 1979; Kress & Hodge, 1979; Kress, 1988) and the critical approach of Pecheux (1982). His criticisms are based in his agenda of proposing a discourse method aimed at increasing ideological considerations of discourse through his textually-oriented discourse analysis (TODA) which is conceived as a three dimensional analysis of social interactions. Fairclough's TODA framework acknowledges the discursive text, the discursive practice, and the social practice of the interactants and the situation. Thus, a TODA analysis would examine (a) the text; (b) the discourse processes of the text production, distribution, and consumption and interpretation of the text; and (c) the contextual conditions and events of each interaction in light of institutional and societal effects and conditions. With this purpose in mind, Fairclough found each of the above approaches lacking in one of the three dimensions which he proposed to overcome with the TODA approach.

In summary, the above approaches to discourse analysis demonstrate the wide variety within the field. It is useful to decide what type of question is being asked in the research project in assessing the effectiveness of each of the above approaches. The goal of this research project was to examine the explanations of those who believe that they have been affected by the racist behaviors of others in order to discern patterns of discourse which (a) explain and resolve breached social expectations and a problematized racial identity, and (b) frame and present this interpretation of a racial conflict in a coherent and believable manner. These research questions imply a method and theory which explore the perceived reality (social expectations and social identity) of speakers and their recounting of a conflict in which the speakers' identities have become problematic.

#### Discursive Psychology and Interpretations of Racism

For my research project, I found the approach to discourse analysis developed by Potter and Wetherell (1987) and Wetherell and Potter (1992) to be particularly useful in probing the knowledge of those affected by racism and racist practices. As previously discussed by Tracy (1995), discursive psychology focuses on talk situations in which there is an interpretation of conflict either within one's self or with another. As developed by Potter and Wetherell, there is an interplay among identity, reality, and ideology

that is considered during the analysis of discursive text.

Potter and Wetherell (1987) described discourse analysis as studying a broad array of texts, both formal and informal, as well as spoken or written. The goal of this type of research is to strengthen comprehension of social interactions in a particular society. There is an underlying assumption that discourse is produced by group members to be meaningful to other group members. The meaningfulness of discourse comes in part from social conventions such as regularities in its organization and structure, conversational goals and purposes, and specific socially sanctioned vocabularies (Mills, 1940).

Fairclough (1992) criticized Potter and Wetherell (1987) for their lack of consideration of ideology and lack of clear conceptualization of self and identity. He granted that Potter and Wetherell's approach was a useful addition to the more traditional approaches of social psychology because it used discourse analysis to study issues which have previously been examined using more quantitative methods.

I believe that Fairclough's criticisms were premature. First, Wetherell and Potter (1992) directly examined interview discourse within the framework of personal and group identity, ideology (personal and group), and perceptions of the reality (the external situation such as political power and national economy). Their research

centered on the racist interpretations made by Pakeha New Zealanders (White) of the native Maori population. The research question asked by Wetherell and Potter (1992) was what interpretative repertoires support racist discourse about Maori New Zealanders. In their understanding of this concept, the authors do not see ideology as separate from identity and reality.

To Wetherell and Potter, interpretative repertoires are the linguistic and social resources that are available to speakers to achieve certain interaction goals (Sidanius & Pratto (in press) use the term legitimizing myths to describe the justification myths of the majority group). The authors are interested in investigating the "nature of the interpretative resources that allow that achievement" (1992, p. 91). Interpretative resources include discernible categories or clusters of images, figures of speech, or metaphors that indicate a system of understanding based on group identity and ideology. Based in social history and ideology, these clusters offer the resources to construct and support particular instantiations of self (identity) and social action as well as warrants for specific arguments and perceptions of reality. They are not based solely within an individual but incorporate historical, social and ideological discourses.

In interview 4 from my data corpus, for example, the interviewee referred to teachers as "White teachers" and

associated them with "Americans," a term the interviewee found derogatory when applied to him. The interpretative resources for this speaker and his social group in the educational topic setting included his ideology of non-identification with "American" culture and "White" beliefs and behaviors. His individual and social group identity, in addition to his self and social ideological beliefs, created a discourse for this topic. The image that is at the center of his category is the White, American teacher that represents the culture and ideology in opposition to the speaker's. That is, there is an apparent familiarity and seamlessness with the speaker's use of these images and symbols in opposition to the speaker's presented identity. The use of this image creates an effect of reality for the speaker's position.

Wetherell and Potter (1992) asserted that discourse is constitutive in that discourses or repertoires allow versions or accounts of actions to be warranted. That is, discourses construct a particular reality that a speaker may use to achieve a reality or identity that "make[s] an argument...[or constructs an argument] against alternatives" (p. 95). From this position, Wetherell and Potter (1992) examined how Pakeha New Zealand discourse constructs an argument which supports racially oppressive actions or policies in opposition to the Maori discourse or liberal Pakeha New Zealanders. In a similar move, as described

above, interviewee 4 constructed his argument to warrant his interpretation of the conflict between reservation children and the White education system.

This perspective of identity suggests that some accounts of one's self identity are more familiar under certain circumstances than others. What is implied is that some identities become emblematic and enduring in particular social situations. In terms of racist discourse, it may be that the following terms from my interviews such as "White", "American" (from interviews 1 and 4) and "Barbie doll" (from interview 9, line 223) become the dramatic figures that are constituted in opposition to "the gook" (from interview 5) or the "big Indian" and "red nigger" (from interview 4) in social encounters which are perceived as racist by one of the speakers. However, these identities are not constructed anew with each interaction (Wetherell and Potter, 1992, p. 78) but there is a continuity which emerges from readily available narratives and past discursive practices.

The interpretative repertoires and resources, then, are dependent upon the set of social relations or social positions in which a speaker is enmeshed. One of the goals of discursive psychology is to describe the reality or interpretative repertoires of specific social groups. Although Wetherell and Potter have focused on analyzing the discursive practices of Pakeha New Zealanders, discursive psychology is equally valuable in order to analyze the

discursive practice of those who believe that they have been affected by racism. Ideology for Wetherell and Potter is an analysis of "the crucial aspect...whose story will be accepted and become part of the general currency of explanation, whose version of events, whose account of the ways things are" (p. 62). For Wetherell and Potter, it is the everyday understanding of the Pakeha New Zealanders that is accepted and examined. On the other hand, Essed and Louw-Potgieter have researched the perspective of those who are affected by the racist actions and beliefs of others. By their studies, these two researchers privilege the specific discourse and reality of those affected by the racist discourse and ideologies of others.

Wetherell and Potter (1992) effectively answered the criticisms put forth by Fairclough concerning their lack of consideration of ideology and identity issues. Further, they pointed out that although not all discourse is ideological, ideology is constructed discursively (p. 63). The critical approach, including the TODA method proposed by Fairclough, assumes that there is a point from which reality can be viewed free of ideological coloration (Fairclough, 1992; Foucault, 1980, 1982, 1984). Fairclough presumed that critical discourse analysis is that neutral point. Wetherell and Potter, however, realized that at any point, some discourses are being privileged rather than others.

Advantages of discursive psychology. The advantages to this research project of the discursive psychology approach are obvious. The theory and methodology used by Wetherell and Potter to analyze the Pakeha discourse of New Zealand are a useful perspective to add to the methods used by Essed and Potgieter. The interdisciplinary combination of these two perspectives brings together formidable tools to understand further the perspectives of those affected by racism. Two of my earlier criticisms of Essed and Louw-Potgieter centered on their lack of focus on both discourse and the constitutive elements of the interview setting. These criticisms are answered by the discursive psychological approach of Wetherell and Potter.

In summary, the discursive psychology approach examined the discourse or talk of a particular social group. In comparison to the previously reviewed quantitative racist attitude survey research, what can be revealed by a privileging of minority discourse and explanation? The participants in my study gave narrative explanations that explained and resolved their breached social expectations and problematized racial identity in a discursive style that was intended to be believable. The research questions stated in Chapter One suggest that both narrative explanations and their discursive organization are sources of valuable insight. The following three sections explore (a) the usefulness of everyday explanation as a source of

data, (b) the value of accounts research in understanding covert racism, and (c) the categories of organization and narrative considerations used to establish a believable explanation of a racist event.

### Everyday Explanations

Whether the researcher speaks of the existence of majority versus minority groups, or in-group versus out-group, or dominant versus subordinate groups, there are two themes running through research on racism. The first theme recognizes the power of one group over another based on some type of salient characteristic that distinguishes all members of one group from another. The converse of this is also true--some groups recognize that others have power over them due to roles or race, for example. The second theme recognizes talk as a social act which reenacts these power plays on an ongoing basis. These two themes intersect when lay persons explain their perceptions of racist events. Potter and Wetherell (1988) proposed that "different people say different things, and, more importantly, the same person will say different things on different occasions" (p. 54). This variability combined with function and construction are displayed within a group's interpretative repertoire. When applied to racist statements, the variability referred to above occurs, in part, because of the need to conform to group norms (repertoire) against presenting a prejudiced or biased identity. Opinions or fact-like assertions which

could be interpreted as racist are couched within disclaimers and explanatory causal stories. For example, Potter and Wetherell proposed that such explanatory causal narratives and disclaimers accomplish three things: (a) the warranting of fact-like claims, (b) the mitigating of blameworthy behavior, and (c) the remediation of motives (so that the statement will not be heard as obviously racist). Potter and Wetherell's discursive approach implicates a person's attitude toward an object with the object itself. Attitude is accomplished or constructed, and displayed, in everyday talk, such as explanations and disclaimers. For example, a statement such as "I'm not a racist, but ..." (van Dijk, 1988, p. 141) displays both the speaker's attitude and the speaker's ambivalence. The use of this disclaimer permits the speaker to state his or her attitude as a fact-like claim. The ambivalence toward the disclosing of the speaker's attitude is displayed in the "face-keeping and positive self-presentation" aspects of the remedial statement "I'm not a racist, but..." (van Dijk, 1988, p. 141).

Wetherell and Potter (1988) asserted that their data revealed interpretative repertoires. As previously discussed, these are explanations that are actively constructed from social and discursive practices. That they are readily recognized and used among group members implies that there are underlying resources which shore up and

support the discourse. There are specific interpretative repertoires or underlying resources (history, attitudes and beliefs, for example) within a group that render the statement "I'm not a racist, but..." as meaningful to that speaker's group. These resources and repertoires would support certain discourses as more meaningful, coherent, and real in comparison to others. Further, the use of certain strategies such as explanations or causal narratives implies an understanding of their function and meaningfulness. What Wetherell and Potter termed interpretative repertoires, Semin and Manstead (1983) referred to as interpretative schemata. These are culturally available to competent group members and are used explain the incident in question. Wooffitt (1991) referred to conversation constructions which are repeated across different contexts as being of "conventional character...which can be exploited to address inferential and pragmatic tasks" (p. 285). Script formulations is the term Edwards (1994) used to describe a similar phenomenon. Edwards claimed that actions and events may be describes as either normal (script formulations) or aberrant (breach formulations) in order to recognize interactional concerns within the events and within their reporting. The use of these schemata or strategies, then, would imply that the person who used them understood their meaningfulness and usefulness in construction.

In examining descriptions and explanations of events,

lay persons are asked to reconstruct the event and to describe the ideas held within. Everyday explanations (Antaki, 1980, 1988; Draper, 1988) focus on the reflected perspective of the actor--the agent--of particular events. The event is being explained while a description of how the speaker sees the world (and event) is being revealed in response to some perceived request. In this way, the examination of everyday explanations constructed during interviews about racism can reveal knowledge of how racism is perceived by the informant as well as how the informant constructed his or her response to the interview request.

These explanations also provide a sense of historicity as past events, group experiences, and other organizing schemata are employed in order for the explainer to make sense of an event. These may be displayed in discourse as referring to other-based knowledge or experience to support an explanation. Thus, in explanations that offer reasons to justify a particular perspective, an authority beyond the informant must be used to eventually "'close off' chains of explanation requests by referring to some public, authoritative information source" (Draper, 1988, p. 21). Everyday explanations are also powerful because the speaker has an opportunity within a reconstruction to describe a more favorable presentation of the event or interaction. An explanation may be composed to accomplish social repairs, ameliorate a face-threatening episode, or other selected

constructions. A favorable or face-saving account (as the term is used by Scott and Lyman (1968), for example) of one's behavior or a justifying statement for an interpretation of someone else's behavior may occur as part of an explanation or a display of everyday knowledge.

Everyday explanation research provided this dissertation study with two important resources. First, the study of everyday explanations shifted the focus of research from a perpetrator's intention to commit racism to the interpretations of those who perceive it. Thus, another perspective of racism was gained. Second, further insights into racism were revealed through the display of justification statements and coherent construction of explanatory statements about racist judgments. In sum, the everyday explanations or the narrative explanations given by participants during my research interviews are both valuable and reliable sources of data.

The following section will discuss the usefulness of accounts literature to this dissertation study. The advantages of this perspective were twofold. First, accounts are generally given to excuse, apologize, or justify a behavior that is deemed inappropriate by others. However, as described on page three of Chapter One of this dissertation study, in the covert racism event person A cannot excuse her or his physical appearance. In this type of interaction, person A must justify her or his explanation

for making the interpretation of racism. Second, person A must use accounts to ameliorate a stigma and restore a positive identity. These two areas of justification and excuses are addressed in the body of accounts research.

### Accounts

Accounts (Benoit, 1995; Buttny, 1985; Cody & McLaughlin, 1985; Goffman, 1963, 1967a; Heritage, 1988; Schonbach, 1980, 1990; Semin & Manstead, 1983; McLaughlin, 1986; McLaughlin, Cody, & Rosenstein, 1983; Potter & Wetherell, 1987; Scott & Lyman, 1968, 1970; Semin & Manstead, 1983; Sykes & Matza, 1957; Tedeschi & Riess, 1981; Wood & Kroger, 1994; Wooffitt, 1991) occur as part of everyday explanations. Accounts are given as a way of justifying, excusing, or mitigating an occurrence which is being recounted as part of an explanation.

Scott & Lyman (1968, 1970) defined accounts as either excuses or justifications which are "statements made by social actors to relieve themselves of culpability for untoward or unanticipated acts" (1968, p. 48). Excuses admit that an act was deviant or disruptive but that the agent of the action was not fully responsible for what occurred. Excused actions may appeal to accidents, biological drives, lack of knowledge, lack of free will, and scapegoating (1970, p. 93). Justifications, on the other hand, admit that the agent of the action is fully responsible, but that the act itself was not deviant.

Justified actions may appeal to a denial of injury, a denial of the victim, and a condemnation of the condemner (Sykes and Matza, 1957, pp.667-669). These accounts are offered in an attempt to ameliorate a possibly face-threatening episode by appealing to its ability to be understood and accepted by those who hear it.

Goffman (1963) claimed that an individual's self identity may be discredited or "spoiled" by a socially recognized stigma symbol (see also Benoit, 1995). It may be a physical or social deviance which brings unwanted attention, and imputation or judgment of personal ability and identity to a person. Goffman suggested that an individual's need to avoid being stigmatized leads those so afflicted to practice information control techniques such as concealment, disidentifiers, cooperativeness, limited disclosure, keeping a physical distance from those who may pass harsh judgement, and covering up the social stigmata. These information control techniques are used by the individual to maintain a positive face in a possibly face-threatening situation. Goffman (1967) further described the sequential corrective process of facework accounts as a challenge from an offended other to the agent of action. Following Goffman's lead, Scott and Lyman (1970) used the metaphor of a game to describe the face-saving actions and discourse which may be used to present a positive self in social situations. Scott and Lyman extended the face game

metaphor to explain the use of accounts to explain deviance within the larger concept of social order. Scott and Lyman described deviant persons as sharing two characteristics. First, the person's actions are perceived as "...untoward and possibly thought to be a threat to the common good...(and) second, deviants are generally held to be in some sense responsible for their deviant action" (p. 91). The deviant label can be removed if the actor is able to successfully erase the negative interpretations of the act. The goal in face games, then, is for each actor to try to "maximize [his or her] own realization of a valued identity, while seeking an equilibrium that will permit others to do likewise" (p. 97).

In each account situation, Scott and Lyman see a negotiating of identities through the use of justifications. They are very conscious of the roles taken and/or assigned and state that:

A normative structure governs the nature and types of communication between the interactants, including whether and in what manner accounts may be required and given, honored or discredited...the particular identities of the interactants must often be established as part of the encounter in which the account is present. In other words, people generate role identities for one another in social situations. (1968, p. 58)

Furthermore, in identity negotiations involving racial minorities, these researchers found that "racial minorities in caste societies often insist to no avail on the priority of their identity as 'human beings' over their identification as members of a racial group" (p. 58). Thus, race and the perception of race as the most salient identity contributes to an understanding of accounting behavior and interpretations of racism.

In an extension to the types of accounts (excuses and justifications) delineated by Scott and Lyman (1968, 1970) and Sykes and Matza (1957), Schonbach (1980) stipulates that concessions and refusals should be included. Schonbach also found that not all sub-categories could be clearly separated as only falling within one type of account. Semin and Manstead (1983) disagreed with Schonbach's (1980) formulation of concessions and refusals as additional types of accounts and propose that because these depend upon the amount of guilt or possible atonement, that they should be typed as apologies.

Tedeschi and Riess (1981) proposed their own typology that included three categories of excuses and ten categories of justifications. These researchers focused on the role of causality and responsibility in the production of accounts. They formulated several new types of accounts such as appeals to a higher authority, appeals to an ideology and appeals to self-defense.

In 1983, Semin and Manstead created a super typology which effectively subsumed the previous developments mentioned above. Their proposed excuse category included appeals to denial of intent, denial of volition, denial of agency, and an appeal to mitigating circumstances. Semin and Manstead's justification category provided for appeals to the principle of retribution, social comparisons, claims that the effect has been misrepresented, higher authority, self-fulfillment, the principle of utilitarianism, values, and the need for facework.

These studies have attempted to outline the types of accounts that are used to excuse or justify behavior that can be viewed as disruptive or deviant. Other researchers have investigated the sequence of account behavior. Scott and Lyman (1968) do not propose any sequence for the occurrence of account behavior; however, one can be inferred. At the minimum, Scott and Lyman's work suggests that in an interaction between two actors (a) a stigmatizing act is committed that is evaluated as aberrant or not within usual norms by the members of the community which contributes to the strategies and resources of both participants; (b) an account is called for or not; (c) an account is offered or not; and (d) if an account is offered, it is honored or not.

McLaughlin, Cody, and Rosenstein (1983) found that in first encounter episodes between strangers the precipitating

offense (related to taste, attitude, or belief; personal identity; work or school; or interaction offenses (p. 108)) is followed by reproach categories (surprise or disgust, moral or intellectual superiority, direct request for an account, and direct rebuke (p. 109)). McLaughlin, Cody, and Rosenstein proposed four strategies that actors use to manage these reproaches: concede, do not offer an account, justify, or refuse to account (p. 111). If an account is presented there are four possible evaluation behaviors: honor; retreat; reject, take issue, or reinstate reproach; or, drop or switch topic (p. 112). Initial encounters include many account sequences because they are aligning (Stokes and Hewitt, 1976) for each of the actors and they "serve to manage apparent dissimilarity and/or impending disagreement" (McLaughlin, Cody, and Rosenstein, 1983, p. 103). These researchers offered, at minimum, a three-turn sequence which begins with a reproach, followed by an account, and ends with an evaluation. This three-turn sequence can be collapsed and is alternately represented as reproach or account followed by account or evaluate (p. 103).

Schonbach (1990) also viewed accounts as aligning actions which are used to repair or maintain successful relationships that may have been breached by unmet cultural expectations. Therefore, similar to the cultural and group strategies put forth by Scott and Lyman, Schonbach perceived

accounts as useful in aligning and mediating between culture and conduct.

Schonbach, however, believed that Scott and Lyman's (1968) notion concerning the negotiation of identities was incomplete. Scott and Lyman stated that identity negotiations are crucial to the participants and that the power or status of particular identities, if accepted, may lend an advantage to one or another of the participants. Schonbach added to that by pointing out that

the negotiation of identities in the service of maintaining or restoring self-esteem often becomes the primary purpose of one or both interactants of an account episode, relegating the concrete conflict issue to a position of secondary importance. (p. 15)

Scott and Lyman proposed that the ability to impose one's own identity over that of another lends power, position advantage and/or status to one of the participants in an interaction. Schonbach expanded upon this by emphasizing that the lack of control is part of the negotiation of self-esteem and that gaining this positive face is often more important than the apparent conflict issue.

Schonbach viewed account sequences as a basic four part pattern consisting of a failure event, reproach, account, and evaluation (p. 12). He emphasized that there were possible variations on this basic sequence. His sequence is similar to those investigated by other researchers.

In "Accounts as reconstruction of an event's content", Buttny (1985) used accounts to examine how an event may be mitigated during its reconstruction. Buttny stated that "an account is used to communicate one's preferred meanings about the event in question" (p. 59). Because an event or incident may be interpreted in a variety of ways, an actor may offer a favorable account or explanation which asserts a perspective which may not have been noticed or appreciated by its audience. The account may be provided by the actor or others who may help the actor to save face. In a manner similar to what was previously specified, Buttny described three stages for account episodes: (a) the failure event, (b) a response to what has been made problematic, and (c) an evaluation from the other based on the proffered account. However, Buttny noted that the account response and the subsequent evaluation may not be expressed at the time of the problematic failure event. This lack may, in itself, become a problem and part of the account. Buttny used as a model the coordinated management of meaning (CMM) perspective of context which employs an actor's understanding of both constitutive and regulative rules to hierarchically order contextual information.

Buttny asserted that accounts are used to change the hierarchical configuration of the context of an event. Thus, an audience's interpretation of an action may be changed by its socially constructed and socially understood

context. The context hierarchy consists of information content, speech act, episodes which are described as "patterned sequences of activities which persons discern by a principle of unity" (p. 67), relationships (between persons), life scripts (concepts of self), and, finally, cultural patterns. For example, what may be appropriate information content within an acceptable speech act for teachers in an all-teacher's lounge may not be as acceptable in a student-filled classroom. The cultural pattern in the former may be more informal and casual than the latter. The relational level in the former would be among peers where, in the latter, there is an imbalance in perceived status and power between teachers and students. Thus, a speaker must orient the audience to the appropriate context which may mitigate the audience's understanding of a possibly untoward event.

Using conversation analysis methods, Heritage (1988) examined explanations as accounts. Based on the ethnomethodology framework and the structure sequencing of conversation analysis, Heritage proposed that accounts are used to "[maintain] methods or procedures through which the organization of social action is sustained ... [these are] the central resources through which actions are both produced and understood" (p. 139). Heritage recognized that the rules for how an act or discourse should be composed and subsequently interpreted are intertwined with the

organization of an account and its accomplishment. The conversation analysis of accounts centers on noting the sequences of discursive actions and goals.

Potter and Wetherell (1987) furthered the above perspective of focussing on structure and "work[ed] from the assumption that phenomena like accounts will be best understood through looking at their positioning in sequences of discourse performing different kinds of acts" (p. 93). They combined the conversation analytic perspective with account research and found that the context of accounts as well as their turn-by-turn appearance in discourse are worthy of investigation.

Mercer and Longman (1992) found accounts to be very dependent upon their context in order to be understood and successfully accomplished. They examined how the context of the present is reconciled with the actions of the past in accounts of experiences being shared within the context of employment training interviews. They considered how discourse is used to create mutual accounts of past and present events. Mercer and Longman suggested the person in power can reformulate and reconstruct the summaries of what occurred in talk (p. 112). The reformulations and summaries recast the episode into language that is shared by the participants and created a mutual identity.

An accounting device described as 'I was just doing X...when Y' is used by actors when sharing paranormal

experiences to "display that they are essentially normal people: their description reveals that they do not, in the first instance, go about seeing the world as unusual or bizarre" (p. 269). Wooffitt (1991) found that speakers used this device in an attempt to mitigate the deviance of the event they will be describing by emphasizing the normalcy or uneventfulness of the context. In a sense, this is similar to the disclaimer or denial mechanism described earlier. What the speaker attempts to do is to appear normal and to forestall any negative interpretations against him or herself.

Accounts and everyday explanations emphasize an individual's knowledge of social norms and this resonates with the interpretative repertoires suggested by Wetherell and Potter (1988), the central resources referred to by Heritage (1988), the knowledge of contextual hierarchy presented by Buttny (1985), the social order presented by Scott and Lyman (1970) and the understanding and use of group member resources referred to by Antaki (1988), Essed (1988, 1990, 1991), Wooffitt (1991), Semin & Manstead (1983) and van Dijk (1984, 1985, 1987, 1988, 1993).

The prominent features of accounts, then, are a) that one of the actors is stigmatized by an action; (b) that there is a belief that the stigmatized actor is responsible for negative impressions; (c) that actor identities are being negotiated in interactions in both the past and

present; (d) that there may be a tendency on the part of the actors to seek equilibrium when negotiating identities; (e) that an actor's efforts to negate the loss of self-esteem or lack of control in identity impressions may supersede other conflict issues; and, (f) that account sequences are used and are understood when they occur.

In summary, accounts research literature proved to be very useful in analyzing accounts of racist actions. As outlined on page three, the event sequence of covert racism encounters stigmatizes the identity of one of the interactants. The stigmatized interactant may use the discourse construction of an account to explain or resolve a breached social expectation or problematized racial identity. Further, in order to create a believable justification of an interpretation of racism as well as to restore a damaged identity in both the past and present, person A may appeal to justifications and excuses.

The discursive psychology approach asserted that particular discourses are constructed and warranted through a "range of specific discursive features through which versions are warranted....[features such as] narrative techniques, constructions involving consensus and corroboration..." (Wetherell & Potter, 1992, p. 95). (See also Edwards & Potter, 1992 and Wooffitt, 1992). Accordingly, Essed has provided five categories to frame an analysis of the discourse provided by those affected by

racism. Other researchers have suggested other frameworks for narrative analyses. van Dijk (1984, 1985, 1987, 1988, 1993), for example, suggested an interdisciplinary approach which fused social cognition with narrative-based theories. The utility of these approaches will be discussed in the following section.

#### Categories of Organization

Narratives, everyday explanations and accounts presuppose a certain knowledge on the part of the interactants concerning the beliefs and understanding about racial or ethnic affairs or social norms and expectations of the particular social situation.

Polanyi (1985) found constraints that operated on both the speaker and hearer of stories or narratives within which accounts occurred. According to Polanyi, the teller must tell an organized and coherent story that has a point that is worthy of the telling. The teller must use appropriate linguistic devices and move the telling of the tale from the present world to the past world where the event takes place. In addition, the speaker must begin at the beginning, move the story line along, and evaluate the events so that the hearer may "infer the point being made" (p. 200). The constraints on the hearers or recipients of the narrative are that (a) they agree to hear the story or give an account as to why they should not hear it; (b) they do not take a turn except to make remarks that support the evaluations of

the speaker and indicate that the story is being understood; and, at the end of the story, (c) they demonstrate an understanding of the speaker's position. Polanyi described narratives as stories which are told in a temporal order in the past, which have a point or important idea that reflects a revelation about the world that the speaker and hearer inhabit, and which imposes specific behaviors for a successful accomplishment. Further, Gergen (1988) provided additional culturally-based structural characteristics (chronological, stability, regressive, progressive, use of dramatic tension) which were used by speakers to compose a narrative for specific persons and situations.

van Dijk (1993) combined the two research lines of narrative theory and social cognition and proposed that "stories are expressions of so-called (episodic) models, or situation models" (p. 124). One way to examine these explanations is to use a framework of narrative categories. Based on Labov (1972) and Labov & Waletzky (1967), van Dijk used the conventional narrative categories of summary, orientation, complication, resolution, evaluation, and coda or conclusion to analyze the structure of everyday stories.

van Dijk summarized the pertinent attributes of stories as being (a) primarily about past human actions and cognitions; (b) usually made interesting for an audience; (c) usually told to entertain an audience; (d) abstractly organized using the categories of summary, orientation,

complication, resolution, evaluation and conclusion which are hierarchically ordered; (e) told from different points of views; and, (f) organized along general conversation interaction lines, although the storyteller may keep the floor for long periods of time. These characteristics, particularly points (b), (c), and (d), as well as those described by Polanyi were of particular interest to this dissertation study because of their focus on the everyday explanations of lay persons and how these explanations or stories are relayed to an audience. The above research focus on the mutually accomplishment of a narrative (that is, it is told to someone) is an important point to consider, particularly within an interview context in which the speaker believes that the point in the story being related is relevant and important to both hearer and the speaker.

van Dijk's 1993 work with stories and narrative forms echoed the framework used by Essed, however, the work of these two researchers differed on one very substantive point. While van Dijk used the narrative and social cognition model to study the dominant group's stories about racial minorities, Essed's research focused on the everyday explanations of minority group members about perceived racist incidents. The racist incidents in Essed's data were reconstructed from the point of view of the person(s) affected by them. As discussed in the previous section, the

privileging of particular discourses assures that that discourse may become known, familiar, and incorporated within the interpretative repertoires of groups.

van Dijk's research was focused on discovering the underlying social models of episodes which were used to understand and produce the discourse or stories about minority groups. His emphasis was on the dominant group's organizing schema for its knowledge about ethnic minorities. Essed, on the other hand, concentrated on the stories told by minority group members who believed they had been discriminated against. Their stories or explanations focused on justifying their interpretation of a possibly ambiguous act as racist and presenting their knowledge of other social models as support for their interpretation. Both researchers believed that the micro and macro levels of interactions interrelate and inform each other. Essed's research presumed that the stories told by minority group members who believed they had been discriminated against reflected not only the knowledge of their own group but also that of the dominant group. The stories or explanations by the minority or out-group must be based on an evaluation of what standards of interaction are the norm for the dominant group in order to determine that their treatment is different. In this way, the explanations by minority or out-group members represent an understanding of the appropriate dominant group's patterns of interaction as well

as an evaluation of their interactions with the dominant group in social situations.

However, narratives may be influenced during their organization and telling by the ideology of speaker. Although Essed is not explicit about this point, the ideology of covert racism suggested that the participants in a mutual event may view that event differently based upon their history and social group orientation--among other social forces. One interaction participant, then, may view the situation as aberrant or untoward, and another participant might see the same event as seamless and without a breach. In this way the participants who perceived racism within a social context in which the dominant group did not discern the same intent, must formulate a narrative explanation that convincingly supported their perceptions. Therefore, these narrative explanations are an important resource for a different perspective of racism.

Essed's analytic framework offered one method for understanding these narratives or verbal accounts of perceived racism. Both Essed (1988, 1991) and van Dijk (1988, 1993) argued that for a speaker to understand and to evaluate particular actions or interactions as racist, it is assumed that the person had problematized racism, had knowledge of specific types of racism or specific episodes of racism, and had an understanding of how racism operates. According to Essed, comprehension of racist acts can be

defined "as the ability to explain specific experiences in terms of situational knowledge and in terms of general knowledge of racism" (1991, p. 79).

Briefly, Essed proposed two processes. The first was a strategy for assessing the racist impact of an event. The second was a framework which permitted researchers to examine the internal coherence or justification account of an explanation of racist interpretations by centering on the categories used to organize that account. In the first process, the initial evaluation of an event as racist was made by a speaker through the use of a strategic six-step process. The process, as described by Essed, employed an evaluation scheme based on individual and group experiences. The specific act or interaction in question was compared against individual and group knowledge for consistency or deviation before the interpretation of racism was made. The charge of racism was not made lightly nor is it made without evaluation or justification on the part of the speaker.

Second, Essed's framework categories of context, complication, evaluation, argumentation, and decision were detailed in the previous chapter. To review briefly, the narrative criteria of Essed's framework were based on the notion that stories were about past events which were organized into categories and composed to elicit interest for an audience. Thus, the stories of racist interpretations were told because there was something

deviant or disruptive about an event based on the speaker's mental schema of racism which would be of interest to an audience. In this way, racism must be made problematic by the informant before the story could be told.

Essed pointed out that "not all organizing categories and heuristics are included in all reconstructions of personal experiences" (1991, p. 128) and that reconstructions may contain both "stable and variable" (1991, p. 128) content in the telling of personal incidents. Stable content does not change over time or with further experiences. Objective information such as who was involved, where and when the incident took place, and any other circumstances which may be important to the disruptiveness of the incident may be included. This information is not likely to change. Variable information, on the other hand, may change depending on any new information that may come from further developments, the sharing of group member knowledge, or additional research on the part of the speaker.

#### Summary

I have presented four research approaches (discursive psychology, everyday explanations, accounts, and narrative categories of organization) that provide the foundation for understanding the discourse constructed about racist events.

My research questions focused on (a) how narrative explanations of racist events were constructed to explain or

resolve breached social expectations and stigmatized identity and (b) how the narratives were constructed to be believable to an audience. The four approaches reviewed in this chapter furnished different analytic perspectives with which to examine the discourse about racist events.

As described, the discourse analysis approach of discursive psychology was concerned with an examination of the interplay among identity, reality, and ideology in narrative explanations. Wetherell and Potter (1992) presented this type of analysis as an investigation into the interpretative resources used by those producing discourse about racism. As presented, everyday explanations or narrative accounts viewed discourse as a social reenactment of social domination, stigmatized identity, or breaches of social conduct. Everyday narrative explanations, which include the use of accounts, then, are socially constructed actions which are employed by lay persons to compose explanations of disruptive events. The success of these narrative explanations and the believability of the accounts depend upon using knowledge and organizing structures which are intelligible to the audience.

One of the functions or discursive goals of accounts may include attempts to mitigate or amend disruptive incidents that stigmatize the actors involved. Narratives about racist events are one such example because race is a visible stigmata that can spoil an individual's identity

(Goffman, 1963). The information control techniques mentioned by Goffman cannot conceal, distance, or disidentify someone who is being stigmatized due to recognizable physical racial features.

Previous racism studies which made discourse the object of analysis centered research attention on the structure, the participant accomplishment, and the available meanings for the discourse, as well as the construction of everyday narrative explanations, accounts, and account sequences. Everyday narrative explanation studies highlighted the use of accounts as part of the justification of what "everybody knows" and revealed interpretive repertoires of culturally available knowledge. Literature from accounts research pointed toward the importance of identity, self-esteem, lack of control, and negation of responsibility in informant discourse. Both discourse analysis and account studies indicated the speaker's use, and presumed knowledge, of sequences in discourse.

The discursive psychology approach, the value of everyday explanations, accounts research, and the framework of narrative categories of organization furnish a foundation for a fuller understanding of explanations of racist interpretations. The following chapter will discuss the methods used in this study to examine the discursive choices, the narrative organization and speaker identities presented in explanations about racism.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### Method

The choice of method implies a particular perspective. It is my position that racism occurs in the ways previously described and that the narrative explanations of those affected by racism are knowledgeable and worthy of further examination. The goal of my research was not to uncover further information about racism, but to investigate the interpretative repertoires (Wetherell and Potter, 1988), (Also referred to as cultural memory (Hopper, 1988) or script formulations (Edwards, 1994)) displayed by the study participants within coherent organization patterns and the identity negotiation mechanisms that were used when they spoke of racism. The focus of this chapter is (a) to review the implications and usefulness of the discourse analysis approach for this study, (b) to establish the validity of discourse findings, (c) to contrast the procedures used by Essed (1988) and Louw-Potgieter (1989) with the procedures that I developed for my study, (d) to describe the data for my study, and (e) to present a sample of my coding procedures.

#### Discourse Analysis Method

The use of a discourse analysis perspective and method was appropriate for this study because discourse analysis with its specific application in the discursive psychology approach does not collapse categories, impose categories of individual attitudes, or view discourse solely as a means of

transmission of underlying beliefs. Rather, this approach recognizes the constructive and reconstructive aspect of discourse as well as its quality of mutual achievement. My choice of discourse analysis, then, implied particular procedures in order to build a case for a fuller understanding of the talk surrounding racism. In the following section, I am indebted to Fairclough (1992), Hopper (1988), Hopper, Koch, and Mandelbaum (1986), Jackson (1986), Jacobs (1986), Jacobs (1988), Potter and Wetherell (1987), and Tracy (1995), for their representation of discourse analysis and its procedures as they relate to this study.

#### Discourse Analysis Procedures

The procedures for accomplishing a discursive analysis are represented by Hopper et al. (1986) as making tape recordings, transcribing, analyzing the data, and writing a research report. The findings of discourse analysis are grounded in the recordings and transcriptions of discourse. The findings from the analysis phase are stated as claims and presented with transcript examples.

Fairclough (1992) offers a similar procedure. However, his representation of the best method includes further interviews to enhance the corpus as well as the addition of an expanded coding framework for analysis. The categories added by Fairclough are similar in scope to the categories included in this dissertation analysis through the use of

Preston's (1986) classifications.

Potter and Wetherell (1987) outlined the process of discourse analysis as encompassing ten stages: establishing research questions, using a sample selection, collecting material, interviewing, transcribing, coding, analyzing, validating, presenting the report, and applying the findings. Although more finely delineated than what was presented by Hopper et al. (1986), the processes are quite similar. In general, a discursive analysis involves repeatedly listening to interviews and reading transcripts of interviews to find regularities and differences in the data. Potter and Wetherell described this stage as cycling between analysis and open coding. That is, the researcher should use coding procedures that are as inclusive and descriptive as possible (Potter & Wetherell, 1987, p. 167). The next phase involved forming hypotheses about the functions and effects of the patterns in the data, followed up by a validation of the findings. Fairclough (1992), Hopper et al. (1986), and Potter and Wetherell (1987) pointed out that there is no correct way to proceed except through an attempt to do this type of analysis.

#### Validation of Discourse Findings

It would be productive, at this point, to discuss how claims about discourse findings can be validated. Potter and Wetherell (1987) suggest four analytic techniques which are available to validate the research findings. These are

achieved through researcher attention to coherence, participants' observation, new problems, and fruitfulness (see also Tracy, 1995).

Coherence is a display and analysis of the findings with an explanation for diverse examples. A researcher presents a set of analytic claims and data displays to demonstrate the functions of the specified discourse structures. Thus, there should be a coherence, visible to others, in that the data examples do not just illustrate the claim but are evidence of it (Jackson, 1986). One way to do this is through a close interaction between claims and examples.

Participants' observation is Potter and Wetherell's category for a researcher's awareness of a participant's interpretation of the discourse situation. Thus, if a researcher views a particular structure as a question, but the participant does not react as expected, the researcher must consider, as one possible analytic option, that the participant did not view it the same way as the researcher did.

The analytic technique of new problems refers to the observation that each discursive strategy may encumber new concerns which will need to be explained. For example, a particular phenomenon (such as conversation turn-taking) may be observed and can be explained only if another condition exists (such as a way to terminate conversations). Potter

and Wetherell suggested that the existence of such secondary explanations is supportive of primary claims. That is, when new concerns or contradictions arise they provide a validation of the primary analytic premise.

The fourth technique, fruitfulness, "refers to the scope of an analytic scheme to make sense of new kinds of discourse and to generate novel explanations" (p. 171). For Potter and Wetherell, studies augmenting previous work on the sequential nature of discourse and the use of interpretive repertoires provide new and novel explanations of discourse behavior. Fruitfulness is similar to analytic induction (Jackson, 1986; Jacobs, 1986) which involves being able to account for regularities or disparities in the research data in order to build a strong claim for specific explanations or structures.

Method for Jackson (1986) is more than a set of procedures. It is a way to build an argument for a claim in which analyses "demonstrate the correctness of what the analyst is claiming" (p. 133). In what Jacobs (1986) called "method of argument from example" (p. 433), five criteria are stated by which the strength of discourse claims can be evaluated. These are patterns of inference and coherence, paradigm cases, variety, participant accomplishments, and critical falsification (Jacobs, 1988, pp. 436-442)

The first evaluation method, patterns of inference and coherence, is similar to Potter and Wetherell's (1987)

coherence technique, where the discursive structural organization and meaningfulness of the data displays "make sense" (Jacobs, 1988, p. 436).

Second, based on the aforementioned patterns of inference and coherence, paradigm cases are used. Paradigm cases are clear-cut examples of the structure or meaningful achievement of the discourse that are presented to display clearly the properties being claimed. From these paradigm cases, the third evaluation technique, variations (what Jacobs calls "variety"), are presented for the initial claim such that what is being claimed is displayed in a variety of examples.

Fourth, participant accomplishment is similar in intent and scope to Potter and Wetherell's participant observation. In this evaluation of data, the researcher displays examples which demonstrate that the participant's interpretation of the situation is aligned with that of the researcher. The researcher proposes a particular organization pattern and the participants' use of this interpretation is evidence of mutual accomplishment.

Fifth, the analytic mode of critical falsification asks if the analyst has searched for possible counterexamples and if the analyst's findings can be replicated. Critical falsification is used as a way to validate whether a researcher's claim adequately represents the phenomena it purports to represent.

The use of paradigm cases, patterns of coherence and patterns of inference had particular significance for my study because of the emphasis of my research questions on identity concerns and patterns of coherent organization. The use of these analytic techniques validates research claims about discourse findings in the study data.

In the following section, I review the procedures Essed (1988) and Louw-Potgieter (1989) used to conduct their studies of racism and to obtain their reported results, then contrast them with the procedures I developed.

#### Procedures Of Other Researchers

##### Essed's Procedures

Essed's interviewees were 27 women in the United States and 28 in the Netherlands, who were selected through (a) referrals from interviewees, (b) referrals through Essed's personal contacts, and (c) referrals from Essed's professional contacts. Although Essed suggested that these bases for selection lead to a diversity of study participants, I believe that they also limited the type of participant that was included in the study. When participants referred other interviewees to the study or when personal contacts made referrals, it was generally because they knew that these persons had a story to tell and that all participants may have shared particular political or social constructions. Essed's biographical data on her interviewees suggested that most of the women in her study

had college degrees. Although this was not one of the bases for inclusion in her study, it does indicate a possible limitation in ideological diversity.

Essed used two investigative positions in the interviewing process. The first was conscious subjectivity (from Klein, 1983, p. 94 cited in Essed, 1991, p. 67). Conscious subjectivity encompasses being respectful of, showing genuine interest in, and giving serious consideration to the interviewees' accounts. Essed points out that she did not accept all participant accounts uncritically, but that her attitude of conscious subjectivity enabled her to ask questions and encourage further elaboration of specific details without arousing a defensive reaction from the interviewees.

The second technique Essed used was nondirective interviewing. In this type of interviewing, the interviewer encourages the study participant to speak about the topic at hand without undue direction or questioning. Essed described her nondirected interview technique as "encouraging the interviewee to talk about a given topic with a minimum of direct questioning or guidance" (p. 68). However, Essed's goal was to discover and compare understandings of racism among Black women. Thus, she did have specific areas which she asked interviewees to respond to in order "to guarantee comparison between statements of different women..." (p. 68). Essed based her interviews on

five main "clusters of information" (p. 68), which included general perceptions of race relations and racism, perception of racial issues and racism in relation to socialization, personal and vicarious experiences of racism, perceptions of self in relation to other Blacks, and perceptions of self in relation to (Black) femininity. The use of nondirective interviewing with specific areas of questioning appears contradictory and may have limited the type of data which Essed's informants discussed (see Verkuyten, de Jong, and Masson, 1994, for a discussion of possible interviewer effects in racism discourse studies). Essed appears to have assumed that her study participants shared common cultural knowledge and understood that the interview process differentiates the roles and the power of each of the interview participants. The interview process implies that the interviewer has the power to initiate the interview, ask questions, and control the direction of the interview. To add specific areas of questioning increases the power of the interviewer and may limit the type of data presented in the interview to what the interviewee believes the interviewer is seeking.

Next, Essed applied her five narrative categories to frame her data and used the resulting data in conjunction with her definitions of racism to establish the validity of her findings. The processes of analytic induction and falsification are described by Hopper as the "testing [of]

descriptions against the details of each new instance" (1988, p. 56). Briefly, Essed's validity for her findings develops from the adequacy of her definition of racism to account for all her informant data. Reliability was obtained through an intersubjective comparison of experiences for consistency.

#### Louw-Potgieter's Procedures

Essed's methods and findings were replicated by Louw-Potgieter (1989), who found that similar instantiations of racism (powerlessness and resignation) occurred within a university context in South Africa. Louw-Potgieter's goal was to establish the existence of racism on the University of Natal campus. Louw-Potgieter supported his contention that although racism may be frowned upon in South African universities, it still occurs. In order to establish the existence of racism, he asked his students to ask friends and family members if they had ever experienced racial discrimination.

Louw-Potgieter (1989) gave his interviewers the following directions:

The interview should be the interviewee's construction of his/her experience of a racist event, therefore, the interviewer should interrupt and distract as little as possible. It is suggested that the interview be started with the comment: "Have you ever experienced racist discrimination here on campus? If so, please

tell me about it in as much detail as possible." (p. 311)

Next, Louw-Potgieter applied Essed's framework to establish the coherence and argumentation presented by the informants and to organize the interviews by the categories of actors who perpetuated acts of racism. Louw-Potgieter found that in the university setting, actors such as lecturers, fellow students and university residence staff were perceived to have committed acts of racism, as reported by the participants in his study. Louw-Potgieter's conclusions were that Black students felt powerlessness and resignation because of three existing conditions: the difficulty in confronting covert racism directly, the belief that racism by Whites is an inevitable condition in South Africa, and the fear of victimization (Louw-Potgieter, 1988, p. 57).

The studies by Essed and Louw-Potgieter, as well as my dissertation study, focused on the reports of those who believed they had been affected by racism. However, the stated purpose of each researcher was different. Essed's goal was to examine the understanding of racism as it occurred and affected Black women in the Netherlands and the United States. The purpose of Louw-Potgieter's study was to establish the existence of racism on South African university campuses through an examination of coherent justifications and argumentation used in informant

discourse. The purpose of my study was to examine how identities are negotiated by those who had been stigmatized by race and how these explanations were organized to present a coherent account. The methods used by both Essed and Louw-Potgieter informed the procedures I implemented. In the following section, I discuss my specific procedures and how the previous discussions apply to this study.

#### Procedures of this Study

In order to analyze and interpret the everyday explanations about racism from the perspective of those affected, the research project must be designed to provide a way to identify racist evaluations as expressed by the respondents. The previous research lines suggest that what would best inform this study is a qualitative method that: (a) does not unnecessarily reduce data, (b) focuses on the discourse of participants as valuable and knowledgeable, and (c) does not emphasize the underlying intentions or agency of the other interactants in the reported events.

The use of discourse analysis procedures and nondirected interview techniques produced a body of data that addressed the above three standards as well as goals of this study. In the next section, I outline my criteria for selecting participants into this study.

#### Selection Criteria for Interviewees

The participants in this study were persons (a) who had self-selected themselves for these interviews and had

directly experienced events that they perceived as racist, (b) who were United States citizens or permanent residents, and (c) who were enrolled in greater Seattle area colleges.

Self-selection. As I mentioned earlier, I believed that Essed may have limited the scope of her data by relying too heavily on referrals from other interviewees and personal contacts. To overcome this limitation, I considered only participants who self-selected themselves for this study. The subject of racism is perceived as negative and distressing by those who have experienced it (Essed, 1991; Louw-Potgieter, 1988). In recounting racist incidents during an interview, I believe that the participants must be willing to restigmatize themselves and re-experience an unpleasant or unfavorable personal event with an interviewer.

By using self-selection as a criterion, I believed that the participants chose to share their stories with me and that each participant came with a particular story that problematized racism in specific ways. This component of my data collection method affirmed the contention (Potter and Wetherell, 1988) that culturally available group resources are used in discourse. Each study participant had problematized racism in a particular way and had constructed a narrative that emphasized and supported his or her interpretation of racism. Further, it can be assumed that the study participants were assured that I had also

problematized race.

A second benefit of using the self-selection criterion, was the confidence it gave me that the study participants understood the norms of the interview situation. Only one interview participant made a further comment about the process. The comment, "...and spill my guts out?" (interview 6), indicated that this participant was reconfirming the expectation of the interview sequence. No other participants requested further clarification of the interview process or sequence. In summary, the use of self-selection as a criterion enhanced the study data by assuring that the participants (a) had knowledge of the interview process and behavior sequence expectations, (b) had problematized racism, and (c) were willing to restigmatize themselves in the reconstruction of discriminatory events.

Citizenship or permanent resident status. A second criterion was United States citizenship or permanent resident status. This selection basis was used to ensure that participants shared common social and interpretive knowledge. Unlike the racial limitations of the studies by Essed and Louw-Potgieter, I was interested in the discourse repertoires of those who believed that they had been affected by racism and how these experiences were displayed in the interviewees' narrative discourse. Thus, I did not limit participants on the basis of race. If the interview participants believed that they had a racist event to share

and if they fulfilled the other criteria, they were included in the study regardless of their self-ascribed race.

College enrollment. Essed's study was not limited to Black women with college degrees, however, all of her informants were students or possessed at least an equivalent of a Bachelor of Arts degree. I also chose enrollment in a college or university as a criterion because "critical skills of reflection and communication usually increase with more and higher levels of education" (Essed, 1991, p. 101). A second reason for limiting this study to college students was related to Human Subjects guidelines (see Appendix D) of the University of Washington. These guidelines did not allow minors to participate in my study.

In summary, the three criteria for interviewees were (a) self-selection into the study and direct experience with the racist event being described, (b) United States citizenship or permanent resident status and (c) college enrollment. In the next section, I describe my recruitment process and contrast it with those employed by Louw-Potgieter and Essed.

#### Recruitment Procedure

In order to recruit informants, I asked faculty members from various divisions within Seattle-area community colleges and a university to read a short statement asking students who believed that they had experienced racial or ethnic discrimination to participate in an interview-based

research study. I placed a similar notice in a student newspaper, on student activity bulletin boards, and in multicultural student offices on some campuses. I received fifteen responses. Most of the respondents were unknown to me. However, two respondents were former students and two had been introduced to me prior to the interviews. I did not personally recruit any of the respondents. The following section elaborates what procedure I followed once I received an interested response.

#### Interview Procedure

When interested persons responded to the recruitment notice, I informed them of the general procedure for the interview and the purposes of the study. If they were still interested in participating, an appointment was made for the interview. At the beginning of each interview, I asked each participant to sign a consent form and to fill out an interview information sheet which asked for personal information such as name, age, date of birth, educational background, and employment or career goals. These forms are displayed in Appendix B.

One of the questions on the interview information form asked study participants to describe their ethnicity. Racial designation categories, such as those which appear on government census or employer reporting forms, may actually be categories of national origin and do not necessarily reflect racial or ethnic orientation. Because of this

difference, the informants were asked to self-designate or self-label their race or ethnicity. Their varied and descriptive responses are shared in the Participant Characteristics part of the Corpus of Data section of this chapter.

I employed Essed's technique of "conscious subjectivity" and began each interview by introducing myself and sharing some personal information such as education goals, interests, hobbies, and recreational activities with the interviewee. In all cases, the interviewee and I were able to find several overlapping areas of common interest. I wanted the informant to feel at ease. Although I still retained the role of interviewer, the informants were told that I would listen to their stories (Essed, 1991, p. 67). I also used the listener guidelines suggested by Polanyi (1985), which include agreeing to hear the narrative, not taking a turn except to make supportive remarks, and demonstrating an understanding of the teller's point. In addition, I tried to present supportive behaviors that indicated I would respect their point of view and not challenge the identity they were sharing with me. I recognized that my prior knowledge of some of the participants, my role of interviewer, my race, and my gender may have had an effect on the interviewees level of comfort. However, I could not control or be aware of all the factors which might have impinged on the interview context. Thus, I

was aware that there were possible external influences on the interview situation.

After the introduction phase, I read a statement to the study participant that confirmed the general procedures of the interview and the motivation for the research. Using the interview format suggested by Louw-Potgieter (1989), I began the section of the interview that was relevant to the study with the comment: "Have you ever had an experience which could be interpreted as racial or ethnic discrimination during or since your high school days, particularly in an academic setting? If so, please tell me about it in as much detail as possible." The above question and previous talk was important in establishing the reference frame for the question and its answer.

The nondirected interview, as used by both Essed and Louw-Potgieter, was employed here. However, I did not have a list of specified, formal questions which I needed to ask of all participants nor did I direct the interviewees to answer specific questions. I allowed the participants to proceed at their own pace and to construct their own narrative in response to the original question.

This interview style was useful in eliciting oral reconstructions of acts the speakers had experienced as racist. At times, I asked for clarification and gave supportive and encouraging comments for the interviewee to continue. I believe that because each interviewee

voluntarily came in response to the notice about the study, each had problematized racism and had constructed a response to my original question concerning ethnic or racial discrimination particularly in academic settings. The nondirected interview permitted respondents to share their perspectives, to organize their own narratives with minimal influence from the interviewer, to proceed at their own pace, and to construct a personal narrative in response to question prompt.

Following each interview session, I completed the interview log sheet and began transcribing the interview. This process is described next.

#### Transcription Procedure

Each interview was transcribed by two transcribers. The use of two transcribers forced each of the transcribers to be able to justify the representation of difficult sections and also served as a confirmation of what was understood to have occurred during the interview. When I found a section that was interesting, a claim could be tested in a preliminary step with the second transcriber.

Because the goal of this project was to examine how stigmatized identities and breached social expectations were negotiated in the reconstruction narrative and how these explanations were organized to present a coherent account that supported an informant's claim of racism, detailed transcriptions were not necessary. A transcription system

which preserved temporal placement of reconstructed events and some inflection features was needed. Thus, I used a modified version of the transcription notation proposed by Atkinson and Heritage (1984) was used which preserved stops, pauses, participant interaction overlaps, and some inflection features. The notation symbols that were used are displayed in Appendix A.

The transcription phase ran concurrently with my coding procedure for an initial analysis. That is, I continued to transcribe interviews while coding previous ones using the frameworks presented by Essed (1988) and Preston (1986). The transcribed interviews comprised the body of my data.

#### Corpus of Data

The aforementioned recruitment, selection, and interview procedures produced fifteen (nine female and six male) participants who were willing to share their perceptions of racism. Only fourteen of these interviews were included as part of data for this study because one of the interview participants did not fulfill the selection criteria. During the course of the interview, it became apparent that the racist incident that was recounted did not happen directly to the participant. Although the interview participant had been peripherally affected by the incident and was very disturbed by what she perceived as racial discrimination and injustice, she had no direct involvement with the precipitating event.

During their interviews, these fourteen participants produced narrative explanations concerning racist incidents that they had directly experienced. My research questions focused on the discourse structures used by the participants in their explanatory narratives (a) to explain and resolve breached social expectations and a problematized racial identity and (b) to meet a criteria of believability and veracity for an audience. Thus, the transcriptions of these interviews comprised the corpus of data for this study. Next, I present a descriptive characterization of my data and my study participants.

#### Characteristics of my Data

The study participants' interviews were transcribed using a variation of the notation system presented by Atkinson and Heritage (1984). As I explained earlier, the focus of my research questions did not require highly detailed transcripts. It was more useful to preserve the placement of discourse constructions used by the interviewees.

The interviews ranged in length from fifteen minutes to approximately 45 minutes. A sample interview, interview 10 is displayed in Appendix C. Although each line of the interview is numbered, I found that it was more productive to use Essed's categories to refer to specific discourse constructions. Thus, the data for this study were comprised of fourteen interviews and their transcripts which were

subsequently coded using two frameworks. An example of the coding procedure will be discussed later in this chapter. In the next section, I describe three pertinent characteristics of the study's participants.

### Participant Characteristics

As part of the interview process, I requested that each participant fill out an interview information form (see Appendix B). Three questions seem particularly pertinent to the data collected for this study: (a) a participant's citizenship, (b) a participant's self-described ability with American English, and (c) a participant's self-described ethnicity.

Questions (a) and (b) were asked in order to provide consistency in the data. As was specified in the rationale section of this report, these two selection criteria relate to the interpretative repertoires in experience and discourse of the participants (Wetherell & Potter, 1992). The fluent use and understanding of American English and the participant's American citizenship or permanent resident status were used to ensure common social and interpretive knowledge. The implied assumption is that discourse is produced by group members to be meaningful to other group members. Further, this meaningfulness is based on an understanding and successful member accomplishment of regularities in organization and structure, and conversational goals and purposes (Mills, 1940). The two

participant responses to citizenship and American English fluency, then, were useful indicators of a participant's understanding of certain social expectations and norms of behavior for both an in-group and an out-group membership.

Although all the study participants fulfilled these criteria, their responses to the category "citizenship" on the interview information sheet were varied. Three participants simply answered "yes" (interviews 2, 9, and 10). One interviewee wrote "born" (interview 12). Six participants stated "U.S." or "U.S.A." (interviews 4, 5, 6, 11, 13, and 15). Two participants wrote "American" (interviews 7 and 8). One interviewee answered "U.S./Hungarian" (interview 3). Two participants responded with "permanent resident" (interviews 1 and 14).

In response to the question of American English language ability, eight participants responded with "fluent" (interviews 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 11, 12, and 15). Four participants answered this question with the response "mostly fluent" (interviews 1, 4, 10, and 14). Interview 10 responded with "fluent--with style". Participant 9 answered "OK". The participant in interview 13 replied "native-like".

As varied as these participant responses were, these answers indicated that the interviewees shared common social and interpretive knowledge. This shared social knowledge and understanding of norms of behavior, social expectations, and discourse goals in membership accomplishment were used

to ensure consistency in the data. As I stated on page 109, four of the interviewees were known to me prior to the interviews. The consistency of their responses suggests that they were not unduly affected by their prior knowledge of the researcher. That is, their responses displayed similar social knowledge and a similar understanding of the norms for membership accomplishment of the interviews to that of the participants who were unknown to me.

Another question on the interview information form referred to the participant's self-characterized ethnicity. One of the rationale for this study focused on the race limitation imposed by both Essed (1988) and Louw-Potgieter (1989). I did not want to impose either my own racial designations or that of other government agencies (for example, the census categories) on the study participants. The question was "How would you describe your ethnicity." The responses were as varied as those for the citizenship question. Each participant had a unique self-characterized description of his or her ethnicity. In the following self-descriptions, I have preserved the participants' original spelling and punctuation of their ethnicity. The ethnicity designations were: "semi Korean semi American" (interview 1), "Asian/Hispanic" (interview 2), "Hungarian" (interview 3), "Indian" (interview 4), "Filipino Spanish Oriental/Asian" (interview 5), "Vietnamese" (interview 6), "American White" (interview 7), "White" (interview 8), "1/2

Athabaskan German Italian Russian" (interview 9), "Cambodian" (interview 10), "WAS" (interview 11), "Black" (interview 12), "Korean American" (interview 13), "Asian American" (interview 14), and "Hispanic" (interview 15). These self-described designations are different from those generally used by other racism researchers. The descriptions are more detailed, do not seem to be limited to race, and use nationality designations to describe ethnicity. Further, these descriptions appear to indicate that some participants were affected by more than one ethnic influence ("semi Korean semi American", for example) or that some interviewees recognized the mutual influence of both in-group and out-group memberships. That is, their physically identifiable traits existed within the larger social context (Asian American or Korean American, for example).

The variety of responses to these three questions is an indication that racism is problematized across a larger spectrum of ethnic and racial concerns than is indicated by previous racism studies. Although, much racism research has focused on the White and Black patterns of discrimination, the participant responses in this study suggest that race has been problematized by other groups as well.

In summary, these fourteen interviews represented the narratives of participants who had problematized race and were willing to share their perceptions with an interviewer.

However, these fourteen interviews do not compare favorably to the approximately sixty interviews conducted by Louw-Potgieter's students or the fifty-five interviews examined by Essed. Nonetheless, it is a sufficient number to explore and describe the construction of narratives about racist incidents. The display of paradigm cases and exemplars (Hopper, 1988) of the discourse pattern being examined, and the use of coherent inferences, make it unnecessary to examine a vast number of cases. Potter and Wetherell (1987) stated that

because one is interested in language use rather than the people generating the language and because a large number of linguistic patterns are likely to emerge from a few people, small samples or a few interviews are generally quite adequate for investigating an interesting and practically important range of phenomena. (p. 161)

Hopper echoed this with "conversation analysts may not express concern with sample size, but instead may stress descriptive specification of a phenomenon" (1988, p. 57). Hopper further stated that the most compelling evidence or exemplar was naturally occurring speech because "somebody who spoke the language actually said these things..." (p. 53). Hopper implied that what was naturally produced is based in cultural memory or social repertoires which is displayed in natural discourse. Thus, the fourteen

participants in this study produced natural discourse which presented their insights into the perpetuation of racism.

In the next section, I present an explanation of Preston's (1986) coding categories and the usefulness of both Preston's and Essed's (1988) frameworks for this study.

### Coding Procedure

I followed the procedural steps proposed by both Hopper, Mandelbaum, and Koch (1986) and Potter and Wetherell (1987). Following the interview and transcription steps, I listened repeatedly to the audiotapes of the interviews and read their transcriptions. Next, I noted areas of interest and began to categorize them according to their similarity. In the initial phases of analysis, I used Essed's five categories of context, complication, argumentation, evaluation, and decision as well as sections of Preston's (1986) participant and interaction categories to frame the interview remarks of the study participants. Preston (1986) suggested at least fifty categories for language variation and grouped these into four major headings: participant, interaction, code, and realization. Preston suggested that these categories be used to analyze the variation in language use in speech events. I found Preston's participant and code categories to be useful in my analysis because they provided an organizing framework without being prescriptive.

Preston's participant category includes both ascribed

and acquired characteristics. The characteristics listed below are not exhaustive, but they are provided as an example of the scheme's usefulness. Preston's ascribed characteristics include age, sex, nativeness, and ethnicity. Although his categories reflect language variation, I used them as an analysis frame for both the interview and reconstruction discourse. For example, the misascribed identity of nativeness or ethnicity was the point of contact for racist encounters that were described by some of the participants. I noticed this pattern in the interviews when I used Preston's categories to organize each narrative.

Preston's category of acquired characteristics suggests four areas of variation--roles, status, fluency, and specialization. The acquired characteristics within the role category were most salient in my analysis of my interviews. Preston described role as the "socially conditioned and identified aspects of behavior which can best be thought of as 'being an X' and which 'overlap with other aspects of physical and/or professional relationships'" (Preston, 1986, p. 14). I used this category to examine the participants' language in the interview context and the language they represented in their reconstructions for congruency with the speakers' expectations of those roles.

Preston's interaction category includes setting, situation, topic, relation, and function. The category of

setting information answers questions of time, place, length and size of interaction. Preston defined the situation category as a "set of culturally labeled activities not directly related to linguistic activity..." (1986, p. 19). For example, Essed's job interview excerpt might include statements about expectations for what constitutes a job interview. Preston's topic category is characterized by what is being talked about. This topic proved valuable in analyzing both the reconstruction and interview narratives. The next category, relation, asks if solidarity, network, and/or power differences between the participants are evident. The final category which was used in this study is function, which categorizes the ostensible and actual reasons for the speech event.

The use of Preston's categories as well as those developed by Essed as a coding and analysis frame for the interview narratives was effective. These categories were used in coding both the verbal reconstruction of the racist event as well as the interview discourse. By using these two frameworks, I noticed three areas of similarity developing among the interviewees' narratives.

Although Preston's scheme was developed to categorize language variation, the above categories worked well to capture additional components of the speech event being reconstructed by the respondents. Because racist events may involve power and group knowledge, an expansion of Essed's

context category was revealing. Beginning on page 42 of this document, several excerpts from Essed's 1988 study involving racism in job interview situations were presented. I will present these excerpts once again to illustrate what was further captured by the use of Preston's category of role and situation in an analysis of the reconstruction narrative. The interview participant stated, "She did not even say 'good morning'..." (Essed, 1988, p. 31), "You know, it wasn't like I wasn't dressed for the occasion..." (p. 32), and "The conversation we had was not businesslike at all..." (p. 32). Using Preston's role category, these quotes illustrate that the speaker was aware of what was expected in a job interview situation and how what actually occurred to her deviated from that expectation. The interviewee used her knowledge of both in-group and social norms in order to support her claim of an aberrant and racist event. For example, the female interviewer, in that role, was expected to say "good morning". The interviewee displayed her knowledge that the interview situation required certain types of dress and had appropriate topics for talk. Although some of these categories may seem self-evident, the use of these specified headings provided consistency and a more detailed description than was delineated in Essed's heuristic scheme (readers may want to compare the use of these two classifications with Fairclough, 1992).

In summary, the discursive psychology approach to discourse analysis is suggestive of a methodology of analysis and validation (Hopper, Koch & Mandelbaum, 1986; Potter & Wetherell, 1987). The participant selection criteria I used differed from those employed by Essed (1988) and Louw-Potgieter (1989) in three areas. I limited my participants to those who: (a) had directly experienced a racist event and were enrolled in college, (b) had United States citizenship or permanent resident status, (c) had self-selected themselves into the study. The frameworks I used to code and analyze the interview data also differed from those employed from Essed (1988) and Louw-Potgieter (1989). In addition to the framework suggested by Essed (1988), I utilized the categories proposed by Preston (1986). To summarize, I have discussed the recruitment and selection criteria for participants, and my coding procedures. Next, I present a sample of the coding process from my data, my analysis of the material organized within the two frameworks, and an analysis of the speaker's discourse goals and points of tension as they were represented in the interview.

#### An Example of the Coding Process

At this stage of coding and analysis, I tried to be as inclusive as possible. By this I mean that I did not eliminate coded data unnecessarily, but listened to interview tapes and read the interview transcripts

carefully. Not all categories proved to be equally fruitful or successful. However, by using the frameworks suggested by Essed (1988) and Preston (1986) I discerned three patterns used by the participants in their interviews.

After I transcribed the interviews, I used both frameworks to analyze the interview data. In this section, I present an interview, first, using Essed's categories followed by an analysis of the interaction. Then, I present the same interview coded with Preston's framework to illustrate the utility of using both frameworks.

The following excerpt from my own data illustrates the use of Essed's five narrative categories and is an example of the evaluation process which Essed stated informants use to evaluate the reasonableness of the charge of racism. This process is part of the evaluation category and can be recognized by the interviewee's suggestion of other possibilities--reasons other than race--for the breach of behavior or complication. The speaker in interview 10 demonstrated the evaluation process and category when she evaluated her experience in a department store against what she understood to be the social norm for that social context. All five of Essed's categories are illustrated in interview 10. In her interview, the study participant initially presented information (context category) to establish the background for the deviant complication which was then followed by the evaluation category (which detailed

the speaker's evaluation for her charge that this event was based on racial discrimination), and, finally, the argument and decision categories. Because of the length of the interview, I present only the informant's comments and, in doing so, have removed my own comments as well as some repetitions and filler comments made by the informant. The interview is presented here as it occurs in the actual time sequence with the narrative categories imposed.

#### Essed's Categories

##### (1) Context:

...well I went to a (g) department store...it's kinda discriminating. I went to a department store at the (store's name) - and I wanted to get my watch band, you know I want to buy it there...

##### (2) Complication (what is deviant in the situation):

but um there was this old man that. I was the only one there and he's just walking around, he would not help me, um and then I even um called - and he didn't, he just ignored and all of a sudden this white lady...women...came in and he just walk up to them and asked them if they need any help in finding anything and I was like, okay.

##### (3) Decision (Concluding statement about what happened)

So I felt like it was just unreal, you know,...

##### (4) Evaluation (why is this situation deviant):

...it's like it never happened to me before and that

was like the first time...

(5) Further explanation of the Evaluation:

- and - probably, you know, the way I dress it's not as sophisticated or - you know - not as professional type thing but um I just dress in my regular clothes, - you know, in jeans, shirt, t-shirts but maybe that's, - or maybe cause I'm Asian or, you know, - doesn't have the money to give 'em or something...

(6) Decision (informant's end result or concluding comments):

I don't know but - (i) it was really um intimidating.

(7) Further emphasis of the evaluation:

...I don't know how he looked at it but um - I think because - I just um - maybe cause I'm Asian

(8) Argumentation (justification of the evaluation):

I think because the way I dress is like normal, you know going to the store, I mean you don't dress, you know, uh going to the store anything, it's like, you know, a gangster or something, I don't dress like that bad but it's just normal clothes going to school, you know, just like (breath) - I think I think because - I don't know, I don't - because I don't wear any jewelries or ha ha - I don't have make-up on or maybe the way I look or - you know, sometimes refuse to, sometime people say refuse to help Asian or something,

you know, ethnic discrimination they want to help their kind, you know.

(9) Decision:

That was the hard part to accept...

(10) Argumentation:

... because it's like excuse me, you know, I was here like long, way longer than her you know, it (wa) it was really interesting -

(11) Further Clarification of the complication:

...but um I later on I tell the woman, she she came out, there was a woman came out and she asked can, you know, (t) if I need any help and I was like well that man was really rude, you know, and but but she didn't say anything though you know she she didn't even say sorry about that or something, I mean...

12) Argumentation:

...I don't know how I feel but at the time ((pause)) I think it was very polite of her to ask and help any way but well that's her job, you know but I didn't really get into, you know, why she didn't have to say sorry for him, I mean he, you know, - I ((5 second pause))...

(13) Decision:

I just feel really, you know, terrible, you know, I just, [(soft) ha ha] I just like oh you know buy all the things just to let him know that, you know, that I'm not a cheapskate or something, I don't know what

he's (loo), you know, judging me as...ya...Oh ya there is definitely.

(14) Argumentation (the informant repeats the context to emphasize the deviancy and uses the context to add to the justification of the claim):

I mean it was right there, you know, he'd show it. I mean instead of helping me, I was the only one there, you know, on the counter but - right in front of him too, cause you know how you stand, you go up - and you know how they place the they sell the watch band right in front of the counter? - by the cashier? - so he was right there and I was like okay (breath) ah so I was that's that's like one of the...

(15) Further expansion of the argumentation category using consensual information to support her interpretation:

Oh - um, well I don't know what the real story is about, you know, how to they think of Asian or something but um - one point I heard that um because of the Vietnam war - you know how they think of - you know Asian because their relative or something got killed at the Vietnam war or something - so some Americans discriminate against Asians because of that - um that's what I heard but I don't know - but I don't know - if it's really true because I never met a person that said oh you know I hate Vietnamese or something or something like that or Asian or but um - um one of my friends she

she's ya American and her parents ... she's Caucasian  
um one of her I mean her parents strictly told her that  
she's not allowed to go out with Asians, that she's  
allowed to have friends with them but not a boyfriend,  
boyfriends so and and she had to sneak out when she,  
you know, I somebody that's see that's that's the only  
one that I, you know - I heard from and she'd tell me  
directly that her um parent isn't um allow she could  
talk to a phone, you know, on the phone with them - but  
um she said that her family is strictly a White  
traditional family...

(end of excerpt from Interview #10)

Interview 10 illustrated the usefulness of Essed's categories for examining the story being told by a speaker. The five categories are context, complication, evaluation, argumentation, and decision. I will review these categories briefly. The context category presents information that establishes the circumstances of the event. Essed's complication category organizes the information of the precipitating event to be worthy of the telling as well as to emphasize the deviance and disruptiveness of the interaction for the interviewee. The evaluation section examines explanations of why this event was interpreted to be racist by providing supporting statements of expectations and consensual information. The argumentation category includes statements to justify the claim. The decision

category involves statements of the speaker's end result or resolution of the event. As illustrated in interview 10, these five categories serve to emphasize the point of tension and sources of argument for the speaker's narrative explanations of racist behavior.

### Preston's Framework

A second coding framework, a modification of the categories proposed by Preston (1986) was also used. Essed's categories proved useful for isolating parts of the narrative structure. Preston's framework, on the other hand, provided categories for emphasizing the function of discourse within a narrative explanation. The following is an example of how Preston's framework was used in conjunction with Essed's categories.

This excerpt is also focused on interview 10. I used Preston's framework to examine both the interview situation and the reported incidents of racism. This first section refers to the interview context.

### Interview Context

Name:	Interview #10
Age:	20
Gender:	Female
Nativeness:	Not necessarily an issue
Ethnicity:	Not an issue for this interview. Presumably this is part of the reason for the interviewee being present.

Cambodian-American, American citizenship

Role: Student and interviewee

Specialization: No

Status: No

Fluency: Informant describes herself as mostly  
fluent in American English

Place: Conference room at a college campus

Time: 11:00 am

Length of Interaction: Approximately 25 minutes

Size of Interaction: Interviewer and interviewee

Situation: Clearly set up as an interview

Topic: Racist incidents

Relation (solidarity, network, power) Both the  
interviewer and interviewee are Asian  
American. This may have an effect, but does  
not show up in solidarity language.

Tenor: Fairly formal. Neither interviewer nor  
interviewee was known to the other before the  
interview. The interviewer shared the  
purpose of the interview with the  
interviewee. Both parties discussed  
commuting to the school campuses. The  
interviewee shared her commuting experiences  
from Mill Creek to (name of university) which  
takes her two hours by bus. Both parties  
also discussed transferring from school to

school. As the interviewee filled out the form, there was some discussion about the last question on the form concerning goals and future employment.

Function: Ostensibly, an interview.

The first incident reported by the informant is stated in Essed's category sections 1 through 6 in the previous section. In the following display, Preston's categories are used to evaluate the function of the discourse structures in the reported incident.

Incident 1:

Who is involved? Salesclerk, interviewee (customer)

Gender: Salesclerk - male, customer - female

Roles: The interviewee is a customer wanting to buy a watchband. She expects to be helped at the sales counter. The salesclerk is expected to help her by making the sale.

Specialization: This is not apparent.

Status: This is not apparent in language. The interviewee does suggest that her dress may indicate that she is not wealthy.

Fluency: This is not an apparent problem.

Setting: Jewelry department of a department store.

Situation: There is an expectation that she, as a customer, would be helped and would be able to

purchase a watchband.

Topic: No verbal interaction, no visual recognition, no expected role interaction.

Relation: Power appears to reside with the male salesclerk because no sales transaction can take place without his recognition of the customer.

Function: To initiate a sales transaction, but there was no interaction. This was unexpected.

Tenor: Distant, formal

Evaluation: In sections 5 and 7 above, the interviewee suggested that her conventions of dress, her physically apparent ethnicity, or her lack of visible markers of wealth were potential causes of the male salesclerk's deviant behavior. However, her final conclusion, in section 8, is that her visible Asian appearance is responsible for the deviant behavior.

During the interview, the informant recreates the interaction with the female salesclerk in sections 11 through 13. Although this second interaction appears to be a second complication, I do not believe that it is a separate incidence of racism. I believe the interviewee used it in her narrative as a discourse strategy to increase the believability of her interpretation by reconstructing the first complication for the female salesclerk. There are three additional points of tension presented: the lack of

an apology, the job responsibilities of the salesclerk role, and the need to redeem a positive identity. Each of these are social frame expectations which strengthen the interviewee's veracity as a reasonable and knowledgeable evaluator of the event. The following is an analysis of the second incident.

Who is involved? Salesclerk, interviewee

Gender: Salesclerk-female, interviewee-female

Roles: The interviewee is still waiting to make a purchase

Specialization: None

Status: This is not apparent in the language, but the interviewee has already suggested that dress and her physically recognizable racial characteristics may be part of the complication.

Fluency: This is not a factor

Setting: Department store jewelry department

Situation: The interviewee is still waiting to be helped and to make a purchase. There is an expectation of being helped by the salesclerk (role expectation), but there are additional factors: the interviewee makes a complaint to the second sales clerk with the expectation of some kind of repair (apology) for the male salesclerk's violation (being

ignored by him, for example), the need for a positive identity, and the interviewee's understanding of what responsibilities are included in a salesclerk's role.

**Topic:** The interviewee's complaint about the male salesclerk's behavior, a role rationalization for the woman's behavior and her lack of comment about the male salesclerk's behavior, and purchasing other items to have a positive identity.

**Relation:** The interviewee makes a complaint to the female salesclerk after the salesclerk approached her. The female salesclerk's lack of comment may indicate role solidarity with the male salesclerk or ideological solidarity with the male salesclerk's behavior toward the informant. The making of a complaint by the interviewee may indicate a customer's power to complain or, alternately, may be seen as making an appeal of wrong doing to someone in power.

**Function:** This reconstruction gives further explanation of the complication. Within the incident, this reconstruction functions as a complaint of the speaker's treatment as she tried to buy a watch band. Within the interview, it functions as an argument to further the believability of the interviewee's evaluation that this was not

acceptable salesclerk role behavior.

Tenor: The tenor of this interaction is impersonal because there was no recognition of her complaint. However, there was contact with the female salesclerk which was in contrast to the interviewee's lack of interaction with the male salesclerk.

Complication: The interviewee complained about the male salesclerk's behavior, but her complaint was not acknowledged to her satisfaction. By framing a complaint, the interviewee must admit that she was the recipient of rude behavior. This admission is an additional stigmatization of her identity.

Evaluation: The point of tension appears to be that her complaint was not handled satisfactorily and not necessarily racism. The interviewee stated her expectation when she said: "...but she didn't say anything though - you know she she didn't even say sorry about that or something, I mean..." (section 11).

Argumentation: The interviewee initially described the female salesclerk's behavior as solicitous when she said: "I think it was very polite of her to ask and help any way..." (section 2). Then, the interviewee used the justification statement of her understanding of the female salesclerk's job expectations in the following statement: "...but well that's her job..."

(section 12). The interviewee used social knowledge to make a complaint that this behavior was nothing out of the ordinary and did not relieve the salesclerk from culpability in this context.

The use of two frameworks served to focus my attention on both the narrative structures and discourse functions of the interviewee's construction. The use of Preston's framework emphasized the use of power and relationships between the interactants in the reconstruction as well as in the present interview situation. I used these frameworks, then, to discern the construction and function of an interviewee's everyday explanation, to notice the similarity among the interviews in particular categories, and to make notes concerning similarities in observation or theoretical application.

It is not surprising that three of Essed's categories, those of complication, evaluation, and argumentation, proved to be particularly fruitful in demonstrating a study participant's use of discourse structures for the purpose of increasing the believability of that participant's claim. I present an analysis of these for interview 10 in the following section.

#### Discourse Goals and Points of Tension

The complication, evaluation, and argumentation categories establish the deviance of the situation, the process for a racist interpretation, and the justification

and support for both the interpretation of deviance and the interpretation of racism. The interviewee's narrative indicated that there were two goals for presenting her explanatory narrative: (a) to establish a believable identity by resolving her breached social expectations and identity stigmatizations and (b) to ensure that interpretation of the event was worthy of being believed. In order to accomplish these two goals, the interviewee used her knowledge of social norms to support her interpretation that this event was racist and her knowledge of discourse choices to increase the believability of her narrative.

#### Complication Category

Interviewee 10 was at a jewelry counter of a department store to purchase a watch band and she established the ordinariness of this situation in the context category. The pedestrian quality of this situation was in contrast to what followed in the complication category. The interviewee established the tension of the context by stressing the difference between what was expected of the situation with the unexpected deviance of the salesclerk's behavior. This tension makes the event worthy of being retold. That is, the interviewee established that this encounter was sufficiently deviant as to be retold in an interview concerned with racist incidents. By stating that "he's just walking around" (section 2) and that she "even called and he didn't, he just ignored" (section 2), the speaker increased

the deviance of the social breach. These discourse choices heighten the compelling justification for the interviewee's later interpretation of this event as being racist.

The deviance of the situation was further established when the speaker provided a contrast in the salesclerk's behavior with customers who appeared after the speaker did. Essed's proposition is that explanations like these are constructed in response to some type of difficulty or deviant occurrence. That is, there is some tension which is addressed through discourse (Antaki, 1981, 1988; Draper, 1988; Essed, 1988, 1990, 1991; Kress, 1989; Scott and Lyman, 1968, 1970). The tension in this situation comes from two complications in section 2 of the above transcript: (a) the breach of social expectations in the situation and (b) the lack of recognition that results from an absence of identity. These points of tension are further explained below.

Breached social expectations. The first complication occurred when the interviewee's co-occurrence expectations (Gumperz, 1982) were not accomplished to the satisfaction of the interviewee. The interviewee used her understanding of the norms of behavior in the jewelry store context to suggest that her interpretation of this incident was worthy of the telling and that this was a racist event. Her expectations were that as the only customer present, she should have been waited upon by the salesclerk who

apparently did not have anything to do at the time of the incident; that the first customer to appear should be the first one served; and that part of the salesclerk's job should be to recognize a customer particularly if the customer does not exhibit any extraordinary behavior. These three expectations exhibited the speaker's greater social knowledge, increased her credibility as a reasonable speaker and enhanced the justification that her interpretation is believable. These discourse choices, then, support the speaker's claims as reasonable and believable. However, the speaker must still be perceived as reasonable. She has already overcome part of her stigmatized identity by demonstrating her knowledge of appropriate social norms.

Stigmatized identity. The initial complication points to a violation of an expected norm of behavior based on race which the speaker explains in sections 4, 5, 7, and 8 above. However, beyond the initial absence of recognition and equal service on the part of the salesclerk, the speaker's point for her narrative is her lack of identity. She was not seen or recognized by the male salesclerk. She stood in front of him, even spoke to him, and was still ignored. This further compounded the egregiousness of the situation. Not only was the informant treated unfairly, she believed that she was not even worthy of recognition. Her customer identity, the identity the interviewee chose in the customer-salesclerk situation, was not recognized and only her racial appearance

identity was made salient. These two points of tension or complications are what brought the speaker to share her experience within the interview context. Within the interview, the speaker was able to assert the rationality of her customer identity as the legitimizing role for her complaint. That is, rather than frame her argument as race-based, she used the larger frame of the customer-salesclerk context. Her argument becomes one based on the audience bringing similar knowledge to the event in that if the listener agrees with the social norms, the listener must also agree that there was a breach. In this way, speaker 10 constructed both a reasonable identity as well as a believable argument.

The following category is used by the interviewee to emphasize the process that she used to reach the conclusion that this event was racist.

#### Evaluation Category

The speaker in Interview 10 continued with the evaluation category in sections 4, 5, and 7 of the displayed interview. The evaluation procedure proposed by Essed begins with the question of acceptability. In section 4, the speaker stated that this is the first time she had encountered behavior like this and the incident was not acceptable to her. She continued by searching for other acceptable excuses for the male salesclerk's behavior. She believed her clothes were normal and invoked a comparison of

this event with a larger social knowledge as a warrant for her belief (section 8). The interviewee settled on her Asian ethnicity, and its attendant stereotype of not having money, as being the probable cause for her treatment (section 7 above). As indicated in Essed's process, the next step is the speaker's evaluation of other acceptable excuses for this specific incident. Interviewee 10 did make further evaluation suggestions in section 8 such as her lack of jewelry or make up. She finally concludes that "maybe the way I look" could be part of the reason.

#### Argument Category

Essed's argument category includes information which supports the evaluation that this incident was racist. It may include both individual and social comparisons as well as confirmation of the evaluation from others within or without the informant's group. Essed proposes seven possible sources of consistency and consensus support such as in-group and out-group knowledge of norms of behavior, confirmation of the racist interpretation by the agent of action or other group members, previous personal experiences in similar situations or with a similar agent of action, and/or a deviance or "dissimilarity of perceived or expected actions" (Essed, 1991, p. 131).

In this interview, the interviewee used her knowledge of social norms of behavior for customer and salesclerk roles to provide the comparison for her own treatment and to

support the believability of her interpretation. The interviewee compared her department store event to both general social norms as well as the specific treatment of White customers to support her evaluation of racism.

Furthermore, the interviewee added her knowledge of the responsibilities of a salesclerk's job and how this contributed her evaluation. Neither salesclerk behaved according to the co-occurrence expectations of the situation. First, the interviewee described the male salesclerk's lack of recognition of her as "intimidating" (section 6). Next, the female salesclerk was solicitous, but did not attempt to repair the violation of the male salesclerk. The interviewee stated that it was "polite of her to ask and help" but then negated this effect by stating that "well that's her job" (section 13). The interviewee used her knowledge of the expected and acceptable role behaviors to support her interpretation of racism.

Part of this interviewee's interpretative repertoire is constructed around the figures of White, American and salesclerk in contrast to Asian, Vietnamese, and customer. This contrast warrants the speaker's interpretation of the situation and bolsters her argument that her interpretation is justified. Furthermore, her claim is bolstered by the contrast between commonly understood frame expectations and the violations which occurred in her specific case.

Interviewee 10 also used the frame expectations of her

customer role to support her reasonable speaker identity. She used two discourse modes to renegotiate the negative stigmatization of the event. Her first identity repair occurred when she described her encounter at the department store as "kinda discriminating" (section 1). Although this evaluation was reached following an extensive elimination process, she appeared reluctant and tentative to state her conclusion of a spoiled identity. This reluctance may appear to be a tolerance for racist actions. However, I believe that the need for a positive self-presentation within the interview context in which the interviewee may be unfamiliar with the interviewer's understanding of the situation or the interviewer's ideology, may be an influence in this discourse choice.

The second repair attempt occurred when the speaker undertook actions which would restore her identity in both the present and past (the interview and the racist event). Her comment "just to let him know that, you know, that I'm not a cheapskate..." (section 13) appeared to be constructed to have three effects: (a) to create a positive identity of her in reaction to the male salesclerk's negative response, (b) to create a positive identity of her for the interviewer, and (c) to share what actions (decisions) occurred as a result of the racist complication.

In summary, the reality of interviewee 10's interpretation is increased through the use of consensual

information from social norms and corroboration from personal sources. Furthermore, Interviewee 10 renegotiated her identity to demonstrate that she was more knowledgeable and powerful than the department store event would indicate and, thus, was a reliable evaluator of the event.

Both Essed's evaluation process and organizing categories are illustrated in this example. The categories are used to uncover the underlying coherence of this interviewee's justification for the charge of racism. The organizing categories permit researchers to examine the justification arguments used by an interviewee in composing a narrative for the interview.

As the excerpts from Interview 10 demonstrated, the underlying warrants or group resources were revealed through the discursive interpretive strategies used by the interviewee. The narrative categories mentioned in the previous section were useful to focus attention on the organization the speaker used to enhance both the comprehension of and interest in the event. The interviewee reconstructed the deviant event to fulfill the requirements of the interview and interviewer. Thus, in Interview 10, the informant appealed to what she believed were understandable arguments to the listener such as the norm of the first customer should be served first and the norms of behavior for the role of a salesclerk in a department store, and the legitimizing roles of customer, Vietnamese and Asian

in contrast to White, American, salesclerk to justify the credibility of her claim. Goffman (1974) stated that "the activity type does not determine meaning but simply constrains interpretations by channeling inferences so as to...make relevant certain aspects ...and underplay others" (p. 131). The informant's justification lines are effective only if they are understandable to the interviewer and, thus, are based on an assumption of a common understanding of the context frames, its roles, and expectations. Further, the informant has chosen discursive constructions to support her perspective, to undermine the discourse of the White American in-group, to constitute her identity in a more positive light, and present her reality against that of the male salesclerk (Wetherell & Potter, 1992).

Interview 10 was representative of all of the interviews in that three patterns emerged from this coding and initial analysis phase. These patterns were: (a) the participants used an account sequence to describe racist and covert racist events that differed from the standard account sequence formulation in that it emphasized the stigmatization of the speaker; (b) the study participants' interview narrative explanations were concerned with rectifying the breach of social expectations and their stigmatized identities which occurred as a result of the racist event; (c) the participants employed a discursive organizational construction in which they used a single

episode or premise to organize their narratives and, then, presented additional examples of racist incidents to support that initiating event. These patterns and goals suggested a research generalization that the interviewees had an overall discourse organization design to establish the premise that reasonable speakers make reasonable claims.

#### Research Generalization

In order to account for all the patterns previously presented, I generalized that the interviewees used the aforementioned constructions to develop their argument that reasonable speakers make reasonable claims. That is, if the speakers established that their identities are reasonable and rational, these identities were further support that their claims were reasonable. The veracity of the speakers' claims of racism, then, depended upon positive speaker identities and use of reasonable evaluations and evidence. My support of this generalization is presented in the next chapter.

#### Summary

The discursive psychological approach suggested my methodology for this study. The interviewees in this study were participants who had directly experienced a racist event, were enrolled in college, had United States citizenship or permanent resident status, and had self-selected themselves into the study. I followed consistent interview procedures and transcribed the interviews using a

variation of the notation system presented by Atkinson and Heritage (1984). Next, I used the categories proposed by Essed (1988) and Preston (1986) to examine the corpus of data for patterns and areas of consistency. A sample of the coding and analysis from my data, interview 10, was presented. Interview 10 demonstrated the discourse goals of the interviewee included explaining and resolving breached social expectations and a stigmatized identity as well as supporting the interviewee's interpretation that the event was worthy of being told and believed.

In the next chapter, I present my findings and support for the generalization that the interview speakers used specific discourse constructions, such as accentuating positive speaker identity, to fulfill a goal of assuring the believability of their narratives

## CHAPTER FIVE

### Results

The research goal of this study was to answer two research questions:

1. What discourse constructions are used by persons A to explain and resolve perceived breached social expectations and problematized racial identities in the described narrative situations?
2. What discursive modes are used by persons A in their narratives to construct a believable and reasonable narrative for an audience?

As I argued in the analysis of interview 10 in the previous chapter, racism was perceived to occur when one part of an interactant's identity was made problematic by another actor in the social situation. This paradigm case demonstrated that, regardless of whether cultural, individual, or institutional influences shaped the behavior of the interactants, at the moment of personal contact, racism was perceived as a negative reaction to one part of the speaker's identity.

In all fourteen interviews, the one predominant discourse organization pattern or one essential characteristic of every interview was the use of an argument based on the premise that reasonable speakers make reasonable claims. This premise was supported by the underlying argument that if it is proved that the speaker is reasonable, then the speaker's claim is also reasonable.

This organization was supported by three discursive patterns: (a) the participants used an account sequence to describe racist and covert racist events that differed from the standard account sequence formulation in that it emphasized the stigmatization of the speaker; (b) the participants' interview narrative explanations were concerned with rectifying the perceived breach of social expectations and their stigmatized identities which occurred as a result of the racist event; and, (c) the participants employed a discursive organization pattern in which they used a single episode or premise to organize their narratives and, then, presented additional examples of racist incidents to support that initial episode or premise. These three patterns account for the speakers' goal of creating a reasonable speaker identity which is part of the foundation of a reasonable and believable claim of racism.

The following sections detail the findings to my research questions. Based on the discursive patterns I observed and the argument premise of each narrative, I answer RQ1 by demonstrating that speakers formulated and supported reasonable identities in order to accomplish two goals: to construct normal (not deviant) and reasonable speaker roles, and to emphasize the deviancy of the social breach committed by others. Next, I answer RQ2 by demonstrating that, as reasonable and reliable evaluators of

racist acts, each speaker's claim had four essential characteristics: the use of legitimizing myths, the use of consensual support, the use of the evaluation process, and the use of a single episode or premise to organize the interview narrative.

#### Research Question One

RQ1 concerns what happened in the narrated racist event as this event was experienced by the study participants and as this event was expressed within an interview. As I shall show, the study participants' reconstructed narratives of the events were very much like a remedial interchange. But in these narrated events, the "failure" event that precipitates the interchange and that evokes a challenge from the challenger (person B) is not some flawed conduct on the part of the challengee (person A) but rather is person A's presentation of a physical racial identity. This sequence is shown in the following interchange.

- | Person A  | Person B   |
|---|--|
| 1) Presents a physical racial appearance.   | 2) Presents some type of behavior that appears based on Person A's race. |
| 3) Evaluates the offensive behavior and is unable to fulfill the turn adequately. |  |
| 4) Makes an evaluation or interpretation of racism.                               |  |

In the racist events reported by the participants in

this study, the classic remedial account sequence as described in Chapter Three was not observed. As my respondents reported their experiences of racism, the event begins with the presentation by A of a physical racial appearance. Then, this presentation is treated by B as problematic or noticeable such that A experiences B's act as a reproach. Thus, B's act is constructed by A as an act of racism. This sequence is treated as the failure event, and the reproach is the act which is perceived as racist. The account, which is the next turn in the sequence, should be provided by person A whose race has precipitated the remedial interchange. However, it is not possible for person A to make an excuse, justification, or apology for her or his racialized identity. Thus, excerpts from my interview data, which will be presented later, show that stigmatized interactants narrated two reply options in their reports of racism: (a) to end the interaction or not take the reply turn, or (b) make a direct reply as part of the remedial interchange. This sequence with reply option a is illustrated below with the events from interview 10.

- | Person A   | Person B                                    |
|--|---|
| 1) Presents a racial physical appearance at a department store jewelry counter.  | 2) Ignores person A at the jewelry counter. |
| 3) Calls to the salesclerk and attempts to gain the attention of the salesclerk. |   |

- 2) Helps White customers.
- 4) Makes an evaluation of racism.

In this interaction, the male salesclerk, person B, responds twice with acts which person A evaluated as racist: (1) when the clerk ignored the speaker, and (2) when he served other customers who appeared after the speaker. Person A, in interview 10, did not take the reply turn after the second reproach action. If direct reply option (b) was taken, a hypothetical example may be illustrated as follows.

- | Person A  | Person B                                    |
|---|---|
| 1) Presents a racial physical appearance at a jewelry counter.  | 2) Ignores person A at the jewelry counter. |
| 3) Calls to the salesclerk and attempts to gain the attention of the salesclerk.  | 2) Helps White customers.                   |
| 4) Makes an evaluation of racism and makes a direct reply such as "I believe I was here first. I should be served first." |   |

Contrast the above sequence with the classic remedial account sequence in the following hypothetical example.

- | Person A                                  | Person B               |
|---|------------------------|
| 1) Appears and is late to an appointment. | 2) "Why are you late?" |

- 3) "Traffic was heavy."
- 4) "Okay, but try to be on time next time."

In this hypothetical illustration, one of the interactants was late to an appointment. The account sequence would consist of the failure event of being late, a reproachful comment or request for an account which is remediated by an excuse, apology or justification. This is followed by an evaluative statement. In the hypothetical example above, person A can produce an account for the failure event in order to fulfill the speaker's turn following the reproach in the interchange. However, if the incident is provoked because of race, as shown in the two previous illustrations, what excuse of justification could be reasonably provided by person A to fill the turn following the reproach? There would appear to be no way to repair this failure event in that no acceptable normalizing or neutralizing technique would be available to this speaker at this time. The speakers in covert racist events, then, are usually unable to directly ask the other interactants for justification of what they believe to be a breach or express a direct reply to the reproach behavior. In either case, the speakers would continue to violate the co-occurrence or member expectations of the remedial account sequence which would result in further stigmatization.

The first finding I report is that in twelve of the

fourteen interviews I conducted, the event narrated by the interviewee conforms to the discourse structure that I have characterized in the illustrations above.

In interview 1, in response to being miscast by the other interactant as an Asian foreign student, the speaker stated "...and I said thanks and I uh left" (line 69). This interviewee did not challenge the miscast identity, but simply ended the interaction. His reaction was one of surprise and uncertainty.

In interview 2, the study participant was taken aback when she was miscast as an Asian non-native English speaker: "and I was kinda taken by surprise" (line 89). Her reaction was one of confusion because she had spoken to the instructor about her concern about studying Shakespeare before the quarter began and the instructor had given no indication of having inconsistent context expectations.

In interview 5, the interviewee was called a "gook" (line 175), by two persons she had previously detained for shoplifting: "I'm just like, ah, [(high pitched) thank you]" (line 175-176). Later in the interview, the speaker admitted she did not even know the origin of this word. She did indicate that she thought it was a term of derogation.

The speaker in interview 6 expressed two incidents in which she did not directly reply to the perceived racist incidents.

I got talked to one teacher it was U.S. History class

and - and he was always asking me you know, well how come you and (Asian friend's name) are so different? And, and I just thought well why wouldn't we be different? (lines 208-215)

I like get sick a lot so I was like out of class and when I came back my teachers are like oh you obviously had the Hong Kong flu and then she like laughed a lot and the whole class laughed with her and I thought well what is so funny about that, ya I had the flu. (lines 394-401)

In these excerpts, the speaker did not directly confront the teacher with her racist interpretations.

The speaker in interview 7 recounts an event in which she and a partner were doing school work in a room that was reserved for foreign students. They were asked by three instructors to leave. Her interpretation of racism was influenced by her work partner, Tom.

I don't think it bothered me at first but when Tom brought up his comments, I kinda was thinking, ya you know we're being discriminated against. (lines 72-75)

I don't think a lot was said when I said is it okay if we stay and finish here. (lines 169-171)

In this example, the speaker did not ask the instructors for an account of their actions, but simply addressed the work situation.

In interview 8, the speaker recounts two incidents.

The first occurred when he was a child.

I remember the first time I got mugged. (line 45)

I didn't resist in any way. (line 84)

The next event is representative of events which occurred when he is an adult. In this excerpt, the speaker is unable to directly reply to the policy-makers who have provoked the event.

Like I explained before with the application process for city jobs, the government jobs...they take literally hundreds, sometimes thousands of applications and narrow it down to the best qualified and they are federally bound to have disabled people, minorities, women proportionately in there and I'm none of those. (lines 247-261)

As many times as I went through the process, on some of these jobs I was highly qualified to hold that position and would have done an excellent job, in my opinion. but I was never even you know put on a, on a list of potential people. (lines 270-277)

This speaker made an evaluation of racism, but did not directly ask for an account from the other interactants.

In interview 9, the interview participant, an Athabaskan Indian, tried to respond to a teacher's request for a particular type of classroom behavior. In a private conversation with the teacher, the interviewee had explained that she was not comfortable disclosing personal information

in front of strangers. In front of the class, the teacher insisted that the interviewee comply with her request and the interviewee responded with "that really threw me" (line 46) and "I didn't say anything, you know, because it was in front of a bunch of people and she was the teacher" (lines 56-58). The speaker was uncomfortable with the context but did not challenge the teacher on what she perceived as a breach of expectations.

A similar construction was used in the jewelry counter exchange from interview 10. "He just walk up to them and asked them if they needed any help in finding anything and I was like, okay" (lines 27-31). In this narration, the speaker used "okay" to indicate a realization of what took place in the situation. As was described earlier, this customer tried to get the attention of the salesclerk. She was ignored and the salesclerk turned to help other customers.

The speaker in interview 12, in response to a question about how to let others know that their behavior is racist replied:

But you can't always do that effectively because you can't get past that that pain and that hurt to explain that person's behaviors to them you're so upset at that particular moment you have to kind of back out - catch your breath and then go in and say hey I think you treated me unfairly. (lines 703-716)

This speaker described the interaction that was illustrated earlier. An evaluation of racism is made in a particular situation, but the speaker, person A, is unable to take the turn at the time of the event.

The speaker in interview 13 indicated that she was taken by surprise by the unexpectedness of the event. This Asian speaker's turn followed an allegation by a classmate that Asian students are taking financial aid support away from White students: "but I just sat there silent, I didn't respond to anything" (lines 47-48). In this excerpt, the interviewee was unable to respond effectively to the negative comments by a fellow student.

Again, the speaker in interview 14 would rather be silent than to risk further negative attitudes from White students about his high grades and their assumption that his race accounts for his high grades:

And since that class I just keep my mouth shut, and I never tell them what I got cause I don't want that kind of attitude toward me--the negative. (lines 255-260)

In interview 15, the interviewee had applied for a job that had been advertised with a help-wanted sign on the business premises. When she asked for an application, she was told that that vacancy had been filled. This reaction was a surprise and in her turn, the speaker replied: "And I said okay. And I says well thank you and I left" (lines 49-50). The discourse construction in this excerpt is similar

to that presented by the speaker in interview 10 in that the "okay" represents an realization of what has taken place.

In the account sequence, then, the stigmatized interactant is often unable to respond effectively at the time of the event because of the need for additional information in order to make the evaluation of racism or because the other interactant's behavior was completely unexpected.

In the above excerpts, the perceived racist act or reproach turn altercasted the interviewee into an identity that is unexpected or the stigmatized speakers were often unable to respond effectively at the time of event because the other interactant's behavior was ambiguous. The speakers reacted by ending the interaction or by not taking the reply turn at the time of the event.

In contrast, reply option b, the direct reply, was in reaction to an unambiguously perceived racist event. Three speakers from interviews 3, 4, and 5, expressed this reply.

The speaker in interview 3 used the direct reply response, but he did not apologize or excuse his racial identity.

Basically she was just criticizing that Hungarian people are dumb. That's what she was basically saying and then I didn't take this laying down of course.

(lines 55-60)

I mentioned that - three hundred years ago in Belgrade

which was then...under Hungarian rule and Hungarian soldiers were called in and Hungarians fought off the Turks? And then I just mentioned that...as sort of a come back." (lines 61-67)

In the next excerpt, the speaker in interview 4 chose to physically attack the person who initiated the racially based encounter.

And that was the first time I'd ever really gotten angry about White people. And I made a bad mistake and hit him with the history book - and broke his nose.

(Interview 4, lines 157-160)

In interview 5, the speaker chose to directly attack the comment of a fellow student.

Then we were just talking and he says well - so - where are you from? I'm like, what? Where am I from? I go, I said, in my own words, that I was from America. He got the picture and he just, I mean the way I said it I kinda threw in a adjective there, and I told him I was from America, and then he just said oh, oh I'm sorry...he just took a step back after I said that and he he thought twice about what he had said. (Interview 5, lines 41-59)

In her turn following the reproach, the speaker chose to attack the behavior of the other interactant. There was no doubt that she felt dishonored in the interaction.

The above speakers directly expressed their

interpretations of the other interactant's behavior in the reproach turn. The behavior of the other interactant was not ambiguous to the speakers in these situations. However, the direct reply was not a mutually acceptable response. That is, both reply options narrated by the interview speakers (the reply option of ending the interaction or not taking the next turn and the direct reply) did not fulfill the co-occurrence expectations of the standard account or remedial interchange sequence. The account formulation, as described by previous researchers, does not adequately describe what occurred in the above racist encounters.

Thus, the account sequence in events which precipitated an interpretation or evaluation of racism differed from those in other account situations in that the reproached interactant was unable to respond in a mutually acceptable manner at the time of the stigmatizing encounter. In these narrated accounts of the precipitating events, the standard sequence formulation does not adequately describe what occurred in racist encounters. The interviewees were aware that this was a breach of the account sequence and of member expectations. As a result, the present-time or current speaker accounts which were presented within the interview context also did not follow the standard account sequence.

#### Accounts in the Present

In the racist or covert racist events that precipitated these interviews about racism, an interactant made only one

part of the interviewees' identities salient; however, it was not the identity or role that the interviewee would have chosen to be most salient. The interviewees' statements indicated that their identities were not honored as expected and that they were without control over their own identities. This presented a dilemma for those faced by perceptions of racist encounters because, in the frame of the standard account sequence formulation, the co-occurrence expectation would be to take the next turn. However, in order to take the next turn following a reproach, the interviewees would need to stigmatize themselves further. The dilemma, then, is as follows: if a speaker refuses to take the next response turn or does not take the turn in accordance with the standard sequence, that speaker will be stigmatized by not meeting a mutual conversational achievement expectation of turn taking.

Thus, the interviewees were unable to effectively take their reply turn within the precipitating event. The attack reply did not give an excuse or justification as the co-occurrence expectation for the account sequence would require. The second option, ending the episode, also did not take the reply turn effectively. Thus, the interviewees were unable to complete the event account sequence competently in the past. However, as the precipitating account was presented within the interview context, the speakers had an opportunity to overcome their stigmatization

with reasonable speaker identities.

Repairing identities in the present. The discourse within my data demonstrated that speaker identities which were stigmatized in the racist or covert racist incident were repaired in the present time interview account sequence. That is, what could not be said without further risk to the speaker's identity was recreated within an interview narrative about racism or within a narrative with supportive in-group members. In this way, the precipitating incident that left the interviewee with a dishonored identity was repaired or resolved within the present interview account.

This discourse mode differed from previous account research which centered on how each actor excused, justified, or denied his or her own behavior. The interviewees in my data used narrative statements and descriptions in which they disclosed a personal reaction to the event by describing both actors' behaviors with the more advantageous evaluation being given to the aggrieved. Essed's evaluation and argumentation categories also displayed how interviewees justified their own and others' behavior in order to give themselves an advantageous purchase on a positive identity. Furthermore, Wetherell and Potter (1988) suggested that these accounts and narratives come from the social stories and interpretive resources which are available to the informant. It is through these

resources that identities may be maintained and repaired. Thus, one could expect to see discourse which demonstrates the renegotiation of identity and account explanations for both participants.

In interview 10, for example, the speaker invoked her knowledge of social contexts and frames by the use of the "customer-salesclerk" roles to support her reasonable speaker identity. Further, she displayed her evaluation process to come to her conclusion of racism which prevented a negative impression that she was unreasonable or just overly sensitive. When the speaker in interview 10 used these constructions with others (the female salesclerk and the interviewer, for example), she renegotiated the identity that the initial encounter dishonored.

In interview 15, the speaker had repeatedly sought employment. However, each time she asked for an application she was told that the job had been filled. Speaker 15 stated

And at first I thought well maybe, you know, there's a good possibility that, you know, that that could be legit. But like after hunting for a bout a month and a half, you know, it's the same thing, and it it didn't matter if it was in a department store or an office, um it was always the same thing. And I thought something, you know, was (war:) not right here and um.

When Speaker 15 next applied for a cashier and was told that

the position had been filled, she replied "And I said okay. And I says well thank you and I left" (lines 49-50). When she returned home, however, speaker 15 asked her light-skinned aunt to apply for the same position. The speaker's aunt was hired within hours of the speaker's employment rejection. The interviewee, in this case, used consensual information to confirm her suspicions of racism.

In this way, the entire covert racist sequence initially presented on page three of this study can be completed. In step one, the physical racial appearance of person A (the interviewee, in this case) appears to cause a reaction in person B (step two). In step three, person A makes an attribution of racism, and may challenge person B's action, ask person B for an account, or end the interaction. In the fourth step, if a challenge or request for an account is made, person B may deny the attribution, or make an excuse or justification statement centered on person A's perception. In an alternate occurrence, step five, person A will not ask person B for an account because he or she expects a denial, does not wish to escalate the interaction, or may be considering further consensual information. Instead, person A will justify both the attribution of racism as well as the reasons for not asking for an account with others. Gonzales (1992) explained the anticipated refusal in step 5 as expected because "refusals [to account] represent an additional threat to participants' face, for

they likely challenge participants' interpretations" (p. 147). In this final step, then, person A communicates the incident to others or supportive in-group members to effect a repair (which did not occur through the racist account sequence with person B).

The events of interview 10 are displayed within this sequence formulation:

- | Person A  | Person B  |
|---|---|
| 1) Presents a racial physical appearance at a department store jewelry counter.   |   |
|   | 2) Ignores the customer at the jewelry counter. |
| 3) Calls to the salesclerk and attempts to gain the attention of the salesclerk. But there is no contact and, thus, no reply to the reproach.                                   |   |
|   | 2) Helps White women customers.                 |
| 4) Makes an evaluation of racism which she does not share because she has no contact with the reproacher  |   |
| 5) Communicates the racist evaluation with the female salesclerk and the interviewer. Person B's behavior is described as unreasonable while person A's behavior is normalized. |   |

Step 5, then, completes the racist interaction that was started in the past precipitating event. It is expected that Steps 2, 3, and 4 will be displayed in both the past

and the present within these data because this is the point at which potential conflicts between honored or dishonored identities and acceptable or not acceptable attributions are made. That is, the precipitating event (past) will be recounted in the interview (present) in order to accomplish the reply turn and to fulfill other discursive goals.

The account sequences as described here differed from those of previous researchers in that these event accounts were from the perspective of one of the participants and issues that were raised in the precipitating incident were resolved in the present interview context unless a direct challenge was made to the offending interactant. The findings from the study data were that interview reconstructions are accounts within accounts. The second part of this claim examined the different discourse goals of each of these accounts.

#### Discursive Goals of Accounts

Each of my interviewees underlined the speaker's desire to be viewed as a reasonable speaker who made a reasonable and believable interpretation of racism. However, the immediate goals of past and present accounts differed. In past accounts, the speakers used discursive constructions to normalize their behavior and to increase the deviance of the others' actions. In present accounts, the speakers used discourse choices to complete the reply turn in order to demonstrate membership accomplishment and competency, to

emphasize their identity as reasonable persons whose interpretations of racism were believable, and to accentuate the irrationality of their misascribed identities. The first goal of present accounts, to complete the reply turn, was explained and demonstrated in the previous section.

Either the past or present account, or both, may be constructed to present a more favorable identity to the speaker (Crocker & Major, 1994; Gonzales, 1992). In this way, the discourse as presented in either the past or present constructed a particular perspective that the speaker used to achieve a reality or identity that "make[s] an argument...against alternatives" (Wetherell & Potter, 1992, p. 95).

On the basis of the research by Wetherell and Potter (1992), I recognized that certain identities, as they were constructed in the discourse, were more familiar and enduring to the interviewees under particular circumstances. One example is the "customer" role with its expected behavior versus the "salesclerk" role and its expected behavior in the retail store context of interview 10. In addition to discursive use of these role identities, the speaker may construct a powerful interviewee role against the negative identity presented in the precipitating event. In the following section, I present excerpts which exemplify the discursive goals achieved by the interviewees.

Goals in past accounts. The effect of the interviewee's discursive constructions in past accounts was one of increasing the interpretation of deviancy and unexpectedness of the racist behavior and, at the same time, normalizing their own. One discursive mode was to emphasize the unexpectedness of the situation. A second discursive construction signalled a specific speech activity or context which, in turn, signalled the social presuppositions or social relationships in relation to some communicative goal (Gumperz, 1982).

The following excerpts from interviews 12 and 15 clearly illustrate the discursive effect of these construction choices. Additional examples of speaker reactions to unexpected behaviors were presented earlier.

My first example, from interviewee 12, clearly described the unexpectedness of racist encounters and the speaker's inability to prepare for them. The second description pointed out that speakers must be wary of potential identity attacks and that it was possible to be prepared in specific contexts (such as a college campus) in which racism was known to exist. This interviewee emphasized the unexpected deviance of some situations as well as emphasizing a positive speaker identity. He used an "expert informant" identity during the interview in that he used both the second and third-person pronoun construction in order to give advice to other Blacks, to share

information with the interviewer and other Blacks, and to help the interviewee understand racism from the Black perspective.

But I think the hardest thing to deal with is that it is so unexpected, you won't know how to prepare yourself for it. You think you have the skill to hold it in and keep it together, you know, and it takes practice to be able to do that. (lines 34-40)

The reason why Blacks have have continued to make it is because those are the Blacks who have the ability to overcome. They've had the practice at overcoming and so they expect that on campus they know that they're going to get resistance and they're prepared for that. (lines 128-137)

Within the interview, interviewee 12 used his expert identity to renegotiate a powerful and reasonable speaker identity.

In this next example from interview 15, the unexpected deviance of the other participants' actions as well as the speaker's development of her normalcy is displayed. The speaker used her restaurant customer role and the restaurant context to support her reasonable speaker identity. This example followed several other racist experiences the speaker has had in Jacksonville, Florida in reaction to her dark, Hispanic appearance:

And I remember us walking in you know, when you normally walk into a restaurant you hear people talking and clattering, you know, people eating and so forth. Well we walked in and she happened to be Black and um it was like all of a sudden silence si:lence, I mean, we're talking not a pin was, everybody had stopped and they looked at us. (lines 248-257)

The initial discourse developed the social expectations of the restaurant context. In other words, the speaker signalled to the listener that the restaurant context and its presuppositions of what should occur in that situation should be compared with what actually happened. Next, the speaker entered the restaurant with her friend and the unexpected silence occurred. These two constructions developed the normalcy of the speaker's behavior with known resources as a common basis for what usually occurred in this situation and, at the same time, emphasized the deviance of the situation. Gumperz suggested that the speaker's social knowledge is displayed within this verbal interaction through co-occurrence expectations of the restaurant context and expected behavior (1982, p. 166). Furthermore, the speaker signalled that she believed that the listener would share the same social knowledge by her use of the restaurant context.

The speaker's choice of "and she happened to be Black" accentuates the point that in this situation with these

people in Jacksonville, this part of her friend's identity is what was salient. Further, because this speaker does not see herself as Black, she does not identify herself as causing this reaction. By comparison, her friend is Black and the speaker attributes this reaction to her. This attribution is made although the speaker has previously described several other racist incidents which focused on her visible ethnicity.

Next, the speaker used a discursive construction which was noted by Wooffitt (1991). Wooffitt proposed that the use of all of a sudden intensified the deviance of the event that followed and increased its departure from what is commonly understood to be normal. The speaker in interview 15 not only used this construction, but repeated and emphasized the word silence. This construction accentuated that what occurred was the opposite from what was expected from a restaurant setting. The speaker accomplished both past account goals in her statement. In addition, in other parts of the interview, interviewee 15 reiterated the deviance of the situation and emphasized her astonishment at this reaction. These excerpts follow:

And it was so bizarre because I've never ever had that  
(ha) I mean the restaurant, everybody did an about face  
and it was just complete silence. (lines 264-266)

But that was just a really bizarre, I had never been to  
a restaurant and had that happen. (lines 270-281)

And then that other incident when we went to the restaurant it was kind of like complete silence, you know, I've never been to a restaurant where everybody stops, you know, what they're doing to look - I mean it was just if it was like a tomb in there, you know. And it was just it was wild, I'd never had that happen.  
(lines 563-569)

These constructions work to point out the unexpected deviance of the racist event in contrast to what is normal and expected. The deviance--silence--is described through the use of repetition and emphasis (silence si:lence), and comparisons ("not a pin", "complete", and "like a tomb").

Speaker 12 and speaker 15 chose discourse modes which stressed the deviancy of the precipitating event and normalized their own actions. The discourse goals of past accounts were to demonstrate that the speakers were reasonable persons whose interpretations of racism should be believed, and to overcome the irrationality of the undeserved identities ascribed them by other interactants.

Goals in present accounts. The interviewees demonstrated three goals in their present accounts. The first, completing the racist interactions begun in the past, was explained in an earlier section. The second goal was to accentuate the interviewees' identities as reasonable persons with rational interpretations. The third goal of the present account was to overcome the speakers' undeserved

and stigmatized identities. The following excerpts from interview 10 and 15 exemplify how speakers used discursive constructions to accomplish these goals.

In the statement from interview 15 above, the speaker sets up her argument as "if you agree that what I described is not normal, then you must agree that what happened to me was not reasonable and that my interpretation is rational." The speaker used interpretative resources (known restaurant behavior) to contrast the aberrant behavior and bolster her identity as a reasonable person. In addition, she reinforced her position by stating the deviance of the experience three more times.

In interview 10, as displayed at the end of the last chapter, the speaker used the same argument as interview 15 and an evaluation process to repair her stigmatized identity and to establish the rationality of her expectations. The speaker described herself and her actions as unremarkable. By contrast, the male salesclerk's behavior was described in such a way as to be very much out of the ordinary. Furthermore, the speaker used the construction described by Wooffitt (1991) and repeated the details of the incident twice during the interview. Both excerpts follow.

I wanted to get my watch band, you know I want to buy it there but um there was this old man that, I was the only one there and he's just walking around, he would not help me, um and then I even um called - and he

didn't, he just ignored um and all of a sudden this White lady, well you know, women came in and he just walk up to them and asked them, you know, for help, if they need any help in finding anything, you know, and I was like, okay. (lines 19-31)

I mean instead of helping me, I was the only one there, you know, on the counter but- right in front of him too, cause you know how you stand, you go up - and you know how they place the they sell the watch band right in front of the counter? - by the cashier? - so he was right there and I was like okay (breath). (lines 115-125)

The constructions served to demonstrate the rational argument and identity of the speakers. The speakers described their identities in the interview as rational and reasonable by using Essed's evaluation category as well as generally accepted social knowledge for behavior in specific situations to reinforce the reasonableness of their interpretation. In this way, each speaker constructed a rational "interviewee" identity that was not challenged by the interviewer and presented an argument that would appeal to a large audience. This identity as a rational person who is capable of presenting a believable argument stood in contrast to the misascribed racial identity of the recounted episode.

In summary, all fourteen interviews exhibited the described discursive constructions in both past and present accounts. These discursive modes were used by the interviewees to repair deviant interaction situations, to overcome breached social expectations, and to renegotiate stigmatized identities in order to present reasonable speaker identities making reasonable claims. In my findings for research question one, I argued that narratives about racist episodes are accounts within accounts which differed in sequence from the standard formulation reviewed earlier, that the goals of accounts in the past were to increase the deviance of the precipitating episode and to normalizing and neutralize the speakers' actions and that the account goals in the present were to present a reasonable identity whose interpretations of racism are believable and to overcome the irrationality of a stigmatized identity. Specifically, in order to normalize or align the situation in both the present and the past, the speakers constructed narratives that emphasized the unexpected deviance of the situation, the loss of speaker control in the event, and a reasonable and positive speaker identity.

#### Research Question Two

RQ2 concerned the discursive modes used by the interview participants to construct reasonable and believable claims of racism in their narratives. As I argued in the previous section, the reasonable speaker

identity was established, in part, to support the speaker's premise of a reasonable claim.

All fourteen data interviews displayed the use of the following four discursive modes to support the believability of their interpretations of racism: (a) the use of legitimizing roles, (b) the use of consensual information, (c) the use of the evaluation process and, (d) the use of a single episode or premise to organize the interview narrative. That is, the interview narrative of the precipitating event was reconstructed to support the interviewees' reasonable identities and claims of racism.

#### The Construction of Legitimizing Roles

The interviewees in this study were not given to making the charge of racism without due consideration to their reasons why their treatment should be considered to be based on race, nor did the interviewees seem to expect that their charge would be received without demonstrating their reasoning. That is, as was stated on pages 4 and 5 of this document, the commonsensical response to the charge that some act or another is racist is that person A's charge is not reasonable or that he or she has misunderstood the action. Thus, if a charge of racism is made, it must be formulated to justify the claim by being both believable and understandable to those with whom it might be shared, and it must be declared by a reasonable speaker. For example, if person A charges that she or he has been a target of racist

actions committed by another, the veracity of the charge must be shown in a manner that is reasonable and understandable to those who hear of it. If the explanation is not formulated in a manner which justifies the charge, the claim will be dismissed as unbelievable and unreasonable. In addition, person A must be viewed as a reasonable and believable evaluator of the incident.

As I explained in response to RQ1, the interviewees developed positive identities by demonstrating their competency as knowledgeable interactant in both their past and present accounts. In developing their arguments as competent and reasonable speakers, the interviewees invoked legitimizing roles which supported the acceptability of their reply options, normalized their reactions and claims, and increased the deviance of the perceived breach.

This was accomplished in a different way by each interviewee. For example, in interview 10, the interview speaker used the role of "customer" to point out the unexpected deviance of the male "salesclerk" role. Interviewee 10 used these roles to emphasize the breach of the co-occurrence expectation in support of her identity as a reasonable speaker who made a reasonable interpretation of racism. The legitimizing role was constructed in contrast to the dishonored identity presented within each precipitating situation. In a similar fashion, each of the interviewees invoked this type of social knowledge to

present a legitimate role which was not upheld in the racist encounter. However, the interviewees differed as to which identity they felt was dishonored. That is, there were interpretive resources which were more relevant and useful in each social context.

For example, in interview 15, the speaker used the roles of restaurant customer and job applicant to uphold her reasonable speaker identity. The restaurant customer role was explained earlier. In the following excerpt, interviewee 15 considered her job applicant role as not legitimized within employment interactions. In this incident, the speaker initially believed that she might be cause of the discriminating behavior in employment situations when she stated:

I thought - is there's something wrong with me?...Do I not look right or, you know, I mean I'd go up for, you know, I before I'd go for the um job hunting I'd dress professionally you know and try to look neat and everything. (interview 15, lines 148-153)

However, in the next excerpt, once the speaker compared this incident to her social knowledge of employment situations, she concluded that she was not to blame. In this way, her positive interview identity was preserved and the violation of context as caused by the other interactant is emphasized. Her legitimate role was upheld when she stated that she dressed professionally and neatly. As a job applicant, the

speaker acted correctly and sustained, correctly, the co-occurrence expectations of the job hunting frame. Finally, her conclusion is stated with consensual knowledge.

I had no problem in New York finding a job, I never had a problem before looking for a job and all of a sudden it's kinda like nobody wanted to hire me...I realized (i) it had nothing to do with me, um or my skills,...a lot of people just didn't like the color of my skin. (interview 15, lines 158-166)

In interview 7, the speaker based the justification of her claim on the believability of her roles as a student and taxpayer. This speaker is a White, American student who was asked three times by English as a Second Language faculty to vacate a room that was reserved for non-native English speaking students. The first excerpt illustrates the speaker's use of her general student knowledge of the room and room use procedures.

Because I was aware that that was a special room and um although it's not, I don't believe it's posted or if it was I didn't notice and nobody was using it at the time. (interview 7, lines 197-202)

The speaker admitted that she knew it was a special room, but she invoked two common social expectations maxims to justify her use of the room. The first is that the room was not obviously posted as being reserved for a special population. Her second argument is that it was unoccupied

at the time. She used these two arguments to solidify her justification for being placed in the situation which dishonored her student identity.

Later in her narrative, speaker 7 constructed a legitimate student status in contrast to the status of non-native English speaking students. That is, she perceived non-native English speaking students as having more benefits than she did (a reserved room), although she believed they were students who did not pay as much money as she did to go to school, who did not live in her country, and who did not have as strong a claim to campus facilities as she did. She used this perception as well as her taxpayer role to give her student status greater legitimacy than that of non-native English speaking students in part to justify her identity and claim.

I thought you know a lot of these students are here in our country and they're getting a better deal at school, than I'm paying more money and uh, I'm being thrown out of part of my building. (interview 7, lines 87-92)

I don't think it it upset me until I was thinking about it long term and the only thing I was thinking about and it doesn't make me mad but its its kinda funny that uh ((pause)) I as a student and I'm paying a lot of money to go to this school and I think about all the money we give to other students and sometimes um I

might get a little bit upset like I live here I pay taxes here why can't I get a better deal on my you know ha ha ha on my tuition. (interview 7, lines 222-235)

In each of these examples, the speakers constructed different legitimate roles to support their claims to the audience. In this way, each speaker presented a strong identity to substantiate the charge of racism and to argue that such an interpretation was warranted. This was upheld within the interviews when the speakers invoked legitimizing roles to support their positive identities and claims. Furthermore, the interview data suggested that the speakers used in-group sources of consistency and consensus to bolster their use of out-group or dominant social roles.

#### The Use of Consensual Support

The use of other sources, which is similar to the argument category proposed by Essed (1988), for support of a speaker's interpretation of racism provided a further basis for believability. The accomplishment of this demonstration of both in-group and out-group knowledge is an increase in the reasonableness of the speaker's claim. The speakers used both legitimate roles from the dominant social context as well as corroboration and consensus from within their in-group to support their interpretations of racist practices and to uphold their positive identities against the deviancy of the social breach. The following excerpts from interviews 2, 7, 10, and 15 illustrate the use of consensual

information.

I actually told a friend who's Asian...and she was just furious. She says you should go back there and you should report her to the minority affairs office. (interview 2, lines 876-881)

But my Asian friend said oh well you know you you gotta report her - I was what what you mean I can report something like that that's a racist comment and I'm going it is ((pause)) but I didn't realize how it was a racist comment that she made that was just she made an assumption about me. (interview 2, lines 895-905)

The speaker in interview 2 above, did not realize that she could complain about the professor's behavior toward her until she received additional information from her friend. In a similar construction, interviewee 7 stated that her partner's comments caused her to reinterpret the behaviors of certain college instructors.

I don't think it bothered me at first but when Tom brought up his comments, I kinda was thinking, ya you know we're being discriminated against. (interview 7, lines 72-75)

In the following section from interview 10, the speaker used consensual information to provide consistency for her interpretation.

I don't know what the real story is...one point I

heard that um because of the Vietnam war - you know how they think of - you know Asian because their relative or something got killed at the Vietnam war or something. (interview 10, lines 131-139)

One of my friends she she's American and her parents ya she's caucasian um one of her I mean her parents strictly told her that she's not allowed to go out with Asians. (interview 10, 149-156)

In this excerpt from interview 15, the speaker shared one source of consensual information for her claim of racism.

My aunt told me they were just very, they did not like Black people, anyone that was not White, they would just not tolerate - and they made no bones about, you know, showing it and even in the stores, you know, standing in line... (interview 15, lines 335-341)

The above examples illustrate how the speakers' use of consensual knowledge (a) supported their interpretations of racism by evaluating them against other sources of knowledge and moving toward the inevitable conclusion that the other interactants based their behaviors on race, and (b) created a more positive identity for themselves against the deviance of the other interactants. In this way, consensual knowledge of legitimate roles was used in the speakers' interpretations of racism.

The third characteristic of reasonable claims was the speakers' use of Essed's (1988) evaluation process and

argument category. The use of the evaluation process, legitimizing roles and consensual knowledge gave a common social knowledge base to support the speakers as reasonable evaluators of the precipitating events being described. However, the use of the evaluation process had some unintended effects.

#### The Use of the Evaluation Process

As I discussed in the sample analysis at the end of the last chapter, the evaluation process and the argument category demonstrated the speakers' use of comparison among various sources to reach their conclusions of racism. These two modes were used to counter the dominant group's commonsense criticisms that the speakers were overly sensitive, that their interpretations were mistaken, or that their evaluations were unsubstantiated. However, the use of the evaluation process, in particular, also had the effect of presenting an appearance of tolerance for such racist acts. Although the interviewees responded to the interview request with recounted incidents that were racist in nature, they gave an appearance of tolerance when they provided excuses for the acts of others or gave such careful substantiation for the claim that they seemed reluctant to reach the conclusion that an act was racist.

Although the interviewees eventually and inevitably reached the conclusion that the incident occurred because of their race, there was an appearance of an initial reluctance

to choose this interpretation. Louw-Potgieter (1989) described this as a tolerance of racism in that the evaluation process indicated the speaker's unwillingness to perceive "well-intentioned acts as racist" (p. 313). I disagree with part of his assessment. I agree that the speaker may be reluctant to appear unreasonable by making an unsubstantiated claim of racism. However, I believe that this appearance of tolerance or prolonged discrimination between racist and non-racist acts also stems from the speaker's reluctance to agree with another's assessment of her or his identity as solely based on race. Thus, the reluctance to make an interpretation of racism through a prolonged evaluation process is not tolerance but an attempt to recast a stigmatized or spoiled identity within the present interview. The speakers did not admit their stigmatized identities nor did they agree with the other interactants' assessment of their identities. However, the speakers did not summarily dismiss the other interactants' breach of the situation. The interviewees used the evaluation process to further establish the deviancy of the others' behavior and to substantiate the believability of their claims. These goals account for the prolonged evaluation process interviewees went through to reach the decision that the event was based on their racial differences.

For example, in interview 10, the interviewee's use of

the evaluation process may give an appearance of tolerance when she suggested that her lack of sophisticated clothing and jewelry as well as the stereotype that Asians may not have money to spend in a department store may account for the male salesclerk's behavior toward her. However, when she compared her dress to her social knowledge, she concluded that race was the motivating factor. The interviewee's evaluation process gave an initial appearance of tolerance for the male salesclerk's action and the speaker seemed to blame herself for the other interactant's behavior. However, the result of this display of her evaluation process is an increase of the unreasonable deviancy of the male salesclerk's behavior and an increased normalcy of her own reaction.

A similar construction was used in interview 15 from my data. In this incident, the speaker initially suggested that she might be cause of the discriminating behavior in employment situations when she stated:

I thought - is there's something wrong with me?...Do I not look right or, you know, I mean I'd go up for, you know, I before I'd go for the um job hunting I'd dress professionally you know and try to look neat and everything. (interview 15, lines 148-153)

However, in the next excerpt, once the speaker compared this incident to her social knowledge of employment situations, she concludes that she is not to blame. In this way, her

positive interview identity is preserved and the stigmatization can be seen to be caused by others.

I had no problem in New York finding a job, I never had a problem before looking for a job and all of a sudden it's kinda like nobody wanted to hire me...I realized (i) it had nothing to do with me, um or my skills,...a lot of people just didn't like the color of my skin. (interview 15, lines 158-166)

In the following excerpt from interview 2, the speaker commented on reasons why an English professor may have committed the racist act.

My my personal opinion is maybe she just wasn't listening anymore. She was so um - uh maybe she just has tunnel vision where she just sees her subject and she doesn't want to look at anything else...and she doesn't have a as much of an open mind. (interview 2, lines 958-965)

A similar construction occurred in interview 12, when the speaker stated that he did not feel that "a lot" (interview 12, line 347) of racist incidents were maliciously motivated.

I think a lot of people ((6 second pause)) don't realize that they're being racist - I think it's just the way they do business - they are so accustomed to just assuming - that simply because I wear Nike tennis shoes and play rap music that I'm a hoodlum. (interview

12, lines 347-358)

Sometimes it comes out of people just not knowing that they're being racist. (interview 12, lines 696-697)

The excerpts from interviews 15, 2, 12, and the reference to interview 10 illustrate that evaluation process supported the interviewees' conclusions that their racist interpretations were inevitable and reasonable.

Furthermore, these discursive choices had another effect within the interviewees' explanatory narratives. The statements served to emphasize the normalcy of the interviewees' behavior and, by contrast, the deviancy of the others' behaviors. In this way, the interviewees used the evaluation process to bolster both their interpretation of racism and their positive identity as rational speakers.

In order to uphold support for a reasonable and believable claim of racism, the interviewees constructed legitimate roles, used consensual information, and displayed their evaluation process of the deviant behavior. In the next section, I describe the fourth characteristic of interpretations of racism which is the speaker's use of a single highly detailed incident of racism or a premise of racist behavior to substantiate and to organize the interview narrative. This finding suggests that there is an alternative interpretation for the type of data used by Essed in her study.

### The Organization of Interview Narratives

A fourth construction which speakers used to uphold the credence of their claims was the organizational use of one highly detailed incident or premise of racism which answered the request for the interview. That is, the interview context required that the speakers be willing to share incidents of racism. In response to this request, each interviewee problematized racism and organized his or her narratives in such a way as to substantiate their claims of racism for the interview. The interviewees did this in one of two ways.

The narrative explanations in my interview data indicated that informants generally presented one or two well-developed descriptions of racism as central to their argument that racism occurred in particular events. That is, each interview speaker related precipitating incidents that met the expectations of a problematized racial identity and which they believed would interest the interviewer. By well-developed or highly detailed descriptions, I mean that the interview speaker provided many details of Essed's (1988) context, complication, and argumentation categories in their narrative of the precipitating event. Other examples or incidents of racism were presented in addition to the central example(s), but these were not as highly developed as the organizing event. These additional examples of racism, though less detailed in the context,

complication, and argumentation categories, were presented as sources of consensus and consistency for the initial claim. This organization supported and substantiated the interviewees' interpretation of an incident as racist in both the initial claim and the subsequent inferred point.

Essed's studies do not address either the organization of the interview data or the method used to enumerate interpretations of racial conflict. Essed stated that her informants in the United States provided an average of 6 examples of racism, while, in the Netherlands, informants averaged 7 incidents per interview (1991, pp.176-177). My interviews also provided several incidents each of perceived racism, however, not all examples were equally developed.

Based on my analysis of the data using both Essed's framework and Preston's categories, I observed that the speakers organized their narratives to create the strongest possible argument for their interpretation of racism. The speakers chose to center their claim around incidents that clearly demonstrated racist actions and that these incidents were presented with rich details. Other incidents were supportive of the speaker's initial argument and claim. I believe that racism occurs as described in Chapter Two and that, in an atmosphere where dominant group beliefs can be assumed to be prevalent, speakers can be expected to organize a narrative that presents an account which justifies their interpretation of racism. This variability

in the types of examples presented is not inconsistent with discourse theory and Edwards' (1994) notion of script formulations where singular items may be used to warrant or support more generalized conclusions. Thus, these less well-developed items or examples should stand in contrast to detailed formulations which directly address the event's complication and should be viewed not as further examples of racism, but as support for an account.

As I stated in the previous section, the point of a speaker's narrative may be about a spoiled identity rather than race. My data suggested that the point of the interview narratives may not be racism, though racism is certainly the precipitating event as well as the initial request for the interview session. In this way, the discursive goals of certain constructions may be related to identity concerns rather than racism. The supplemental incidents or the addition of consensual information are used by the informants to support a claim beyond the initial one of racism and do not need to be well-developed, but only sufficiently developed to support the point being made.

My observation does not negate the usefulness of these incidents for developing an understanding of racism; however, my data and observations do support the contention that the application of additional research methods revealed a fuller understanding of racism explanations. Essed did not display temporal constructions of her interview data.

Thus, it is not useful to conjecture whether her analysis found differences in the discursive construction of the incidents.

In interview 15, the speaker began with an employment incident. She saw a "help wanted" sign. When she went in to apply for the job, she was told it had been filled. She asked her light-skinned aunt to apply for the same job that afternoon. Her aunt was hired. Later, the interviewee had an opportunity to confront the hiring manager. Interviewee 15 used this incident to initiate the interview and further supported her claim that the people in Jacksonville, Florida did not like her dark skin with other incidents such as the restaurant event.

In interview 10 (see Appendix C), the speaker stated her knowledge of her friend's situation, her experience in school with Black students, and her experience at another department store's cosmetic counter to support her initial point that the White male salesclerk did not help her because of her race. The effect of this discursive construction is to substantiate and warrant the interviewee's interpretation of racism and to establish a positive identity.

Of the fourteen interviews, eight interviews were organized as described above. That is, the speakers used a highly-detailed precipitating event which they interpreted as racist to answer the interview request. This single,

highly stigmatizing episode displayed how the interviewee perceived racism to occur. Within the subsequent interview discourse, the interviewee disclosed other episodes which warranted the initial charge of racism. These other episodes exhibited a rhetorical test of reasonableness for both the speakers and their claims. That is, the use of other incidents as well as legitimizing roles, consensual information, and evaluation formulations, served to demonstrate the speakers' in-group and out-group knowledge of what constitutes a reasonable claim of racism.

In six of the interviews, however, an inferred premise was used to organize the speaker's narrative. That is, several examples of racism were given to support a premise which the speaker did not explicitly state. In this construction, the interviewee perceived racism to be institutionalized to the extent that incidents of racism were too numerous to recount. This construction, in conjunction with the other discourse modes described, served to demonstrate the speakers' knowledge that what had occurred was correctly interpreted as racism. In interview 4, for example, the speaker presented numerous descriptions of the racism demonstrated by White educators against Indians from reservations. There was not a single incident that was more detailed than another. Similarly, in interview 12, the speaker's premise that the educational system is racist is supported by several examples. I

selected eight examples to present below.

- (1) "I was almost run down by a pick-up truck driven by a White student - yelled racial slurs to me -" (lines 28-31)
- (2) "I've walked in the hallways and had things like nigger said to me underneath their breath but where I could hear it." (lines 31-34)
- (3) "A kid called me a nigger one time and I smacked him, you know, and got expelled for three days for fighting." (lines 45-50)
- (4) "I think it hurts the self-esteem of the student - it limits the students access to that area - it's like climbing a wall and you never reach the top because every time you get close to the top they raise it just a little bit higher." (lines 57-68)
- (5) "An instructor went as far as to separate the class, put, place them in groups -by nationality." (lines 148-150)
- (6) "Ohhh, you and I are in the same class - you happen to be a White student and I happen to be a Black student. We both turn in an assignment and we both make a mistake. I make one mistake and you make four, but I lose a point but you lose a half a point. That's covert racism." (lines 227-245)
- (7) "They are so accustomed to just assuming that simply

because I wear Nike tennis shoes and play rap music that I'm a hoodlum." (lines 353-358).

- (8) "I can recall going to library and having a stack of books in my arm and just waiting there waiting and waiting and uh there was a student in back of me - actually there were three students in back of me - there were two White students and one Latino student in back of the White students and the receptionist came out from behind the corner and kinda looked right through me and asked the person behind me can I help you." (lines 404-413)

The speaker in interview 12 used an inferred premise rather than a meaningful precipitating incident to organize his interview narrative. He responded to the interview by enumerating many incidents of racism. Although there were variations in the organization of the interview narratives, the speakers used either a highly developed event or an inferred premise about racism to organize their narratives. The organization of the interview narratives, in addition to the construction of legitimate roles, the use of consensual support, and the display of the speaker's evaluation process, was used to support the claim that the speakers and their claims of racism were reasonable.

#### Summary

These goals and constructions suggested that there was a continuity which emerged from the interviewees' readily

available narratives and past discursive practices. The speakers in my corpus used available interpretative repertoires and resources that were dependent upon in which set of social relations or social positions the speakers were enmeshed. That is, how an act or discourse should be composed and interpreted is intertwined with the organization of an account and its accomplishment (Heritage, 1988). The interviewees' discourse goals of constructing positive identities and justifying their interpretations of racism were intertwined with the organization of their accounts in both the past and the present.

Research question one concerned the interviewees' use of specific discourse constructions in order to explain and resolve their breached social expectations and to gain control over their own displayed identities. My data suggested that the interviewees overcame these violations by the use of discourse modes that increased their positive and reliable speaker identities in the present interview and accentuated the unexpected deviance of the other interactants in past accounts. Based on the interview data of this study, accounts of racist encounters differed from those presented by previous researchers in that an opportunity to complete the reply turn may not be taken within the actual encounter. In this way, the goals of past and present accounts differed. In past accounts, the discursive goals were to normalize the speaker's behavior

and to increase the deviance of the social violations. In present accounts, the speakers completed reply turns, established themselves as reliable and reasonable evaluators, and accentuated the irrationality of the stigmatized identity.

Research question two centered on the discursive modes used by participants to construct reasonable and believable narratives for an audience. That is, having established themselves as reasonable speakers, the speakers constituted reasonable claims of racism by securing legitimate roles, exhibiting consensual information, displaying a thoughtful evaluation of the aberrant behavior, and organizing the interview narrative in such a way as to strongly answer the interview request for experiences of racism.

These results suggest that racist interpretations incorporate more than descriptions of racist events. The use of additional analysis methods revealed interpretative repertoires of speakers such as sequence formulations, argument construction, identity warrants, and narrative goals and organization. From these results, I conclude that there is a two-part test of reasonableness to determine the legitimacy of claims of racism. One part of the test asks if speakers who make a charge of racism offer substantiation for their charge which includes, but is not limited to, the use of legitimate roles, the use of consensual information, and the display of an evaluation process as justifications

for their claims. A second part asks if speakers who make such a charge display intersecting standards of in-group and out-group knowledge in such a way that the speaker demonstrates common cultural expectations for specific socially sanctioned frames or contexts as well as in-group consensual knowledge. In this way, the speakers overcome the charge that their claims of racism are mistaken or unsubstantiated by using discourse to construct positive identities and reasonable arguments which are understandable to a larger audience. Based on the data provided by the fourteen interviewees in this study, these two tests of reasonableness contend that reasonable speakers who make reasonable claims must necessarily include, but are not limited to, the above constitutive elements.

## CHAPTER SIX

### DISCUSSION

This study looked at racism from the perspective of those who experience it as an everyday occurrence. In contrast to previous racism research, I used qualitative and discursive methods in this study to frame an incremental understanding of racism as it was perceived to occur between two interactants. In this chapter, I review my findings to RQ1 and RQ2 in terms of the criteria advanced by Potter and Wetherell (1987), discuss limitations of this study, and propose future research directions.

Based on the successful studies completed by Essed (1988, 1990, 1991) and Louw-Potgieter (1988, 1989), my study extended the scope of their approach by focusing on the discursive construction of racist interpretations. The first research question for this study centered on the discourse constructions chosen by interview participants to negotiate their identity both in social interactions that have been interpreted as racist as well as within the interview context. The second research question concentrated attention on the discourse modes chosen by interviewees to present a narrative that was coherent and believable as a claim of racism.

#### Research Questions

Following my selection and interview procedures, I applied two coding frameworks to my interview data. Based on the data resulting from my use of Essed's (1988) and

Preston's (1986) coding categories, I found three consistent patterns. These patterns were: (a) the participants used an account sequence to describe racist and covert racist events that differed from the standard account sequence previously formulated by other researchers (Buttny, 1985; McLaughlin, Cody, & Rosenstein, 1983; Schonbach, 1980; Scott & Lyman, 1968) in that it emphasized the stigmatization of the speaker; (b) the study participants' interview narratives were concerned with rectifying the breach of social expectations and their stigmatized identities which occurred as a result of the racist event; (c) the participants employed a discursive organizational construction in which they used a seminal episode or premise to organize their narratives and, then, presented additional examples of racist incidents to support that initiating event.

These patterns and goals suggested a research generalization that the interviewees had an overall discourse organization design to establish the premise that reasonable speakers make reasonable claims. The interviewees did not assume that their claims would be believed without substantiation in that their claims may be denied as mistaken or unsustainable. In this way, if the speakers established that their identities were reasonable and rational, these identities were further support that their claims were reasonable. The veracity of the speakers'

claims of racism, then, depended upon positive speaker identities and use of reasonable evaluations and evidence.

My first research question asked what discourse constructions and social knowledge are used by the study participants to resolve breached social expectations and problematized racial identities in the described narrative situations. That is, in what ways did the study participants establish their claims as reasonable speakers? In response, I argued that the interviewees used an account formulation in both their past and present narratives which differed in sequence and goals. One way that covert racist accounts differed is in the failure event, reproach, and account sequence. I suggested that, in covert racist events, the failure event was the physical racial appearance of the interviewee. The reproach was the other interactant's response to the interviewee's appearance. The interviewee interpreted this response as racist or stigmatizing. The succeeding account or reply turn was not completed by the interviewees in covert racist events. The interviewees appeared either to ignore or to end the covert interaction. At the time of the precipitating event, then, the speakers did not renegotiate their stigmatized identities or adequately take their reply turn. The participants in my study used their subsequent descriptions of this sequence to resolve identity issues which were precipitated by their physical racial features through

establishing the normalcy of the situation prior to the deviant act and to emphasize the sudden and unexpected nature of what occurred which supported the impression that they did nothing to initiate this account sequence. In the past accounts, then, the speakers normalized their behavior and accentuated the unexpected deviance of the other interactant's actions in contrast with common social expectations for that context.

As I introduced on page 3 and illustrated on page 170, the study participants used the research interview experience to complete the account sequence in which an account reply turn was expected but unfulfilled in the past. In this way, the participants used their narratives within the interview to complete reply turns and, thus, to establish themselves as reliable and reasonable evaluators of the precipitating event, and to accentuate the irrationality of the stigmatization imposed by the other interactant's actions. These demonstrations of mutual accomplishment were used by the interviewees to present themselves as knowledgeable and reasonable evaluators of both in-group and out-group expectations for common social situations.

My second research question asked what discourse modes are used by the study participants in their narratives to construct a believable and reasonable narrative for an audience? That is, how did interviewees constitute as

reasonable their charges of racism? I argued that once the speakers had established reasonable identities, they constructed reasonable claims by establishing legitimate roles to contrast with those stigmatized by the precipitating events, by exhibiting their knowledge of consensual information from both in- and out-groups, by displaying a thoughtful and careful evaluation process, and by organizing the interview narrative around a single premise or precipitating event. These conclusions differed from the conclusions of Essed (1988) and Louw-Potgieter (1988, 1989) on two points. First, there is an indication in my data that what Louw-Potgieter terms a tolerance of racism can alternately be viewed as a reluctance on the part of informants to further stigmatize their identities or to appear to make an unsubstantiated claim of racism. A second point of difference is that the interviewees' narrative organization was based on a pivotal, singular incident or premise, with additional supportive examples. These supportive examples, as examined in this study, should not only be enumerated as additional instantiations of racism, but should be considered as backing for specific narrative claims. Furthermore, I recognized that the interviewees used constructions which were culturally available to both the informants and interviewer. This choice underscores how the interviewees' use of culturally available formulations was assumed to be congruent with the interviewer's

perceptions of the coherency and veracity of the narrative.

To summarize, this study overcomes a limitation of previous studies by including a qualitative perspective, discourse analysis methods, and two coding frameworks. Previous researchers may have inadvertently limited their understanding of interpretations of racism by not considering the discursive construction of an informant's response.

Finally, I proposed a two-part test of reasonableness which can be applied to claims of racism. Part one asks if speakers who make a charge of racism offer substantiation of their charge. This substantiation may include, but is not limited to, the use of legitimate roles, the use of consensual information, and the display of an evaluation process. The second part of the test of reasonableness asks if speakers who make such a charge display an intersection of standards from both in-group and out-group knowledge in such a way that the speaker demonstrates common cultural expectations for specific socially sanctioned frames as well as in-group consensual knowledge.

My results, then, suggest that there are certain discursive characteristics which are culturally available to speakers to establish reasonable identities and to make reasonable claims. In the following section, I examine my findings in terms of the four criteria proposed by Potter and Wetherell (1987) for evaluating the validity of

qualitative discourse analyses: coherence, participant observation, new problems and fruitfulness.

### Validity Criteria

#### Coherence

The first criterion suggested by Potter and Wetherell (1987) is the coherence with which a researcher presents a set of analytic claims and data displays to demonstrate the functions of the specified discourse structures. The goal of this study was not to describe racism, but to examine the discursive constructions of narratives about racist events. In other words, I examined the structures interviewees used to compose their narratives in order to present a positive identity and a coherent claim. In Chapter Four, I presented interview 10 to explain my coding and analysis process. I stated that, although Essed's (1988) framework was useful as a frame for the interview data about racism, Preston's (1986) Interaction and Participant categories offered a more detailed list of functions for examining discourse modes. Based on the results of the two coding frameworks, I concluded that there were three discursive patterns present in all fourteen interviews. These patterns suggested a research generalization that the interviewees used their narratives to establish that they were reasonable speakers making reasonable claims. In Chapter Five, I shared my study results and presented a variety of examples from several interviews in order to support my analysis of the

discursive modes used by interviewees to create reasonable speaker identities, to overcome negative ones, and to craft reasonable arguments for their interpretation of racism. These discursive modes were constitutive of the narratives of those who made interpretations of racism.

### Participant Observation

This second criterion from Potter and Wetherell (1987) refers to a researcher's awareness that his or her interpretations are aligned with those of the participants. This criterion was satisfied in three ways: the use of self-selection by the research participants as bearers of experiences with racist incidents, the employment of a straight-forward statement of the purpose of the interviews in the request for an interview, and the application of a supportive, but restrained, interview protocol.

First, the self-selection of interviewees assured the study that those participants who responded were aware of the social norms and expectations of an interview context. This indicated that the study participants realized that they would be sharing possibly humiliating, intimidating, and stigmatizing episodes with someone whom they did not know.

Second, each participant was aware of the topic and goal of the study and came to the interview with a problematized concept of racism as well as a narrative about the event. That the interviewees were prepared to share

instances of racial discrimination in response to the interview request added reliability to the discourse data gathered in this corpus in two ways: each informant demonstrated a comprehension of the scope of the question, and each informant had an understanding of what abilities were needed in order to meet the interactant achievement expectations of this situation.

Third, based on the interview protocol of Essed (1988) and Louw-Potgieter (1989) and following the suggestions outlined by Polyani (1985), I restricted myself to supportive comments and clarification questions and indicated my interest in the reconstructions offered by the speakers without signalling that I would doubt or challenge the veracity of their interpretations of a situation. This procedure permitted a more narrative-type discourse to be constructed, rather than an interrogative discourse style dominated by the researcher. In other words, the interview participants were allowed to create or construct their narratives in a manner that was appropriate for them. My use of clarification or follow-up questions permitted me to confirm my understanding of the speakers' discourse about racism. In addition, the consistent discourse patterns within all fourteen interviewees suggest that these conclusions are supportable.

#### New Problems

The third criterion is new problems. The use of

discourse analysis methods brought into focus areas of narrative construction that had not been explored by either Essed or Louw-Potgieter. The underlying assumption of this study--as was presented in Chapter Four--was that the interviewees' narratives were worthy of study as everyday explanations of racism and legitimate justifications of racist interpretations. As such, these narrative explanations were available for study.

As I argued in Chapter Four, Essed's framework was useful for her purposes; however, in addition to her five-part framework, parts of Preston's (1986) scheme were employed to code and analyze interview responses. The use of Preston's participant and interaction categories revealed a consistent pattern of identity issues through the use of the words "identity", names of derogation, the argument claims based in "we were taught that..." or "I know that...", pronoun usage, and Wooffitt's "I was just doing X ...when Y" construction (1991).

Once I described racism as a stigmatized identity (Goffman, 1963) at the point of contact with another interactant, it became apparent that the interviewees' descriptions of the stigmatizing event did not follow the account sequence proposed by other researchers (Buttny, 1985; McLaughlin, Cody, & Rosenstein, 1983; Schonbach, 1980, 1990; Scott & Lyman, 1968). A careful reading of the transcripts revealed that the unexpected and stigmatizing

nature of racist events did not easily permit the study speakers to confront the perpetrator of the incident and also did not allow a normalizing turn to occur. In Chapter Five, I outlined the interaction account sequence proposed by other researchers as well as that accomplished by those faced by racist events.

Because the account sequence as previously described did not portray accurately what occurred in covert racist narratives, I used the Essed (1988) and Preston (1986) frameworks to examine the data for other discursive patterns. This search yielded: the constitutive formulation of narratives around a singular, seminal event or premise, the use of secondary examples to support a speaker's interpretation of racism and not to illustrate racism, and discursive constructions which alleviated the speaker's stigmatization. In summary, my analytic perspectives centered on what discursive elements constituted an explanation of racist events. My results and examples explain the differences I encountered in my data which were not explained by previous racism researchers and substantiate my conclusions.

### Fruitfulness

The final criterion is fruitfulness. I will organize my discussion of this criterion into two parts. Part one will focus on the internal coherence and consistency that each participant displayed in their explanations supporting

racist interpretations and part two will focus on the use of identity as a construction of racism incidents.

Fruitfulness: Part one. Previous studies in racism examined the perspective of those who perpetrated racism. White attitudes and projected actions were studied through surveys and responses to fictionalized scenarios. Essed and Louw-Potgieter used interview data from those affected by racism, framed by Essed's five part coding schema, to answer the question "what is racism?" One contention of both Essed and Louw-Potgieter was that the explanations given by interview participants were not overly sensitive or unreasonable but were formulated to justify the interviewees' claim of racism. Essed's framework was useful for my interview data and these categories were found to be used by all of the interviewees in my study. However, neither of the previous researchers examined how the internal coherence and justification for the interpretation was accomplished during the interview, nor did they examine the explanations given by interview speakers of other stigmatized groups.

There is an obvious presupposition that both the interviewer and the interviewee understood the behavioral norms and expectations of the interview context. As I stated earlier, only one interviewee in my corpus of data made an overt mention of what would happen in the interview. This lack of reflexivity in perspective may have led

previous researchers to miss the importance of mutual participant achievement by their study interviewees and interviewers.

Internal coherence and consistency of the interviewees' interpretations of racism were discursively apparent in their choice of a seminal event or premise in order to organize their response and the use of supportive examples, an evaluation process, and group-based, consensual knowledge to support claims. These constructions were used to formulate coherent and reasonable justifications for the speakers' interpretations of racism. That is, the label of racism was not stated without substantiation.

As I contended in Chapter Three, however, these constructions are culturally available to both dominant and minority group members. Essed and Louw-Potgieter claim that these constructions lend veracity to the claims made by out-group members. This is true and undeniable. However, neither researcher recognized the reflexivity of the interview situation and the interaction quality this implies.

Thus, I argued that these constructions were consciously chosen by the informants for use within the interview in order to promote mutual interactant achievement and a subsequent positive identity in the interview situation. That is, informants chose these constructions to be understandable and coherent to other interactants. This

is not to say that other constructions would have been chosen if the interviewer were physically marked as being part of the dominant group, but it does imply that out-group members use constructions that are understandable and coherent to a larger audience. Interviewee 7, a student who described herself as American-White, used discourse constructions similar to those who described themselves as ethnic minorities to support her claim that she was affected by racism. This is further substantiation that these discourse modes are culturally available to both dominant and minority group members. Essed's conclusion, then, should not be that these speakers meet tests of coherency, but that they use constructions that she understands as coherent. Furthermore, if these constructions are culturally available, then out-group members would have to use them in order to fulfill the mutual goal of participant achievement in this context. Thus, tests of coherency and justification are better described in terms of constitutive elements such as those presented in my two tests of reasonableness.

Fruitfulness: Part Two.

This study found that both dominant group members and minority group members formulated their claims in similar ways, but differed in the types of support and appeals used. For example, Interviewee 7 used her White, American taxpayer identity to gain relief from discriminatory practices she

felt she encountered in her student role. In other instances, Interviewee 12 supported his claim with his racism expert role, Interviewee 10 used her customer role, and Interviewee 15 appealed to her restaurant customer and job employees roles in order to ameliorate their stigmatized identities.

The use of identity as an organizing scheme for claims in racist encounters is not mentioned by previous researchers. However, it is constitutive of the narratives that the speakers provided. The examples given in Chapters Four and Five are evidence that, at the point of contact with an interactant who problematizes the race of the speaker, it is the identity of the speaker that is stigmatized. In the narrative explanations of the interview, the context of the racist event is described as normal and usual, which is in contrast to the sudden and unexpected nature of the racist act. The so-called perpetrators of the acts (by bearing a racial or ethnic identity) are assigned full agency for them, but these speakers are described as not taking responsibility for the resulting stigmatization. That is, the speakers do not apologize or excuse their racial appearance. These constructions are evidence that identities that were stigmatized within precipitating events were renegotiated in racist narratives. This area is particularly fruitful because it accentuates the discursive goals of the

participants, accounts for the type of constructions present in the data, and presents a perspective that is not heavily researched in this particular context.

This study has met the four validity techniques proposed by Potter and Wetherell (1986) through careful use of procedures and methods. I have presented all my study processes, data, and analysis claims in as clear a manner as possible in order to invite other colleagues to examine my work.

#### Study Limitations

As I mentioned at the start of Chapter Four, a choice of method implies a particular perspective. As with any research project, choices were made as to how best to address specific research issues. This study is regarded as exploratory in its investigation of the discourse surrounding racist incidents and their representation in narratives from the perspective of those affected by this phenomenon. In this regard, there are three limitations of this study.

The first limitation is the limited number of interviews. The number of interviews in this project does not compare favorably with previous studies. The self-selection method of participant recruitment as well as the possibly self-stigmatizing nature of this research project did not seem to encourage a large number of respondents. It is important to note, however, that a greater variety of

participants responded to the interview request than in previous research studies. A greater number of interviews, however, would provide a further test of the robustness of this study's findings.

A second limitation of this study is the self-selection process. This process was both an advantage and a disadvantage. As I mentioned above, self-selection limited the number of respondents to the call for participants. This procedure may have drawn only those informants who were willing to problematize race to an interviewer. Thus, while this procedure gave confidence to the study in other ways, it is difficult to determine if those who responded to the call were representative of the general population. Conversely, it is also difficult to refute the perspective of the informants. That is, the interview reconstructions of my fourteen respondents may not be representative of all those who experience racism. As Interviewee 12 suggested in his interview, potential participants may be reluctant to come forward because: a) they would have to recount personally humiliating and painful episodes, b) face possible retribution, and c) confront the resignation of having nothing change. Based on these issues, generalizability of these findings may be limited without a greater number of interviews.

Third, although all the constructions point to being constitutive elements of narrative explanations of racist

interpretations, this study lacks a strong counter-example. That is, I was able to account for all variations within the data of this study. A search for a counter-example would provide critical falsification (Jacobs, 1986, p. 433) that the discourse claims I make about racism, as described above, are adequately represented. Once again, I have presented my findings in as clear a manner as possible in hopes that further studies will be able to recognize and investigate this perspective.

#### Future Research Directions

There are several future research directions that await investigation in the area of discourse, discourse analysis, and racism. There are four specific areas that are recommended by the findings of this study. The first area, as was alluded to in this study in regard to Essed's test of coherence, is the reflexivity in discourse of both the interview and analysis contexts. The study of reflexivity (Potter, Stringer, & Wetherell, 1984) as both an investigator's object of examination as well as the means of doing so admits the mutual accomplishment of both levels of discourse.

Second, an application of the research done by Wetherell and Potter (1992) to the White American population would be useful. Wetherell and Potter analyzed and described the ideologically-based interpretive repertoires used by European New Zealanders when interviewed about the

indigenous Maori population. Such a discursive study would add a significant perspective to the already extensive data concerning White American attitudes and beliefs about Blacks and other minority groups.

Third, the discursive constructions suggested by this study were based on identity issues. Goffman (1963) proposed other visibly apparent stigmatized identities. A productive future research direction would focus on these other groups in order to further apply and test the discursive structures described herein.

A fourth direction, based on the indications in this study, is the investigation of other culturally available repertoires for establishment of claims, account turn sequences in other stigmatizing contexts, and additional aligning and normalizing strategies in racial encounters.

#### Conclusion

This study filled a void in racism research by exploring the discursive construction of an often neglected population. This study overcame the limitations of previous discursive studies by collecting a new corpus of data from a variety of respondents, applying two coding frameworks to reveal the constructions of coherence and consistency previously noted by Essed (1988) and Louw-Potgieter (1989), and identifying other constitutive characteristics of narrative explanations of racist events. Furthermore, an alternate account formulation and a two-part test of

reasonableness were proposed to generate alternative explanations of justification coherency and racism identity struggles in verbal accounts of racism. The conclusions of this study point to a possible research bias in the lack of attention and recognition given to the perspective of those who exist within a dominant culture, but are seen as outside of it.

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## APPENDIX A

### Notational System\*

- [ ] Brackets are used to indicate overlapping utterances. Left bracket indicates the beginning of the overlap, and the right bracket notes the end of the overlap.
- = The equal sign denotes that two utterances are contiguous but do not overlap.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Underlining denotes stress or emphasis.
- ? A question mark indicates a rising inflection, but not necessarily a question.
- .
- A period reflects a stopping fall in inflection and not necessarily the end of a sentence.
- ,
- A comma indicates a continuing inflection. It does not necessarily reflect clauses, etc.
- (0.0)
- When there were long intervals between utterances, they were indicated within the parentheses where they occurred.
- (( ))
- Comments within the double parentheses are the transcriber's descriptive remarks.
- ((pause))
- Longer untimed pauses are indicated with the word pause between the double parentheses. This was inserted where such pauses occurred.
- 
- A short untimed pause was indicated by the hyphen.
- ::
- Colon indicates that a particular sound or syllable was extended or drawn out. The number of colons visually approximates the length of the sound extensions.

\*Based on the notational system developed by Gail Jefferson and published in Atkinson, J. & Heritage, J. (1984). Structures of social action: Studies in conversational analysis (pp. ix-xvi). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

## **APPENDIX B**

### **Forms Used in this Research Study**

The following forms were used during the course of this research project. They are listed below and are displayed on the following pages.

- Informant Consent Form
- Informant Interview Information Sheet
- Interview Log
- Interview Guide
- Analysis Guide

**CONSENT FORM**

INVESTIGATOR: Sandra Cross

TELEPHONE: (206) 640-1389

I hereby consent to participate in an investigation conducted by Sandra Cross, a graduate student in the Department of Speech Communication at the University of Washington. This consent will permit the tape recording of one or more interviews with the investigator. I understand that the investigator may take some hand-written notes during the interview. I understand that the investigator is doing this study as part of her doctoral work to learn about explanations of racist experiences.

I understand that the responses I give will remain anonymous. In the final research report, my name, or other names I mention, will not be identified or will be reflected by pseudonyms. Further, the name of the institution(s) where these experiences occurred will not be identified in any written documents or verbal presentations that result from this study.

I understand that at any time during the interview, if I do not wish to answer a question, I have the right to refuse to answer. I also understand I have the right to terminate any interview at any time without penalty or recourse.

I understand that if I have further comments or questions, I may contact the interviewer.

---

Signature of Participant

Date

---

Signature of Investigator

Date

## INTERVIEW INFORMATION SHEET

#\_\_\_\_\_

NAME:

ADDRESS:

TELEPHONE:

STUDENT ID #:

#\_\_\_\_\_

AGE:

CITIZENSHIP:

LENGTH OF RESIDENCE IN THE UNITED STATES:

LENGTH OF RESIDENCE IN THE GREATER SEATTLE AREA:

NUMBER OF CREDITS AT THE COMMUNITY COLLEGE:

OTHER COLLEGES OR UNIVERSITIES:

HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE YOUR ABILITY WITH THE AMERICAN  
ENGLISH LANGUAGE: (fluent, native-like; mostly fluent, some  
difficulty, etc.)

HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE YOUR ETHNICITY?

WHAT ARE YOUR EDUCATIONAL INTERESTS OR YOUR MAJOR?

WHAT ARE YOUR EDUCATIONAL GOALS?

WHAT IS YOUR EMPLOYMENT AND/OR YOUR EMPLOYMENT GOALS?



**INTERVIEW GUIDE**

1. **Introductions**  
Sharing of information about myself and asking of similar questions of the participant.
2. **Statement of the purpose of the interview and procedure**  
As part of my research project, I am conducting interviews with people who have experienced racism here on campus. The interviews will be recorded and transcribed. As mentioned on the consent form, all information will remain confidential.
3. **Have the participant fill out the Interview Information Sheet and the Consent Form.**
4. **Do you have any questions for me? If not, we'll get started. You can stop me at any time, if you have a question or our concerned about what is occurring in the interview.**
5. **Have you ever experienced racial or ethnic discrimination in an academic setting during or since your high school years? If so, please tell me about it in as much detail as possible.**
6. **Conclude the interview and give the participant a card with my name and number on it.**

## ANALYSIS GUIDE

### Essed's five categories

1. Context - everything as detailed below using parts of Preston's categories.
2. Complication - what is wrong, deviant, or tense. Essed's context category might be made problematic in the reconstruction of the context, the interviewer's gender, for example.
3. Evaluation - explanations of why this event was evaluated as racist. Statements of expectations, social group knowledge, and beliefs. Statements that indicate the only when alternate explanations are not available is it called racist.
4. Argumentation -a) statements to justify the claim and b) statements which involve consistency and/or consistency within the participant, the participant's group, and across groups. Other comparisons for consistency and justification.
5. Decision - Speaker's end result or resolution of the event. Plans, intentions, expectations, actions, and concluding statements concerning what happened or will happen as a result of the event observed here.

### 1. Who is involved? (Context)

Name:

Age:

Gender:

Nativeness:

Ethnicity:

Role:

Specialization:

Status:

Fluency:

Time:

Place:

**Length:**

**Size:**

**Situation:**

**Topic:**

**Relation:**

**Function:**

**Tenor:**

## Appendix C

### Sample Transcript

Interview: #10

- 1 #1: I mentioned in class, um - when I went to your  
2 class that uh my project deals with any experiences  
3 that you have felt uh could be described as (racis)  
4 racism or ethnic discrimination and um particularly  
5 in academic settings and I record this but it's um,  
6 after it's transcribed I don't keep anything so  
7 it's very anonymous, ha ha ha [ ha ] okay. So we =  
8 #2: [ okay ]  
9 #1: =generally will not refer to each other by name. ha  
10 ha ha - So why don't you just start with =  
11 #2: okay  
12 #1: =your experience.
- 13 #2: Well um, I don't know if it's, well I went to a (g)  
14 department store, it's not a really academic  
15 setting but it's kinda discriminating. I went to a  
16 department store at the (department store) - and  
17 umm, (smack) =  
18 #1: mhm  
19 #2: =I wanted to get my watch band, you know I want to  
20 buy it there but um there was this old man that. I  
21 was the only one there [ and ] he's just =  
22 #1: [ uha ]  
23 #2: =walking around, he would not help me, um and then  
24 I even um called - and he didn't, he just ignored=  
25 #1: oh  
26 #2: =um and all of a sudden this White lady, well you  
27 know, [ women ] came in and he just walk up=  
28 #1: [ uha ]  
29 #2: =to them and asked them, you know, for help, if  
30 they need any help in finding anything, you [ know ]  
31 and I was like, okay. So I felt =  
32 #1: [ ohh ]  
33 #2: =like, [(soft) I was just] it was just unreal  
(hoa), you know, it's like it never happened to me  
before and that was like the first time - and - =  
34 #1: uha  
35 #2: =probably, you know, the way I dress it's not as  
sophisticated or - you know - not as professional=  
36 #1: oh uha  
37 #2: =type thing [ but ] um I just dress in my regular=  
38 #1: [ uha ]  
39 #2: =clothes, - you know, in jeans, shirt, t-shirts=  
40 #1: uha  
41 #2: =but maybe that's, - or maybe cause I'm Asian or,=  
42 #1: uha  
43 #2: =you know, - doesn't have the money to give 'em =  
44 #1: uha  
45 #2: =or [ something, I don't know ] but - (i) it was=  
46 #1: [ ha ha ha ha ha ] uha

47 #2: =really um intimidating.

48 #1: So this was uh ((pause)) this was a um =  
 Uk: [(soft) oh hi]

49 #1: =situation where you felt discrimination, um - =  
 50 #2: mhm

51 #1: =and but you're not sure whether it was racial or  
 52 because of dress or money or status or?

53 #2: I - I don't think it's, I don't know how he looked  
 54 at it but um - I think because - I just um - maybe  
 55 cause I'm Asian I think because the way I dress is  
 56 like normal, you [ know going ] to the store, I =  
 57 #1: [ mhm ]

58 #2: =mean you don't dress, you know, uh going to the  
 59 store anything, it's like, you know, a gangster or  
 60 something, I don't dress like that bad but it's  
 61 just normal clothes going to school,  
 62 [ you know, ] just like (breath) [ um ] - I=  
 63 #1: uha [ and ]

64 #2: =think I think because - I don't know, I don't -  
 65 because I don't wear any jewelries or ha ha - I=  
 66 #1: mhm

67 #2: =don't have make-up on or maybe the way I look  
 68 or - you know, sometimes refuse to, sometime =  
 69 #1: mhm

70 #2: =people say refuse to help Asian or something, you  
 71 know, ethnic discrimination [ they ] want to =  
 72 #1: [ ya ]

73 #2: =help their kind, you know.  
 74 #1: okay

75 #1: Um so but did see him help someone else while you  
 76 were there, nokay. And

77 #2: That was the hard part to accept because it's like  
 78 excuse me, you know, I was here like long, way  
 79 longer than her you know, it (wa) it was really  
 80 interesting - but um I later on I tell the woman,=  
 81 #1: ya

82 #2: =she she came out, there was a woman came out and  
 83 she asked can, you know, (t) if I need any help  
 84 and I was like well that man was really rude, you  
 85 know, and but but she didn't say anything though  
 86 - [ you ] know she she didn't even say sorry =  
 87 #1: mmm [ mmm ]

88 #2: =about that or something, I mean  
 89 #1: oh

90 #1: So how did you feel because she didn't apologize  
 91 and she didn't say oh I'm sorry or

92 #2: Well I I guess - I don't know how I feel but at  
 93 the time ((pause)) I think it was very polite of  
 94 her to ask and help any way [ but ] well that's =  
 95 #1: [ mhm ]  
 96 #2: =her job, you know but I didn't really get into,  
 97 you know, why she didn't have to say sorry for  
 98 him, I mean he, you know, - I ((5 second pause)) I  
 99 just feel really, you know, terrible, you know, I  
 100 just, [(soft) ha ha] I just like oh you know buy  
 101 all the things just to let him know that, you  
 102 know, that I'm not a cheapskate or something, I  
 103 don't know what he's (loo), you know,  
 104 #1: uha ya  
 105 #1: So you're not quite ((pause)) but you felt that=  
 106 #2: judging me as  
 107 #1: =[ you ] don't know why but there was some kind =  
 108 #2: [ ya ]  
 109 #1: =of judgment going on  
 110 #2: Oh ya there is definitely. I mean it was right  
 111 there, you know, he'd show it. I mean instead of  
 112 helping me, I was the only one there, you know, on  
 113 the counter but - right in front of him too, cause  
 114 you know how you stand, you go up - and you know =  
 115 #1: ya  
 116 #2: =how they place the they sell the watch band  
 117 [ right ] in front of the counter? - by the =  
 118 #1: [ mhm ] mhm  
 119 #2: =cashier? - so he was right there and I was =  
 120 #1: mha  
 121 #2: =like okay (breath) ah so I was that's that's like  
 122 one of the  
 123 #1: You said something earlier on about sometimes uh  
 124 maybe people don't want to help Asians, ((pause))=  
 125 #2: (wh) u-um  
 126 #1: =tell me some more about that  
 127 #2: Oh - um, well I don't know what the real story is  
 128 about, you know, how to they think of Asian or  
 129 [ something ] but um - one point I heard that um =  
 130 #1: [ mhm ]  
 131 #2: =because of the Vietnam war - you know how they  
 132 think of - you know Asian because their relative  
 133 or something got killed at the [ Vietnam ] war or=  
 134 #1: [ ohh ]  
 135 #2: =something - so some Americans discriminate =  
 136 #1: uha  
 137 #2: =against Asians because of that - um that's what =

- 138 #1: uha
- 139 #2: =I heard but I don't know - but I don't know - if=  
 140 #1: uha uha  
 141 #2: =it's really true because I never met a person  
 142 that said oh you know I hate Vietnamese or  
 143 something or something like that [ or ] Asian=  
 144 #1: [ uha ]  
 145 #2: =or [ but ] um - um one of my friends she she's=  
 146 #1: ya  
 147 #2: =American and her [ parents ] ((pause)) ya =  
 148 #1: [ is she ] a Caucasian  
 149 #2: =[ she's ] Caucasian um one of her I mean her =  
 150 #1: [ okay ]  
 151 #2: =parents strictly told her that she's not allowed  
 152 to go out with Asians, that she's allowed to have  
 153 friends with them but not a boyfriend, [ boy ] =  
 154 #1: mmm  
 155 #2: =friends [ so ] and and she had to sneak out =  
 156 #1: mhm  
 157 #2: =when she, you know, I somebody that's see that's  
 158 that's the only one that I, you know - I heard=  
 159 #1: uha  
 160 #2: =from [ and ] she'd tell me directly that [ her ] =  
 161 #1: [ uha ] ya  
 162 #2: =um parent isn't um allow she could talk to a  
 163 phone, you know, on the phone [ with ] them - but=  
 164 #1: mhm mhm  
 165 #2: =um she said that her family is strictly a White  
 166 traditional family - [(soft) ya]  
 167 #1: mhm
- 168 #1: So she told, you heard from her, from her directly  
 169 [ um ] have you heard this from anyone else?  
 170 #2: [ ya ]
- 171 #2: No because, I'm not really [ close ] to White =  
 172 #1: ya  
 173 #2: =people as [ much ] because, you know, =  
 174 #1: [ uha ]  
 175 #2: =[ it's just  
 176 #1: [ or have other ] Asians told you that?
- 177 #2: Um - well - no because my - friends they're - they  
 178 were either born or they came here when they were  
 179 really young, [ younger ] than I was. [ See ] I =  
 180 #1: mhm mhm  
 181 #2: =got here when I was nine years old - but um my =  
 182 #1: mhm  
 183 #2: =Asian friends they were here like when they were  
 184 four years old or they were born here - so they =  
 185 #1: mhm

186 #2: =don't um - really have (tha) that kind of  
 187 discrimination because they grew up in a  
 188 neighborhood and, [ you ] know, and where their =  
 189 #1: [ uha ]  
 190 #2: =parents bring them and stuff like that I guess -=  
 191 #1: uha  
 192 #2: =they never experience themselves, maybe their  
 193 parents but I don't they never say anything about  
 194 [ that. ] - Umm but that was the only um - thing=  
 195 #1: [ mhm ] mhm  
 196 #2: =I heard was from my American friend. Well that's  
 197 the only close friend I have - were really close =  
 198 #1: ya  
  
 199 #2: =so that's why she told me that - cause she liked=  
 200 #1: ya  
 201 #2: =this um Asian guy - that was we we all have, you=  
 202 #1: uha  
 203 #2: =know, volley ball class - ya we got um we have =  
 204 #1: uha  
 205 #2: =(breath) we play volley ball together so she  
 206 liked this guy [ and ] he's Laos - and um - I =  
 207 #1: [ uha ] uha  
 208 #2: =guess they like each other - but in order to =  
 209 #1: uha  
 210 #2: =go out with her she had to keep secret from her  
 211 parents - [ so she ] had to um like ((pause)) =  
 212 #1: oh [ okay ] ha ha ha  
 213 #2: =[ um ] not really lie to [ them ] but tell them=  
 214 #1: [ ha ] [ ya ]  
 215 #2: =[ like ] I'm going out with a friend, =  
 216 #1: [ uha ]  
 217 #2: =- [ you know, instead ] of [ - ya ] so she =  
 218 #1: oh [ uha right ] [ right ]  
 219 #2: =had [ to ] sneak out that way so that's =  
 220 #1: [ I see ]  
 221 #2: =[ (breath) ((pause)) ] and and you know and I (c1)  
 222 I told her I was like gosh you know this is  
 223 America, you know, you can't you can't turn away  
 224 from it, you know, because it's all cultural  
 225 diversity here - you know it's (li nya) you can't=  
 226 #1: mhm  
 227 #2: =get a pure Caucasian as well I mean, - you know,=  
 228 #1: mhm  
 229 #2: =Caucasian what is Caucasian, you know, Scottish,  
 230 Irish, or [ what ] you [ know ] so - I guess =  
 231 #1: [ uha ] [ uha ]  
 232 #2: =they basically say as long as you have blond hair  
 233 or [ brown or something brunette ] or something -=  
 234 #1: [ ha ha ha ha ha ha ] uha  
 235 #2: =you know - uhmm [ but ]  
 236 #1: right [ nkay ]

237 #1: Have there been other experiences um you mentioned  
 238 that this one at the (department store) was the  
 239 first one - has =  
 240 #2: ya  
 241 #1: =that been about the only [ one ]  
 242 #2: [ ya ]  
  
 243 #2: Ya that's the only real, one that because I don't  
 244 usually go um - shopping, you know, at other -=  
 245 #1: mhm  
 246 #2: =stores like um, it depends on the department  
 247 store. Like (another store) they're really nice  
 248 there, you know, they don't - really care but um =  
 249 #1: mhm  
 250 #2: -= well about make-up like at, you know, where  
 251 they have it, I use Clinique and I went there I  
 252 guess the lady was really nice but the problem is  
 253 that she doesn't know how to put make-up on an  
 254 Asian cause we have different tone of skin and the  
 255 make-up is not really for us it's just for they  
 256 they only know how to use it for White people, -=  
 257 #1: mhm  
 258 #2: =you know, put it on - so - when they put it on =  
 259 #1: mhm  
 260 #2: =me I was like - and and I think she felt she=  
 261 #1: mmm ya  
 262 #2: =felt that too. She felt that it's not  
 263 appropriate but she don't know what else to use,  
 264 you know, so that's I think that's - well I just =  
 265 #1: uha  
 266 #2: =feel like they should learn how to, you know, use  
 267 any type of make-up on any type of skin, - you =  
 268 #1: uha  
 269 #2: =know if they are behind the counter in cosmetics  
 270 i-it's, you know, it's like, you know, and I just  
 271 feel that they should learn more about other  
 272 culture, you [ know, ] or use other people as =  
 273 #1: [ mhm ]  
 274 #2: =well - as their own but [ I guess ] some people=  
 275 #1: uha [ right ]  
 276 #2: =know only know how to use, you know,  
 277 [ basically ] on  
 278 #1: uha  
 279 #2: their type of people [ or their ]  
 280 #1: [ ha ha ]  
 281 #2: =kind - ya so that's that was (ki) that was one =  
 282 #1: uha  
 283 #2: =time that I was [ like ] you know cause I =  
 284 #1: [ ha ha ]  
 285 #2: =planning well y-you get a makeover, you know,  
 286 you probably [ can ] go out afterwards, =  
 287 #1: [ yaa ]

288 #2: =[ you know, ] but I was like (breath in) I have=  
 289 [ ha ha ha  
 290 #2: =to wash my face - [ before ] I go out =  
 291 #1: ha ha [ ha ha ]  
 292 #2: =because I look really like a evil or demon or  
 293 [ something ] cause she put my eyes too dark =  
 294 #1: [ ha ha ha  
 295 #2: =[ see ] my eyes are small already and =  
 296 #1: [ ohh ]  
 297 #2: =[ y-ya and she ] put it to dark and I was like=  
 298 #1: ha ha ha  
 299 #2: =oh especially I don't use eye shadow cause it  
 300 looks really funny, makes your eye look (?) so  
 301 that's [ like ] (?)  
 302 #1: [ okay ]

303 #1: And nothing in the academic settings, but mostly  
 304 kind of a shopping situation right?  
 305 #2: ya

306 #2: That's that's what happened to me but um like well  
 307 like at school, - like when I was in high school,=  
 308 #1: mhm  
 309 #2: =um - uh some Blacks does not like Asian - maybe=  
 310 #1: mmm  
 311 #2: =because the reputation, you know, like - gangster  
 312 or something?

313 #1: Oh so maybe Asians are gangsters? Okay.

314 #2: Ya well or, or sometime when they have a fight  
 Blacks - ya I have um - I've heard of it when I =  
 315 #1: uha  
 316 #2: =was in school it was, you know, I was walking -=  
 317 #1: uha  
 318 #2: =Blacks people they like get their clumps, you  
 319 know, like they have th-their group - and then,=  
 320 #1: uha  
 321 #2: =you know, sometimes when you walk by them or  
 322 something they make face at you - you know like=  
 323 #1: oh  
 324 #2: =you know I was like you're a slut or something,  
 325 you know, [ they just ] the face expression is =  
 326 #1: uha  
 327 #2: =sometimes they look at you like that and I've  
 328 seen that but they don't do it really directly,  
 329 you know, it's like indirect [ it ] was like an =  
 330 #1: [ oh ]  
 331 #2: =indirect thing - but um you sense it cause - you=  
 332 #1: uha  
 333 #2: =don't - when when well when I was high school you  
 334 don't see, you know, Asian mixed with Black

335 [ it's ] really rare, you know, but Blacks they =  
336 #1: [ mhm ]  
337 #2: =just get in their own group - and I don't=  
338 #1: uha uha  
339 #2: =know what they talk about I don't go to  
340 [ eardrop but I don't ] want to but um I =  
341 #1: [ ha ha ha ya ]  
342 #2: =think they have some kind of discrimination  
343 against Asians - so that too  
344 #1: nkay nkay  
345 #1: Well great I'm glad you came in today.

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