

ETHNOGRAPHY of SPEAKING-and-FEEDING #2

SPEAKING

Setting	<u>Macro:</u> Friday, November 10, 2017. Piscataway Township, New Jersey, U.S.	<u>Micro:</u> Evening-9pm Elizabeth Jones' On-Campus Apartment (Kitchen Area- food preparation occurred on the countertop)
Participants	<u>General sociocultural characteristics</u> Including the researcher Lacy, there are 3 young adults who are familiar with one another and with cooking. Elizabeth Jones and Lacy J. enjoy baking. Jamie Smith enjoys regular cooking.	<u>Individual identities and roles</u> Elizabeth Jones- cisgendered female, 22, 4 th year undergraduate student, middle class, American with European ethnic background Jamie Smith-cisgendered female, 19, 3 rd year undergraduate student, working class, American with Hispanic ethnic background Lacy J- cisgendered female, 21, 3 rd year undergraduate student, working class, Hispanic American with mixed racial background
Ends	<u>Goals of the discourse event in general</u> 1. To bake and decorate cupcakes 2. To bond more as a group	<u>Goals of a few specific discursive acts</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share a past experience and express excitement Jamie S.- "I went to the drag show. I went yesterday at [a residence hall] (Lacy J.-It was yesterday?) Yeeess" • To make the group get started baking Elizabeth Jones- Read the back of the cupcake box and then said "Do you want to use water or milk for this? It says to use water, but we can use milk instead." Lacy J. and Jamie S. had stared at the camera and danced ridiculously to acknowledge its presence while Elizabeth just read the box. Her comment made all participants begin to open the packages and get the necessary ingredients.
Acts	<u>Usual types of discursive acts</u> 1. Greetings 2. Discussion 3. Innuendos 4. Apologies 5. Praise 6. Back-channeling	<u>Examples of these discursive acts</u> 1. Greeting- Jamie S. was late to the event. When she arrived, Lacy J. and Elizabeth J. both acknowledged her arrival with "Hello" or a similar greeting. 2. Discussion about excitement for a coffee shop's winter flavors Jamie S.- "...I need the chestnut praliene in my life." Elizabeth J- "I'm just ready for the eggnog latte" Jamie S.-" I don't really like eggnog much..."

	<p>7. Double entendres 8. Paralinguistics</p>	<p>3. Innuendo- Lacy J. was reading the back of the box to figure out how much water was needed Lacy J.- “Imma grab some water. Right? A third cup of water?...” Jamie S.- “Girrrl- Are you thirsty Lacy?” (referring to a common joke that when people (man or woman) have sexual desires they are “thirsty”) Lacy J.- *reading the box* - “No it’s one cup of water... Girl I’m mad thirsty. You know me on the weekends.” *acknowledging/returning the joke* Jamie S.- *laughs*</p> <p>4. Apology- immediately following the innuendo, Lacy J. went to grab the measuring cup to get some water. As she was reaching across the counter, she bumped into Elizabeth J., who was immediately to her right. A brief apology was given in passing with no further acknowledgement. Lacy J. “<i>Ooh. I’m so sorry</i>” Elizabeth J.-does not look at Lacy J., but acknowledges a roommate simultaneously passing by- “We’re just/ we’re just having some chaos over here” Jamie S.- “The younger girls in my choir..” Didn’t realize what was happening and was giving a story about how she educated some younger students in her choir group about sexual health</p> <p>5. Praise- The decoration process proved very tricky since the group was using icing bags for the first time to try and create designs. As a result, the group kept praising one another on their questionable designs. Jamie S. “Girl... what is this? Mine just looks like poop.” Lacy J. “I like it... it’s/creative” Elizabeth J. “I couldn’t do it with the bag. I’m just using a knife... But mine still looks bad.” *small giggle* Jamie S. “I like yours better though/ for real. <i>At least it’s smooth!</i>”</p> <p>6. Back-channeling- As members of the group told stories about events that had occurred, the other members of the group often nodded their head or would say “Yeah” Jamie S. “Where’s my apron? Where’s the gloves? And why haven’t we changed the gloves five times already?” *verbally acknowledging the contrast between how she usually cooks at her job versus making cupcakes with us* Lacy J. “Yeah. Yeah”</p> <p>7. Double entendres- Jamie S. was sick that day. Elizabeth J. was trying to open the</p>
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Keys	<p><u>Overall mood</u> Joyous, Open</p>	<p><u>Some specific emotional moments</u></p> <p>1. Excitement about coffee: Elizabeth J “I was in [a] dining hall last night, they have a cold brew ice coffee machine now.” Jamie S. “What?! That is crazy!” Elizabeth J. “It wasn’t open. There’s a sign saying it’s coming soon but the machine was there and I was like, <i>this changes the game!</i>”</p> <p>2. Offended: Jamie S. “Snap me and Lacy” *speaking to Elizabeth and referring to taking and posting a picture on a popular social media app* Lacy J. “Yes girl! We’re posing *Jamie S. and Lacy J. pose close together* <i>Oh Wait... aren’t you sick?</i>” Jamie S. “I’m not actually doing anything <i>girl!</i> <i>Oh my God!</i>”</p>
Instru-mentalities	<p><u>Channels</u></p> <p>1. Body language Jamie S. raised her eyebrows when she was excited about something or makes a sexual innuendo, like with the previously mentioned water joke. Elizabeth J. had a giant smile whenever she mentioned a memory she found enjoyable, like discovering the new coffee machine in the Livingston dining hall.</p> <p>2. Speaking</p>	<p><u>Codes</u></p> <p>Language: English Dialect: Northeastern American English Register: Youth speak</p>

	<p>The entire night everyone spoke to one another. We discussed movies, life's events, and many other topics.</p> <p>3. Reading</p> <p>Everyone read the cupcake boxes at different points to guide us in decision making-the amount of eggs to use, the oven's temperature, etc.</p>	
Norms	<p><u>Normal topics:</u> Events we recently attended, past and future food consumption, how to cook the cupcakes, schoolwork and extra-curriculars, dating</p> <p><u>Taboo Topics (for this occasion):</u> Family problems, Weight</p>	<p><u>Normal discourse features</u></p> <p>Turn- taking: There really was not any silence. There was a lot of overlap as the participants shared our stories and figured out how to cook/decorate the cupcakes properly.</p> <p><u>Formal Address:</u> Everyone referred to one another by first name or by the generic word "girl"</p>
Genres	<p><u>Routine discourse genres</u></p> <p>Storytelling, Joking, Reading</p>	<p><u>Example of one of these discourse genres</u></p> <p>1. Storytelling: Elizabeth J. recalled a play her high school performed and the local town's reaction. As they are talking, everyone is looking down and scooping cupcake mix into the little cups.</p> <p>Elizabeth J. "We did Sweeney Todd my freshman year and people get slapped and like their throat slit (Jamie S.-Ooooh) and we had a chair and when they hit the handle like the dead person would go down a chute (Jamie S. Oh wow. <i>That's crazy</i>)./ People, like some parents in the community, complained about that. (Lacy J. Why?) Because it's very like graphic... But it was a really good show. I was just stage crew"</p>

Key:

- *Italicized words* are words where there was a vocal inflection
- Words in parenthesis are comments/interjections from another participant that were spoken at the same time as the other person
- Words where letters are repeated (Yeess) indicate that the sound was elongated
- Slash marks between words indicate a pause in speaking (That's/nice)
- The actions that are simultaneously occurring while they are talking are indicated by a * before and after the act. "I love cupcakes" *picks up the icing bag*

FEEDING

Food	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Powdered Cupcake Mix (1 vanilla and 1 chocolate box) • Small container of oil • Half a carton of eggs • 2 containers of icing (1 chocolate and 1 vanilla) • 1 bag of mixed chocolate chips (contained white chocolate, milk chocolate, and dark chocolate chips)
Employment (generally in chronological order)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading the box (Everyone read the boxes at different points in the process) • Gathering the kitchen utensils to prepare the cake mix in (a bowl, a spatula, etc.) • Asking each other for confirmation of how to correctly prepare the mix (Should we use water or milk? What temperature should we set the oven? “So.. are we basically adding half the bag [of chocolate chips]?”) • Mixing the ingredients- spent extra time breaking up the chunks of flour that were in the batter • Putting the ingredients in the cupcake tins • Baking them (set oven’s timer 18 minutes at 325°) • Check if done (stick toothpick straight through middle cupcake to see if it comes out clean) • Letting them cool (set oven’s timer to 20 minutes) • Cutting holes in the corner of plastic Ziploc bags in order to put an icing tip inside and fill it with icing (makeshift icing bags) • Splitting the 24 cupcakes into 3 groups of 8. Everyone chose a group and iced the cooled cupcakes • Eating the cupcakes- The group chose which cupcakes they wanted to eat before offering the remaining 21 cupcakes to Elizabeth J’s roommates
Etiquette	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social Politeness- there were some apologies as we bumped together in the small kitchen counter area. Also, the participants kept asking each other how to do certain tasks that everyone knows how to do. For example, Elizabeth J knew how to use her oven and that she wanted to set the temperature to 325° to bake the cupcakes. However, she asked Jamie S and Lacy J. “Should I set it to 325°. Is that ok?” This social politeness meant that no one person dominated the group and made all of the decisions. Finally, everyone all helped clean up in the end, even though it was Elizabeth J’s apartment. • Health/Cleanliness- Before cooking began, all of the participants and washed their hands. Clean utensils and tap water that had been purified using a filtered pitcher were used for baking. Finally, after we finished decorating and consuming, all participants assisted with cleaning the counter. The counter was wiped with a wet paper towel to clean off the icing that had fallen on it, the used bowls/utensils were placed in the dishwasher, and the leftover ingredients were placed in the fridge.
Display	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • After cooling, the cupcakes were arranged with white paper towels under them to decorate. However, once after decorating, they were placed back in the aluminum cupcake trays that they had been cooked them in. Placing them there allowed them to remain on display while also making them easier to move out of the way as the area was cleaned.
Implements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 medium sized mixing bowls- one glass and one plastic

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 whisk • 1 giant cooking spoon • 1 small spoon (to break the flour clumps in the batter) • Measuring cups • Regular cup (to break the eggs in before adding them to the mixture) • 4 cupcake trays (6 cupcake slots per tray) • Oven • Ziploc bags (impromptu icing bags) • Icing tips
<p>Notions Food beliefs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jamie S. and Elizabeth J. both really enjoy coffee. For them, good coffee depends on where you purchase it. • The flavor of the cupcake determines how good it is. Jamie S. prefers chocolate. Elizabeth J. prefers vanilla. • The cleanliness of the environment where the food was produced impacts the quality of the food and whether or not it is safe for consumption (why we took so many cleanliness precautions) • For homemade cupcakes, the outward design does not affect the willingness to taste the cupcakes. We were still eager to try our creations despite the messy appearance of the frosting; even more telling is that Elizabeth J's roommates also were eager to try our creations.
<p>Gender (and other socially constructed identities and roles)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As women, the participants are often expected to cook in the traditional patriarchal backgrounds that they come from. They have definitely absorbed that message, particularly Elizabeth S. She mentioned it in the interview and then again as the batter was being mixed, that she found baking therapeutic (particularly because she and her mother often baked together). Jamie S. told Lacy J. in the interview that she learned to cook out of necessity; however, she learned certain techniques from her mother. Truthfully, Lacy J. does not believe that male participants would have actively helped bake and clean up afterwards like the 3 female participants did. "Womanly" topics about events and female problems, like finding sexual health centers on campus, were discussed throughout the event as well. • Gender identity helped the event itself come together. However, during the event other identities did not really affect who did what. In the beginning, the other participants kept asking the researcher, Lacy J., what type of cupcakes were being made and how things should be done; however, that may simply have been because of Lacy's role as a researcher who specifically formulated this event to complete a project. Once they realized Lacy wanted them to have free reign and just cook/ mix/ bake as they want, they stopped asking questions specifically to Lacy. Instead, they asked all of the members of the group. Despite age differences, differing ethnic backgrounds, and different socio-economic statuses, everyone shared evenly in the responsibility of cooking and cleaning.