

Exercise 10.1

Extract 2: Interview extract from Short's (2007) *Domestic Cooking and Cooking Skills in Late Twentieth Century England*, interview with LA

FS: ...can you think of any techniques you use when you're trying to eat a healthy diet?

LA: ...um... {thinks} ...for a healthy diet well we don't...fry much...we...but then I've always grilled rather than fried stuff...for example sausages...it's the one sort of meat thing that we all quite like...and {L's older daughter} likes...we do have sausages...usually once a week...a nice quick meal...my liver and bacon equivalent...a kind of warm...easy to make meal and you've got nice gravy that goes into mashed potato...um so I would grill but I've always grilled...I don't think there's anything that I particularly change but then...

FS: ...um...

LA: ...I think also my mum was quite conscious of health even...twenty years...thirty years ago...she was quite advanced with that as a cook...to not fry...to grill most things...so it's more up-bringing I'd say then conscious healthy living...that has um...yeah I mean...you know with potatoes we're much more likely to have them mashed or boiled...we'll have the odd sort of...chips out of the freezer...but I'd never have a deep fat fryer and I'd never make chips...um I might do sliced fried potatoes with an omelette...I think that's a really nice combination...um...so...yeah...there's...the only concession is very little frying of food...

FS: ...um...

LA: ...we don't have lots of meat but again that's...I mean that is healthy {?}...we don't particularly like a lot of meat...um...not much fat...semi-skimmed milk...can't think of anything else...

FS: ...the last section...in Britain today...etc?

LA: I think it's brilliant...I think um...my grandmother who I was talking about earlier and who's had a lifetime of preparing food and sick of it...she's also nearly blind...and she came to stay with me when {L's younger daughter} was first born so that was

about eight months ago...and she's never been round a big supermarket...she lives in Shropshire...um...and they've got quite a good shop that sells quite a variety of foods for where it is...

FS: ...um...

LA: ...but I took her over to the Sainsbury's in Haringey...and we walked up and down the aisle...and I had to tell her what was on the shelves because her eyesight isn't good enough...and we spent half an hour just in the fruit and veg section...pointing out all the different pears and all the different...all the exotic...star fruit and...and it was all too much for her in a way because you know she's eighty five or something and she's had meat and two veg all her life and yet she's still sort of young enough at heart to want to try these different things...so she had pasta for the first time...the first time she'd ever had pasta was here...and I was just thinking we take it so much for granted now...but things are so different now...I think it's brilliant...I wonder where we can go from here...I suppose there'll just be more and more influx of foreign foods and foreign recipes and I'm all in favour of it all...I think it's a good thing...

FS: What about prepared and semi-prepared foods?

LA:it's funny because this same Grandmother...if she knew the extent to which we buy ready prepared foods...she'd be absolutely horrified because of the war-time mentality...of everything must be...cooked...[edits] ...and I...there's part of my background that tell me I shouldn't do it...

FS: ...um...

LA: ...but I also know that for today's living...it's impossible...[edits] I cannot think how they [mother and mother-in-law] managed it...but then I think our lives are different because we have a much bigger social like and...we're more house proud...we want to get our houses looking nice and...I always remember our house being the same for years and years...but my Mum was always cooking our food...plus obviously most women I know work...with kids, so... you know you're both out of the house...[edits] so all in all...I think it's...it's...there's so much a place for it and I wish in a way it wasn't because it's cheating...I still feel it's cheating...I think I said earlier...

FS: ...um...

LA: [edits]...in fact my sister makes me laugh 'cos her and George are the epitomy [sic] of the kind of nineties could both working really long hours in trendy jobs...and she said cooking for her now is heating up some pasta...some sauce...she says they've 'cooked' if they've done that...most of the time they're either eating out or getting a takeaway...so it's like 'oh should we cook tonight' and then they get ready prepared food and yet deep down...she's got the same sort of thing as me...she comes from a background where cooking food was important...um...and you feel you're cheating...[edits] ...whereas because of the life I'm leading...you know at home with children...I've got more time here...more time to think about food and whatever...and more time to shop for it...but um..

FS: ...um...

LA: there's still a huge part of our lives with ready prepared food...and I can't see that going to change for a while...I just can't see...because as the kids get older and get more time for me I'll probably end up working more...I can't see that suddenly I'm going to have two hours every day...to create wonderful food...and I just think back and wonder how my Mum did it...I don't think she went out much...she didn't go out much...she didn't watch telly much...she didn't have hour long conversations on the phone with friends which I frequently have...I just think our lives are very different...I'm in favour of it I think.