respect to the second. If there’s a perfect relationship between membership in a category of the first and membership in a category of the second, then persons could begin to be trained for that second, however soon you wanted to start. (Sacks, 1992a)

So, there were found to be ‘eligibilities’ between the kinds of relationships that various collections have to each other (Sacks, 1992a, p. 590).

These basic principles are assumed in this study. This study documents and examines co-membership and cross-membership to understand whether it is relevant for the task at hand, ‘discussing experiences at university’. While expectable categories in this study relate to ‘Indigenous’ and ‘Non-Indigenous’ persons, it will be interesting to examine the types of collections that participants orient to and what those might look like in terms of co-memberships and cross-memberships. Hence, co-memberships and cross-memberships are taken to be accomplishments of the participants as members of society; who are the collective meaning-makers and ‘sense-makers or interpreters of the[ir] world[s]’ (Hester, Francis, & Watson, 2000, p. 2).

Drawing on a range of EM studies (e.g., Fitzgerald & Housley, 2002; Hellstén, 1999; Housley & Fitzgerald, 2001; Silverman, 1998; Watson, 1997), this EM study uses CA to examine the sequential organisation and MCA to examine the categorial organisation created and re-created in and though inter-racial interaction.

### 3.5 Interactional Features

This section introduces three key features of talk that are examined in this study: (i) personal pronouns; (ii) strategic/sequential forms of action and preference organisation; and (iii) list production and construction. Research on these interactional features, some of which is presented below, indicates that an examination of their usage in interaction can provide insights into the relevant memberships that focus group participants invoke and the actual relations being established among participants on a moment-by-moment basis. For instance, pronouns have been found to be capable of revealing varying sorts of solidarity and differentiation amongst persons, while strategic/sequential forms of action and preference
organisation in operation can reveal how participants are (dis)aligning and (dis)agreeing in the focus group event. Finally, list production and construction provides insights into how focus group participants align with one another. Hence, examination of these features ‘serve as tools for explicating the action and interactional import of particular episodes of conduct’ (Schegloff, 1999, p. 418, emphasis in original), and particularly with regard to partitioning and aligning the population.

3.5.1 Personal Pronouns

One of the features examined in this study is personal pronouns. The English paradigm of personal pronouns has grammatical divisions of first, second and third person, which contain seven personal pronouns: first-person singular (‘I’), first-person plural (‘we’), second-person singular and plural (‘you’), third-person singular masculine (‘he’), third-person singular feminine (‘she’), third-person singular neuter (‘it’), and third-person plural (‘they’) (Hurford, 1994, p. 202). Pronouns ‘stand in place of a noun phrase’ (Fromkin, Rodman, Collins, & Blair, 1996; Quirk & Greenbaum, 1973). They are ‘used in the grammatical classification of words, referring to the closed sets of items which can be used to substitute for a noun phrase’ (Crystal, 1985, p. 248). They refer back (anaphoric reference) to a prior noun phrase, forward (cataphoric reference) to a yet-to-be-produced noun phrase, or externally (exophoric reference) to some object, event or person in the spatio-temporal situation. They provide ‘textual cohesion’ (Halliday & Hasan, 1985) in spoken language and written text. A number of studies that have explored pronouns have found though that ‘they are not merely substitutes for nouns’ (e.g., Bramley, 2001; Elias, 1978; Errington, 1998; Fox, 1987; Nevile, 2001b; Sacks, 1992a, p. 333; Silverstein, 1976).

In his work on ‘we’, Sacks (1992a, 1992b) distinguished between two very distinct varieties, the summative ‘we’ and the categorised or ‘premitive’ ‘we’. The summative ‘we’ refers to a finite and specific list of persons; say Peter, Paul and Mary. With the summative ‘we’, for example, it would be a contradiction to say ‘we enjoy reading’, but ‘I don’t enjoy reading’. Sensically, each person included in the summative ‘we’ has to do the thing (i.e., enjoy reading). In contrast, the categorised or premitive ‘we’ refers to an infinite list of persons, say students, or tutors, or Aboriginal persons, and so forth.
Type 2 (categorized “we”) is interesting because it provides for exceptions, and talk of and around those exceptions can lead to all sorts of moral work. It can lead to talk of who’s exceptional and who’s not. So if we get “Men are bastards, but my husband’s not a bastard”, there’s a claim to positive moral status for the particular person in question. Likewise, if we get “Lawyers are rich, but my lawyer husband is poor”, there’s a claim about the person’s moral failing’ (McHoul, 1997, p. 317).

Further, in his discussion of ‘tying techniques/rules’, Sacks (1992a, p. 333) found that not only do pronouns tie some ‘current piece of talk to some past piece of talk, but ‘comprise an orderly technique which is at least as important as are the sequencing pairs for ordering parts of a conversation’ (Sacks, 1992a, p. 333). According to Sacks (1992a) tying one’s talk to another’s prior talk is a motivation to listen, and tying properly shows that one has understood. While Sacks found that pronouns serve as a ‘reference preserve’ through their tying together technique (1992a, p. 333), he further found that ‘[d]eployment of the pronouns ‘we’, ‘you’, ‘they’ and the like can serve to express varying sorts of solidarity and differentiation, and different ways of “partitioning the population”’ (1992a, p. 716).

Pronouns support interactional management (Fox, 1987). They produce and maintain particular relations and relationships. For instance, in an early study, Brown and Gilman (1960, pp. 253-254) examined ‘a connection between social structure, group ideology, and the semantics of the pronoun’ (Brown & Gilman, 1960, pp. 253-254) to understand how the use of personal pronouns is influenced by the characteristics of the speaker, and the relationship between speaker and hearer, as well as other aspects that constitute relations of power. Although they did not use data from naturally occurring interaction, their work identified that speakers have a consistent pronoun style, and that pronoun style can reveal matters to do with speakers’ social class status and political thinking (Brown & Gilman, 1960, pp. 253-254), as well as serving to build solidarity between interactants.

In the Amsterdam/California study that van Dijk (1987, pp. 7-11) conducted, his investigation found that white participants were using pronouns to separate and distance themselves from other ethnic groups. White participants used the third person plural pronouns ‘they’ (as ‘subject’) and ‘them’ (as ‘object’) to distance themselves from Turkish, Surinamese and Moroccan ethnic groups as displayed in comments such as, ‘They look different’, ‘They cause the decay of Amsterdam/the neighbourhood’, and ‘I have had contacts
with *them* in the shop/market’ (van Dijk, 1987, pp. 105, emphasis added). In other words, pronouns were found to be demonstrative of ‘expressions of attitudinal distance, and, hence, as signals of prejudice’ (van Dijk, 1987, p. 105). Van Dijk’s (1987) work suggests that white racial groups orient to an ‘us/them’ dichotomy in which they establish themselves as members of the white *in-group/us* in opposition to members of the ethnic *out-group/them*.

Following Sacks, a number of other studies have adopted an interactional approach to pronouns. For instance, Watson (1987, p. 262) found that ‘choosing between pronouns’ means ‘choosing between mutually-exclusive linguistic alternatives’, which means that interactants actively select pronouns to exploit pronominal references and, in doing so, partition one person and number reference (i.e., first, second or third) from the other person and number references, at least for that moment and space in time.

Nevile’s (2001a, p. 245) thesis examined pronominal use in the cockpit to investigate what it means to be ‘accountably and recognisably an airline pilot’. In examining pilots’ routine talk-in-interaction, Nevile found that pilots use pronouns as a resource to make clear ‘their continuously evolving understandings of the distribution of these cockpit roles’ (Nevile, 2001a, p. 248), which is relevant to successfully completing the task at hand. For instance, the choice of ‘we’ in a communication makes salient the pilots’ shared conduct and responsibility for starting the engines’ as ‘something which occupies the attention of both pilots and in which both pilots participate’ (Nevile, 2001a, p. 75).

By shifting moment-to-moment between pronoun forms pilots are able to shift between available cockpit roles as their flight progresses, and so make salient who they are ‘talking and listening as’.

Hence, Nevile’s (2001b) work provided an understanding of ‘who’s who’ in the cockpit by showing that cockpit roles are interactionally created on a moment-by-moment basis. It showed that roles in the cockpit are not ‘given’, fixed or ‘officially assigned’, but are ‘repeatedly invoked and understood throughout the flight’ through the pronominal choices made by persons in the cockpit (Nevile, 2001a, p. 119).
A similar finding was identified in Keogh’s (1999) research. Keogh’s (1999) work examines a school principal’s use of pronouns in a speech that he is delivering to potential parents and children of the school community. Keogh (1999, p. 191) shows that the principal’s pronominal usage sets up or establishes ‘an ever changing and dynamic audience of parents and/or students who might or might not have received his words as directives for themselves or for each other’. The principal’s production of ‘we’, for example, was found to reveal some particular institutional positioning practices. For instance, the principal was found to produce ‘we’ in order to discursively shift the composition of teams to include and/or exclude different members to achieve different effects.

Bramley’s (2001) investigation into the use of pronouns in political interviews found that politicians ‘actively exploit the flexibility of pronominal reference’ to ‘show affiliation or create distance between people’. Bramley’s (2001, p. 260) examination of the first person pronoun, ‘we’, showed it was ‘central in the construction of identities of politicians as group members’. Pronoun selection was shown to enable politicians to talk-into-being ‘alignment with and boundaries between different identities’ (Bramley, 2001, p. v), which allowed them to construct multiple selves and others. They were shown to do this to ‘deflect individual attention or simply to present issues as collective rather than individual ones’ (Bramley, 2001, p. 260). According to Bramley (2001, p. 260), ‘it is not the referent of ‘we’ that is important so much as the effect that is achieved by presenting “self” as part of a collective identity’.

The notion of collective identity has also been taken up by McHoul (1997, p. 317) in his investigation on the production of ‘we’ in sport. The focus of McHoul’s (1997, p. 315) work is with Laurie Lawrence; the Australian swim coach at the 1988 Summer Olympics, who ‘leaps to his feet and shouts “We won! We won!”’ after Australia’s only gold medal winner, Duncan Armstrong, won the two hundred meter race. McHoul (1997) found that ‘we’ ‘can do the work of hooking up the game and the ceremony, the sports event and the broader everyday. McHoul (1997, p. 319) further found that ‘in the case of sports’ there are ‘peculiar instances’ that may indeed ‘be unique to sports as a particular domain of everyday life’. In the case of swimmers, McHoul explains that while swimmers mostly compete alone, they also compete in teams. What that means is that non-swimmers such as the coach, swim crew and even family can be included in a particular projection of ‘we’. In other words, the ‘we’ can be summative and therefore made up of a finite list (including, say, the coach and
members of the swim/relay team). However, there can also be a categorial or premitive ‘we’, that is an infinite group of people that includes spectators, the audience, fans, or virtually any person, including persons of the same nationality, particularly in the case of international sporting events. Hence, he argues that

[w]ith respect to sports (and in a few other instances), “we” does both listed and categorial work at the same time; though it may not (McHoul 1997, p. 319).

There is a growing number of studies which adopt an interactional, rather than a social structural approach to pronouns.¹ These studies have gone beyond the traditional concerns with grammatical divisions and anaphora and deixis and showed that participants’ shared orientation to personal pronouns and how they are used is one of the ways in which orderly and mutually intelligible talk is produced (e.g., Watson, 1987). However, few of these EM and interactional studies have gone beyond examination of the pronouns in English to an examination of the pronouns in the inclusive/exclusive system for distinguishing pronouns, which is the aim of my study.

3.5.1.1 Inclusive/Exclusive Dual/Plural Distinction

In English, there is only one non-singular first person plural pronoun, ‘we’, to refer to collective or group membership.² However, over half the Indigenous languages of Australia (e.g., Torres Strait Island Kriol, Roper River Kriol)³ and many languages of the world (e.g., Vietnamese, Chechen) make a distinction between the ‘inclusive’ and ‘exclusive’ varieties of ‘we’ (Dixon, 1980). Dixon explained,

[t]here will be two separate duals – inclusive ‘you and I’ and exclusive ‘I and someone other than you’ – and plurals – inclusive ‘you and I and one or more others’ and exclusive ‘I and two or more others, not including you’ (1980, p. 277).

¹ A number of authors have written on person pronouns in interactional terms, refer to the writings of Brown and Gilman (1960), Jakobson (1957/1971), Benveniste (1971), Silverstein (1976).
² English makes a marginal distinction through the inclusive, ‘let’s’. The directive, ‘let’s eat’ can include the person addressed, and therefore be an invitation to the addressee to eat (i.e., ‘let you and I eat’). Alternatively, ‘let us eat’ - formal usage - can exclude the person addressed, and be a request to leave the speaker alone, (i.e., ‘go away so that I – and one or more unnamed others – can eat’).
³ Roper River Kriol, which originated from the Roper River Mission, is now in usage over a large section of the Northern Territory and adjacent regions of Western Australia and Queensland (Dixon, 1980, p. 73).
This inclusive form refers to the inclusion of the addressee in the collection being established, whereas the ‘exclusive’ form refers to the exclusion of the addressee from the collection being established.

Table 1: First-Person Inclusive/Exclusive Dual/Plural Distinction

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>First-person</th>
<th>Inclusive</th>
<th>Exclusive</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Duals</td>
<td>You and I</td>
<td>I and someone other than you</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plurals</td>
<td>You and I and one or more others</td>
<td>I and two or more others, not including you</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Dixon (1980)

Dixon (1980) has shown that many languages also make a distinction between ‘dual’ and ‘plural’ varieties of ‘we’. The dual system includes a maximum of two persons in the collective (i.e., the speaker and one other person), while the plural system includes more than two persons in a collective (i.e., the speaker and two or more persons).4

Although there is no grammatical category of this system in English, Skelton, Wearn and Hobbs (2002) have examined ‘a standard distinction between doctor and patients’ productions of inclusive ‘we’ (‘you and I’) and exclusive ‘we’ (‘we doctors, but not ‘you patients’) in English language primary care consultations. Their aim was to measure aspects of doctor-patient interaction through the deployment of first person pronouns, ‘I’, ‘me’, ‘we’ and ‘us’, in general consultations, and to contribute to advice to doctors on how to communicate with patients in a patient-centred atmosphere’ (Skelton, Wearn, & Hobbs, 2002, p. 484). The authors found that ‘doctors are very much more likely than patients or

4 Some Australian languages have an even more complex system. For instance, Lardil, which is spoken in the Gulf of Carpentaria, makes distinctions of form that depend on the relationship between the people referred to in a given production of ‘we’ (Dixon, 1980). One type of non-singular pronoun is used when the people referred to are in the same generation level or are two levels apart, while a different type of pronoun is used if they are one or three generations apart.
companions to use ‘we’ and, on many occasions on which they do, an inclusive interpretation is possible’ as shown in the examples from their study below.

Example, Skelton, Wearn & Hobbs’ (2002, p.487) work

D: … we’ll talk about it again in a few days times <write>
P: Thank you ever so much indeed doctor.

D: [if your mood] starts getting low again
P: right
D: then we can start you back on them
P: OK

The study further found that patients and companions do not include doctors in their use of ‘we’. The authors argue that this indicates that ‘they do not perceive doctors as participants in care, but as conduits or co-ordinators of care’ (Skelton et al., 2002, p. 488). The authors conclude that ‘the fact that patients and companions never included the doctor when they said “we” is particularly interesting, and from the point of view of partnership – disappointing’ (Skelton et al., 2002, p. 488).

The current study presumes that ‘we’ is a resource for examining (i) who is being included and who is being excluded, as well as (ii) the number of individuals being referred to in a particular collection being established through the production (Dixon, 1980). Whereas ‘we’ has been shown to be ‘a socially deployable resource that makes available group-identities or memberships’ (Sacks, 1992a, p. 334), and a ‘powerful resource’ for interpreting ‘who “we” are at any moment’ (Malone, 1997, p. 67), this study presumes that the application of this more complex repertoire can provide understanding into the phenomenon of inter-racial interaction, particularly with regard to ‘partitioning the population’ (e.g., Sacks, 1992a, p. xi; Skelton et al., 2002). Hence, these distinctions from Indigenous Australian languages provide a tool for distinguishing different uses of ‘we’ are of relevance to this study of inter-racial interaction because these distinctions exist in the first languages of some of the participants in the focus group event (Aboriginal/Torres Strait Islander languages and Kriol), so the distinctions are more salient to them.