

Do you speak English? Speech Codes relating to “English only” Language Policy within
Multi-lingual Office Space in China

Li Liu

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Reading Committee:

Gerry Philipsen, Chair

Gina Neff

Kathleen Fearn-Banks

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Li Liu

University of Washington

Abstract

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Li Liu

Chair of the Supervisory Committee:

Gerry Philipsen

Dept. of Communication

This three-year study focuses upon different narratives organizational members construct to make sense to the “English only” language policy within multinational organizations in China. Philipsen’s speech codes theory has oriented and guided the design, data collection, and data interpretation of this study. Materials analyzed for this study included transcription of 623 minutes of interview audio files collected from 21 intensive interviews. Interviews were conducted with professionals from a variety of industries in China who work in a mixed language environment of both English and Chinese. Briggs’ approach for “metacommunication” has been used to design interview question and collect qualitative data. Coffey and Atkinson’s three-level generality analyzing model has been used to group patterned expressions from interview transcriptions. The coding

process reflected four distinctive sets of speech codes relating to use of English at work. The four speech codes were: code of normalcy, code of national pride, code of social capital and code of tool. The coding process also discovered two major types of relationship among the speech codes. One was combination, that within one single interview transcription, more than one speech codes may be identified, with one code as primary code and the narrative reflecting “emotional coding” from the primary code over other sub-code(s). The other type of relationship was exclusion, in that code of normalcy and code of national pride have been identified as oppositional codes and exclusive from one another in a single interview transcription. Discussion also pointed at the fact that each speech code reflected distinctive notion of personhood and social structure. Implications to current literature as well as future research suggestions were discussed in the end.

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Chapter I Introduction

I arrived on time for our interview with the CEO in the Beijing office of his start-up company. I was told by the front desk receptionist that the CEO is at a conference call with US potential investors. I waited on the first floor, right next to the front desk for the CEO to finish his conference call, which lasted for 25 minutes. The CEO was talking over the microphone attached to his Bluetooth ear phone inside the meeting room right next to where I sat, separated from the main work area with glass walls. It was July but Christmas decoration was still present in the office. Six employees, all Chinese, were working at their computers in the packed space outside of the meeting room. They were not talking with each other during the 25 minutes while I waited for the CEO except one employee who talked in a low voice over the phone with customers.

My interview started after the conference call. The CEO, an American-born Chinese and who is fluent in both English and mandarin Chinese, briefly apologized for the delay and quickly began to introduce the company to me. We conducted the interview in English. I indicated that I was interested in his experience managing a multi-cultural team and I asked specifically about which language they use in daily work environment. When English was indicated as the required language, I moved forward to ask if Chinese could be an alternative option since the CTO (Chief Technology Officer) was the only person who can't speak Chinese. The CEO said,

Of course we should speak English in office. Everybody knows that Chinese is very difficult to learn. It will be easier to use English because it will smooth daily office communication and bring operation up to speed.

After the interview, I was given the chance to have an office tour. The entire company rented an office suite in the building with two floors within the unit. CEO, CTO and other management

staff were working on the second floor with spacious room reserved to each individual. Another meeting room was set up upstairs again with glass walls.

Two weeks later, I conducted an interview with a Chinese professional in a different Chinese city. We had the conversation in the bar the professional owns and operates. It was three o'clock in the afternoon and the busy hour in the bar was yet to come. We conducted the interview in English. This trainer worked, on a regular basis, with engineers and corporate executives from the US because the company he worked for purchases aircraft from US companies. I asked about his experience working in intercultural work environment. I also invited him to describe his experience using either English or Chinese in the office. He paused for a while and said:

We have to speak English only because in my industry, major industrial standards and codes are initially developed using English. If someday China can build first-class airplane and we can set our own industrial standards that can be accepted elsewhere, we will no longer have to learn to speak English at work. Instead, we will have our foreign partners and co-workers learn to speak Chinese. And that is the reason why we need to speak English today. I hope my generation can witness that day.

The seemingly opposing attitudes reflected from either interview promote me to think further about the reasons behind these different attitudes. When getting expended overseas, American companies inevitably face the question of which language to be used in local branch office. Although the choice of English may seem apparent and even natural given the level of popularity the language enjoys in global business community, organizational members may hold attitudes that dramatically differ from each other. On one hand, some American expatriated managers may inherit the rationale shared decades long among American business executives to “wait for the other side to pick up the language” (Galbraith, 1975). On the other hand, Chinese people may exhibit bitter-sweet sentiments towards English proficiency due to the fact that while it suggests a better career prospect, English

proficiency is competing against their cultural loyalty towards Chinese language. When talking about experience using English at work, divergent attitudes are clearly visible.

Language usage has been found as closely related to how individuals choose to identify with group or organization they work at (Triandis, 1972; Tajfel, 1982; Brewer and Hewstone, 2004). Triandis (1972) stated that based on language, individuals categorize themselves into certain groups that share same rules, values and collective norms. Tajfel (1982) directly equated linguistic distinctiveness with positive group distinctiveness. Following this line of argument, Brewer and Hewstone (2004) discussed possibilities of organizational members' individual categorization and its relationship with their leadership behavior prototype and level of loyalty towards the organization. Among all those explanations offered on how language proficiency would influence individual's group orientation, emotions and attitudes towards use of language seem yet to be addressed. It is possible that use of English may reflect sentiments relating to cultural or even national pride. It is possible that certain attitudes towards use of language may reflect long-observed norm of waiting for the other side of business pick up English to start conversation. Through organizational members' narratives and interpretation of use of language in daily organizational space, certain norm, premises or rules may emerge; such norms, premises or rules may be the product of specific sociological or psychological notions that serve as background picture. Explorations of such narratives and interpretations, in this sense, may stimulate future discussion or exploration of additional dimensions to further understand impact of use of language on organizational commitment. The following session begins the exploration by first describing what kind of different attitudes have been detected and documented through previous research and public discussions.

English or Chinese: divergent attitude

Do you speak English? When looking for a position in American companies operating in China, local Chinese usually need to respond to this question first. According to a recent survey covering 200,000 working professionals in China (Sohu.com, 2007), English proficiency has become one of the most prominent considerations of whether they are selected for the job, have any future promotion or increase in salary. Moreover, the same survey also indicates that job seekers who speak English fluently may be three times more likely to get promoted, if compared with someone who doesn't speak much English (Sohu.com, 2007). A separate research (Xinhuanet.com, 2004) indicates that English proficiency, in both American and Chinese organizations, is directly linked to salary increase; the gap between someone who speaks English fluently and someone who speaks "fair" English may translate into 25% difference in annual income. Furthermore, people who graduated from overseas higher education institutions with foreign diploma are usually considered as having "supreme English proficiency, good team work ethics and solid professional knowledge" (Xinhuanet.com, 2004). *Financial Times* columnist Michael Skapinker (2009), quoting from British Council report, *English Next India*, wrote in his story that China now has more English speakers than India because of India's "ambivalent attitude towards English" due to its colonial background as well as the fact that China is putting efforts into learning English and "serious about becoming the world's leading economy" (para. 8)

While some Chinese people welcome English proficiency for pursuit of better career prospect, others fear its popularity may overshadow acceptance to Chinese language and Chinese culture (Yang Y. , 2009; He, 2009). A survey conducted by a leading Chinese news portal website, *Phoenix.com*, with on-line responses from 13, 362 respondents in 2009, indicates that over 79% of the respondents answered "no" towards the question, "do you think learning English as a

national effort is necessary” (Yang Y. , 2009). The commonly shared belief among people who are concerned with the spread of English is that, by overwhelmingly focusing on learning English, kids may fail to develop important knowledge and skills in areas that closely linked to sense of cultural loyalty towards Chinese language. The unbalanced attention worries many education experts, who then advocate for a change in the education system, particularly in regards to how English as a subject should be tested and weighed when middle school graduates apply for college admission. Wang Xinlu, a People’s Congress representative, proposed for the third time to the 2009 People’s Congress Assembly to make changes to the current national English examination system, in an attempt to offset the status quo under which English test scores as one of the most important factors when granting high school graduates admission to any colleges or universities in the country.

Such self-contradicting, bitter-sweet sentiments towards English, shared over generations among Chinese people, may have reflected a unique national sentiment or premise reflecting complicated cultural or even political considerations. With such sentiments in mind, it may be natural to feel pressured for a young Chinese professional entering a foreign-owned company, when he or she, perhaps for the first time of his or her life, faces the “English only” language policy in the office.

International professionals and business executives who work in China and use Chinese as second language seems struggle less with the “English only” language policy in the office. To American expatriate managers, for example, using English in a daily office setting is an extension of decades’ long tradition of “having the other side to pick up the language” (Galbraith, 1975).

Institutional factors may contribute to such reluctant mindset. In American corporations, foreign language competence seems to be less relevant to overseas assignment, even when the importance of cultural training and orientation for expatriated American managers has been recognized for some time by both academic research and industrial practitioners (Inman, 1978). Research has found that among American corporations reporting doing business abroad, language ability, as a criterion for selection of personnel for overseas assignments, has been scarcely considered as necessary (Inman, 1978). Wilkins and Arnett (1976) reported that management staff will be considered sent abroad after they “have received excellent technical training and demonstrated success in domestic operations” (p. 46), which excluded evaluation of foreign language proficiency. In a separate study, over half of the respondents in Morgenroth, Parks, and Morgenroth’s (1975) study have indicated that they would require no use of modern foreign languages over the next four years, even though nearly 85 percent of the firms surveyed engage in business abroad. Foreign language competence is irrelevant to other aspect of career development either. For instance, foreign language competency has virtually no effect on salary changes (Alexander, 1974).

In addition to institutional factors, the reluctance to learn target country’s native language may also result from psychological or cultural premises widely shared among American expatriated managers. Since the early age of international business expansion in the 1970’s, firms began to respond to the need of a single corporate language to better facilitate the transfer of information and knowledge between headquarters and subsidiaries, especially among subsidiaries across different national boundaries (Inman, 1978). Tendency of using English as corporate language continues to grow over the past few decades (Marschan-Piekkari, Welch, & Welch, 1999). The insistence on letting the other party bridge the language gap has been

summed up by Galbraith (1975) as “congenital inadequacy in languages”. The lack of corporate commitment and individual willingness to pick up foreign language competence remains mostly the same in the decades to come. Based on Fixman’s (1990) study, most US firms included in the research still believe that language is separate from its cultural context, and that the ability to speak foreign languages is a mechanical skill that could be readily acquired on an *ad hoc* basis.

Such lack of linguistic facility becomes a critical blind spot for American managers to achieve effective international business communication (Kolde, 1974). According to Phatak’s (1974) research, the majority of companies under study felt that the international aspects of their companies’ business were not hindered by language problem. Many of them, however, did comment that nuances and underlying meanings are missed even though all parties think they understand each other rather clearly. Phatak (1974) summarized from the academic discussion and pointed to three levels of corporate awareness of linguistic and cultural sensitivity in international business: ethnocentrism (linguistic and cultural chauvinism), polycentrism and geocentrism (“cosmopolitan corporate structure”).

To summarize, when it comes to use of English at work, Chinese people usually exhibit bitter-sweet sentiments while foreign business executives, although they seem to struggle less with the decision of using English, do at times feel the negative impact from a single-language policy within the office space. The question now is: why do the divergent attitudes towards English matter? The following session further discusses the significance of such divergent attitudes in the context of organizational culture and employee communication studies.

Organizational sub-culture: one organization divided

Divergent attitudes towards daily organizational life may encourage formation of organizational sub-cultures (Van Maanen J. , 1991). Organizational sub-culture is an important

concept frequently used to analyze and interpret daily organizational realities, especially when members interpret different meanings for organizational realities. Three elements usually signal formation of organizational sub-culture: organizational inconsistency, subcultural consensus, and the relegation of ambiguity to the periphery of subcultures (Martin, 2002). Scholars studying organizational sub-culture are often skeptical towards organizational-wide consensus and aims at unveiling subcultures co-existing within the organization, sometimes in harmony, other times in conflicts with each other. Some theorists (Jaggar, 1983) suggest that people without power preference within the organization would favor such perspective. Research on organizational sub-culture usually recognizes the inconsistent interpretation towards organizational reality across different subgroups and seeks indicators to identify boundaries of subcultures in the organization (Smircich & Morgan, 1982).

It might be too early to directly conclude that divergent attitudes towards use of English directly create organizational sub-culture within American corporations' branch offices in China. However, literature does suggest some interesting pieces of daily organizational realities, including low level of commitment among local Chinese employees and high level of failure rate among American expatriated managers that at least co-exist, if not result from, the possible organizational sub-culture shaped from such divergent attitudes towards use of language.

From local Chinese employee's side, little loyalty has been nurtured, if any, among Chinese employees towards the company they work for. In his book, *Fast Boat to China*, Andrew Ross (2006) summarizes from his talks with skilled local employees and their foreign managers in Taiwan and Shanghai. Based on his field notes, Ross (2007) described the skillful workers transferring from one corporation to another as "free agents" who do not identify themselves with the corporation very much. The passion of getting the foot in the door and switching to a

new job seem to be equally weighed among Chinese employees. Underneath the surface is low level of commitment to the corporation they work for, or as Ross (2007) has put it, they are “free agents” hopping among different corporations, looking for the best fit. Such trend produces challenges for employee communication professionals within the company. On the larger scale and as Ross (2007) puts it, in a time when China will soon compete for top-level jobs while it absorbs lower-end jobs, which inevitably affect workers and economies in East Asia and the West. In an article published by *Financial Times* in March of 2010, Carl, Redondo, general manager for Asia-Pacific at Hewitt Associates, a human resource consultancy, was quoted saying “the war for talent is back on and bigger” (Thomas, 2010, para. 6), while Peter Johann, head of human resource in Asia for BASF, a world leading chemical company, said the loss of each employee was a “disaster” (Thomas, 2010). According to the article, diminishing company loyalty, among others, has been referred to as contributor towards a growingly tighter labor market (Thomas, 2010, para. 8). Rainer Schmitz, with more than 22 years of human resource management experience in three continents and four countries, said he believed that the war of talent in China has never been more challenging during an interview with the researcher in early 2010.

From the expatriated manager’s perspective, on the other side, a growing trend of failure rate has becoming evident over the past few decades as reflected through diminishing organizational commitment (Tung, 1987; 1988). Expatriated failure is commonly defined as the early return or departure of expatriates, together with the financial loss incurred, due to disrupted operations or damage to business relationship resulting from the failure (Garonzik & Siegel, 2000; Harzing, 2002). Researcher (Forster, 1997) had argued for a broader definition of expatriated failure to include stresses and negative outlook of those who manage to remain on their overseas post,

including, for example, an acknowledgement of the considerable stresses and strains experienced by a minority of staff who are under-performing on overseas assignment; the often negative outcomes of repatriation experienced by many employees in recent years; the negative (and largely unreported) effects on some families or the career prospects of partners and negative views about the prospect of overseas postings in the future. To overcome the stress of working on the foreign land, it seems that fitting into local cultural environment is vital to expatriated managers' success. Lund and Barker (2004) conducted research with group of expatriated managers working at a college in southern part of China and reported that cultural harmony, among others, has been found contributing to expatriated managers' organizational commitment. However, such cultural harmony is usually not result of expatriated managers' effort acquiring fluency of local language, in this case mandarin Chinese. Given the fact that English is widely used as global language in business communities, American expatriated managers are usually reluctant to pursue second language fluency but rely on people on the other end of the business who are usually trading partners or local employees, to pick up English and use it as corporate language. This attitude has been shared over generations of business practices.

Speaking English or Chinese at work seems to be a simple question that doesn't matter that much; but a closer look at this issue sparks further curiosities since it is intimately connected to cultural loyalty, organizational commitment and overseas performance that produce instant and visible impact on organization, culture and individuals breathing such organization reality on daily basis. Would such divergent attitudes towards use of language contribute to and help to explain such dynamism? Divergent beliefs and attitudes within the organization have been one of the fundamental premises of study on organizational sub-culture. Scholars often seek ambiguity of how reality is interpreted on the organizational level, with consensus only shared within the

organizational sub-group (Van Maanen J. , 1991). Scholars (Brewer & Hewstone, 2004) also believe categorization between different sub-groups may usually influence how organizational members orient themselves towards the organization and sometimes even diminish organizational members' commitment towards the organization. In this sense, possible organizational sub-culture shaped by the divergent attitudes towards use of English within American companies operating in China, may in a way contributing to the high turnover rate among local Chinese employees and the high failure rate among American expatriated managers.

Research Questions

With the above discussion in mind, research questions can be articulated surround the following focal concerns: do organizational members hold and describe the organizational reality differently when it comes to language? Would local employees' high turnover rate relate to expatriated managers' high failure rate in some way? If so, are the behind-the-scene socio-cultural factors contributing to such dynamics? Answers to this question directly point to the research attention shared by scholars as global business becomes an everyday reality today. This dissertation, therefore, seeks answers to the following research questions:

RQ 1: What are the patterned expressions shared among informants in regards to daily experience using either English or Chinese as first or second language at work?

RQ 2: What are the premises and rules reflected through such patterned expressions interpreting language experience in the daily office space?

RQ1 is descriptive and RQ 2 is interpretive in nature. Particularly, use of “premise” and “rule” is situated in the discussion on the theoretical development of speech codes theory (Philipsen, 1997; Philipsen, Coutu and Covarrubias, 2005) as the theory has oriented this research in research design and theoretical building. Specifically, speech code scholars consider

culture as “a socially constructed system of symbols, meanings, premises, and rules” (Geertz, 1973, p. 91). According to speech codes scholars, premises “express beliefs of existence and of value” (Philipsen, 1997, p.8); a rule is “a prescription, for how to act, under specified circumstances, which has force in a particular social group” (Philipsen, 1997, p.8).

Collection of different premises or rules, in this sense, may facilitate an effective and accurate way to make sense with the multi-faceted reality related to language use. Although which language should be spoken in daily office space seems to be a simple question, the ordinary daily reality may influence how organizational member chooses to categorize themselves: they may seek to categorize themselves either primarily based on their national identity or their organizational identity. Based on the collected premises and rules, this dissertation further assumes that the narration of daily office language usage may reflect distinctive speech codes.

One important consideration, at this stage, is to clarify that this dissertation does not assume certain premises or rules may evolve based on organizational members’ native language background. Instead, this dissertation stresses possible different “norms of use” (Hymes, 1972, p.321) as primary indicator of distinctive premises or rules.

RQ 3: What speech code(s) associated with use of English or Chinese as either first or second language at work may be suggested through the grouped premises and rules?

RQ 4: How, if at all, do the speech code(s) identified reflect unique sociology, psychology or rhetoric?

If warranted by data collected in the field, this dissertation will move on to RQ3 and RQ4. RQ3 is both descriptive and interpretive in nature as it deals with fundamental questions speech codes scholars seek to answer about how human shape social life through communication. As Philipsen (1997) discussed,

One way to show how speech shapes life differently in different societies is to think of different ways of speaking as expressing culturally distinctive codes, or ideologies, of personhood, society, and communicative action. That is, every cultural way of speaking is a distinctive answer to the questions (1) What is a person? (2) What is society” and (3) How are persons and societies linked through communication?

Hence, RQ3 draws the link between organizational members’ narration and the bigger picture of how organizational members link themselves to the society they live in. Answers to RQ3 may also lead to discussion on how their interpretations towards use of language reflect their identity, either within the organization they work for or beyond the office walls.

RQ4 is interpretive and theoretical in nature as it explores how human use speech codes to shape themselves and others’ communicative conduct within any given speech community. Specifically, answers to RQ4 will offer interpretation of use of speech codes detected through this study within the context of speech codes theory (Philipsen, 1997; Philipsen, Coutu and Cavorrubias, 2005), particularly proposition three, to present how use of speech codes associated with language use may strategically reflect unique notions of personhood and social relations as local people understand them.

Literature synthesis

Previous study in organization culture has inspired the research focus of this project. Three other major area of literature have informed and guided the formation of this dissertation research project: use of language in global organizations, ethnography of communication and speech codes theory. It is necessary to first discuss previous research on use of language in global organizations, particularly how the discussion evolves over time and its focal concerns, to understand relevance and potential strength of using ethnography of communication and speech codes theory to orient research design.

Use of language in global organizations

Today's business world has marched onto the global stage and most multinational entities have gone through evolutionary stages of expanding to overseas markets (Adler, 1997). In early classical management literature, however, there were basic assumptions about the nature of people and that managerial principles are universally applicable (Griffin, 1990; Maddox, 1993). Both academic researchers and managers respond to cultural diversity by a process of simplification and applauded for the "homogenization process [is] underway... Global managers are alert to serving this commonality in human needs and markets with strategies that are transnational" (Harris & Moran, 1991, p. 12).

One major reason relevant to the homogenized approach may be the high cost of maintaining local distinctiveness in management approaches in order to minimize or avoid local political and cultural complications as research (Wakefield, 2001) has documented multi-nationals' attempts of abandoning local autonomy (or decentralization of management) and favor homogeneous practice to all markets. However, the homogenized management approach did not prove itself as panacea and usually risks ignoring local indigenous political or cultural conditions, which calls for structural change from top-down parameters to accommodate both geographical and cultural differences (Forster, 1999; Herbert, 1984; Ghoshal & Gupta, 1989).

Over the past few decades scholars have moved away from homogenous approach and dedicated much attention on local cultural differences, most of which are more or less related to language usage (Ashton, 1989; Brannen, 2004; Kolde, 1974; Reed J. , 1999; Tung, 1988; Marschan-Piekkari, Welch, & Welch, 1999). In a global entity, headquarters and regional offices are now described as a mini United Nations with a pool of best minds drawn from different countries (Kanter R. M., 1995). However, only a "handful of corporations have achieved this

balance to become global in the fullest sense” (Morley, 1998, p. 24). Most research over language usage in multinational corporations, although stretched over several decades, exhibited mixed feeling towards single language policy within the organization, with the only consistent agreement that a strong competitive advantage is now closely related to a truly global corporate identity and dedicated multicultural employee force (Phatak, 1974; Adler, 1997; Grunig, Grunig, & Dozier, 2002; Vaara, Tienari, Piekkari, & Säntti, 2005).

Part of the reason why the research has been inconclusive might be that natural language is usually viewed as a static and predetermined construct within organizational context rather than vehicle of expression linking speech to speakers’ notion of identity or social relations. Previous discussion usually focused on how to overcome the language barrier that impairs market entry (Gibson & Hodgetts, 1991), local operations (Charles & Marschan-Piekkari, 2002), emotional conflicts within multicultural teams (Von Glinow, Shapiro, & Brett, 2004), knowledge sharing and transfer (Szulanski, 1996; Gupta & Govindarajan, 2000). Such trend seems to be strongly influenced by earlier research on social identity theory (Lambert, 1967) and relative linguistic studies, which argues that language and accent influence the formation of in- and out-group identities. A missing piece has remained, which should shed light on how organizational members view language policy differently and in addition, how such a perspective may reflect their outlook towards their personhood and social relations.

Another line of argument views language as embodiment of national culture and all relative discussion of language impact on employee communication is thus generalized to cultural impact. Studies (Johanson & Jan-Erik, 1977; Langhoff, 1997) have related differences among cultures as psychic distance, or factors preventing or disturbing the flow of information between the firm’s home country and its target foreign market. Following this line of argument, Brannen (2004)

uses semiotics to explore the formation of “foreignness” in Disneyland’s exploration of overseas markets. In particular, Brannen (2004) describes how the firm created semantic fit to overcome the sense of “foreignness,” which is believed as necessary for multinational enterprises to effectively claim overseas market. The strength of this approach is the connection between national culture and particular use of language. However, in a globalized business world, it is increasingly difficult to define who is foreign and who is domestic: a single corporation might involve both foreign and domestic investment and hires both foreign and local professionals. In other words, the virtual distance between a firm’s home country and its target foreign market may reduce to none. In situations like this, this research approach that directly relates language use to national cultural influence may fail to capture the dynamics of the increasingly globalized business world.

A third approach differentiates itself from the above mentioned argument by viewing language usage as strategic tool that can be used to integrate global operation in a more effective way. Empirical research (Lou & Shenkar, 2006) has been conducted to explore options in managing language usage in headquarters and local business units, stressing on the importance of considerate awareness and competence over local cultural characteristics. Through case study, Welch and Marschan-Piekkari (2001) have examined the way in which language influences the pattern of foreign market expansion and analyzed how a firm may try to cope with language diversity by adopting a common corporate language. In a similar research, Welch and Marschan-Piekkari (2001) also identified different patterns of market entry into other foreign countries based on the firm’s language heritage: firms from English-speaking countries follow a path distinctively different from those countries in which such minor languages as Japanese, Finnish, and Norwegian are spoken. This research approach distinguishes itself by not assuming

multi-lingual environment as a challenge or obstacle; however, same as the first research approach reviewed here, it still tends to overlook how individual organizational members may approach the language policy differently and focuses primarily on level of organizational effectiveness for the entire corporation through such strategic use of multiple languages.

Besides their individual scholastic concerns, all the above mentioned three research approaches focus on organizational effectiveness. This might have been driven by the ultimate purpose of management scholarship where all three perspectives are grounded, which is to seek more efficient way to bring people with different cultural backgrounds to work with each other in a more effective way. In other words, most literature relating to language use within multinational corporations aim to offer suggestions to the management level, rather than offer interpretation, from a cultural anthropology perspective, for the daily organizational dynamics. For instance, most research on a single language policy tends to focus on how to improve management level practices (Lou & Shenkar, 2006; Du-Babcock & Babcock, 1996; 1999) When they do pay attention to the effect on local employees, research usually rushes into explorations on how language usage may positively or negatively impact employees' motivation (Ryan, Chan, Ployhart, & Slade, 1999; Sharbrough, Simmons, & Cantrill, 2006), training outcomes (Charles & Marschan-Piekkari, 2002), socialization process, shared corporate vision and inter-unit relationships (Barner-Rasmussen & Björkman, 2007). Critical scholars take a different approach by revealing the power and control of such management practices (Boje D. M., 1995; Vaara, Tienari, Piekkari, & Säntti, 2005; Boje, Oswick, & Ford, 2004), yet the research has still focused upon management level practice. Little research has explored employees' perception towards the single language policy and the related socio-cultural implications, with exception of Oyserman's (2002) research that indicates that language competency casts major influence on local

employees' overall perception towards the organization. In this sense, using speech codes theory to explore organizational member's notion of personhood and social relations by analyzing their narration of daily experience with the "English only" language policy, becomes particularly relevant and potentially revealing to further understand the impact of single language policy in a multi-lingual work environment.

To summarize, a brief review of previous study shows that ethnography of communication in general and speech codes theory in particular may collectively offer alternative approach and method to specifically analyze organizational members' attitudes towards single language policy and how such attitudes may suggest distinctive notion of personhood or social relations. To continue to discussion, the following session will provide general overview of ethnography of communication and speech codes theory, including their origin, development and unique theoretical strength, to show their unique strength in orienting this research project.

Ethnography of communication & Speech codes theory

Ethnography of communication as a research cluster or school was first pioneered by several scholars in India who explored socially-explainable variability in speech in the early 1950's. Later in the 1960's and 1970's, John Gumperz initiated intellectual interaction in Berkeley and eventually formed a research cluster there (Keating, 2001). Their research clearly differed themselves from then mainstream linguistics research which focused on "English rather than the social and cultural determinants of the language" (Keating, 2001, p. 297).

The scholastic commitment to revealing "social and cultural determinants of the language" shows that ethnography of communication has been heavily influenced by the anthropological tradition of ethnography (Keating, 2001). Ethnography of communication also inherited from linguistic studies based on the traditional research curiosity around anthropology and language

cherished in American tradition (Hymes D. , 1977; Keating, 2001). Prague school of linguistics with their focus on relationship between form and content as consequential to meaning can be seen as the third influence under which ethnography of communication was shaped in the same period.

If compared with classical linguistics, Ethnography of communication advocates for contexts, appropriateness, and existing structured rules of language usage. To neo-Bloomfieldian and Chomskian linguists, a language only has one phonological and grammatical system. Any error or deviation from that standard set of rules will be attributed to personal idiosyncrasy or errors (Keating, 2001).

If we compare ethnography of communication with other influential schools at the same time, ethnography differs from the Chomskian tradition that focuses primarily upon language as a construct, its varieties and its variations, rather than the socio-cultural implications of use of such language. In addition, ethnography of communication distinguishes itself from the Chicago School and its leading figure, George Herbert Mead by focusing on distinctive local interpretations, which facilitates revelation of differences of language usage from society to society, from community to community (Keating, 2001).

Ethnography of communication as a research cluster generally strives to better understand two key concepts, speech community and ways of speaking. To better understand the distinction among ethnography of communication and the above mentioned academic traditions and how in return ethnography of communication might offer valuable analyzing tool to guide this particular research project, one needs to take a close look at how these two concepts have been defined in those different traditions.

Speech community

Bloomfield has been quoted as defining speech community as a “group of people who interact by means of speech” (Murray, 1993, p.319). This indicates a research commitment primarily on the verbal aspect of the interaction.

Ethnography of communication scholars, on the other hand, focus more on the norm and the meanings reflected through a variety of means of communication through interactions. In addition, ethnography of communication scholars also concern with the overall socio-cultural implications behind such means of communication and situate the interpretation within the local cultural context. Hymes (1972), one of the foundational scholars in ethnography of communication, for instance, defined speech community as “community sharing rules for the conduct and interpretation of speech, and rules for the interpretation of at least one linguistic variety. Both conditions are necessary”(p.55). Hymes also commented on attempts to define speech community as people who speak the same (first) language as members of the same speech community, as “intending to fit in a quantitative measure of frequency of interaction” (p. 55) and this was why he postulated a different definition of speech community, focusing on the “norm for the use” (Hymes, 1972, p.55) of language with a qualitative approach. John Gumperz, another foundational scholar in ethnography of communication defined speech community as “any human aggregate characterized by regular and frequent interaction by shared means of a shared body of verbal signs and set off from similar aggregates by significant differences in language usage” (Murray, 1993, p.321). Different from Bloomfield’s definition for a speech community, both definitions cited from ethnography of communication scholars show attention and commitment to revelation of meanings through various means of communication.

In addition and perhaps because of such academic commitment, ethnography of communication as a research tradition shows unique strength capturing the cultural dynamics in a multi-lingual environment. Following Hymes' line of argument, which respects "conduct and interpretation of speech"(p. 1972, p. 55) as a qualitative approach rather than grouping community based on the same first language, there occurred a paradigm shift from homogeneous speech communities to repertoires of speech, under which many scholars raised interesting questions when they conduct research in speech communities where people speak more than one language. Different levels of competence in mastering a second language within those speech communities, as Hymes (1972) observed, has made it almost impossible for researchers to conceptualize and categorize speakers into specific speech communities if speech community was still defined following the mono-language perspective. The shift of paradigm from a mono-linguistic speech community to a diverse speech repertoire follows ethnographer of communications' constant belief in the diversity of language usage within one given speech community. Following that argument, a speech community was considered as generally including people with overlapping repertoires.

Resent study defines speech community as "social unit that forms the starting point of the ethnographic study of communication in a given case"(Philipsen, Coutu and Covarrubias, 2005, p.367). To conceptualize a speech community as conjunction of means, meaning of such means of communicative conduct and social group wherein the conduct carried out and experienced offers ways to describe how speech community members assign intrapersonal and interpersonal functions to specific means (Katriel, 1990; 1991). Carbaugh (1985) revealed this interwoven reality between members' communicative conduct and their persona in his ethnographic fieldwork inside a TV station. Baxter (1995) also described similar observation during meetings

among university faculty and administrative staff members, where faculty members usually prefer to “talk things through” as ways to reconfirm their collegiality but administrative staff insist on “putting things in writing” as ways to stress on their sense of professionalism.

Early literature on speech community also exhibits constant focus on the multi-lingual speech community (Morgan, 1988, DeCamp, 1971), which may be indication of influence from anthropology research. Another reason contributing to the fact may be that many early scholars in the research cluster are with multi-lingual background. The exploration of a multi-lingual speech community naturally invites clear focus on diversity of linguistic usage within this speech community, which fulfills the commitment on exploration of culturally distinctive ways of speaking. This research project aims to explore multilingual speech community within global organizations. Hence, ethnography of communication offers strong theoretical support to the research design and variety of ways to analyze and interpret qualitative data. Are there multiple speech communities inside global organization because of the multilingual speech reality? Are native language background the most decisive factor to mark boundaries of such speech community, or rather different ways or attitudes interpreting use of language as the most decisive indicator? Speech community, as one key concept of ethnography of communication, would offer versatile tool to guide and interpret data collection of this project

In global workplace, organizational members’ narratives towards “English only” language requirement may reflect how they understand their personhood, or persona, within the company or organization they work for. For people using Chinese as native language, they might produce a narrative interpreting use of English as conflicting against their cultural heritage or national pride. The opposite case might be true, too, when they choose to connect use of English as indication of a successful career, good education background or promising career prospect. In

either case, such connections or interpretations may reflect distinctive sets of personae or identity. For organizational members using English as native language, they might interpret use of English as natural practice or normalcy. They might also express their desire of learning Chinese as a way to fit into a local cultural community. In either case, their narrative towards use of language may reflect how they choose to define their role and relationship to other members inside the organization; more importantly, how they interpret use of English also defines their own persona, or personhood, within the organization.

Speech community, as defined within the academic tradition of ethnography of communication, provides scholars with potentially effective and productive tool to conduct analysis over the norm and premises reflected through communicative conduct. It might be effective in that the concept inspires scholars to seek interpretation through local narratives and seeks to understand the norms or premises behind speech. This focus, unlike existing management literature on language use in global corporations that focus primarily on effectiveness of practices from management level, offers possibility to study individual organizational member's narrative towards their language experience. It might be potentially productive in that the concept offers alternative framework from classic research over organizational culture to unveil the socio-cultural implications behind the norms or premises without linking specific speech to speakers' native cultural background. That is to say, to use the concept of speech community to approach a multi-lingual environment like this enables the scholar to escape from traditional organizational research orientation that relies primarily upon organizational members' native cultural background to categorize or project possible divergent premises or norms but instead, directly focuses upon the premises or norms themselves and use

them as the fundamental reference to group different ways to make sense with the organizational reality. Such an approach may potentially unveil meanings previously hidden from scholars.

Ways of speaking

Ways of speaking is another key concept of ethnography of communication. Unlike speech community, for which scholars from various research traditions have offered definition, ways of speaking is unique to ethnography of communication. The concept covers five interrelated constituent themes (Philipsen, Coutu and Covarrubias, 2005). The following part further explains three of the five interrelated constituent themes to demonstrate how ethnography of communication distinguishes itself from other research traditions with its focus upon diversity of interpretations and overall socio-cultural implications reflected through local communicative conduct.

To begin with, means of speaking of a speech community, the first of the five constituent themes, refers to “media and modes of communication, local variety of languages, dialects...genres of communication...and beliefs pertaining to communication, and so on (Philipsen, 2002). Means of speaking differs from traditional linguistic analyzing theme in that it entails all language resources relevant to the communicative conduct under study. Philipsen (2005) points out that the list of variety of languages, media and modes of communication as well as dialects are “heuristic list of possibilities”... “in the sense of providing a basis for inquiry and in the sense of open to revision and expansion” (Philipsen, Coutu and Covarrubias, 2005).

Many research projects in the ethnography of speaking have explored means of speaking in organizational settings, including Carbough investigation (1988) in an organization where certain cultural terms reflect social currency among organizational members and Baxter’s account (1993)

on two sets of terms, “talking things through” and “putting it in writing” as distinctive to organizational identity and personae.

The second constituent theme, meaning of ways of speaking, refers to people’s “experience in relation to the means” (Philipsen, Coutu and Covarrubias, 2005, p360). Exploration of the meaning of ways of speaking is one step further from documenting language variety and dialect and directly points at the social significance of such language varieties and dialects. Since the means of speaking provides wide array of potential language resources, investigation over meaning of such means of speaking may suggest analysis over evidence that traditional linguists may not pay attention to, such as communicative genres or terms bearing significance only to local community members.

Meaning of ways of speaking also emphasizes on the interactive aspect of situated communicative conduct taking place within the speech community. Philipsen and colleagues (Philipsen, Coutu and Covarrubias, 2005, p361) wrote

When someone uses a particular means, or experiences someone else using a particular means, the act of using that means has meaning that derives from the fact that it is that particular means that is being used, whether it be a particular language variety, dialect, style, register, communicative genre, or habit of speaking.

Efforts to include reaction from local speech community members towards specific communicative conduct add additional layers of analysis. Ultimately, exploration of meaning of means of speaking directs attention to the commitment of interpreting meaning of communicative conduct significant to those who use the means to communicate as well as who experience the communicative conduct on the scene.

The third constituent theme, diversity of ways of speaking in any given speech community is also unique theme underneath the key concept of ways of speaking. The diversity first refers to

diverse forms of speech resources available and applied in a given speech community (Philipsen, Coutu and Covarrubias, 2005). Secondly, it implies that in any given speech community, there can be “multiple meanings of any given means of speaking” (Philipsen, Coutu and Covarrubias, 2005, p. 369). This possibility directs research attention beyond language and dialect variety and highlights possibility of multiple interpretations or different ways to experience any given means of speaking. Finally, the diversity also refers to the fact that meaning and means of speaking identified in any given speech community is distinctive to its origin and can be different across communities (Philipsen, Coutu and Covarrubias, 2005).

Overtime, exploration on multi-lingual speech community and plural form of meaning of means of speaking within such communities remains as a constant research focus shared by scholars in this research cluster (Morgan, 1988; DeCamp, 1971; Katriel, 1990, 1991; Covarrubias, 2005). Research attention given to means of speaking, especially means outside of traditional language and dialect varieties, such as beliefs pertaining to communication “that might be previously...rendered relative invisible, inaudible, undervalued, or systematically ignored or suppressed” (Philipsen, Coutu and Covarrubias, 2005, p.370).

Ways of speaking is another key concept of ethnography of communication and may be a productive tool to guide both data collection and interpretation of this project. In regards to data interpretation, the concept focuses on interpretation of meaning behind the speech act as it sheds light on the setting, participants, ends, act sequence, topic, tone or key of the act and instrumentalities deployed and the beliefs and moral judgments implicated in them (Philipsen & Coutu, 2005). Among all those elements, ends and norms seem to be especially relevant. When analyzing a speech event, ends refers to “community-recognized goal(s) for engaging in the talk being studied” (Hall, 2003, p. 71) while norms refers to “the should and should not of both the

production and interpretation of the act” (Hall, 2003, p. 72). These two elements may guide the data collection process in multiple ways as they both encourage meaningful inquires while formulating interview questions. For example, what would be the reason that you think people learn English or Chinese? What would be the reason that you think local Chinese employees having an English name? Should you consider people as being rude if they speak a language other than your native language while you are also there? Collections of narratives responding to such questions lead to revelation of ends and norms of the speech act described and recounted by organizational members. Similarities and differences among those narratives, in return, may help define boundary of speech community within the organization, or multiple speech communities co-existing within the same company.

An ethnographer of communication commits to better understanding of plural forms of communicative conduct co-existing within the speech community (Philipsen & Coutu, 2005). Commitment to understanding of such multiple sets of meanings, in this sense, is vital to the interpretation of the “English only” language requirement observed in multilingual workspaces. In situations where all organizational members strive to follow the same language requirement, although the means of speaking, in this case being speaking English, has been observed and shared across the entire workspace, is the meaning of the means of speaking also shared and agreed upon on the organizational level? Ways of speaking, as another key concept of ethnography of communication, supports valuable exploration over different versions of narrative that reflect different sets of meanings of such means of speaking. Interpretations of such meanings may eventually leads to revelation of social or cultural factors forging such narrative.

Ethnography of communication as a research cluster exhibits a unique focus and commitment to local interpretation and recognizes communicative conduct as unique, interactive occurrence that bear social significance to those who carry out, experience and witness the speech act within the community. Ethnography of communication also pays respect to the plurality of interpretations within the speech community towards one given means of speaking. Those differences distinguish ethnography of communication from socio-linguistic approach when studying language varieties in different cultures and societies. Those differences also distinguish ethnography of communication from management scholarship when approaching a multi-lingual environment. Speech codes theory builds on top of the academic tradition of ethnography of communication and highlights its commitment to exploration of culturally distinctive ways of speaking that reflect specific rules, norms and premises pertaining to such communicative conduct. The following part provides an overview of speech codes theory, including the definition and development over the years to further explain how the focus on plural forms of speech and local version of interpretation have consistently reflected through the process of its theoretical development.

Speech codes theory

Speech codes theory considers human communication through a cultural perspective (Philipsen, Coutu and Covarrubias, 2005). Specifically, it looks at culturally distinctive ways of speaking in particular times and spaces, explores how culture has influenced such ways of speaking, and what are the particular terms, rules and premises as being interwoven into speaking itself in the communities studied (Philipsen, 1997).

Speech codes theory stemmed from Bernstein's earlier inquiry on the possible existence of people's multiple coding patterns, and how do such coding principles influence, or be influenced

by, social life (Philipsen, 1997). Aside from that, speech codes theory also draws from Hymes' (1964, 1972 and 1977) early research on socially and culturally influenced norms or rules shaping human linguistic interaction. To understand how speech codes theory may connect back to those theoretical traditions, it is necessary to know how some of the key concepts have been defined following those traditions in the context of speech codes theory. Specifically, speech code scholars usually follow tradition within cultural anthropology and consider culture as "a socially constructed system of symbols, meanings, premises, and rules" (Philipsen, 1997, p.8). A symbol is defined as "vehicle for a conception... [and] tangible formulations of notions, abstractions from experience fixed in perceptible forms, concrete embodiments of ideas, attitudes, judgments, longings, or beliefs. The "conceptions" are the "meanings, notions, definitions, and for forth, which symbols express" (Geertz, 1973, p. 91). Based on that, speech code is defined as "a system of socially constructed symbols and meanings, premises, and rules pertaining to communicative conduct" (Philipsen, 1997, p. 8). The following excerpt explains how speech code has been defined in a way to resonate with the above mentioned scholastic commitment that ethnography of communication scholars generally share:

Speech code research is dedicated to understanding the "local knowledge people deploy to talk about---- to characterize, interpret, or rationalize ---- their communicative conduct is indeed local, particular knowledge, this suggested the question of the existence of distinctive speech codes, and has promoted the search for evidence of distinctiveness, across cultures, in the resources people deploy to invent, characterize, interpret, and rationalize their communicative conduct; the question of the substance of speech codes, whether they provide a vocabulary, as it were, in and through which their users express and constitute distinctively coded social meanings and social worlds; the questions of how speech codes could be observed and formulated, with both scholarly and practical implications; the question of the force of speech codes in social life (Philipsen, 1997, p.122)

A brief overview of definition of those key concepts may review how speech codes theory continues with the academic curiosity on plural, local form of communicative conduct and the

socio-cultural implications created and shared among speakers and listeners. Speech code theory was first officially introduced as a formal theoretical statement in 1997 (Philipsen, 1997), and received major revision in 2005 (Philipsen, Coutu and Covarrubias, 2005) in response to criticisms against it. To deal with each theoretical inquiries relating to human's culturally distinctive ways of speaking, speech code theory first proposed five propositions, and then expended to six propositions. Those propositions, as shown in the following table, explain how speech codes theory ventures to answer questions relating to various aspects of such culturally influenced ways of speaking, each addressing the distinctiveness, substance, force in social life and ways to observe or formulate such speech codes.

Table 1: major propositions of speech codes theory

	Philipsen, Coutu and Covarrubias (2005)
Distinctiveness (diversity)	P1: wherever there is a distinctive culture, there is to be found a distinctive speech code; P2: in a given speech community, multiple speech codes are deployed;
substance	P3: a speech code implicates a culturally distinctive psychology, sociology and rhetoric;
Function, use and force	P4: the significance of speaking is contingent upon the speech codes used by interlocutors to constitute the meanings of communicative act;
site	P5: the terms, rules, and premises of a speech code are inextricably woven into speaking itself;
How do SCs influence communicative conduct	P6: the artful use of a shared speech code is a sufficient condition for predicting, explaining, and controlling the form of discourse about the intelligibility, prudence, and morality of communicative conduct;

The six propositions of speech codes theory, each addresses the distinctiveness, substances and function of speech codes. To date, the first and second proposition of speech code theory reflect the distinctive existence of such specific rules, terms and premises and inspires scholars to explore the diverse form and pattern of such rules, terms and premises within any given speech

community. The third proposition deals with important inquiries on how human speech conduct may format his/her notion of personhood, or personae and defines his/her social relation with others. Philipsen (1997) wrote that “One way to show how speech shapes life differently in different societies is to think of different ways of speaking as expressing culturally distinctive codes, or ideologies, of personhood, society, and communicative action”(p. 15). This proposition echoes with one of the five constituent themes of ethnography of communication, the meaning of ways of speaking in that it revisits the social function of communicative conduct within a given speech community and recognizes such community as social unit interwoven with speech act, social group and finally social significance reflected through speech act. Proposition four and five restate the fact that because of the interwoven nature among the speech itself, the speaker as well as rules and norms reflected through the speech to explain that meaning and means of speaking should be interpreted with full respect and attention to its situated, purposeful use and according to local interpretations.

To describe the strategic use of communicative conduct, the sixth proposition explores how members of any given speech community may use speech codes to influence or format other community member’s communicative conduct and social relations. Ethnography of communication has demonstrated a constant focus on the fact that any given speech act should be considered as social in nature and put much emphasis on the meaning that each means of speaking may exhibit to those who experience such speech act. The sixth proposition of speech codes theory ventures to articulate this academic concern and set it as one of its major propositions.

Based on many empirical findings inspired by speech codes theory, speech codes scholars have made revisions to the original five propositions of the theory. Among those revisions,

diversity within one speech community has received growing attention. The proposition of the existence of multiple speech codes in any given speech community has been revisited and revised based on growing body of literature and empirical research evidence. Diversity of speech code within any given speech community and across multiple different speech communities, as speech codes theory argues, echoes with Hymes' early argument of linguistic diversity within any given speech community and later research findings on multiple speech codes co-existing in one speech community (Philipsen, Coutu & Covarrubias, 2005).

As such, speech codes theory offers productive tools to analyze today's multi-lingual, multi-cultural organizational reality with its theoretical framework reflecting an academic commitment to diversity and local interpretations of speech. Today's globalized multi-lingual organization creates an interesting environment. Ethnography of communication and speech codes theory, with their focus and commitment to diverse form of meaning and means of speaking within any given speech community, offer ways to explore such multi-lingual community with full respect to local perspectives and interpretations. The following session will discuss research implications that this research project may produce.

Research significance

This research attempts to contribute to discussion on use of language in global organizations. All major areas discussed above: research on natural language used in global organizations, organizational culture studies, ethnography of communication and speech codes theory have influenced and oriented the formulation of research question of this project. In seeking answers to those research questions, this research project also attempts to make theoretical contribution to those areas.

Language use in global organizations

First, this research project may develop alternative ways to approach natural language used in global organizations. Previous literature discussed natural language either as cultural construct (which is static) (Martin, 2002) or communication barriers (Du-Babcock, 1999; Du-Babcock & Babcock, 1996). Recent years, scholars begin to consider natural language used in global organization as strategic tools (Lou, 2006) to coordinate communication between global headquarters and local units. However, in most cases, research attention has seldom given to socio-cultural factors that influencing organizational members' reaction to use of language. In other words, research on use of language in global corporations have focused sufficiently enough on how to cope with the multi-lingual organizational environment to improve organizational efficiency, yet fail to identify the socio-cultural impact of such language policies on each individual organizational member. Phatak (1974) conducted interviews with local branch employees of global companies and have generated evidence that local employees may consider fluency of the their expatriated managers' native language is important for their pay raise, but very few research has paired interviews with both executives and average organizational members to compare and contrast their attitudes. To answer this call, this research project chooses to explore the behind-the-scene premises, rules and norms in regards to use of language as reflected through organizational members' own account on this topic. Note here that organizational members include both expatriated managers and local employees. Taken into consideration the co-existing high turn-over rate among local Chinese employees and high failure rate among American expatriated managers, this research may venture to provide a more comprehensive outlook of the social dynamics created because of such single language policy.

Ethnography of communication

This dissertation research project may be a meaningful addition to the theoretical development of ethnography of communication by revisiting the original research interests over multi-lingual speech communities. Specifically, the findings of this research project might first offer an alternative account to re-conceptualize speech community. This could potentially be achieved on two different levels where the term “culture” can be conceptualized in this study, either as national culture or sets of shared premises or rules, depending on local speech scenario. If warranted by data collected, findings on either or both level can be meaningful continuation of existing discussion. Secondly, findings of this research project might confirm or disconfirm the value using shared premises or rules to draw the boundary for a speech community where members don’t share face-to-face relationship but rather bound by public means of communication. If warranted by data collected, this discussion could be meaningful to re-conceptualize the concept of speech community, which has long been a challenge for scholars sharing this interest (Keating, 2001).

To begin with, since this project explores a multi-lingual speech environment, national culture inevitably will play an influential role shaping speakers’ attitudes towards either language. Documentation of speakers’ speech may reflect distinctive premises or rules that correspond to the socio-cultural context that speakers mostly identify with. Before analyzing data collected through interviews, this dissertation will explain in chapter III the historical and cultural context relating to use of English in China, in an attempt to provide a comprehensive background with which some speakers’ interview narrative might resonate.

At the same time, however, this project may offer evidence to prove the validity of separating speakers’ cultural background from specific set of premise or rules that he/she might exhibit

through speech. That is to say, this project has potential to confirm that speakers coming from different national cultures might share the same set of premises or rules; speakers coming from the same national culture might share different set of premises or rules. Since this research project is committed to using premises or rules as unit of analysis, this allow researcher and readers to conceptualize the term, “culture” on more than one ways to reflect the dynamics between speech act the behind-the-scene socio-cultural factors.

On the theoretical level, if proved through later analysis, this contribution may respond to one major criticism that the concept of speech community receives, that the concept of speech community may help amplify what was already known and shared about the culture while ignoring what had not yet been discovered, and thus committed over-simplification in cross-cultural studies (Philipsen, Coutu and Covarrubias, 2005). In particular, this study may continue with the traditional research focus on multi-lingual environment while it takes one step further by focusing exclusively upon individual speakers’ own interpretation of their or others’ speech act. Early research (Morgan, 1988; DeCamp, 1971) focused upon multi-lingual environment but studied primarily the surface level language features in use within the community; more recent studies (Carbough, 1988; Baxter, 1994; Coutu, 2000; Edgerly 2010) have been consistently committed to local interpretations of a speech act, but only within a speech community where one language is spoken. This study, if warranted by data collected, may show a picture combining both of the two areas where scholars have shared curiosity: the multilingual speech environment and local interpretation on speech act. Combining the two is vital to reveal the very message traditionally hidden from scholars when approaching a multi-lingual speech environment like this.

Secondly, this research project may support efforts re-conceptualizing the concept of speech community by studying a multi-lingual environment where speakers don't share face-to-face relationships but are bounded through public means of communication. This is done through two ways: one is to use sets of premises or rules, instead of natural language variety, to draw the boundary of a speech community in this environment; two is to explore possibility where speakers assume same sets of premises or rules even though they don't have face-to-face interactions with each other.

Ethnography of communication as a research cluster has traditionally focused on the meaning created within a multi-lingual speech environment, which naturally adds onto the complexity of conceptualizing a concept like this. As a result, speech community as unit of analysis has undergone sustained critiques, mostly because of the seemingly impossible way of realizing or truly conceptualizing the concept in field practice in a multi-lingual environment (Keating, 2001). Responding to this challenge, early research projects on multi-lingual speech environment took the approach by studying the surface linguistic variation with some efforts dedicated to exploring the socio-cultural factors driving such varied use of speech. Such early approach has usually used natural language variety to distinguish and conceptualize a speech community and focused primarily upon the language feature itself. For instance, early scholars (Morgan, 1988, DeCamp, 1971) have looked at multi-lingual speech communities, but the research attention has been focused on "speech feature" (DeCamp, 1971) or behavioral level characteristics (Morgan, 1988). Such early approach, although did make commitment to exploring socio-cultural implications behind such speech feature, has conceptualized the concept of speech community according to natural language variety and in turn limited the potential to fully unveil the premises and rules on the deeper level underneath such varied use of speech. In other words, speech community has

been originally defined with deep concern of pre-structured rules and interpretations of such communicative conduct, but early research has been solely focused on the behavioral, observable, socio-linguistics level of evidence rather than exploring the indigenous interpretation towards such communicative conduct shared by community members, which may contain important message explaining meaning of means of speaking that usually escape scholars.

A commitment to the behind-the-scene socio-cultural factors may be traced back to Hymes' (1972) early projection on the social dynamics within a multi-lingual environment, which links diverse linguistics usage to deeper levels of rules and messages beyond linguistic features like grammar. Specifically, when Hymes discusses his definition of a speech community, he has continuously observed and addressed the diversity of linguistics usage and difficulties of identifying all linguistics usage within one community. Hymes (1972) pointed out that the sharing of grammatical (variety) rules alone is not sufficient to define a community as *the* speech community. He saw possibilities when "there may be persons whose English I can grammatically identify but whose messages escape me" (Hymes, 1972, p. 55). Such "message" could highly possible to be related to premises or rules that shape different versions of interpretation of similar use of speech, as he argued in the same article (1972) that within one community where the same language is shared, in different contexts usage of the same language may not deliver the same meaning:

The nonidentity of the two kinds of rules (or norms) is more likely to be noticed when a shared variety is a second language for one or both parties. Sentences that translate each other grammatically may be mistakenly taken as having the same functions in speech, just as words that translate each other may be taken as having the same semantic function. There may be substratum influence or interference (Hymes, 1972, p.55).

Later research continues with similar inquiry on multi-lingual environment and proves that sharing the same grammatical rules doesn't directly translate into set of shared socio-linguistic rules (Morgan, 1988). Features of speech in a multi-lingual community have also been described as a continuum in DeCamp's (1971) research between Standard English and rural Creole speech in Kingston, Jamaica. However, although Hymes discussed possibilities of different sets of interpretations of such communicative conduct, attention given to actual interpretations has been scarce. Inquiries of such usually require sufficient cultural knowledge to tease out the underline premises and norms, which might be one reason why literature lacks empirical data in this regards.

Following Hymes' line of argument, it might be possible that within a multi-lingual speech environment where one language is chosen as primary language, first-language user and second-language user may possess different sets of interpretations towards such shared language usage; the different interpretations, in this sense, may very likely make up a good portion of the "message" that escaped Hymes. Or, on the contrary, speakers do share similar set of interpretations towards such shared language usage. In either case, distinctive premises or rules seem to be vital to draw the boundary for a speech community.

This speculation has oriented this research project to reflect the communicative complexities within a multi-lingual environment under discussion in this research project. In today's globalized workplace, presence of different native languages inside one same office may produce multi-lingual speech communities where one naturally language is shared among parties with different native language background. Although organizational members are generally understood by each other, their interpretations, or meaning of the means such ways of speaking may reflect distinctive array of premises, norms and rules. Such set of premises, norms and rules

may vary according to organizational members' native language background, or stay rather similar across different cultural and language background. In either case, it would be worthwhile to explore organizational members' own interpretation towards the "English only" language requirement observed in office space. Such indigenous or local interpretation may be more revealing, or at least well complement the explorations of observable external behavioral level of evidence in describing the culturally distinctive way of speaking in global offices. If warranted by data collected, this research project may promote scholars to seek deeper level of analytical tools by focusing upon premises and rules, rather than the surface level language features to conceptualize the concept of speech community. In other words, do speakers sharing the same native language belong to the same speech community? Or do speakers sharing the same set of premise or rules belong to the same speech community? The strength of such research design rests in the respect and recognition of local interpretations, rather than directly relating possible premises or rules to speakers' national cultural background before entering the research site.

Secondly, this research project may continue the exploration of speech community where speakers don't share face-to-face interaction with each other but bounded through other public means of communication. In other words, this study may capture the nuances shared among speakers who don't know each other personally but share similar premises or rules associated with language use at work. They might have developed such premises or rules through similar exposure to mass media message or cultural up-bringing. In addition, the process of developing distinctive premises or rules might be a long process corresponding to historically shared sentiments, rather than spontaneous ideas came up overnight. Previous efforts have been made to understand whether collective exposure to social sentiments or public debates may help shape a speech community. Coutu (2000) explained how social actors make sense to the topic of U.S.

involvement in the Vietnam War using two distinctive codes: McNamara's code of rationality and code of spirituality were identified as either distinctive, or exclusive from each other, meaning even though people are aware or able to understand each other's narrative, they chose their own distinctive ways to frame their rationale. more recently, Edgerly (2010) analyzed public talk about terms used in US mainstream media coverage of Hurricane Katrina, particularly the terms "refugee" and "citizen" to illustrate publicly held notions of these two social categories. In both cases, speakers, or social actors do not share face-to-face relationships with each other; at the same time, they do share the same premises or rules to make sense to the social world they live in.

Similar approach has been used by scholars outside of ethnography of communication academic cluster as well. Machin and Van Leeuwen (2007) for example, argues that international readership of top fashion magazines, like *Cosmopolitan*, have formed an interpretive community in which "they share an involvement with the same modalities and genres of linguistic and non-linguistic communication, and the same constructions of reality" (p. 50). The internationally shared sisterhood of "fun, fearless female" identity constructed among reader communities across the globe, in this case, offer another example where sense of community may be constructed through shared public means of communication.

To continue the exploration, this research project will study a multi-lingual environment where speakers don't have face-to-face relationship but exhibit potential of sharing premises or rules associated with language use at work. In chapter III, several examples will be included to illustrate how the shared social sentiments towards use of English in China has been historically presented, which may serve as base to identify possible shared premises or rules speakers may

reflect through their speech. Identification of such shared premises or rules will be used to conceptualize a speech community.

To summarize, within the theoretical context of ethnography of communication, the strength of this research project rests in its potential of offering multiple ways to conceptualize the term, “culture” to better approximate local interpretations on language use at work. In addition, this research project promotes scholars to re-conceptualize a key term within ethnography of communication, speech community, by exploring boundaries of a speech community within a multi-lingual environment with focus primarily upon shared premises or rules rather than speakers’ national cultural background.

Chapter Summary

This chapter provides an overview of the dissertation research projects, which looks at attitudes, premises and interpretations of language usage among speakers who use either English or Chinese as first or second language at work, who do not share face-to-face interaction with each other but may share similar or different sets of premises or rules towards such language use. The chapter provided literature review in area of organizational culture and language use within global corporations to discuss potential strength of the research design, which focus on local level interpretations rather than data collected from management level. Ethnography of communication and speech codes theory has each oriented this research in theory and research design. This dissertation research project joins current debate in organizational culture and employee communication in regards to the impact of globalized workplace, while at the same time, make it possible to extend theoretical development of ethnography of communication by providing alternative case to endorse the existing theoretical claim.

Chapter II Methodology

Chapter Overview

In chapter two, I first discuss the rationale and the strength of choosing ethnography and speech codes theory as research method for this research project. I will then share criteria used to set up and select the fieldwork sites and participants, as well as interview processes. I will pay special attention to communication repertoire (Briggs, 1986) in local speech community and discuss ways to infer premises or rules from speaker's account, which while to some degree salient to speakers sharing them, may remain invisible to outsiders. I will also introduce the themes and types of questions asked, procedures of the research project, and the interview protocol I followed. Finally, I will share steps I take to code and present interview data. I will also address ways to ensure validity and reliability during data collection and analysis.

Philipsen's (1997) speech codes theory has oriented this research both in theory and methodology design. Other qualitative research perspectives have also informed my conceptual and methodological approaches to this study, including Atkinson and Hammersley's (1994) overview of ethnography as research method, Briggs's (1992) discussion on communication repertoire, Emerson et al (1995) on how to write field notes, Hammersley's (1991; 1989; 1992) critique of ethnography as a research method and Lofland and Lofland (1975) on their discussion on selection of informants, validity and reliability of qualitative field research design. On data coding and interpretation, I rely on Coffey and Atkinson's (1996) discussion of three-level generality analyzing model.

Ethnography

Some scholars consider ethnography as a philosophical paradigm; others consider it as a method (Atkinson & Hammersley, 1994). Ethnography is directed toward better understanding how people make sense of their lives. Researchers usually use participant observation and intensive interviewing to collect data in the field (Lofland & Lofland, 1975) and write up field notes during or right after participation of the field events (Emerson, Fretz, & Shaw, 1995). Ethnography supports data collection of this research project in multiple ways, particularly because of the commitment to local interpretation of a social phenomenon: the “English only” language policy.

First, ethnography as research method assures the data collection for this research project to minimize existing assumptions correlating one’s cultural background to certain premises or rules a speaker is likely to exhibit through speech. Ethnographers immerse themselves into a local cultural community and study human interaction in a natural setting. Such immersion enables a researcher to gradually obtain insider social status as he/she receives growing trust and respect from community members. This allows a researcher to enter some of the research sites that are usually closed to outsiders, where quantitative research methods are simply not applicable, such as studying a street gang (Whyte, 1955) and homeless punk musicians (Lull, 1986). The cultural immersion is based on the notion that the world hosts multiple versions of reality pertaining to local community members’ interpretations. This notion reflects the most prominent strength of ethnography: the researchers' commitment towards multiple versions of realities existing in the human world and restoration of such reality according to local community members’ terms. For an ethnographic research method to be effective, the researcher should not only rely on his or her physical presence, but also the “insights and intuitions” (Hymes D. , 1977, p. 170) gained from

certain training. Ethnographic research differs from general field work in that it remains “open to questions and answers not foreseen” (Hymes, D., 1977, p. 170). To an ethnographer, the world is inherently adapting and changing, recreated and reinterpreted by individuals in their own lives. Ethnography as a research paradigm assumes that the world has multiple realities; therefore, any attempt seeking to understand the multiple facet of the reality entails individual efforts on specific cases, fields and communities. Ethnographers explore reality using unstructured investigation. The hermeneutic root of ethnography resonates with the notion that human social and cultural life is complex and has to be understood through local terms. Ethnography enables a researcher to explore a human social world with minimal pre-shaped impression. Because of such commitment, ethnography as research method may best extend the potential of this research project to confirm or disconfirm whether one’s national cultural background is always correlated to certain premises or rules he/she may exhibit through speech. This helps avoid the cognitive schema developed solely on narratives generated from the management level (Martin, 2002).

Secondly, because of exclusion of pre-existing assumptions, ethnography as research method may avoid previous research of multi-lingual work environment that considers language as communication barrier or challenge, but rather considers language experience as a way for speakers to make sense of the social world and how they can find a way to fit in. Ethnography relies on in-depth, or semi-structured, interviews to encourage informants describing their experience using their own terms. This helps to produce narratives with rich meaning that supplement existing quantitative studies. Quantitative research has described the impact of language on organizational efficiency (Lou & Shenkar, 2006; Du-Babcock & Babcock, 1996; 1999) or employee motivation (Ryan, Chan, Ployhart, & Slade, 1999; Sharbrough, Simmons, & Cantrill, 2006). Some researchers consider language as barrier of communication (Ryan, Chan,

Ployhart, & Slade, 1999), while other researchers consider language as strategic tools (Lou & Shenkar, 2006). Ethnography research method allows genuine interaction with community members, in which case meanings and power relations may become more prevalent. In this way, ethnography helps to expose multiple layers of messages and illustrate the dynamics situated in the cultural context. In this particular research project, the generation of speakers' own narratives towards use of English at global workplace may reveal meanings and terms that usually escape the researchers who collect data through pre-structured survey questionnaires.

Third, ethnography as the principal research method fits well with narrative analysis, which I plan to use to support data analysis. To better make sense of narratives towards use of language within the organization, I rely on narrative method (Gribich, 2007) to segment interview transcriptions for further analysis. This research project deals with a complex situation where national culture intertwines with organizational culture. Weick (1995) offers the notion of sense-making in organizations, which is useful to decipher nuances of dynamics that might reflect unique meaning or significance. The epistemological root of the narrative method (Gribich, 2007) lies in the notion that story-telling is the fabric of our daily life. Within an organization, members usually make sense of events and incidents following certain patterns, which in return constitutes shared behavioral choices that defines their membership or personhood (Aguinis & Henle, 2003). Sojin and Scheytt (2006) set forth an argument that the narrative method offers alternative lenses to explore organizational members' sense-making process, which is especially relevant to this research project. In multicultural organizational environment, narrative method may avoid existing cognitive bias shaped by traditional approach represented by Hofstede's work (1984; 2001) that evaluates culture's consequences through specific, pre-structured categories. Narrative method, as opposed to inviting informants to respond to surveys designed by such pre-structured

categories, may allow informants to elaborate on key events within the organization, using their own terms. In this sense, narrative method complements speech codes analysis because it may avoid pre-existing stereotypical assumptions that organizational members automatically produce account towards use of English according to their native language background or cultural heritage. Instead, narrative method enables me to treat each narrative account separate from the interviewee's cultural background and fully focus on his or her sense-making process on use of English in daily office space.

Finally, ethnography fits this project also because it is ideal for research conducted at multiple international locations. In such scenarios, quantitative research projects usually cannot offer the level of flexibility and productivity that ethnography can provide. At international locations, conditions in the domestic environment may pose additional challenges to a quantitative researcher. To conduct a quantitative research project in foreign countries usually suggests increased financial support to sample, distribute survey questionnaires, and collect data in a foreign language. It is also difficult to gain access to national level demographic data if such a database even exists. Additionally, negotiation of local access to facilities or organizations to conduct a controlled experiment with informants may also be difficult because of language or cultural barriers. Especially for organizational culture studies, data sets generated through longitudinal, international field investigations have been rare due to obvious reasons: high logistics cost, different cultural and social circumstances to negotiate organizational access and conduct interviews, as well as the researchers' own language proficiency and cultural sensitivity to coordinate all those efforts (Martin, 2002). Ethnography, in this case, poses a unique advantage because it encourages the researcher to excel with limited access to local sites, and sometimes analyze a single case in detail. For this research project, ethnographic investigation,

particularly one-on-one interviews with organizational members outside of the worksite, may bypass this challenge and generate narratives with interviewees in a relaxed environment away from work.

Longitudinal, international ethnographic field investigations have been proved productive and revealing. Sean O’Riain conducted ethnographic research in an Irish IT company in 2000 and later completed his research, *Net-Working for a living: Irish software developers in the global workplace*. In his investigation, O’Riain (2000) described the dynamics of global workforce, including detailed accounts on how Irish IT workers move around the globe through the global labor network, how the communication virtually happens across the globe internet and such time-space intensification would generate a new set of social identities, resources, interests and issues by the global information economy. Covarrubias (2005) spent nine months at a Mexican organization to study pronominal use and its indication to speech codes theory. Her analysis set forth arguments that the adoption of different speech codes of *Respeto* and code of *Confianza* neatly supports and confirms one of the propositions of speech codes theory, that the artful use of speech codes may control and predict community members’ behaviors accordingly. Most recently, Sprain (2009) spent nine months in Nicaragua participating in fair trade cooperative meetings and produced an account of meetings as a social phenomenon.

To summarize, ethnography was chosen as the principal investigation method because it may best assist such academic pursuit with focus on specific behind-the-scene socio-cultural factors shaping speakers’ narratives. The following section will discuss how ethnography of communication, in particular, may assist data interpretation of this research project in that respect.

Speech Codes Theory

This research project aims at better understanding of the behind-the-scene socio-cultural factors that shape specific narratives towards informants' language experience. If compared with traditional linguistics study, this research project pays specific attention to the socio-cultural factors beyond the grammatical use of the language. As discussed in previous chapter, ethnography of communication as a research tradition offers a lens to look beyond the linguistic text and tease out the behind-the-scene premises or rules. Speech codes theory has been developed based on this tradition and extended the academic commitment to explore the process in which social actors link themselves to the society through communication. The following part discusses how speech codes theory may support data interpretation for this project.

To begin with, since speech codes theory commits to better understanding of plural forms of communicative conduct co-existing within the same speech community (Philipsen & Coudu, 2005), it makes sense to use the theory to guide the discovery of multiple speech codes within the same community or environment, which is ideal to analyze multiple responses to the "English only" language policy. In situations where all organizational members strive to follow the same language requirement, different narratives may reflect different sets of premises or rules. Interpretations of such premise or rules may eventually leads to revelation of social or cultural factors in such narratives.

Speech codes theory also commits to cultural distinctiveness of speech codes. This resonates well with the potential this project aims to achieve, which is to describe a scenario within which the term, "culture", could be conceptualized in multiple ways.

To summarize, speech codes theory looks at a broad range of human communication forms rather than only surface grammatical language features. Ethnography of communication as a

research approach has been considered as filling in the gap between what is usually described in grammars and what is usually described in ethnographies. It considers “what a child will internalize while learning a language” (Hymes D. , 1962).

Research Progress and Data Collection

To respond to the research objectives stipulated in chapter I, the present study was conducted in three distinct phases. The first phase involved a pilot study conducted in spring 2008 in Beijing, China. The second phase was conducted in summer 2009 in three cities in China: Beijing, Chengdu and Kunming, where I conducted one-on-one interviews with informants, organized focus group interviews and participated in “English Corner” gatherings where Chinese people get together practicing their English skills. The third and more exhaustive phase involved a period from 2010 to 2011 during which I conducted interview in Seattle with informants in China over Skype or long-distance conference calls.

Phase I of this project was carried out in spring 2008 in Beijing, China. The initial exploration of this study involved on-site visits to several American companies’ branch office in Beijing, during which I conducted participant observation with local Chinese employees during work as well as one-on-one interviews with their American expatriated managers. The result of that study was later integrated into Phase II of this project.

Phase II of this project was carried out in summer 2009 in Beijing, Chengdu and Kunming, China. During this field investigation, I interviewed American expatriated managers working in three cities and local Chinese employees. The investigation covers 16 one-on-one interviews in total with informants and two field notes of participant observation at two “English Corner” gatherings, where Chinese people got together practicing English skill and usually also talk about their experience using English at work. I have been hosting such “English Corner” for four years

at the university in the same city, where I received my bachelor's degree; I am familiar with meanings and norms guiding communicative conducts at those social gatherings. I jot down field notes after my observation; I also briefly talk to some of the participants to the "English corner" about their specific reaction towards use of English or Chinese in American corporation's branch office in China. Both "English corners" have a host who announced topic of the day and facilitated discussion afterwards. At the beginning of each "English corner", I announced my presence as researcher to all. When I talked to individual participants, I first explained my presence as researcher and made clarifications before I extended my questions to them.

Phase I and Phase II study have informed my understanding of different attitudes and interpretation towards use of English at work among American expatriated managers and local Chinese employees. Both studies have also implied the behind-the-scene social and cultural factors that contributed to such divergent attitudes and interpretations. I reflected upon Phase I and Phase II of the project and adjusted the design. For example, I decided to conduct future interview questions as open, broad questions to all my interviewees rather than ask separate sets of questions according to interviewees' native language background.

The third phase of this study extends over a year from early 2010 to summer 2011, when I conducted one-on-one interviews with foreign expatriated managers working in China or had worked in China, local Chinese employees, and intercultural management consultants working in both Seattle and China. Although the majority of the interviews were conducted over either long-distance conference calls or over Skype, I traveled to China to revisit some of the informants I interviewed during phase II for follow-up interviews, which provided a rare opportunity to me to construct longitudinal international investigation experience. I also started transcribing interview files collected through Phase I and II.

In total I have conducted 21 intensive interviews and collected 623 minutes of interview audio files. All interviews are transcribed and I have generated 119 pages of single-spaced transcription in English, 20 pages of transcription in Chinese.

The on-site, face-to-face follow-up interviews, company visits, and participant observation at local relevant social gatherings are used to construct an international longitudinal investigation framework that reflects people's attitudes towards use of English at work, which may reinforce the validity of the data set collected.

Selection of Location for Informant Recruitment

Beijing is the economic and political center of China. Since the opening up policy initiated by Chinese government a few decades ago, multinational companies have been seeking any opportunity to maximize their market share in one of the world's largest consumer markets, while at the same time, trying to benefit from the low-cost labor force available there. For foreign companies, China is both an engine of growth as well as an increasingly significant share of their global business. How to localize business practice has been a constant inquiry for most multinational businesses in China. Ferdinando Beccalli-Falco, president and CEO of GE International Belgium was quoted saying, "General Electric, which is a global company, is going to be a Chinese company in China, an American company in America and an Italian company in Italy" (Liu, 2010) at the 2010 World Economic Forum Annual Meeting, also known as the "Summer Davos" recently held in China. Most American companies choose to build their Asian regional headquarters in Beijing, which makes Beijing an ideal site to recruit informants for this research.

The city of Chengdu, on the other hand, serves as regional economic and transportation harbors in the west region of China. Chengdu is capital city of Sichuan Province and may host

growing number of American companies, according to the emerging trend of moving inland to the west region of China in order to gain access to cheaper labor force if compared with the coast region of China (Ross, 2006, 2007). Do informants working in Chengdu produce similar narratives of their language experience at work? Or do they exhibit additional premises or rules relating to use of English or Chinese at work? One-on-one interviews with informants and participant observation at relevant social gatherings may provide additional data sets strengthening validity of the research.

Selection of Kunming, on the other hand, is because of the fact that it may offer deviating cases to see whether “the main pattern still holds” (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 28). Kunming is the capital city of Yunnan province, which borders with Thailand and Viet Nam. Historically, the geographical area covering the majority of today’s Yunnan, two neighboring Guizhou and Guangxi Provinces as well as the majority of Viet Nam, has been under French reign at the turn of 20th century (Sun, 1995). Impacted by this, Kunming experienced stronger influence from French culture. One obvious example is that Yunnan University, one of the major universities in the province, hosts one of the strongest French language and literature academic majors in China that offers both undergraduate and graduate degrees in French literature. Additionally, due to the thriving trading activities over the border with Viet Nam and Thailand merchants, the city sees greater interests to learn Vietnamese and Thai as a second foreign language. Would influence from French change the way in which informants respond to the “English only” language policy in Kunming? or would growing demands for Vietnamese or Thai language counter balance the passion towards English? All those reasons make Kunming a location where deviating cases, where interests or influences from languages other than English likely be identified. Those deviating cases will be valuable to compare against main patterns generated in Beijing and

Chengdu, in which English may still hold primary foreign language influence. Such “maximum variation” approach of sampling, as Miles and Huberman (1996) explained, may “increase confidence in conclusions” (p. 28).

To summarize, I select these three locations to set the boundary of my sampling process out of methodological considerations. Setting boundaries of sampling in qualitative research, as Miles and Huberman (1994) explains, is to “define aspects of your case(s) that you can study within the limits of your time and means, [and] that connects directly to your research questions” (p. 27).

Selection of Informants

This research project recruits informants among expatriated managers working in China and local Chinese employees working American companies, who speaks English at work as either first or second language. This includes American expatriated executives as well as international professionals coming from countries other than the US. They may work at different positions or functions within their companies, ranging from information technology engineer, marketing communication manager to trade representatives.

I also conducted interview with intercultural management consultants and human resource managers working in China. My informants come from different levels of professional credentials, including newly hired fresh college graduates with minimal experience as well as a global vice president at a large multi-national corporation with decades of professional experience. The rationale behind such composition of interviewee is to avoid cognitive schema usually based on narratives generated from management level executives (Martin, 2002).

I follow a procedure combining snowball or chain, dimensional sampling and criterion sampling to select and recruit my informants. Criterion sampling is my primary sampling method,

which suggests selecting informants based on clear criteria (Kuzel, 1992). My criterion is professionals working in China using English or Chinese as either first or second language. I use this sampling method to identify professionals through on-line groups affiliated with *LinkedIn.com*. This is for several reasons. First, *LinkedIn.com* has over 80 million members in over 200 countries and about half of their members are outside the US (LinkedIn, 2008). Therefore, *LinkedIn.com* has hosted a large, expensive on-line community where I can likely access informants falling into my recruiting categories. Second, *LinkedIn.com* facilitates gatherings of on-line groups according to a certain professional focus or geographic location, like “intercultural management,” “foreigners in Beijing,” and “expatriates in Shanghai.” This group setup is convenient to locate informants working in the three areas I target at: Beijing, Chengdu and Kunming, in a rather efficient and accurate way. I have signed up with groups where international expatriated professionals and local Chinese employees are likely to get together and share career-related information. I have also signed up with groups where human resource managers, academic researchers and management consultants get together to discuss topics relating to intercultural management training.

I contacted professionals sharing the same group membership with me and invited them to participate in my research by receiving a 30-minute phone conversation with me. I explained this in the initial invitation of the purpose of my study. At the beginning of our phone call or Skype meeting, I would introduce in detail the research project, overview of questions, and interview protocol. I reserved time at the end of each interview for them to ask questions.

Whenever possible, especially during my field trips to these three locations, I also used snowball or chain sampling method to identify informants through people who I know. This is to supplement criterion sampling method.

I invited intercultural management consultants and human resource managers to participate in my research. This is to follow dimensional sampling as suggested by Johnson (1990) to invite responses from well-informed informants who are usually believed to have professional knowledge and expertise in the area under study. The goal of such sampling method is to access informants who are usually “more knowledgeable, reliable, and accurate in reporting events that are usual, frequent, or patterned” (Miles and Huberman, 1996, p. 29). Miles and Huberman (1996) also referenced Pelto (1975) to explain risks of the dimensional sampling methods as it usually includes possibilities where such informants “assume greater uniformity than actually exists” (p. 29). To respond to such risk, I followed up with them questions relating to unusual yet reoccurring expressions emerged from interviews with other general informants to seek their responses, especially in regards to terms or expressions that usually contradict against existing main pattern relating to use of language in multicultural office spaces.

Interview questions

Specific interview questions are formulated surrounding research questions of this project. For example, RQ1 explores the patterned expression relating to use of either English or Chinese at work. I asked informants questions exploring this issue such as: “do you think it is necessary to have ‘English only’ corporate language policy, why or why not? When was the last time you see people switching between English and Chinese? Why do you think they did that?” Questions like these invite informants to share their own interpretations towards the language policy. As informed by the pilot research, I asked the same question to both international business executives and local Chinese employees, rather than preparing separate sets of questions for them based on their native language background. In other words, interview questions do not imply that speakers with different native language background naturally produce interpretations

in ways distinctive to their language background. In this way, the interview questions open possibility that speakers may share similar or different premises and rules towards use of language regardless of their cultural background. This approach also supports one of the key inquiries shared by speech codes scholars: the diversity of speech codes that co-exist within one speech community and its consequent influence (Baxter, 1993; Covarrubias, 1999; Gumperz & Hymes, 1964).

One-on-one interviews were the primary data collecting method because previous literature (Watkins-Mathys, 2006) suggests that it may be the best way to collect data through interview with Chinese informants, because in a focus group setting Chinese people tend to agree with each other and hide their true thoughts, if different from the majority voice.

Transcription

Most of my interviews recorded in English were transcribed by two assistants under work-study program through which they receive stipend and academic credits by assisting with the transcription process. We conducted norming meetings before transcription to lay out expectations, routine and details worth attention during transcription. I reviewed all my interview transcriptions after the initial draft transcription was done. This serves two purposes. The first purpose is that in doing so, I hope to accumulate first-hand impression of the exact scene of the speech act, which includes both the physical as well as psychological setting of the speech event. The second purpose is to translate the contextual meaning, if the interview was conducted in Chinese, into English, instead of literal meaning, if the contextual meaning is closer and more accurate in reflecting informants' intentions.

Most of my informants are native speakers of either English or Chinese who may or may not be fluent in the other language. My interviews with them were conducted in either English or

Chinese, depending on their needs or comfort level. I transcribed interviews conducted in Chinese and translated into English the portion of which I included into the dissertation discussion. This is out of two considerations. One, as native speaker of Chinese, I can document nuances during the interview recording and translate the contextual meaning rather than literal meaning, whenever necessary. Second, as the interviewer, I can catch those moments, pause or sighs that may convey meanings significant to this study but may only be detectable to people native to Chinese culture.

Data Analysis

My interview transcription and field observation notes are my primary data. My analysis was oriented by ethnography of communication and speech codes theory (Philipsen, 1997; Philipsen, Coutu and Cavarrubias, 2005). I looked through data gathered from multiple sites in search of evidence of speech codes. In particular, I looked for ways that potential codes, or reoccurring themes and categories of key words, fit with each other or challenge each other; or if the codes are shared by multiple informants. I am aware of and especially interested in codes that are shared by multiple informants who do not necessarily share the same native language background. That is to say, I do not assume that interviewees coming from the same native language background would assume similar attitudes towards use of English, or come up with similar narratives towards use of English at work.

To identify potential reoccurring themes or categories of key terms in any given narrative, I adopt pattern coding as described by Miles and Huberman (1996), who referenced Kaplan (1964) and described the coding method as satisfying “the researcher’s quest for ‘repeatable regularities’”(p. 69). As Miles and Huberman (1996) explain, pattern coding usually involve four inter-related summarizers: themes, causes/explanations, relationships among people, and more

theoretical constructs. In my research, most research questions are structured to reflect at least one, sometimes more than one of the four summarizers.

For example, my RQ1 and RQ2 address themes, which are premises and rules pertaining to interpretations of language policy:

RQ 1: What are the patterned expressions shared among informants in regards to daily experience using either English or Chinese as first or second language at work?

RQ 2: What are the premises and rules reflected through such patterned expressions interpreting language experience in daily office space?

My RQ3 and RQ4 address causes/explanations contributing to possible different versions of interpretations:

RQ 3: What speech code(s) associated with use of English or Chinese as either first or second language at work may be suggested through the grouped premises and rules?

RQ 4: How, if at all, do the speech code(s) identified reflect unique sociology, psychology or rhetoric?

In this way, pattern coding allows me to identify reoccurring summarizers that may tie together groups of interview excerpts while at the same time, pointing out the connection between such summarizers and the specific research question. For example, several informants talked about how using English name at work could be considered as “fashionable”. Through pattern coding I am able to identify the connection between the repeated expression of “fashionable” and the question that usually encouraged such expression. In other words, I am able to know that this is usually when informants attempt to offer explanations of using English or using an English name at work. I use pattern coding during Phase I and Phase II of my study and continuously through Phase III. As Miles and Huberman (1996) put it, pattern coding allows

me to start analysis fairly early during my data collection process so that “later fieldwork can be more focused” (p. 69).

Once I identify any pattern, I go back to the corpus of data to see if this pattern unfolds multiple sub-categories of generality on different layers of meanings. This requires multiple layers of analysis that connect general inquiries that usually correspond to particular interview questions to groups of much finer, more subtle meanings reflected through expressions on informants’ own terms. Specifically, I follow what Coffey and Atkinson (1996) framed as “three levels of generality” (p. 37) to explore and track such multiple layers of categories or expressions informants used. The top two and most general layers of categories, as Coffey and Atkinson (1996) put it, are categories corresponding to semistructured interview questions. In my research, this layer of category will be informants’ responses to questions relating to use of language within daily office space, and their reactions or interpretations towards such language policies. The third layer of categories, according to Coffey and Atkinson (1996), are categories of expressions most informants choose to use during the interview.

I follow these three steps because of several considerations. First, the three-step identification process enables me to connect finer, further extended categories of expression to the interview questions. For example, the expression of “fashionable” has been repeatedly used by informants to describe use of English names and how it may relate to their own persona. The expression “fashionable” belongs to the third layer of category; but under this three levels generality analyzing model (Coffey & Atkinson, 1996), I am able to know this is usually when informants are invited to comment on why people choose to use English names at work. Secondly, the three-level generality analyzing model (Coffey & Atkinson, 1996) enables me to re-analyze and re-evaluate corpus of data with new sets of expressions or categories of key terms. As Coffey and

Atkinson (1996) put it, “the main goal of such coding is to facilitate the retrieval of data segments categorized under the same codes” (p. 28) Speech codes theory (Philipsen, Coutu and Covarrubias, 2005) strives to understand how meaning is intricately interwoven with the communicative conduct itself. The three-level generality analyzing model (Coffey & Atkinson, 1996) allows me to capture meanings, norms and premises on multiple levels of the data and fulfills that commitment.

Interview protocols

Pertaining to my IRB approval, I can keep audio recording of interview and later transcribe the audio file into textual file for further analysis. I have stated as such in my approved IRB consent form in both English and Chinese. I always shared my consent form before interviews. At the beginning of the interview, I explain how I would protect their privacy and how I would store the file, both electronically and in hard copies. I always seek their consent of audio recording the interview before I begin the actually recording. Towards the end of my interview, I reserve five to ten minutes for my informants to express any questions they may have and repeat how they can contact me in future.

To follow code of ethics as researcher, I announce my presence to any *LinkedIn* online professional groups once I was granted membership. I contacted group owner about my research project and make my presence known. Whenever I extended an invitation through LinkedIn, I included blurb explaining my research in the initial message and followed up with additional information about my research, accompanied with my informed consent form in both English and Chinese, to any individual responds to my invitation. For each of those steps, I made sure that informants understand their rights, risks and specific procedures of the interviews, as well as how I would store and transcribe interview file in a way to protect their privacy.

At the beginning and ending of each interview, I reserved time to further explain the interview procedure, ways to follow up with me, together with risks and rights as an informant to my interviewee. I only conducted audio recording once I secure their oral consent. I also ensure that they can access and make changes to their interview transcriptions.

To avoid or minimize negative impact of consequential presence (Emerson, Fretz, & Shaw, 1995), an ethnographer may either play a practical role in local community or simply be an “observer”, but he/she shall never attempt to intervene with local social interactions. In other words, ethnographers should work to avoid contamination to the site; while it is ethical to disclose their researcher identity once they enter the site, they should bear in mind and avoid any attempt to adjust, change or even terminate any incidents or interactions taking place on site. To restore the human social life to its natural setting are the key words here.

Responding to this concern, I usually scheduled interviews during weekends or at least after work, at locations physically away from work or over Skype, a web-based phone service. This fulfills two goals. First, this enables informants to mentally separate themselves away from the work environment and reflect upon their daily communication experience in a more relaxed environment. Second, this avoids my presence to intervene in daily communication dynamics within the office.

Display of research materials

This section explains how I present field material in my dissertation.

I use tables to display various patterns I identified through pattern coding that was conducted throughout the entire research process. Matrix offers ways to clearly present relationship between two variables (Miles & Huberman, 1996). In my research case, this is used to present various patterns and how they are connected to particular speech codes.

For example, I identified code of normalcy of speaking English at workplace, which represents general premise that speaking English is normal or “the way it should be”. Underneath this code, there are various finer subcategories of expressions that informants regularly repeat, with the notion that using an English name is considered as “fashionable” as one example. In the following chapters, I will display the speech code of normalcy, together with all subcategories in matrices to illustrate the relationship among them.

For representative key narratives, excerpts and expressions, I display the direct quote or excerpts from interview transcript together with the coding categories as illustrated by Coffey and Atkinson (1996). Following APA style, I present direct quote or excerpts in quotation marks and direct quotations longer than 40 words in a free-standing block of typewritten lines. If the original interview was conducted in Chinese, I present the quotation in two columns, with one as the original Chinese version and the other as its English equivalent.

Following APA style, all of the words in Chinese appear in italics.

Validity and reliability

Ethnographers argue that quantitative research approaches may reduce meanings to what is “observable” and treat social phenomena as static entities. On the other hand, however, despite of ethnographer’s firm belief that ethnography faithfully reflects social reality, research has been done to show just the opposite. Whyte’s (1955) ethnographic study on the “corner boys” has been challenged by Denzin (1992) when the later revisited the “corner boys” community and questioned Whyte’s earlier account based on their research.

Additionally, ethnography begins to receive criticism as being subjective, too. To change social phenomena due to the involvement of expertise and close contact with people, as critics argue, may represent a subtle form of control, if not more than that of quantitative research

(Hammersley M. , 1991; Atkinson & Hammersley, 1994). In a way, the criticism either for or against ethnography seems to reflect the on-going dilemma between a positivism and interpretive or hermeneutical tradition. Ethnography as research method has been heavily influenced by anthropology and modern sociology. On the continuum between positivism and interpretive tradition, ethnographers strive to restore human social world to its original look in academic research text, but the fluid nature of human social life has made it a constant challenge. Such has been my concern as my own cultural bias could be one of the major challenges to data interpretation. Taking this into consideration, I intentionally recruit professionals working at different industries, with different level of credentials or year of experiences working in multilingual environment. I also contacted and interviewed informants outside work space to create atmosphere different from work environment and collect informants' comment in a relaxing environment.

Social desirability is another prominent concern in this study when interpreting data gathered from interviews. Johnson and Van de Vijver (2003) summarized from previous research over social desirability and concluded that social desirability is likely to be a universal concept, especially when it comes to measure concepts relating to individualism-collectivism, expressiveness, and self-disclosure. In view of this consideration, I take steps to set sampling boundaries to identify deviating cases from the main pattern. I also select informants through dimensional sampling to solidify the main pattern. Additionally, I follow progressive verification methods (Billson, 1991) to maximize opportunity for community members to voice their own narratives or expressions, especially when those narratives or expressions go against existing literature or the main pattern identified so far. Originally proposed by Billson (1991), the progressive verification method was deeply rooted in feminism literature and was designed to

clear myth over topics frequently studied by feminism scholars, including objectivity, historical and cultural abstraction by inviting comments and suggestions from community informants into the data collecting, analyzing and interpreting processes. In other words, the method requires the researcher to first conduct a literature research, particularly review of statistical data or history for the community under study, before the field investigation. The method also recommends open-ended interview schedules to encourage original expressions. Most importantly, the method suggests second, or third round of literature review in parallel with the interview data transcribing process. In the end, the researcher will submit a drafted research report to selected community members for further clarification or suggestions. The adoption of progressive verification method may increase reliability of data gathered and analyzed with its consistent commitment towards original interpretations from community members. Such commitment also resonates with the approach most ethnographers of communication hold. To follow a progressive verification method, I invited questions and comments at the beginning and end of each of my interviews. I also assured my informants of their rights to access my audio file, transcription and research report to edit, change and offer clarifications. Most importantly, I conduct follow-up interviews with some of the informants to seek clarifications or confirmations to tentative conclusions I planned to draw.

In additional to the above mentioned steps, this research project follows what Lofland (1975) has listed as some basic questions or tests to evaluate investigators' own perception and the perceptions of other people:

Social locational skewing of reported opinion;
Self-serving error and bias concerning reports;
Internal consistency of the report;
External consistency;
Agreement among independent reports (p. 51)

Based on the list, I will pay attention to the researcher-informant relationship that might lead her or him to lie, distort, omit, falsely elaborate, or otherwise be less than accurate. I will pay attention to local cultural tradition and how local Chinese employees may react to interviews as a speech event. Interview is not a traditionally established speech event in Chinese culture; researchers conducting field research in China using interview as their principal investigation technique need to be aware of “metacommunicative competence” (Briggs, 1984). As native Chinese, I pay special attention to cultural nuances during interviews to pick up meanings whenever they are not explicitly expressed in words.

Chapter summary

In this chapter, I discussed rationale of using ethnography as my principle research method for this dissertation project. I also discussed rationale of using speech codes theory to orient my research. Details of data collection, research progress, analysis and presentation of material were also addressed. Finally, I included ways to improve validity and reliability. In the following chapter, I will give an overview of socio-cultural background of use of English in China, over a time span of more than 100 years, to further illustrate the bitter-sweet social sentiments usually associated with use of English or English fluency in China.

Chapter III English in China: an Overview

Chapter overview

In this chapter, I introduce a brief overview of the socio-cultural sentiments evolved over the past few centuries regarding the use and spread of English in China. The overview will first introduce scholarship produced by socio-linguistic scholars in this area to point to the possibility of co-existing bitter-sweet social sentiments towards use of English in China. The rest of the chapter is roughly divided into three stages by two historically significant events: one is the year of 1949 when the Chinese communist party established the new government and the Chinese nationalist party receded to Taiwan, while the other is the year of 1978 when the Chinese government adopted the policy of opening up to the rest of the world. Each stage witnessed unique socio-cultural dynamics because of the political influence at that time, which produced distinctively different social attitudes towards the use and spread of English in China. The overview will use evidences from historical account produced by missionaries, linguists as well as well-known literary work to show such changing trend.

English in China: perspectives shared by socio-linguistic scholars

English has always had strong social and cultural implications to local Chinese since the first British ship arrived at Macao in late seventeenth century. Socio-linguistic scholars conducted extensive research on the process of spread and variation of English in China, with primary attention paid to variety and development of *pidgin* English (pidgin being a corruption of the pronunciation of “business” in English) developed in China since then (Bolton, 2003). Joshua Fishman (1977), one of the leading scholars in the field of sociology of language and world Englishes, once points out that as postcolonial societies, the status of English has been related to

“social stratification,” in that fluency of English has been used to mark social status of individual or social groups within the society. In addition, Fisherman (1977) explained how such a “social stratification” effect may be exhibited through the concern or debate over whether maintaining local languages among two types of geographical areas in those post-colonial societies: one would be ports and cosmopolitan urban areas where English shows prevailing status over local language, and the other would be less developed inland areas where local languages still rule. In those areas, Fishman explained, discussion between nationalities and English-speaking local elites remains as constant debate. In more developed areas and regions, where people’s socio-economic gain is closely related to proficiency of English, support of the spread of English may be stronger than the voices against it. The reason may be what Fishman (1996) quoted Apple (1986) on the latter’s discussion of hegemony, that the “hegemonic forms are rarely imposed from the outside, but rather more often reintegrated ‘within everyday discourse, merely by following our “our common sense needs and desires” (p. 639). In less developed inland areas where people’s life remains uninterrupted and where people don’t have to work with foreigners to make a living, local language usually receives greater support. To summarize, which attitudes prevails towards use and spread of English in a post-colonial society depends to a large extent on the degree to which local people have their socio-economic life impacted by incoming foreign influences.

Such an argument may resonate with the before mentioned bitter-sweet social sentiments shared by Chinese people towards English. In other words, Chinese people might have developed mixed feeling towards English and they might either select to argue for or against use of English depending on how their socio-economic life fits into the rest of the society. The seemingly contradicting passion or rejection towards learning English may both be results

responding to what Fishman described as debates among different social groups divided through use of English.

In order to understand why the spread of English in China is driven by both foreigners and local people's own "common sense needs and desires"(Apple, 1986, p. 639), one needs to review the introduction, spread and use of English in China over the past 150 years. This chapter will discuss the spread of English over three distinctive historical periods. I will also discuss how local Chinese people with English fluency were perceived by other local Chinese or the foreigners they are in contact with, or in other words, what does it mean to be "fluent in English" throughout different historical periods in Chinese society. The purpose of such discussion is to contribute to a thorough understanding of why English fluency may encourage bitter-sweet social sentiments in today's China.

Before 1949: the missionaries, the linguists and the compradore

The first contact between British traders and the Chinese was made possible by Captain John Weddell (Bolton, 2003). In 1637, his expedition of four ships arrived in Macao, a small village back then along the South China Sea coastal line. Captain Weddell's fleet left China in the same year, frustrated from a series of failed attempts to establish direct trade links with Chinese, despite "a number of unreliable translators or linguists"(Bolton, 2003, p.126).

Since then foreigners have visited Macao with mixed reasons and purposes and they have each contributed to spread of English in China in their own way. Both the Portuguese and British merchants understood importance of translation service to make a deal with Chinese. But the missionaries assume primary role of documenting initial communication between Chinese and foreign merchants through aid of local linguists and translators (Bolton, 2003). One important

periodical that has to be mentioned is the *Chinese Repository*, the monthly magazine documenting missionaries' experience in China between 1832 and 1851 (Poon, 2004).

Wells Williams was one major missionary contributing to this periodical. His narration covered two major relevant topics: foreigners' attitudes towards local Chinese language, Canton dialect, as well as local Chinese's attitudes towards English language and foreign merchants. In most of Williams' narration from *Chinese Repository*, Chinese language was referred to as "jargon" or "barbarous jargon" that needs to be improved (Bolton, 2003). He also harshly criticizes local linguists, who are usually local Chinese using *pidgin* English (pidgin being a corruption of business in English language) to communicate with foreign merchants. For example, in 1837 Williams (1837) noted in one of his journal that

None of these 'linguists' can read the simplest document in English; no more than two or three of them understand two Englishmen in their common conversation...we know that not one of these linguists ever comes to a foreigner for aid, or ever thinks of taking any lessons in the English language (p. 279).

What merits noticing here is that missionaries, who are usually at the same time scholars and diplomats, while urging foreign merchants to learn local Chinese canton dialect, were doing so out of the premise that introduction of English may eventually help local Chinese, especially Chinese youth, to adopt Western way of thinking, which in return enhances foreigners' influence with the Chinese. Elijah Bridgeman (1833) in the introduction to the second volume of the *Chinese Repository*, saw such importance and explained that western missionaries' knowledge of Chinese

will give the foreigner power and influence with the Chinese, and over them too ---- a power which will be both harmless and beneficial to all (p. 4-5)

A similar point was endorsed by Williams (1837) in another journal contributed to *Chinese Repository* four years later, in which Williams argued that by producing a chrestomathy, or a dictionary, western merchants will be able to “command respect, and secure influence” (p. 279).

On the other hand, English, or “good” English that’s being used between two Englishmen, enjoys superior status over local Chinese canton dialect, an attitude not only shared and reflected through William’s narration, but also proved through his observation through daily communication between Chinese linguists and foreign merchants. In an article published in 1836 at the *Chinese Repository*, Williams (1836) noted that

Hundreds of Chinese now acquire enough of the jargon spoken to do business, while hardly a foreigner ever devoted an hour to learn the language of the Chinese. The effect of an intercourse so circumscribed can never be otherwise than to keep the two parties totally separated from each other in all those offices of kindness, sympathy, regard, and friendship which result from a knowledge of each other’s feelings and wants (p. 429).

The missionaries’ account of initial contact between foreign merchants and local Chinese reflects how westerners formed their attitudes towards local Canton dialect. The superior status of English is beyond doubt. Additionally, the need to command local Chinese language is to achieve mutual understanding and more importantly, enhance foreigner’s influence over local Chinese through such mutual understanding. Attitudes as such may stem from premise that prioritize English language over local native language, which seems to be connected with the British past experience with India. As Bridgman (1833) put in the same article that the spread of English, as in India, would help “the native youth [get] introduced into a new world. He will live and move in a new atmosphere...he will see and feel a thousand new relations” (p. 2). Such colonial mindset may have contributed to the premises shared among the first group of foreign merchants doing business in China, which emphasizes on pragmatic reasons and heavily laced with sense of imperial superiority.

To local Chinese, the initial exposure to English was accompanied by introduction of western advanced technology, the mighty cannon and pretentious foreign merchants who demands the best of China. What needs to be said is that the year of 1637 didn't witness Captain Weddell as the first foreign visitor to China. In fact, dated back for one thousand years from 1637, China was once considered as center of the developed world where thousands of foreigners from Europe, central and south Asia would pay a visit simply to learn more about a more developed way of life. Historically, foreign merchants were usually referred to as 夷 (*yi*) or 番 (*fan*), both of which are derogatory terms used to address foreign ethnic groups far away from the central kingdom, who usually settle with less developed life standards. Williams (1837) in his articles noticed that in Chinese documents published in the same period, foreign visitors were usually referred to as 夷 (*yi*) or 番 (*fan*). However, in the late nineteenth century, when foreigners arrived at coastal ports with their advanced technology and superior attitudes, the same term of 夷 (*yi*) or 番 (*fan*) now may imply mixed feeling of both fear and confusion, with fear created by the mighty cannon and rifles, while confusion begging for the answer to the question why yesterday's central kingdom is now so vulnerable in front of 夷 (*yi*) or 番 (*fan*)?

In 1751, two Chinese officials wrote an official study of Macao under the name of *Aomen Jilue*, or 澳门纪略, in which they've included portrait of a Portuguese gentleman in Macao, where the "gentleman" was actually address as 番 (*fan*) (Bolton, 2003, p. 166). Another widely used glossary in the 1830's and 1840's, as quoted by Williams (1837), was under the title where foreign merchants were referred to as "ghost" or "devilish". Foreign merchants' physically-distinguishable look may have partially contributed to such exaggerated description; but the dramatic difference between the British and the Chinese in all aspect, from command of technology and societal structure, together with foreign merchants' arrogant attitudes towards

local Chinese and Chinese language, may have also contributed such mental distance and intentional exoticification.

Such confusion and anxiety was reflected through government policy on spread and education of English. Adamson (2004) provided detailed account on the dramatic difference both in number and scope of English education institutions before and after the first and second Opium War (1839-40, p. 1856-60). Before the Opium War, English education institutions were limited to missionary schools; after the war, effort was seen within formal educational institutions to establish new schools exclusively focusing on English education and translation. According to Adamson (2004), such efforts reflected social sentiments towards English “as essential to the modernizing efforts of ‘self-strengtheners’ and other reformers” (p. 1).

Accompanied with such government-sponsored attempts of English-learning, local Chinese merchants and linguists managed to teach themselves English, or *pidgin* English, to facilitate communication. Despite Williams’s (1837) criticism towards linguists and interpreters, recent historians provided different account for such a first group of people who tried to bridge between English and Chinese. Van Dyke (2001) considered the Chinese linguists and interpreters, although using pidgin English, “did a remarkable job keeping the system operating as smoothly as possible...[and were] on the front lines the entire time struggling with the languages and idioms, balancing the cultural and political differences between the foreigners and the Chinese and between the foreigners themselves; moderating the tensions at every level of the operation” (p. 371-2).

The linguists and interpreters are the first group of people among Chinese society who can communicate with foreign merchants, initially in partial Portuguese, then in *pidgin* English. Although scornfully described in English missionaries’ accounts, these people usually hold

multiple successful social titles among their Chinese peers. They usually represent what one scholar (Bergere, 1989) considers as China's new elite who seize the new opportunities and are among the first to embrace modern western influence. One of the first widely used English-Chinese dictionaries, *The Chinese and English Instructor* (英语集全), was written by a linguist, comprador and businessman who identify himself as Tong Ting-Ku, or Tong Kong-sing 唐景星 (1832-92) (Bolton, 2003). In fact, many linguists and interpreters, because of their command of English, or pidgin English and ability to communicate with foreign merchants, had become the initial group of compradores in China, who seized the quick opportunity for business success yet receive mixed reactions among local Chinese communities because of their apparent inclination towards Western culture and value. To further understand how compradores as a social group lives at the center of the debate between whether to support or reject the spread of English in China, one needs to take a closer look at the social group in general in the historical context of late nineteenth century China, particularly how this social group, especially their command of English, has been viewed by other peer Chinese.

The Portuguese word *compradores* originally denoted the Chinese servants of the earliest foreign merchants in Canton and Macao, who went to local Chinese market to barter for merchandise for their masters (Bergere, 1989). The servant and master relationship set the initial tone or attitudes of how they were going to be treated by their foreign masters. However, within their own Chinese communities, they were among the first to embrace Western values, including

modern pragmatism, which, in the name of profits, sanctioned every kind of collaboration with the foreigners; modernism, which justified borrowing from the West; and nationalism, which provided a defense against slurs of acculturation and legitimized all economic activities pursued in the name of overriding national interests (Bergere, 1989, p. 46-7)

Compradores' business success in portal cities quickly established a new urban elite circle where their new ideology began to exhibit some influence. At the time of the First World War, most of them were entrepreneurs, with western education background, fluent in English and less concerned with traditional Chinese cultural values, especially the parts get in the way of their economic activities with foreign trade (Bergere, 1989). The subscription to western language and values also in part lead to their adoption to a western life style, including switching to business suit instead of traditional Chinese robe, living in houses built and furnished in western style and ultimately converting to Christianity. Their motivation to command English or at least pidgin English as well as their embracing western values, seems different from the reason why their foreign masters would learn and practice Chinese. Instead of achieving "influence" over the foreigners, the Chinese compradores are making an effort to imitate their foreign business contacts in every aspect of their life from dressing code to religious belief, which is apparently beyond the scope of foreign merchants' attempts to obtain some knowledge of Chinese language, and just the language, for business purposes. In other words, compradores did not attempt to achieve better control over foreign business contact but instead switched to a foreign value system and religious belief, leaving traditional Chinese values and religion behind.

On the other hand, being seen as representatives of foreign commercial and military powers, compradores as a social class also received hostility from the local Chinese community. In most cases, they are viewed as servants of their western masters and betraying traditional Chinese cultural value. Linguists, who usually later turned themselves into compradores, were initially looked down upon within their own people. Feng Guai-fen (1809-1874), a firm advocate for the *Self-strengthening Movement* that promotes the ideal of "learning Western technology to the benefit of Eastern ideals" in the late nineteenth century, wrote in dispel to express his

disapproval to people who manage to learn English and communicate with foreign merchants (Ssu-yu & Fairbank, 1979) :

Nowadays those familiar with barbarian affairs are called “linguists”. These men are generally frivolous rascals and loafers in the cities and are despised in their villages and communities. They serve as interpreters only because they have no other means of making a livelihood (p. 51)

Deng (2009) and Chen (1992), after detailed analysis of literary figures relating to compradores published in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, both believe that this is mainly due to the conflict between traditional Chinese culture and western pragmatism. Chinese culture traditionally undervalues commercial activity and associates it with lower social class. Western pragmatism, on the other hand, promotes business success and capital gain. Such conflict, amplified by the widely spread fear and hostility towards foreigners and foreign culture in general, may in some way encourage negative thoughts or reaction towards compradores. While seizing the quick opportunity to become rich overnight, compradores are usually viewed as betraying traditional Chinese value and affiliates of their foreign masters.

The May 4th Movement in 1911, during which university students held a demonstration to protest government’s corruption and failure of defending the country’s sovereignty against foreign powers, marked change of attitudes towards English in Chinese society. Once considered only as vehicle to transfer advanced knowledge of technology from the west, English then was instead viewed as conduit for intellectual interactions for knowledge transfer, which facilitates introduction of western philosophy and political ideals.

The mixture of recognition as well as hostility relating to spread of English language within Chinese society, as well as the risings concern among the nationalistic scholars and politicians on “unwanted cultural transfer” (Adamson, 2004, p. 22), continued to develop in the following

decades before the establishment of People's Republic of China in 1949. The on-going conflict between hostility and demand towards English language, in this sense, may have marked the beginning of the bitter-sweet memories towards English proficiency that's generally shared by most Chinese today.

1949-1978: rise of Russian and down with American imperialist

Wang and Gao (2008), after thorough review of 24 research articles focusing on English education in China published between 2001 and 2006, concluded that English education in China has always been closely connected to socio-political considerations. This may resonate with previous established social sentiments towards English and foreign economic powers: on one hand, English suggests commercial and military invasion from foreign powers and any approximation towards English may indicate betrayal from traditional Chinese culture. On the other hand, English does imply advanced technology and modern ideology, which, after several decades of war and increased understanding of reality, had become one piece of fact that most Chinese need to realize and endorse. Such contradicting sentiments towards English had been reflected by the constantly changing policy of English education in Chinese universities, especially during the period of 1949, when the People's Republic of China was established, and 1978, when the government eventually launched the opening up policy to the outside world.

After the founding of the People's Republic of China, English courses were canceled and at the same time, Russian language education was promoted across mainland china (Zhu, 1982). This situation has been maintained through 1977, when the government decided to launch the opening up to the outside world. However, small changes occurred along the way within this period, reflecting once again the mixed feeling towards English and western economic power it stands for.

Anti-American sentiment was aroused after the Korean War broke out and the US became direct opponents of China on Korean battlefield. Resulting from this, all English classes and curriculum were canceled (Andamson, 2004). English has disappeared from social life. The US, on the other hand, was framed through government propaganda as “American imperialist”. In public social life, any trace indicating fluency of English, or life style choices resemble western style, would be seriously criticized and sometimes incur unexpected troubles.

On the other hand, during the “Great Leap Forward” period, or between 1958-1960, when industrial production was driven by the goal of “catching up with and surpassing Britain and the US in fifteen years,” English classes were restored at most universities, or even middle schools (Zhu, 1982). Such comes and goes of English class in China, especially between 1949 and 1978, may in part reflect the mixed and constantly fluctuating feeling towards western economic power.

Under such circumstances, proficiency in English was usually labeled with negative connotation; in some extreme cases, English proficiency, or appreciation of Western culture and life style were certainly controversial, if not “deadly”, during the Cultural Revolutionary. Anecdotal accounts indicate that people are beaten to death because of refusal to burn their beloved collection of British stamps, or pushed from third-floor window to death because the victim’s job was English teacher (Adamson, 2004). In view of this, the only reason one needs to be fluent in English would be “catching up with and surpassing Britain and the US in fifteen years” (Zhu, 1982, p. 274). This marked the most unique characteristics of social meaning behind proficiency of English during this period, that national level of motivation entirely replaced individual goal in mastering the language. In other words, one shouldn’t learn English purely out of desire of copying western life style, nor should one learn English in order to seek

economic success. The only reason to learn English well was for the country. Nationalism, in this period, is the only acceptable and safe interpretation towards attempts, or fluency of English in Chinese society.

After 1978: Follow Me

Chinese government launched the opening up policy to the outside world in 1977, which marked the government's policy change from class struggle to economic development (Unkule, 2011). After approximately thirty years' discouragement, English education now enjoys unprecedented emphasis and support. This may indicate change of social meaning behind English proficiency: English proficiency is now "seen as the touch stone for getting ahead because it represents modernization and opens up new realms of understanding" (Zhu, 1982, p. 275).

In addition to the new curriculum with more pluralistic approach, two new developments distinguish this period from the past. One is the introduction of TV programs, and later the Internet, as ways of learning English; the other is the increased population immigrated to western countries and increased foreign corporations establishing their China branch offices. Both developments have changed how Chinese people view English proficiency and individuals with good command of English.

Follow Me, an English teaching program originally produced by BBC, was first introduced to China in 1982 through British Council (Sina Education, 2008). *Follow me* differs from previous politicized English pedagogy (Adamson, 2004) with its inclusion of scene-based conversation reflecting everyday life in the western world. *Follow Me* was a great hit. China Daily (Sina Education, 2008), the then only English national daily, reported in 1982, one year later than the launch of *Follow Me*, that the number of subscribers to the program had reached 10 million,

which almost equaled the number of household TV sets back then in China. The revolutionary change the British English teaching program brought to Chinese society was obvious: instead of being motivated by very much politicized reasons, now Chinese people, for the first time perhaps since the late seventeenth century, have been promoted to understand English and western culture through western point of view, with minimal inference of negative connotation traditionally embedded with English fluency. In other words, it is more acceptable for Chinese people to learn English without being concerned of seen by others as betrayal to Chinese culture or even identified as a foreign spy. Curiosity and knowledge of western culture and western life style now bear positive social connotation. In this sense, *Follow Me* can be considered as a milestone. The TV program has helped the society turn to next page, where shift of social sentiment encouraged and supported efforts learning anything about the Western world.

Twenty-sixth years later, The Foreign Language Teaching and Research Press, the most prestigious publishing house in China published an updated version of *Follow Me* (Sina Education, 2008). The new version was still originally produced by BBC; but this time, *Follow Me* did not reproduce the fever back in 1982. The primary reason being the growing number of English teaching programs published in China or available through the Internet had grown exponentially, with local Chinese-made English teaching programs or publications represented by Li Yang's *Crazy English* as one of *Follow Me*'s major competitors.

Li Yang's *Crazy English*, a combination of televised TV English teaching program, downloadable RSS feed as well as club-based learning activities or events, has gained its popularity in the late 1990's and early 2000's. *Crazy English* is similar to *Follow Me* in terms of their scope of influence and number of subscribers; however *Crazy English* differs from *Follow me* fundamentally in how nationalism has been embedded into the program of learning. One of

the primary advertising campaign slogans of *Crazy English* has been “conquer English to make China better” (Osno, 2008). On the official website of *Crazy English*, the tag line reads: “Make the voice of China be widely heard throughout the world” (Li, 2011). Although it remains unclear whether the original intention of crafting and launching *Follow Me* in China can be entirely free from colonial merchants’ goal of better controlling the locals, *Crazy English* still distinguishes from the former with succinct trace of national pride. Adamson (2011) described *Crazy English* as a metaphorical example of how social sentiments in China represent the “unpalatable” (p. 40) transition from a once Sino-centric world view to current recognition of the economic and political hegemony that English stands for.

In a larger sense, however, English teaching programs like *Follow Me* and *Crazy English* have stimulated unprecedented passion towards English. Or, to fit this passion into the global scale, as Feng (2009) described as the “Third Wave” (p.4) of rising English learning population in the changing socio-political contexts around the world, with changes taking place in China as most prominent one, English proficiency now suggests a Westernized, modern way of thinking and a superior version as opposed to the traditional, somewhat mundane Chinese taste or life style. Popular culture and trendy literary reading resonated with this rising trend and framed westernized life style, particularly command of English, as more sophisticated, if not readily superior, than anything traditionally Chinese. Dan Yan Chen, a Chinese novelist known for her nostalgic sentiments towards the city of Shanghai in the 1930’s, once described emotionally in her novel how in some of those old western-cuisine restaurants established their reputation back in the 1930’s, still treat today’s Chinese customers poorly simply because the latter attempt to order dinner using Chinese, rather than English (Chen D. Y., 2003). Chen published in 1996 one of her best-selling novel, *Holiday in New York* (or *Niu Yue Jia Ri*), where she described how a

girl from Shanghai, granddaughter of a compradore banker, pursued her ever-lasting dream of a white Caucasian lover in New York (Chen D. Y., 1996). In an interview published in 2005, Chen ((Zhou & Chen, 2005) explained that completion of that novel fulfills her dream of writing a novel in an American coffee house, as she wrote the entire novel in the then only coffee house in a small New Jersey town. Chen's work is widely read and appreciated in the 1990's in China and first few decades into the millennium. Nicole Huang (2010), director of Center for East Asian Studies with University of Wisconsin at Madison, argued that Chen's work reflects contemporary imagination, or memories of an old shanghai, painted with a subtle but lasting tone of appreciation to western culture.

Besides such changing atmosphere towards spread of English, the expansion of foreign-owned business or joint ventures in China has been contributing to the popularity of the language (Andamson, 2004; Gil & Andemson, 2011). With the increasing international business trading activities, Fishman (1996) added the influence of the rising economic power represented by multinational companies on the spreading and using of English, which "may have more to do with the rowing dominance of the richer countries over the poorer ones (and not merely economically or particularly politically, but also culturally) than with the English mother-tongue countries per se" (p. 4). For Chinese English learners, now one of the primary motivations to learn English well is to maximize their chances of getting hired by multinational corporations in China. For this generation of young professionals who are hired by foreign companies, it may be wild speculation to say that each single one of them has read Dan Yan Chen's *Holiday in New York* or enjoyed her description of western culture; however they may all more or less have grown up with the notion that English proficiency suggested a modern and therefore more sophisticated, desirable life style. Unlike the previous generations before them, they know that

holding notion like this towards English language fluency may not always incur unwanted trouble or hostility but enjoy rather greater amount of social tolerance. At the turn of last century, compradores, while being successful in their business pursuit, were rejected by local Chinese community as they were viewed as betraying traditional Chinese value. They attempted to build their houses following western style, wear western clothing and speak *pidgin* English to seek recognition with their foreign masters. One hundred years later, young Chinese professionals working in foreign-owned ventures in Beijing and Shanghai embrace Western culture and English fluency because the latter suggests more socially desirable version of life. However, this changed attitude may not suggest that today's young Chinese professionals are completely free from any struggle. Along their way of acquiring English fluency, they may have also practiced Li Yang's *Crazy English* and followed those passionate slogans that relating command of English to China's better future. How those different, yet both prevailing messages orchestrate and shape individual's attitude towards English, in this sense, reflect the on-going interplay of various forces within Chinese society.

This resonates with the beginning of this dissertation, where I explained the widely spread passion of learning English that co-exists with equally widely shared doubts towards such passion. Discussion on the contradicting sentiments towards use of English in China is not a new topic: scholars (Nunman, 2003; Tsui & Tollefson, 2007) have discussed how the wide spread of English language, or passion of learning English, have been seen as jeopardizing Chinese local cultural identity. Nonetheless, most scholars would agree that although heavily laced with political and cultural sentiments, pursuit of English proficiency stays within Chinese society throughout different historical period since the late nineteenth century. Fishman (1996) recognized the behind-the-scene driving force as discrepancies of economic development and

desire of catching up with the foreigners among the locals. Quirk (1988) echoed with this argument and pointed out the econocultural feature of language learning. The contradicting, bitter-sweet social sentiments towards English proficiency may suggest what Apple (1986) described as how hegemony comes from within local community, out of everyday sense of needs and desire. To better put the argument, individuals coming from more developed countries may never find the necessity of using an English name to introduce themselves, if English is not his or her native language. They might find their fluency of local language less than perfect, but they may never associate such with their level of education background or future career prospect. However for individuals coming from local communities, the urge and pressure of learning dominating foreign language or having a name in the dominating foreign language may be of primary importance, simply because of the motivation of surviving the competition.

Chapter summary

In this chapter I provided a general overview of the complex and intricate social sentiments associated with English fluency since the late nineteenth century. Such overview is relevant as it is the socio-cultural landscape within which use of language in multi-lingual workspace in modern China may produce multiple notion of personhood or society, depending on specific situations. In the following chapter, I will discuss speech codes I identified through analyzing narratives relating to use of English at work in China. I will offer explanation to how the codes may each connect back to distinctive patterned expressions and how each code may associate with one another in different ways.

Chapter IV

Speech Codes associated with Use of English in China

Chapter overview

In this chapter, I introduce the four distinctive speech codes identified in this research by presenting excerpts from interview transcripts. Following a brief discussion of definition of speech code, particularly the norm, rules and premises, which are concepts highly relevant to Speech Codes Theory (Philipsen et al., 2005), the discussion will use a table adapted from the Coffey and Atkinson (1996) three-level generality analyzing model to illustrate how patterned expression, theme and speech codes are internally connected. Discussion of each of the four speech codes is then illustrated with excerpts from the transcripts of these interviews. The four speech codes identified are: the code of normalcy, the code of national pride, the code of social capital and the code of tool. Finally, the chapter will discuss two types of relationships identified among four speech codes: combination and exclusion.

Speech codes: symbol, premise and rule

As discussed in chapter one, this study is inspired by Speech Codes Theory for two reasons. The first reason is the tradition long cherished in this research cluster to interpret local communicative conduct on local terms. The second reason is the theoretical commitment to the socio-cultural context within which the meanings, norms and premises have been forged. Both reasons are essential for this study to unveil the relationship between the behind-the-scene socio-cultural context and particular ways of speaking associated with using English in China. How would social actors react to a simple question of “do you speaking English at work”? After a brief review in chapter three of the socio-cultural history of using English in China, it makes sense when people describe their experience working in

a mixed language environment, the socio-cultural context, particularly the bitter-sweet social sentiments shared among Chinese people about speaking English at work, will play an active role shaping the narrative. Speech Codes Theory, in this sense, provides ideal tool to abstract, compare and contrast such behind-the-scene meanings, norms and premises. Before I present the speech codes I identified through interview transcription, I will first briefly share how those key terms, particularly in regards to symbol, premise and rule, are defined in the context of Speech Codes Theory and how they may be applied in my analysis.

In the context of Speech Codes Theory (Philipsen, 1992), culture is defined as “a socially constructed and historically transmitted pattern of symbols, meanings, premises, and rules” (p. 8). Following this line, a speech code is understood as “a socially constructed and historically transmitted system of symbols and meanings pertaining to communication” (p. 8). The primary benefit of identifying a speech code to understand social actors’ communicative conduct, in this sense, is because it offers view of “system(s) of symbols and meanings, about the cultural domain ‘communication’ ...[that] consist of resources for talking about and thematizing spoken life in particular contexts” (Philipsen, 1992, p. 102). In other words, speech codes are tools used to abstract and analyze how social actors make sense with their own identity, their social relations with each other and the social life they collectively share.

With this in mind, a series of terms become significant to the concept of speech code. For instance, what is a symbol? What is a premise? And finally, what is a rule? A symbol is defined in the context of Speech Codes Theory as “tangible formulations of notions, abstractions from experience fixed in perceptible forms, concrete embodiments of ideas, attitudes, judgments, longings, or beliefs” (p. 8). A premise is defined as “expressed beliefs

of existence (what is) and of value (what is good and bad)” (p. 8). Finally, a rule is defined as “a prescriptions, for how to act, under specified circumstances, which has (some degree of) force in a particular social group” (p. 8). The following part will briefly refer to Philipsen’s (1992) study within the Teamsterville and Nacirema speech community to introduce how premises and rules can be identified through local narratives.

In his 1992 study, Philipsen (1992) identified two codes for Teamsterville and Nacirema cultural communities respectively, each represents specific sets of premises and rules shared within the community. Code of Honor, for instance, was identify to show the premise of how reference to location of residence has been essential to someone to be considered as honorable. After a review of literary examples showing how reference to residence, heritage and past conduct has been relevant to the cultural meanings of “honor”, Philipsen (1992) listed vocabulary of honor abstracted from interview transcript reflecting special sets of premises, such as “reference to place and social identity...including ‘around here,’ ‘neighborhood,’ ‘ the Spirits fo 32nd’, ‘the 32nd Girls’, ‘ my corner’ and ‘he’s not really from around here””(p. 110). Those vocabularies, as Philipsen (1992) argued, have been “pervasively occurring items in Teamsterville parlance” (p. 110); such unique ways of speaking, therefore, reflected “focal concerns in any Teamsterville conversation” (p. 110), because such reference to place or residence remained consistent and was essential to construct the speaker’s social identity as honorable with the Teamsterville community.

Also relevant to code of Honor was what Philipsen (1992) identified as “patterned interaction” between boys and girls that reflects how male and female social actors in Teamsterville community define their reputation or sense of well-being through social relations with each other through speech. In other words, Philipsen (1992) discovered

through such patterned interactions that in the Teamsterville community, “a man’s reputation or sense of well-being is constituted by public perception of females linked to him by blood or marriage” (p. 110). Such shared premise has been reflected through the patterned interaction, or insults the boys directed at the girls which “centered on the likelihood ...of uncleanness among the girls” (p. 111).

The speech code of Honor linked the vocabulary of residence to patterned interaction and unveils the shared symbol, premise and rule guiding the special ways of speaking that’s culturally appropriate inside the Teamsterville community. Code of Honor offered an effective way to abstract and reflect such shared symbol, premise and rule that are deeply rooted within the socio-cultural context. In the following session, I will share how I link the patterned expression to each of the four speech codes I identified through interview transcript.

Speech codes relating to use of English in China

Based on the coding and analysis of the raw data, I identified four speech codes associated with use of English in China. The four speech codes are: the code of normalcy, the code of national pride, the code of tool and the code of social capital.

The table displays the relationship between speech codes and the finer sub-categories of expression underneath them. Starting from the column to the right, the most specific layer of analysis rests on the local expression, or my summary of local expression directly extracted from the interview raw data. Such expressions are usually direct responses to interview questions. For example, summaries or expressions including “[use of English] represent international competitiveness”, “English fluency represented western life style and foreign culture” are both examples of this first level of analysis. They are original answers to the interview question of

“what do you think use of English stands for?” Based on such grouped expressions, I then identified one umbrella premise. This was done through the initial pattern coding method according to Mile and Huberman (1994) which extracts shared themes from various expressions. The umbrella premise in the case of the excerpts above was the shared notion that “English is superior [over Chinese] and more sophisticated and more desirable”. Finally, I articulated a specific speech code relevant to each shared theme. This is the most general layer of analysis.

I used the pattern coding process suggested by Mile and Huberman (1994) to identify consistent themes and premises across different interviews. The pattern coding process produces explanatory or inferential key phrases that can be used to identify “an emergent theme, configuration, or explanation” (p. 69). This pattern coding process allowed me to group interview data into a smaller number of themes. For instance, in the following table, when people described their experience using English or Chinese as second language at work, their explanation fell under one of four distinctive themes and reflected distinctive premises, which made it possible to abstract and identify a possible speech code. As Kruglanski (1989) discussed in detail, good explanation should connect informants’ narratives to explanations offered by researchers.

Of course, human social life is complex and subscription to one theme does not always inevitably lead to particular sense-making patterns. To buttress my claim, I considered Mile and Huberman’s (1994) several features before stating the internal connection between the theme and local explanations, emphasizing locality, causal complexity, temporality and retrospection. In other words, the internal connection between each of the distinctive themes and the corresponding group of explanations was ultimately local, subject to specific local events or context and loyal to local interpretations. Likewise, the connection is not unique and exclusive

but essentially temporal and retrospective. That is to say, whenever I identified a code as connecting groups of explanations to one another, I made such claim based on local interpretations, stressing the fact that such connections exist only for this local event or interpretation.

Table 2 Speech codes associated with interpretation of use of English

Speech code	theme	Expressions
Code of normalcy	Use of English is superior, more sophisticated and desirable; English proficiency is linked to organizational hierarchy and level of economic development.	“You can only speak English.”
		“Having an English name is fashionable.”
		“In Beijing everybody speaks good English but here in Yunnan people just don’t.”
Code of national pride	Use of English conflict against my cultural and personal identity as a Chinese; it’s simply the thing we have to deal with if you want to stay at your job.	“They are showing off [their English]”
		“ They are forced to use English”
		“when someone called me Mary I know it’s a business conversation”
Code of tool	Use of English is only a tool	“The first thing, if you want yourself to be understood better, you have to be logical”
		“It depends of who is around the table”
		“[speaking Chinese is acceptable] as preparation period”
Code of social capital	Use of Chinese promotes cultural competence	“...they were very helpful and very supportive and kind of excited.”
		“[when I speak Chinese] they just relax”
		“The better your Chinese the more respect that you get [among other foreigners]”
		“With me, with those kind of problems, I will certainly speak Chinese... definitely”

Code of normalcy

The first speech code, the code of normalcy, reflects the premise that use of English is a normal way of life and a necessary procedural requirement within an organization. Within this code, informants often produce narratives in which the use of English as a second language is an indication of a more “sophisticated”, “developed”, or Western way of living. Good command of English is usually seen as indication of promising career prospects. Following this premise, a passion for learning English is usually interpreted as an attempt to enhance career prospects in order to be hired by global corporations. Speakers often express the belief that wide-spread use of English symbolizes China’s status as a rising power and China’s fast paced economy. Below are excerpts from interview transcripts representing each one of these patterned expressions.

“You can only speak English”

The code of normalcy is reflected in the interview with informant number seventeen, [0017, Chinese native language, interviewed in Chinese, Works in Beijing, China] who stressed the following point:

0017: 因为你毕竟是，我们最重要的就是说，是工作在一个跨国性的一个，国际性的公司里面。国际性的公司里面你就应该讲英文。你们也只能讲英文，最基本对吧？虽说你培养的员工，也是说我们是国际标准的员工。不是说在中国人到外边就做不了。都一样，到哪儿都可以做 (0017).

0017: [because] after all, and this is the most important point we are trying to make, that you work for a multinational, international corporation. Inside a global corporation you should speaking English; you can only speaking English. This should be the most basic thing, right? Although we also stress that we train employees according to international standard, this is not to say that Chinese people can do nothing outside [of China]; Chinese people can work anywhere (0017)

The unequal status between English and Chinese distinguishes the code of normalcy from the other three codes identified in this research. A few questions later, the same informant made similar comments on the “impossibility” of being an international business executive without knowledge of English:

0017: 我觉得中国员工并没有什么, 我觉得我如果英语学的好了。我沟通能力更好了, 那有什么坏处呢? 没有什么坏处, 是吧? 我要成为一个 *International business man* 我连英文都不会, 那我怎么能够做 *international business man*? 我不要一天到晚带一个翻译嘛, 对吧 (0017)?

0017: I don't think Chinese employee should feel strange [about learning English]. I think if you learn English well, I can communicate more easily [with foreigners]. What's kind of negative impact can this bring? Nothing, right? I want to become an international business man; if I don't understand English, how can I realize that? I can't bring a translator with me every day, right (0017)?

The premise that “you can only speak English” also suggests that English is considered superior to Chinese. In the last sentence of the above excerpt, perhaps the informant attempted to tell a joke, but the notion that one's professional competence is primarily reflected through English proficiency remained clear. This premise was confirmed by other informants who, while describing daily scenarios of switching back and forth between English and Chinese, stressed on need to speak English even when there was only one non-native Chinese speaker present. Informant number sixteen [0016, Chinese native language, interviewed in Chinese, works in Shanghai, China] described the dynamics of a business meeting for me at the beginning of the interview:

0016 答: 这个完全取决于这个公司的。这个, 看是什么人(选), 如果你是在一般的美国公司 特别是外方人员比较多的情况下, 那么不要是多的情况下, 有一个两个, 有一个都要讲英文的。所以基本上在高层的会议上, 大家都是用英文来讲。但有些事情可能如果是英文讲得并不是流利, 开个玩笑像或是讲个故事或者讲个成语 英文可能不是太清楚。他会用中文, 他再会用英文再来解释一下。这样情况都会有的(0016)。

0016:[which language to use] really depends on the company's, well, who's involved. If you are in an ordinary American company, especially when there are lots of foreign staff, or even not so, even when there's only one foreign staff member, you have to speak English. Hence basically, at higher level business meetings, people use English. However at times, if the person's English is not so fluent, he or she may have difficulty sharing stories, jokes or idioms. In this case the person will first use Chinese, then accompanied with an English version explanation of the story. Situations like this are common (0016).

Similar premises that English is superior to Chinese was identified through interview with informant number three [0003, Chinese native language, interviewed in English, works in Shanghai, China], who offered an interesting analysis of how use of English can be “powerful” in the workplace. The informant talked about how foreigners and local Chinese employees exhibit different levels of motivation and different attitudes towards learning the language as one example of why English is more powerful than Chinese:

....

L: OK. I am interested in...when you said that “English is more powerful”, do you have any personal experience or stories relating to that?

0003: Well I will say that the most obvious example is that everyone is required to learn English in one company, I mean, even sometime it's quite unnecessary. I think I can compare two examples in some company. You know I coach foreigners to learn Chinese, right? Sometimes I also do some English coaching for Chinese. Actually you can feel the power of the language from the attitude of people's learning the language.

L: Interesting. Tell me more about that.

0003: Yeah, so for foreigners to learn Chinese, they don't usually have to take it very seriously. I mean, one is that they are in China, it's not that a difficult thing. I mean if they go to a hotel in Shanghai they can easily communicate in English. So for them, learning Chinese is more like, recreational, you know, or it's just something, you know, they would like to do, to help them live,

or enjoy the life better. So for them, it doesn't matter if they need to put in any effort, or do homework, after work.

But for Chinese learning English, they are obviously more serious. Say I give one Chinese group (lessons) in another company, the group is about six or seven members, they are the mid-level staff of the company. And I have say sometimes they look even more serious than managers. They spend more time learning the language and complete much more activities (0003).

...

Interestingly, here the informant volunteered to describe different attitudes towards language among foreign and Chinese business executives. Informant number sixteen offered an account of his own language experience while informant number three offered an account of another person's language experience. In both cases, the unequal status between English and Chinese was evident.

“Having an English name is fashionable”

The code of normalcy is also used to describe how and why Chinese people should have an English name. This is out of the shared premise that having an English name usually indicates a more sophisticated, more desirable state of being. This again derives from the notion that English is superior to Chinese. That is to say, for example, when it comes to names, it is understandable for Chinese people to have an English name to facilitate communication with foreign colleagues, “if your name was too hard to pronounce” (0016), but it is understandable that foreigners don't have to learn Chinese, or use a Chinese name, to facilitate communication with local Chinese employees.

Interviewee number three, after describing how English may reflect “power” within the company, offered the explanation that Chinese people choose to have an English name out of a wish to be “cool” or “fashionable”:

...

L: OK. So let's talk about how people address each other in the office setting. For example do they use English name or any local Chinese team use English name?

0003: Oh yeah, actually this is becoming popular right now within a company. This is because, partly and I don't think this is because of the power of the language, but because of fashion.

L: OK. So fashion is different from power.

0003: Oh I can't not say that [laugh] I can tell what is power. Calling others by their English name is being cool. Is to be westernized, or fashionable trend. So people are all interested to have an English name. You can also see a lot of English names that are not commonly used... I mean, names like John and Jack, or for girls, Mary or Elena, are not that popular nowadays. So it's more like fashion, that people like longer and complicated names, for example you will always hear names like Cinderella, yeah, and Ofelia, some names are too complicated for Chinese people, in the name itself, these names (0003).

....

Interviewee number sixteen [0016, Chinese native language, interviewed in English, works in Shanghai, China], on the other hand, offered two explicit reasons why use of English names among Chinese colleagues may be desirable: for one, it is considerate of foreign colleagues; two, it helps to reduce mental distance from each other among Chinese colleagues.

...

0016: But also about others it's because [in a] bilingual environment you need to think about your foreign colleague. They need to, to find a way easy to communicate with you. If your name was too hard to pronounce.

L: Um hm.

0016: You know.

L: Um hm.

0016: It is not uh good. So, that's why, I think that, to, to make a summary is two reasons. One is, bilingual environment, you have an English name is better to let everybody to call and to communicate right, and to remember you. And second reason is, uh, you know, within the Chinese uh colleagues that is easy to um, um to make the comfortable environment (0012).

...

In this excerpt, both reasons offered are related to the notion that English is superior to Chinese. For the first reason, in order to "let everybody to call and to communicate right, and to remember you", speakers need to consider having an English name. For the second

reason, having an English name will “make the comfortable environment”. The subtle superiority of the English language, especially reflected through the second reason, merits special attention in this case. What may be opposing the “comfortable environment” here? What would make the environment “less comfortable”? Following interviewee sixteen’s rationale, continuing to use a Chinese name, which would also require an added pronoun to indicate organizational hierarchy, would hinder the development of a “comfortable environment”. Here the desire to build a more comfortable environment through use of an English name may imply a slight rejection of traditional Chinese forms of address, which promote a strong focus on social hierarchy.

“In Beijing everybody speaks good English but here in Yunnan people just don’t.”

An interesting aspect of the code of normalcy is that whoever uses this code also correlates the spread of English to different levels of economic development among different geographic regions within China. The implication is that in more developed regions or metropolitan cities, “good English” can be expected, while in less developed provinces or cities very few people may exhibit good command of English. Foreign employees using Chinese as a second language in less developed area usually attributed difficulties in communication to the level of economic development in those regions, which was seen as the direct cause of a smaller pool of local talent with English proficiency.

Informant number six a French manager working in Kunming, Yunnan province [French native language, interviewed in English, works in Kunming, Yunnan, China] expressed regret for communication difficulties at work. According to this informant, in big cities like Beijing and Shanghai it is much easier to communicate with people because “everybody

speaks good English” (0006), which is not the case in Kunming because the city is “less developed” (0006) if compared with Beijing or Shanghai.

Following this rationale, the same informant also correlated use of English to particular places individuals stand on the organizational hierarchy. Higher management level staff members are usually expected to use and exhibit good command of English, whereas good command of English was rare with lower-level organizational members as they lack the opportunity to practice or use English at all. The informant described the use of language within the organization at the beginning of the interview:

...

0006: Um...so we're an international company, a French company, but international, for the working, the official working language is, uh, English. And, ah, but we are in China and 90% probably more than 95% of all of our employees are Chinese, so of course we also use Chinese. Um...At higher management position usually we try to hire people with a good English level. So usually actually we're just speaking English and there's no special anecdote that I can tell you about this, we're just working in English. Uh, at lower level however, people don't speak English at all. They only speak Chinese, for instance, that managers have to interact with the lower people who can only speak Chinese.

...

The rationale explaining why “higher management position” needs people with good command of English doesn't seem to align with the claim that 95% of all their employees are Chinese. One explanation may be that despite the overwhelming Chinese presence in the company, English still enjoys superiority as it is linked to higher organizational status.

Twenty minutes later, when invited to describe the benefit of using Chinese to communicate with Chinese, the informant explained that this is especially beneficial in Kunming, Yunnan province, a place less developed than places like Beijing or Shanghai, “where lots of people, even in mid-management level don't have a good English” (0006). A quick reference was

made a few sentences later as the informant compared the situation in Yunnan with that of Beijing or Shanghai, where “our people ... all speak fluent English” (0006). Here a link was constructed between level of English proficiency among local Chinese employee and the level of economic development in that area:

...

0006: At least for the mid-level and low-level people yes [that using Chinese makes a big difference for them]. For the higher level people they usually have a perfect fluency in English, so it's easier for them and it's easier for me. I'm talking about, for instance, now I'm working in Yunnan where lots of people even in mid-management level don't have a very good English so it really makes a big difference for them, uh to speak Chinese or English. Our people in Beijing who all speak fluent English it doesn't make a big difference they manage both language so what I'm saying is for Yunnan. In Beijing, we can switch whatever, Chinese English now and back (0006).

...

The notion that English fluency automatically correlated with organizational hierarchy and in some cases, served as a special name tag with particular organizational privileges reflects the overall premise that use of English represents a more advanced, superior state of being.

The code normalcy connects several explanations together. When speakers consider the use of English to be normal, acceptable organizational policy, they are likely to produce explanations linking use of English to level of economic development, to one's standing on the organizational hierarchy, to individual professional competence and to an overall Westernized, more sophisticated and therefore more desirable way of being.

Code of national pride

Informants using the code of national pride expressed the belief that the spread of English in China contradicted Chinese people's loyalty to Chinese culture and hurt Chinese

national pride. The foremost premise shared among informants using this code was that the spread of English represented an historical consequence of Western invasion inflicted approximately 150 years ago, first in the form of military invasion, now in the form of global capitalism and cultural colonization. Following this premise, the spread of English was usually seen as evidence of Western superiority and a new form of the colonization of local culture. This explains, in part, the negative reactions of informants when describing scenarios where Chinese people speaking English with each other without foreigners present. Similar negative reactions were reported to Chinese people using English names to address each other, or using a combination of both English and Chinese during conversations with other Chinese people.

Another premise evident in the code of national pride is that speaking English at work is simply the only option available for Chinese employees of multinational companies if they want to do their job well. In this view, speaking English is far from desirable but just something that has to happen. Under either premise, informants display an emotional preference towards Chinese over English; while they recognize the wide popularity of English, informants exhibit a strong emotional affiliation towards Chinese language and Chinese culture. Excerpts below display each premise.

“They are showing off”

Informant number one described how Chinese speaking English to other Chinese people, or using a combination of both languages during the same type of conversation, may be seen as attempts of “showing off”[0001, Chinese native language, interviewed in English, worked in Kunming, Yunnan, China]:

... But using English makes it come into possibility...and comforts, especially in China we have those...bias...towards people who use [English]...such as [those who] are back from the United States who use Chinese and English simultaneously, or in some combination, but...that's very ridiculous, in fact...most people think that they are showing off. Sometimes they find excuses like I am thinking that word...in an English way... in combination with Chinese sentences. But in fact, Chinese people are very sick about that because it doesn't mean anything. Sometimes you use [English] words [because] you do not have [the word] in your own language but it does not like that. So the usage is very important; we don't think it's a fashionable way; we just think it's bragging or...if you are not using it in your daily works, you are using that in your daily life, or to [other] Chinese, even if you have profound background in the United States (0001).

...

The emotion displayed here is distinctly different from the code of normalcy. While to some degree the superiority of English is still recognized, the emotional tone always favors Chinese language and culture. Use of English, or a combination of both English and Chinese, may be seen as “showing off”(0001), as “bragging”(0001), that “we don't think it's a fashionable way”(0001) and “it doesn't mean anything,”(0001) all comments suggesting a negative connotation or evaluation of such speech.

“They are forced to use English”

Following this premise, the use of English as a second language in the workplace is usually interpreted as less desirable and bearing negative consequences. Speakers' desire to learn English or reasons to use English at work, therefore, are usually interpreted as either the only option available to stay on the job, or as an opportunity to contribute to China's development in a more meaningful way and ultimately resist or stop such colonization. A few questions after describing other Chinese employees speaking English as a way to “show off”, informant number one commented on the reason for learning English well:

...

if someday China can make aircrafts by herself, the FMC, means flight management system in the aircraft, will all be in Chinese version. So it's just some kind of comparison; because China is not powerful enough to...as I said, most advanced technology is from the United States; that is why we use English, or HAVE to use English, when they fly, they are forced to use English to be a pilot. That's very high pressure. Sometime it's sad just because China can't make such high technology composed material to manufacture aircraft that's lighter and carry more people. But someday we WILL make it, and by that day, the relying...I don't know...the degree of relying on the English

language might be reduced to certain level, [rather than] as privileged as present. And I think, if we are lucky enough, people of my age, perhaps we could see it. We could see that (0001).

...
 Through this excerpt two things are evident: one, the emotional tone favoring Chinese language and Chinese culture; two, the interpretation that use English at work is the only thing you can do if you want to keep your position, in this case being a pilot. The connection between language choice and career development is presented as “high pressure”(0001). This evidence is consistent with the code of national pride.

A similar premise was identified through an interview with informant number seventeen [0017, Chinese native language, interviewed in English, works in Hong Kong, China]. Informant number seventeen explained in the interview the mixed language environment she works in every day:

...
 I conduct interview with stock broker in China and we use Mandarin Chinese; I talk to my supervisor using English mixed with Cantonese. I speak Cantonese with other colleagues and English with two of our foreign colleagues...after all one does best with his or her native language. I guess we have to do this is because my Cantonese is not that good, neither is my supervisor's mandarin Chinese (0017).
 ...

In this case the reluctance to speak English was expressed in a more subtle way; however, the emotional inclination towards Chinese is consistent. The other premise, that one has to speak English in order to stay on the job, is also clear.

“When someone called me Mary I know it's a business conversation”

Narratives emerging from the interview transcripts also exhibited the possibility that speakers using the code of national pride may believe that the use of English at work affects the way they approach their job, or encourages them to establish a professional identity distinctly different from their personal identity. In the latter case, the separation between

two identities has either negatively or positively influenced their professional commitment to the company they work for. Informant number two, an American manager traveling frequently to China to make presentations [0002, English native language, interviewed in English, works between the US and China], told a story about his colleague, a female Chinese professional who worked in the Beijing office of an American company, and whose English name was Mary.

...

I will tell you a story of a woman in the China lab. Her name is T, and she, and her English name is Mary, which to me is really like, I don't know, boring, boring name, I talked with her about that I finally asked her such as you know, so I love your Chinese name so why don't you go by that? She said well when someone called me Mary I know it's a business conversation. When someone called me T that I know it's a personal friend. So I thought that was interesting. I've never thought about that before (0002).

...

It is interesting that this story was told by Mary's American supervisor, my informant number two; no matter which code the supervisor is using, in this case the separation of personal and professional identity is quite clear; moreover, such separation is linked with use of either a Chinese or an English name. Such identity separation may influence individual's orientation towards the organization. Abundant quantitative research data suggested that low team identity and reduced job satisfaction has been evident in multicultural working groups because of such split (Earley & Gibson, 2002; Jehn, Chadwick, & Thatcher, 1997).

The code of national pride connects the above mentioned patterned expressions together. Within this theme, people view the use of English as an extension of Western invasion or a new form of cultural colonization. The only reason to learn and use English is to make China better and ultimately one day people will have Chinese spoken in multi-lingual office space. In a larger sense, such a theme may be best reflected by Li Yang's Crazy English, a

nationally-renowned English learning program that advocates extreme measures to improve English pronunciation. The company's corporate marketing tag line reads on its official website: "make the voice of China be widely heard throughout the world", coupled with another slogan, which reads "help 300 million Chinese people speak English fluently" (Crazy English, 2012).

Code of social capital

Informants using the code of social capital share the premise that use of one language or another – Chinese or English – is a way to generate social capital. Social capital, in the context of this study, is understood as feelings of good will, support or recognition from other social actors. In other words, the choice of which language to speak is usually determined by consideration of which language may garner social support for the speaker, respect or recognition within the organization. The code of social capital is different from the previous two speech codes as it does not assume emotional affiliation or appreciation towards either English or Chinese. Instead, informants usually treat both languages as of equal status and somewhat interchangeable with each other. On the other hand, the code of social capital does refer to emotion and feeling when it comes to use of language; but here the "feeling" or "emotion" usually refers to that of the listeners, rather than that of the speakers. In other words, informants using the code of social capital are very conscious of the emotional reactions of *listeners* to the *speaker's* choice of language. They act accordingly in order to generate maximum social support. Finally, based on informants' narrative, such attempts were usually well received within the target audience, even when on the practical level the speaker didn't get most ideas across in the second language. The following group of interview transcripts excerpt displays all of these patterned expressions:

that people use language to generate support and that such attempts are usually well received by native speaker of the other language.

“...they were very helpful and very supportive and kind of excited.”

Informant number two, who is traveling frequently to China to make presentations, spent time learning Chinese and once attempted to use Chinese to deliver a professional presentation at work. The narrative of that experience was included here:

...
 En the third story is, we were presenting at a university of subject of innovation and I actually, I was really excited about learning Chinese and this is what I was trying to do to do an informative introduction. And my colleagues that were there, were very helpful and very supportive and kind of excited. I actually took my presentation, which is primarily images, but anywhere they'd worried, I tried to translate them into Chinese, en, to the best of my ability. And then my local colleagues sat down with me to do all the alterations, like for instance the character Ni instead of Nin, you know, for a presentation. So they corrected my presentation so it would be more, or less, you know, more acceptable. And I have mistaken grammar, used the wrong words, and I expect that so they were really helpful doing that. And they felt that the audience would appreciate that to the fact that I prepared the presentation materials all in Chinese instead of English. But the formal introduction I did, you know, I will be honest with it, you know, about half way through it, to the point you think you'd better keep on going with it, I sensed that there was a little bit in the room that limitations of the words that I used, it's almost like, OK, we gotta to see another guy trying to ...[laughing] it was ending OK. My punch line was, you know, we were talking about *chuang xin*, if I made any mistakes, please don't consider them mistakes, but please consider them as innovations. So you know, I got a couple of chuckles at the end of one of my presentations. But I did end, perhaps that's my own paranoids, that I have the feeling like, well I was very excited about this, you know, I was getting up there and I was doing the equivalent of a, you know, a forth-grade school person reading very slowly to them (0002).
 ...

This informant repeatedly addressed how the attempt itself was well-received, despite the fact that in practice it did not work as planned. In other words, through the narrative of this incident, although the presentation in Chinese created confusion, his attempt had generated social support for him among his Chinese colleagues and audience members. Informants using the code of social capital usually skip any account of how the attempt at using a

different language has improved the quality of communication, but rather stress how the attempt itself created mutual appreciation. This distinguishes the code of social capital from the code of tool, which is discussed later.

“[when I speak Chinese] they just relax”

Informant number six, a French manager working in Kunming, Yunnan province, commented during his interview that his use of Chinese helped all his Chinese colleagues and clients to relax and talk more about the project than they would have had the conversation been in English:

...

Usually it starts by I'm saying hello, how are you and I start to introduce myself and the company in Chinese. People say wow, you can speak Chinese, and uh, and then the conversation goes on in Chinese and you can see that as soon as they understand that I speak Chinese they, they just relax. And I've got nothing more to say than that because it's, I would say 100% always the same situation (0006).

...

In this narrative another aspect of mutual appreciation emerges: the fact that local audience members involved in the conversation were able to relax in a language with which they better identify, and the connection to an improved social atmosphere at work or during business negotiations. It can be assumed that such mutual appreciation is achieved through choice of language as the informant concluded by saying that “I've got nothing more to say than that because it's, I would say 100% always the same situation”(0006).

A few questions later, the same informant offered additional examples of how listeners, who are local Chinese employees, may get relaxed when Chinese is used at the occasion:

...

I think, they tend to be much more open and to talk more to, even about personal opinion, personal feelings, in Chinese than in English. If I speak only English I just remain a distance boss to them giving instructions and that's it. Because it's not mother tongue so usually when you're not speaking your mother tongue you're trying to be very efficient and uh you only say what needs to be said, what needs to be said. Ah, when you're using the mother tongue, even if, on my side my Chinese is not perfect. I can go through with my Chinese but it's not perfect. But they feel much more at ease, so they start expressing other things and just work related topics or work related sentences and uh...actually it helps a lot in terms of management because it makes the relationship human instead of just professional (0006).

...

This same patterned expression, that when you use English you are only a "distance boss to them giving instructions"(0006), resonates with the premise that language choice does create different levels of social support.

At the end of the interview, informant number six explained possible reasons for such relaxation, with specific attention given to choice of language. Here the same expression regarding the social benefit of switching to Chinese was documented again:

...

Well, the first evidence is that they start giving their opinion. Their personal opinion which is not always the case when we're in English and the second like the first evidence is indeed that we can talk about other things than work (0006).

...

Throughout this interview, it was interesting to document how the same patterned expression, that switching to Chinese helps local Chinese colleagues relax, was repeated several times in the text. The social benefit of language choice, instead of the amount of information exchanged during the conversation, was one of this informant's constant concerns.

Worth noticing here is the fact that such social support and relaxation was especially relevant when a non-Chinese speaker switched to Chinese. Such a focus distinguishes the code of social capital from the code of normalcy. In the latter case, informants usually describe a similar situation when non-native English speakers switch from Chinese to English. That is to say,

informants using the code of normalcy also talk about how using English may improve the social atmosphere in a multi-lingual environment, but this is constructed on the shared premise that English is superior to Chinese. For example, informant number twelve, a Chinese human resource manager working in Shanghai, China, without any hesitation, put forward her argument that it's easier for foreigners to use English name to address local Chinese employees, "because your name is too difficult to pronounce". For speech reflecting the code of normalcy, when a similar scenario was described where language choice created a more relaxed, easier communication for non-Chinese native speakers, the superiority of English was evident and beyond any dispute. This is different from narratives constructed using the code of social capital, when although Chinese was used to relax the atmosphere "because it's [their] mother tongue", the narrative remained largely factual with minimum inference of superiority towards either language.

"The better your Chinese the more respect that you get [among other foreigners]"

The narrative produced by informant number six merits attention also because it introduces the concept that choice of language may have an impact on social capital among non-native speakers of that language, in this case Chinese. In other words, switching to Chinese, in this particular case, may have an impact on how the speaker may be respected by other peers who also use Chinese as a second language.

...

L: Ok. And would you say that, um, for people who do not have Chinese as their native language and if they have higher Chinese fluency and um use it as a second language fluently would you say that they are more respected or they are more popular?

0006: More respected, yes.

L: Ok.

0006: The better your Chinese the more respect that you get.

L: Um. How about English?

0006: Ummm...No, it doesn't change, uh anything.

L: So it's not a case that the more fluent you are in English the more respect you would receive.

0006: No.

L: Oh, interesting. Why is that?

0006: Because English is a tool.

L: But Chinese...

0006: And what, no Chinese is not a tool, Chinese is a language, that's exactly what I told you, Chinese is a language between human people and uh, English is a working tool. That's really the difference and that's why speaking Chinese allows you to get respect. While when you speak only English you're just a boss or a working relation.

L: Why, why is that? They are both languages.

0006: Yes, but we are in China, in a French company where most expatriates are French, Indian, or and then most of employees are Chinese, so English is not the mother tongue of anyone, it's just a tool.

L: Oh.

0006: So we don't respect each other because we speak English. However, when Chinese people notice that you made the effort to learn their language, that is to say you've been beyond just using the working language, which is English, you also may be for to adapt to the local culture and to the local people, this, for this, they can respect you (0006).

...

Particularly in this narrative, words like "tool" and "language" are polarized, with "language" bearing greater emotional implications than "tool". This narrative also implies possible reasons why Chinese fluency of foreign professionals may win additional social support among foreigners in the company: the notion that Chinese fluency may earn respect from local Chinese employees and such respect in return, generates additional social support for the speaker among his or her foreign peers.

"With me, with those kinds of problems, I will certainly speak Chinese...definitely"

Another interesting aspect of the code of social capital is that in some cases, language choices may be helpful during a conflict situation. If a speaker uses a local language like

Chinese, the atmosphere might be softened, whereas using a foreign language, like English, might create resistance just because of the language choice. Informant number nine [0009, Dutch native language, interviewed in English, works in Kunming, Yunnan, China], a Dutch engineer, also working in Kunming, offered a narrative describing the different notions of timely irrigation of lily bulbs between the Chinese and the Dutch. According to his account, by using Chinese instead of English to explain the different notions to local farmers he was able to relieve a tense situation. He also shared a mini-story inside this narrative where English was used in a similar situation and actually tightened the situation:

...

For example, we are, we are busy in production, we produce uh, lily bulbs, it's a, it's an agricultural production. Um, so the way of farming in China and in Holland is very different. Um, so we for example we used to do irrigation every, every day we do irrigation, but in, in China, the farmers they will, they don't, don't do irrigation, they will depend on the rain, uh on the rain, the natural rain which will fall. And of course for us, that's not acceptable because we want to control, uh, the irrigation. So uh sometimes uh we are, there are some conflicts briefly that, that the Chinese will say for like, for example, we have the soil here in China is different from in Holland, so you cannot do irrigation every day. Or the Chinese government is different, so we cannot work like this in China or the Chinese farmers are different, so we cannot do that in China.

L: Ok. When um, may I ask when you went through this kind of disagreement, and addressed those differences, um do you remember were you using English or Dutch?

0006: No. Then, then, then I will use Chinese. Specifically in those kind of forums, I will use Chinese because, um, now, now I'm uh, I'm, I'm now I'm General Manager of the company, I speak uh Chinese. Before I came here, I was uh, I was not General Manager, I was Assistant Manager and our General Manager could not speak uh Chinese. And I often noticed that when he was speaking the Chinese were listening, he was speaking English, but then they were talking with each other like uh, that doesn't, in Chinese, that doesn't work in China and our General Manager could not understand, not, not get that, that part of the conversation. And uh, with me, with those kind of problems, I will certainly speak Chinese, and then uh, try to uh address that uh directly with them in Chinese. Definitely (0009).

...

Of course switching to local language does not solve all the problems at once. However among all the factors addressed in this narrative, choice of language did make a difference.

Such narrative reflects the key premise of the code of social capital, that choice of language brings changes to the overall emotional atmosphere of the interaction.

The code of social capital focuses on the emotional aspect of use of language in a different way from the code of normalcy or the code of national pride; this is because the code of social capital treats both languages as of equal status. In addition, although people may accept or reject a choice of language for reasons deeply rooted within specific historical or cultural considerations, the code of social capital puts the emphasis on the question of whether the choice of language is well-accepted, rather than linking the choice of language directly to those historical or cultural concerns.

Code of tool

Informants using the code of tool share the premise that use of English is a tool to facilitate communication. Although somewhat similar to the code of normalcy, when considered as a tool, use of English no longer suggests a sense of superiority or a more desirable, sophisticated state of being. Instead, use of English is treated as a replaceable technique with minimum underlying connotations. Informants who use this code usually remain emotionally neutral towards either language; furthermore, they may also share the premise that choice of language should be purely out of functional considerations, rather than any emotional needs. This distinguishes code of tool from all the other three codes discussed so far, especially the code of social capital, where the emotional reaction towards language choices enjoys first priority.

Following this premise, the use of English is an accepted norm without indication of superiority or privilege. Informants using this code usually produce narratives in which the use of English is a solution for highly effective, logical communication at work. The most

important underlying message is that such norm can be replaced if a better, more efficient language option is available.

“The first thing, if you want yourself to be understood better, you have to be logical”

Informant number eighteen [0018, Chinese native language, interviewed in English, works in Beijing, China], a Chinese professional who works as manager at the China branch of an American company, and is fluent in both English and Chinese, described repeatedly how being logical is the sole standard when deciding which language to speak.

...

Right, yeah. There is a functional. I promise you, language, uh proficiency is beyond a functional level then there is nothing to be afraid. And so the, especially for those people who are tend to be more outgoing, so like I said before it's, many things is beyond language. The first thing, if you want yourself to be understood better, you have to be logical, which it has nothing to do with language.

L: Um hm.

0018: And if you, you are illogical, and doesn't matter whether you are speaking your chin, your native language or a foreign language, it won't hurt, it won't help if you are illogical. So, the, your thoughts or your presentation, your conversation needs to be logical otherwise people will have a hard time to follow you and then once you are logical, and then you need to, there's one more barrier to go over is really just the language and ah, if the language, I know quite a few, for example, ah, Indian, they do speak English with Indian accent. But most of my colleague, I mean, American colleague, they do not have any hard time to understand Indian language. So, slightly accented or even highly accented ah English is not difficult to under, to understand, as long as it's grammatically reasonable and correct. But the Chinese tends to have a better pronunciation, um, in our own stupid opinion, and then we speak English with less accent than with less accent than Indians, but the...Americans have, tend to have more problem understand us because we may just drop some important consonant at the end, say a d or t and also, our grammar tends to be lousy. Sometimes it's sort of ungrammatical and so or very Chinese way and so the receiving end will have hard time to understand (0018).

...

Throughout this narrative, informant number eighteen believed in the premise that so long as language proficiency is above the level to support “functional” or “logical” communication, “there's nothing to be afraid.” Being logical is the sole standard to determine language choices; and the characteristics of being logical include “reasonable and

correct grammar” (0018). One thing is clear: being logical and functional has nothing to do with whatever emotional connotation speakers or hearers may have towards any language varieties. Unlike the code of social capital, the code of tool focuses upon the functional aspect of the language, the amount and clarity of information exchanged, rather than how the language choice may be received, particularly emotionally, by the hearers. Informant number six offered a distinction between “language” and “tool” that emerged during the interview, and that resonated with the overall “emotionless” premise of this code:

...
 And what, no Chinese is not a tool, Chinese is a language, that’s exactly what I told you, Chinese is a language between human people and uh, English is a working tool. That’s really the difference and that’s why speaking Chinese allows you to get respect. While when you speak only English you’re just a boss or a working relation (0006).
 ...

In this narrative, again, the Chinese language was referred to as “between human people” (0016) while English was referred to as a “working tool”(0016) that is closely related to “a boss or a working relation”(0016). The informant addressed English as a “tool” following the premise that a tool is usually free from any emotional commitment.

A similar premise of language utility emerged with informant number two, who had spent more than one year learning and practicing Chinese. He had tried more than once to use Chinese to deliver presentations. He had to confess at the end of the interview, that although his attempts at using Chinese were well received as paying respect to his China team and Chinese culture, he ended up creating more confusion than he would had he used English instead. He commented at the end of the interview that his attempts of using Chinese delivering professional presentations for Chinese audience, although well-received on the

emotional level, didn't function as a good tool but rather equivalent of "a forth-grade school person reading very slowly to them" (0002):

...

But I did end, perhaps that's my own paranoids, that I have the feeling like, well I was very excited about this, you know, I was getting up there and I was doing the equivalent of a, you know, a forth-grade school person reading very slowly to them (0002)

...

Throughout narratives produced by informant number two and informant number six, the practical functionality of language choice was a constant focus. Additionally, both informants evaluated the practical benefit of both languages on an equal basis before they reached a conclusion. Such a narrative is fundamentally different from narratives produced by informants following the code of normalcy, where one language is clearly viewed as superior to another.

"It depends of who is around the table"

The code of tool was also used by foreign professionals who use Chinese as a second language. Informant number six, a foreign professional working for a French company's branch office in Yunnan province, offered a narrative comparing the functionality of language among French, Chinese and English purely out of the consideration of "who's on the table":

...

0006: Well because it's always easier to speak in your mother tongue when someone can understand you in your mother tongue. It makes communications smoother, faster, easier. Uh, not everybody...everybody speaks English, doesn't mean that everybody has a perfect English, and uh, it's just basic politeness when you've got someone who cannot understand you around the table to speak an international language that everybody can understand.

L: I see. Then how about, um, those switch moment, usually when would that occur? I mean, if compare with leisure talk or formal business meetings. Would you say that during formal business meetings this kind of switch would take place more frequently or it doesn't matter?

0006: It doesn't matter. It depends of who is around the table. If there are only Chinese people around the table, or if they are with someone who can speak a pretty fluent Chinese, usually actually they will speak Chinese. If you've got only French people around the table or if they are with someone who can speak very fluent French, they will speak French and if it's not the case, all other situations we are speaking English. That's it(0006).

...

In this case, when describing reasons for switching among different languages, the reason was always whether the language “makes communications smoother, faster, easier” (0006). Such an articulation is interesting, in particular because it deviates from existing literature discussed in chapter one, where expatriated managers, together with the companies they work for, all shared a decades-long reluctance to switch to local native languages while dealing with local business executives(Wilkins, and Arnett, 1976; Alexander, 1974; Fixman, 1990; Marschan-Piekkari, Welch, & Welch, 1999).

In both cases, people who subscribe to the code of tool usually create narratives in which neither language has underlying emotional implications. That is to say, the code of tool does not reflect a premise that either language, Chinese or English, is superior to the other. This code chooses to focus on the practical functionality of the language under discussion and considers choice of corporate language to be non-emotional or at least desired as such.

“[speaking Chinese is acceptable] as preparation period”

Additionally, informants using the code of tool usually describe incidents of switching between English and Chinese in a more tolerant tone. Informant number three, a Chinese corporate trainer working in Shanghai, China, described for me how they were speaking Chinese among themselves to reach an agreement before they presented the idea to their American team during distant video conference. Their American colleagues, not knowing any Chinese, would wait while their Chinese colleagues spoke together in Chinese in front of the camera before English was resumed again.

...

0003: I met just once during a video conference, I mean they are having a meeting with their US team, so the guy in the US can't speak English, or no, they can't speak Chinese, actually the guy here in Shanghai office can speak English very fluently. But when talking about some very specific questions, they still would like to talk in Chinese first. One reason is that they want to make sure the meaning can be expressed clearly. The other reason is that they might want to talk about something that might not be that perfect to let others know beforehand. It's almost like, you know to me, like hide something first.

L: hide something?

0003: yeah, I mean if they speak English of course whatever they say would be understood by the other side. Maybe they believe that certain topics being improper, or maybe, let's say, maybe not that good before they each had reached at a common agreement. So the Chinese staff would discuss the details first in Chinese and make sure they reached at an agreement and then express in English with their US team.

L: Oh you mean reaching at an agreement within the Chinese team in Shanghai before they exchange the idea with their US team.

0003: yes. And the US team can actually see that they are talking in Chinese beforehand, and they have no idea what they are talking about, but these are a few situations they don't care too much, by agreement.

L: so you mean this is somewhat acceptable to the US team as well?

0003: yeah the agreement is acceptable as what is so called "preparation period" that is important.

...

In this case, at least according to my interviewee, neither party has ever sensed any discomfort or disrespect: Chinese employees used Chinese to achieve better deliberation, while their American colleagues, on the other end of the camera, waited for a summary of the discussion in English. This is distinctly different from narratives produced following the code of normalcy, which may display the assumed superiority of English. It is worth comparing with an earlier quote by informant number sixteen, who is also Chinese working in an American company, using code of normalcy describing a similar situation of deciding

which language should be used during business meetings where both Chinese and foreigners are present:

答: 这个完全取决于这个公司的。这个, 看是什么人(选), 如果你是在一般的美国公司 特别是外方人员比较多的情况下, 那么不要是多的情况下, 有一个两个, 有一个都要讲英文的。所以基本上在高层的会议上, 大家都是用英文来讲。但有些事情可能如果是英文讲得并不是流利, 开个玩笑像或是讲个故事或者讲个成语 英文可能不是太清楚。他会用中文, 他再会用英文再来解释一下。这样情况都会有的(0016)。

[Which language to use] really depends on the company's, well, who's involved. If you are in an average American company, especially when there are lots of foreign staff, or even not so, even when there's only one foreign staff member, you have to speak English. Hence basically, at higher level business meetings, people use English. However at times, if the person's English is not so fluent, he or she may have difficulty sharing stories, jokes or idioms. In this case the person will first use Chinese, then accompanied with an English version explanation of the story. Situations like this are common (0016).

Informant number sixteen correlates use of English with level of organizational hierarchy, or whether the company is “average” (0016) or not. Following this assumption, use of English is natural choice if you work in a high-profile American company and attend top-level business meetings. The rationale that “even when there's only one foreign staff member, you have to speak English” (0016), clearly differs from code of tool, that which language should be spoken is entirely up to “who's at the table”(0006), and whether the expressions are functional, logical and grammatically reasonable.

To summarize, the code of tool is characterized by the underlying premise that English and Chinese are equal, and it views both languages with minimum political, cultural or historical connotations. This non-emotional approach distinguishes the code of tool from the other three codes. The following section discusses two types of relationship among the four speech codes identified in this chapter.

Exclusion: the code of normalcy and the code of national pride

The code of normalcy and the code of national pride are mutually exclusive from each other for obvious reasons. For informants who use the code of normalcy, the narrative usually exhibits a strong inclination or preference for English over Chinese. Additionally, such inclination or preference was accompanied with a sense of superiority, in that English was considered more desirable and sophisticated than Chinese. For informants who use the code of national pride, the opposite is true. Their narrative usually exhibits strong emotional reactions towards use of English at work and interprets such use as conflicting against Chinese employees' loyalty towards Chinese culture. Throughout the analysis of all transcribed interviews, if informants deployed either one of these two codes, they remained consistent with that code to finish their narrative. In other words, if an informant using the code of normalcy, he or she would not switch to the code of national pride during the same interview, and the reverse was also true.

What merits research attention here is the lack of evident correlation between one's native background and use of a particular code. As discussed in chapter one literature on organizational communication suggested that foreign executives usually assume the decades' long tradition of letting (or expecting) their local counterparts adopt English for business communication; following this reasoning, one would expect that the code of normalcy should have been shared exclusively among people who use Chinese as a second language. The current study provides accounts indicating quite the contrary, where the code of normalcy is shown to be shared by both international professionals and local Chinese employees. As for the code of national pride, on the other hand, there does seem to be a general trend where it is shared only among informants who are Chinese professionals.

The code of tool and the code of social capital, on the other hand, can co-exist within the same narrative. In other words, during most interviews, when invited to interpret the use of English at work, informants may use both codes to construct their narratives. This is understandable because both codes treat English and Chinese as of equal status with minimum cultural or historical reference. This was clear throughout the narrative created by informant number six, a French engineer working in Kunming, China when the conversation was focused on which language should be chosen according to the occasion:

...

0006: Well, since the native country of this company is France, it happens that a lot of expatriates are French. Between French, we speak French. Whenever there is a non-French speaking person with us, we switch to English. That's very, very basic actually.

L: Ok. And why is that?

0006: What do you mean why is that? Why do we switch to English or why do we speak French when we're among French?

L: Both of them actually.

0006: Well because it's always easier to speak in your mother tongue when someone can understand you in your mother tongue. It makes communications smoother, faster, easier. Uh, not everybody...everybody speaks English, doesn't mean that everybody has a perfect English, and uh, it's just basic politeness when you've got someone who cannot understand you around the table to speak an international language that everybody can understand.

L: I see. Then how about, um, those switch moment, usually when would that occur? I mean, if compare with leisure talk or formal business meetings. Would you say that during formal business meetings this kind of switch would take place more frequently or it doesn't matter?

0006: It doesn't matter. It depends of who is around the table. If there are only Chinese people around the table, or if they are with someone who can speak a pretty fluent Chinese, usually actually they will speak Chinese. If you've got only French people around the table or if they are with someone who can speak very fluent French, they will speak French and if it's not the case, all other situations we are speaking English. That's it (0006).

...

I have quoted the same excerpt twice when I addressed the code of tool and the code of social capital. What is extraordinary about this narrative is that here both the code of tool

and the code of social capital were blended together and interwoven with the narrative itself. That is to say, while describing the informants' own and other organizational member's language experience, both the emotional and functional aspect of language choices were addressed. The informant described how using the majority's mother tongue could be out of "basic politeness" (0006). At the same time, however, the narrative also included patterned expressions indicating that switching to the majority's mother tongue can make the communication "smoother, faster, easier" (0006). Whether referring to "basic politeness" (0006), or to making the communication "smoother, faster, easier" (0006), the narrative offers explanations that blend the emotional aspect with functional ones. Other narratives, on the other hand, may reflect either the code of tool or the code of social capital. That is to say, among all narratives where both languages were treated as of equal status, some narratives focus only on the emotional aspect of the use of language and hence reflect only the code of social capital, while other narratives focus only on the pragmatic, functional aspect of the use of language and thus reflect only the code of tool.

Combination: code of tool and code of social capital

Interestingly, the code of tool and the code of social capital may also act as sub-codes when paired with either the code of normalcy or the code of national pride. The narratives constructed by informants using either the code of normalcy or the code of national pride are coated with the original emotional tone towards either language, but at the same time, speakers may also use either the code of tool or the code of social capital as secondary code. When this situation occurs, the narrative is crafted in such a way that the sub-code, originally neutral towards English or Chinese, now resonates with the primary code on the attitude towards the language. The following three examples demonstrate this situation,

where the primary code is either normalcy or national pride, with a sub-code of either social capital or tool. In all three examples, the code of tool and the code of social capital, which originally are neutral towards either English or Chinese, have been strategically coated with an emotional tone in accordance with the primary code.

Primary code: code of national pride; sub-code: code of tool

Informant number one, who is a Chinese working frequently with foreign professionals and received the interview in English, used the code of national pride in the interview. In addition, throughout the interview transcript, “tool” was used several times to refer to English. For example:

...

L: do you speak English with Chinese people at work?

0001: no, never. Most Chinese people reject speaking English. Especially if you are ...I mean if you are working in international companies, but more convenient we are going to use our mother language. So English is just a tool of working language because that for people who are dealing with high technology such as simulation industry, aircrafts manufacturing (0001).

...

In this excerpt, “tool” was mentioned and to some extent it is still used to refer to English language in a seemingly emotionless way; however this is done to counteract the supposed superiority of English sensed by the informant. In this excerpt, the code of tool was combined with the code of national pride and was coated with the original emotional preference towards Chinese over English. English was described as “tool” to focus on the functional aspect of the language choice. The reference to such a functional aspect, in this narrative, has been included only to balance the superiority of English over Chinese as sensed by the informant at work. The same combination was documented again within the same interview transcript as follows:

...

L: do you consider speaking Chinese as part of your cultural identity?

0001: en...to most people, I think we have the purpose of, eh...different people have different purposes, so using English as a second language; some people are working for a higher degree or receive further education; for employees, especially working for MNC (multinational corporations), they have to use that just because it's kind of tool because you have to report to headquarters, at United States, or...anyway United States represent most advanced technology in this field. That's why college students' first choice to receive further education is the US, and then Europe. So. But as to employees, I think...we are just using it for the job. No other meaning. We don't mean...we don't mean...to show...en...some types of capabilities, because language is just a tool. And...that's all.

...

In this excerpt, “tool” was mentioned again to counter-balance that “we don’t mean to show some types of capabilities” (0001) and that they use English at work because “it’s kind of tool because you have to report to headquarters [in the US]” (0001). The combination of the code of national pride and the code of tool, in this excerpt, continued to reinforce the notion that proficiency of English does not have any additional implications for your professional capability. Again here the code of tool, although still used to focus on the functional aspect of language choice, when combined strategically with the code of national pride, is actually used to counter-balance the superiority of English over Chinese and to reinforce the emotional preference towards Chinese over English.

Primary code: code of normalcy; sub-code: social capital

Informant number two used the code of normalcy. At the same time, the code of social capital was also used to describe the fact that foreign expatriate managers may learn Chinese in order to garner additional social support. This was mentioned several times. The first instance was when the informant described how local Chinese employees may expect their foreign expatriate managers to learn Chinese:

...

答：没有说期待他能学一些他能讲得怎么好，他学也只会讲几句客套的话“谢谢”

“你好”这样，最简单的东西，对吧？“发票”“还要发票”那只是学些最基本最简单的东西。他不可能用它来做工作中的沟通。它是很困难的。所以，也没有这种期望说要他怎么样讲得多好。没有的。因为你毕竟是，我们最重要的就是说，是工作在一个跨国性的一个，国际性的公司里面。国际性的公司里面你就应该讲英文。你们也能讲英文，最基本对吧？虽说你培养的员工，也是说我们是国际标准的员工。不是说在中国人到外边就做不了。都一样，到哪儿都可以做。

0017: Not much expectations actually. To a great extent whatever he could learn will be just general social greetings to show politeness or things like “*xie xie* [thank you]”, “*ni hao* [hello]”. Those simplest stuff, right? Know how to ask for receipt, and additional receipt, that type of simple and basic stuff. He can't use it for communication at work. This is hard. So, there's no such expectations that their Chinese proficiency should reach certain level. There's no such [expectation]. [because] after all, and this is the most important point we are trying to make, that you work for a multinational, international corporation. Inside a global corporation you should speak English; you can only speak English. This should be the most basic thing, right? Although we also stress that we train employees according to international standard, this is not to say that Chinese people can do nothing outside [of China]; Chinese people can work anywhere. [Chinese native language, interviewed in Chinese, works in Beijing, China]

...

In this excerpt, the social benefit of using Chinese was mentioned as it is considered to show “politeness” (0002) and exchange “social greetings” (0002), among other things. However, such social benefit was described following an emotional premise resonating with the code of normalcy, in that English is superior to Chinese, but some basic greetings in Chinese can be learned by foreign executives only to show a friendly gesture. Note how the narrative stressed the fact that Chinese is very difficult to learn and it may be an unrealistic expectation for foreign expatriate managers to use Chinese on a professional level. Immediately after this comment, the informant went on to stress “the most important point” (0002) that in a multinational, international corporation, “you should only speak English; you can only speak English. This should be the most basic thing” (0002). It is evident that the unequal status between English and Chinese has set the basic tone of the narrative; the code of social capital was combined with the code of normalcy to construct this narrative.

Primary code: code of national pride; sub-code: social capital

If we go back to informant number one, who subscribed to the code of national pride, we can find distinctly different ways to comment on how expatriate managers learn Chinese:

...
 En...yes, sure, they use that quite often. Just like we are living abroad, everyone is eager to be accepted by a new environment. If they live in China and work in China, they have to learn some Chinese, such as “thank you”, easy daily language that helps they quickly accepted by the new working environment. So everyone...everyone does that. No exception. Yeah (0001).
 ...

The primary code here is the code of national pride. When talking about the motivation to learn Chinese among foreign expatriate managers, the informant described how this is done in order to “be accepted by a new environment” (0001). Informant number one described exactly the same type of Chinese, basic greetings, which foreign expatriate managers

usually choose to learn; however, the premise here is that Chinese is preferred because it is the native language in China. The code of social capital is combined with the code of national pride to articulate just that: Chinese is respectable for a good reason. If you want to be accepted by the new environment, you have to learn some local language. Informant number one's narrative exhibited an underlying tone indicating the speaker's loyalty towards Chinese culture; following this premise, the narrative recognized the expatriate managers' attempts as catering to such cultural loyalty. In other words, informant number one would never consider Chinese language or culture as subordinate or less relevant. Within this primary code, the expatriate managers' attempts to learn Chinese can be deemed appropriate and therefore winning social recognition.

Chapter summary

In this chapter I first introduced the theoretical background of proposition three of speech codes theory (Philipsen et al., 2005). I then discussed four speech codes identified through interview transcription: the code of normalcy, the code of national pride, the code of social capital and the code of tool. In presenting each speech code, interview excerpts were displayed to introduce the shared premise; this section also summarized, compared and contrasted among other interview excerpts to discuss how they each demonstrated unique sets of premises relating to the use of English or Chinese in multinational workplaces in China. I also discussed two types of relationships identified among use of speech codes: combination and exclusion and how combination and exclusion of speech codes demonstrates shared premises as well. In the following chapter, I will further discuss the theoretical implications of the four speech codes, particularly with regards to the key aspects of proposition three of speech codes theory: sociology, psychology and rhetoric.

Chapter V Speech Codes and Sociology, Psychology and Rhetoric

Chapter overview

In this chapter, I situate the discussion within speech codes theory (Philipsen, Coutu & Covarrubias, 2005) with special attention given to proposition three of the theory. I begin with proposition three and compare and contrast across interview excerpts to further demonstrate how “a speech code implicates a culturally distinctive psychology, sociology and rhetoric” (p. 61). I will discuss how the four speech codes relating to use of English in China may provide unique ways to understand how people use culturally distinctive ways of speaking to reflect their unique cultural upbringing and to express their sense of personhood, society, and strategic action.

Speech Codes Theory proposition three: “Sociology, psychology and rhetoric”

My discussion will be primarily situated in speech codes theory (Philipsen, 1997; Philipsen et al., 2005). As explained in chapter I, this theory is the most relevant theoretical construct to explain each one of the four speech codes out of two considerations: one is the theory’s focus on local interpretation; the other is the theory’s commitment to considering overall socio-cultural background when interpreting interview data.

With these two considerations in mind, the discussion is situated within speech codes theory help find local interpretations of language experience to the overall socio-cultural background, while recognizing and respecting the original interpretation of such experience. Following what Miles and Huberman (1994) described as “‘dialogue’ between our ideas (theory) and evidence (data)”(p. 144), I argue that although the narratives and expressions in the interview data reflect complex social or historical contexts within which they are produced. These local systems of meaning-making constitute “socially constructed and historically transmitted system[s] of symbols and meanings pertaining to communication” (Philipsen, 1992,

p. 8), or speech codes. For each given speech code, there exist distinctive premises pertaining to communication.

The third proposition of speech codes theory (Philipsen, et al., 2005) states that “a speech code implicates a culturally distinctive psychology, sociology and rhetoric” (p. 61). One of the primary functions of speech codes, therefore, is to shed light on the meaning of social actors of their ways of speaking. This proposition is an extension of Philipsen’s (1992) earlier observation that

One way to show how speech shapes life differently in different societies is to think of different ways of speaking as expressing culturally distinctive codes, or ideologies, of personhood, society, and communicative action. That is, every cultural way of speaking is a distinctive answer to the questions (1) What is a person? (2) What is society” and (3) How are persons and societies linked through communication? (p. 15)

The following discussion examines previous research that has used speech codes theory, particularly proposition three, to present how scholars have explored answers to those questions in the context of particular research cases. The review will also be grouped into three sections to show their individual focus on the nature of a person (psychology), of social relation and society (sociology), and of strategic communicative conduct (rhetoric). After the review of each section, I present interview excerpts from my data set to illustrate how the four speech codes identified in the previous chapter help us better understand how the shared norms, premises and rules associated with use of English in China may reflect distinctive notions of personhood and of social relations, as well as of notions of strategic communicative conduct. The discussion gives particular weight to social actors’ personae, their social relations with each other and their collective understanding of the society they live in.

Speech codes reflecting distinctive psychology

To begin with, proposition three points out that “a speech code implicates a culturally distinctive psychology” (Philipsen, et al., p. 61). This statement is related to Philipsen’s (1992) earlier question “what is a person?” (p.15). The answer to this question may help to make sense of the concept of personhood, or the notion of personae, a term used in the context of speech codes theory to refer to the prototypical types of person that are widely understood, recognized and shared by a community. In addition to notions of personhood, a speech code may also help reveal notions of what a proper person should do and can do in a given situation on local terms. Thus, the term “psychology” in speech codes theory refers to how social actors “implicate meanings about human nature (psychology)” (Philipsen et al., 2005, p. 61). This means that ways of speaking reflect particular notions of personality that are culturally distinctive. This also means that social actors adhere to certain rules, premises and norms to express their notions of personhood. Speech codes can be used as analytical constructs to abstract, compare and contrast such norms, premises and rules to reflect social actors’ notions of personhood, or personae as expressed in their own speech. I will use three research examples to illustrate how speech codes theory, particularly the identification of rules for proper speech conduct in contemporary public discourse, can be used to reflect and analyze culturally distinctive personhood on social actors’ own terms.

As explained in the previous chapter, a rule is defined in the context of speech codes theory as “a prescription, for how to act, under specified circumstances, which has (some degree of) force in a particular social group” (Philipsen, 1992, p. 8). Philipsen’s (2000) case study examined an incident in which William Gerberding, then President of the University of Washington, referred to a student receiving an award at the University of Washington’s

Equal Opportunity Program (EOP) awards banquet in 1990 as an “illegal alien” (p. 216). The case study drew evidence from Gerberding’s speech act on that night as well as from public reactions documented in media coverage. Reactions from both Gerberding and the student receiving the award were included in the case study analysis as well. The analysis revealed two distinctive rules: 1) joking about the ethnicity or race of another person is permissible in intimate occasions, a rule expressed by Gerberding in retrospectives defending his action, and 2) a citizen joking about the ethnicity or race of another person is prohibited on public occasions, a rule expressed by those who challenged Gerberding’s remarks. Philipsen (2000) argues that rule number one can be summarized from Gerberding’s own explanation when he was quoted saying “there are things you say to your friends of different ethnicity, of different race and they say it to you” (p. 220). Formulation of this rule revealed Gerberding’s own notion of personhood; specifically, this rule showed those conditions in which he considered it appropriate to mention race or ethnicity in a certain way, when he was with people similar to him, or in his words, “your friends.” At the same time the public reaction to Gerberding’s speech act was a result of the violation of rule number two. Specifically, because rule number two invoked the widely shared understanding of appropriate behavior and speech for “citizens” in public settings, Gerberding’s violation of rule number two provoked dramatic public reaction. To summarize, in this case study, both rules identified helped to reveal how social actors define and enact their own notions of personhood, or *personae* on their own terms.

Such notions of personhood or *personae* can also be reflected through either preferring or dispreferring certain culturally distinctive ways of speaking. Edgerly (2011) analyzed public talk about terms used in US mainstream media coverage of Hurricane Katrina,

particularly the terms “refugee” and “citizen.” Edgerly argued that the terms reflected socially shared premises about who a “refugee” or a “citizen” really is; in other words, use of these terms for persons, and the descriptive terms associated with them illustrated publicly held notions of these two social categories. Through analysis of documented public reaction to journalists’ use of the word “refugee” to refer to victims of Hurricane Katrina, Edgerly argued that the dramatic public reaction was in response to the violation of the widely shared understanding of the persona of a “refugee” as inferior to a “citizen of the United States.” Such a widely shared notion helped to formulate a rule against public reference to citizens as refugees; in view of this, the dramatic public reaction against using the term “refugee” to refer to victims of Hurricane Katrina indicated how social actors “preferred – or dispreferred – content and modes of communicative conduct” (p. 308). Based on analysis of such “preferred – or dispreferred – content” in a public dispute over journalistic reference to victims as refugees, Edgerly’s study provided an answer to the question, “what is a person?” in US society, with special attention given to the generally understood difference between a “refugee” and a “citizen.”

The third example concerns what is generally understood as a person and a proper person within a community in local terms. In other words, based on the way social actors talk to each other, speech codes can be used to reveal the nature of a person as generally understood within a given community, as well as what a person can be and should be. In Philipsen’s (1992) study of the Teamsterville and Nacirema cultures, he found that in Teamsterville, a person is understood as “fundamentally a persona, a bundle of social identities, such as “man,” “Italian,” young,” and “a resident of 33rd Street” (p. 15); while for the Nacirema, “a person is a psychologically unique individual” (p. 16). Such distinctions

illustrate the differences between cultural communities and how they exhibit different notions of personhood, or the nature of a person.

Also evident in this comparison between Teamsterville and Nacirema culture was the distinction between the ideology of honor within Teamsterville culture and the ideology of dignity within Nacirema culture. In Teamsterville culture, which respected societal values of hierarchy and community, the ideology of honor was evident in community members' narratives or conversations. Within Nacirema culture, where "the individual is of ultimate value" (p. 16), the ideology of dignity was prominent in speech in which social actors "pay homage to their social equality" (p. 16) rather than to social difference. Such distinction between ideologies points to different versions of understanding what a proper person is. Based on these, Philipsen (1992) identified two codes, the code of honor and the code of dignity as systems of "interpretive resources with which interlocutors can make sense with each other" (p. 16).

To continue the discussion in the context of this study, I argue that the shared rules formulated from social actors' narratives of their language experience reflect unique notions of personhood, or personae. Informants' narratives reflect these notions primarily around two interview questions: first, why do you use English? Second, should non-native English speakers have an English name at work? Answers to such questions help reveal culturally distinctive notions of personhood on two levels: one, what is the nature of a person and two, what a proper person can and should do. Use of the four speech codes identified in the previous chapter helps to differentiate culturally distinctive notions of personhood on both levels through the identification of different rules. For example, interpretation of the code of normalcy reveals that speakers view the nature of a person to be a collection of personal

capacities subject to external evaluative criteria; when it comes to use of English at work, a proper person is primarily a professional person who aspires to career advancement. Within this code, an important and consistent rule of speaking, articulated by many subjects, appeared to be place-specific: “A person should speak English in an international work setting like this.” References to work location, including “international corporation,” and “American corporation” reinforced such a notion of personhood, and the important role of setting.

According to the code of national pride, respondents consider the nature of a person to be an exhibition of loyalty and moral conscience subject to internal reflection. In this system, when it comes to use of English at work, a proper person is primarily a defender of Chinese culture. Evidence of this may be seen in the numerous references to emotional responses and evaluative comments made by speakers who use this code. One rule of speaking that reinforced this notion of personhood may be stated as follows: “A Chinese person should not speak English with other Chinese because it is bragging.”

In the following section, I group some answers according to these two interview questions and offer my analysis of their notions of personhood on these two levels as expressed in the speakers’ answers. Some of the excerpts reflect rules explaining both the nature of a person and what a proper person can do and should do; other excerpts reflect rules explaining either the nature of a person or what a proper person can do and should do.

“Why do you use English?”

The following three examples are all answers to the interview question, “why do you use English?” The first example comes from the speech produced by informant one. In his speech, the code of national pride can be identified as the primary code, with the code of

tool as the sub-code. The interview narrative demonstrates his clear emotional affiliation towards Chinese language and Chinese culture, and his defensive attitude towards the perceived superiority of English language in the workplace:

[informant one, native Chinese speaker, interviewed in English, works in Kunming, Yunnan, China]

0001: especially in China we have those...bias...towards people who use [English]...such as [those who] are back from the United States who use Chinese and English simultaneously, or in some combination, but...that's very ridiculous, in fact...most people think that they are showing off. Sometimes they find excuses like I am thinking that word...in an English way in combination with Chinese sentences. But in fact, Chinese people are very sick about that because it doesn't mean anything. Sometimes you use words that you do not have in your own language but it does not like that. So the usage is very important; we don't think it's a fashionable way; we just think it's bragging or...if you are not using it in your daily works, you are using that in your daily life, or to [other] Chinese, even if you have profound background in the United States (0001).

Informant one was aware of the fact that other people choose to use English even when there are no foreigners present; in other words, informant one was aware of the code of normalcy. He clearly articulated his personal opinion towards such usage, or choice of English over Chinese, as “bragging”, “not fashionable” and “doesn't mean a thing” (0001). Even a “profound background in the United States” (0001) would not justify choosing English over Chinese, if there are no foreigners present. While the code of national pride is evident in this narrative through such criticism, informant one further defended the rule of loyalty towards Chinese language or Chinese culture; he also distanced himself from the social group comprised of people who are Chinese but prefer using English when “there are no foreigners present.” For this informant, the presence of foreigners would be the only reason to justify a Chinese person using English. In other words, the code of national pride points to the rules to which this informant adheres in order to demonstrate what a proper

person should and can do in situations like this. For instance, according to him, one may work in a mixed language environment or have obtained overseas education, but only when foreigners are present should a speaker use English. Otherwise, if a speaker uses English with other Chinese people or uses a combination of both English and Chinese in a non-professional setting, that speaker will be “bragging” and “not fashionable” (0001) at all. Such evaluative comments and emotional responses reflect the use of the following rule:

One should not speak English when there are only Chinese present.

This rule first explains how informant one views the nature of a person. According to him, the nature of a person should be primarily defined by his or her ability to produce certain consistent moral judgments of day-to-day communicative conduct. A proper person or a proper Chinese person, to follow this notion of personhood, should know how to behave so as to demonstrate loyalty towards Chinese language and Chinese culture by not flaunting English proficiency in front of other Chinese people. Violation of this rule will incur criticism or an unfavorable judgment, such as “bragging,” “not fashionable at all,” and “doesn’t mean a thing.”

An interpretation of what a proper person should and can do appears distinctly different in speech that reflects the code of normalcy. Informant seventeen, for example, produced a different response to the question, “why English?”

[Informant seventeen, native Chinese speaker, interviewed in Chinese, works in Beijing, China]

因为你毕竟是，我们最重要的就是说，是工作在一个跨国性的一个，国际性的公司里面。国际性的公司里面你就应该讲英文。你们也只能讲英文，最基本对吧？虽说你培养的员工，也是说我们是国际标准的员工。不是说在中国人到外边就做不了。都一样，到哪儿都可以做 (0017).

[because] after all, and this is the most important point we are trying to make, that you work for a multinational, international corporation. Inside a global corporation you should speaking English; you can only speaking English. This should be the most basic thing, right? Although we also stress that we train employees according to international standard, this is not to say that Chinese people can do nothing outside [of China]; Chinese people can work anywhere.

Discussion of the excerpt in chapter four demonstrated the clear attitude of superiority towards use of English. Several statements provide evidence of such an attitude. For example, the informant said that use of English is based on the rationale of international business practice: “you work for a multinational, international corporation” (0017) and is based on employees’ professional capability: “we train employees according to international standard” (0017). Although he did not explicitly state it, the informant suggested that he would definitely reject the rules of the code of national pride – loyalty towards Chinese language or Chinese culture – since such loyalty, according to him, is irrelevant to international business practice. Instead, a different rule can be formulated from this informant’s speech as follows:

One should speak English if one works at an international corporation.

Informant seventeen considers the nature of a person to be primarily defined by his or her personal capacity subject to external criteria. When it comes to use of English at work, a proper person should use English at work to reflect the level of professionalism as well as the status of working in an international corporation. References to the work environment, such as “multinational, international corporation” and “global corporation” were repeated during this short excerpt to reinforce the idea that one should speak English as an international professional.

Further interpretation of the code of tool identifies another rule related to a notion of personhood, or what a proper person can do and should do when it comes to language choices, which has no clear emotional inclination to either language. Informant eighteen did

not explicitly support use of either English or Chinese but instead focused on the “logical” aspect of the actual usage from a functional approach.

[Informant eighteen, native Chinese speaker, interviewed in English, works in Beijing, China]

0018: Right, yeah. There is a functional. I promise you, language, uh proficiency is beyond a functional level then there is nothing to be afraid. And so the, especially for those people who are tend to be more outgoing, so like I said before it's, many things is beyond language. The first thing, if you want yourself to be understood better, you have to be logical, which it has nothing to do with language.

L: Um hm.

0018: And if you, you are illogical, and doesn't matter whether you are speaking your Chin-, your native language or a foreign language, it won't hurt, it won't help if you are illogical.

From this excerpt, a rule regarding which language should be spoken emerged that is different from the above two rules:

The logical, functional aspect of the language should be regarded as the most important consideration in choosing a language.

This informant's speech reflected this rule and his belief that “it has nothing to do with language” (0018). He states that that if your language has been illogical, “it won't help you” (0018). This rule helps understand informant seventeen's notion of personhood. To begin with, the nature of a person is defined primarily according to the ability to produce practical, unbiased judgment; a proper person, when it comes to use of English at work, should disregard the emotional implications related to either English or Chinese but rather focus upon the logical aspect of the actual communication. This rule is different from the previous two rules related to either the code of national pride or the code of normalcy as it does not assume, from an emotional stand point, that either English or Chinese should enjoy greater preference in such a decision making process. According to informant eighteen, a proper

person, when deciding which language to speak in a mixed language work environment, should always first consider whether the language chosen may produce the most logical and coherent explanation to support smooth communication.

These three examples show how different rules can be formulated through different informants' answers to the same question: why speak English at work? Generation of such rules is helpful because they reveal speakers' own notions of personhood, or personae on two levels: the nature of a person and what a proper person can do and should do. For example, the rule in the code of national pride, as reflected in informant one's narrative, revealed his own notion that being a Chinese person means one should put loyalty to Chinese culture first. The rule of the code of normalcy, on the other hand, revealed informant seventeen's notion that being an "international business professional" means one should always [be able] to speak English. Finally, the rule of the code of tool, formulated through informant eighteen's narrative, revealed his own notion that being an "logical person" means one should always be logical and "it has nothing to do with language" (0018).

"Should non-native English speakers use an English name at work?"

Regarding the question of whether to use an English name (if the informant is using English as second language) or to prefer that others use an English name (if informant is using Chinese as second language), another set of rules can be formulated from the subject's responses. Interestingly, in this case more than one rule can be formulated; some of them point to informants' notions of personhood, others point to beliefs about what a proper person can do or should do.

Informant nine, who adheres to the code of normalcy throughout his interview, first explained that the use of English names in the workplace might be out of consideration of convenience:

[Informant nine, Dutch native speaker, interviewed in English, works in Kunming, Yunnan, China]

0009: About English names? Um, yeah, I think it's uh its convenient sometimes and sometimes it's not convenient. Um, it's conv-, convenient in the way that it's easier to learn an English name than a Chinese name, uh also for, for my brain it's easier to memorize a English name than a Chinese name. Often with a Chinese name, names I will forget a name and um maybe the, if you, if you forget someone's name it's never, the people never like it because it's, it looks like they are not important to you. But uh, I think for our, our brain is diff, diff, more difficult to remember a Chinese name. Of course after a, after five years living, speaking in China, I'm a more used to remembering um Chinese names, but still it's a convenient, uh more convenient to remember English names (0009).

It is interesting to take a closer look at this statement, in which two rules that seemingly contradict each other co-exist side by side. On the one hand, the informant agrees that forgetting someone's name might be socially awkward; on the other hand, he agrees that it is acceptable to have an English name for Chinese people for convenience. A few questions later, the same informant, who is Dutch, was invited to project the simulated scenario of him using an English name at work:

[Informant nine, Dutch native speaker, interviewed in English, works in Kunming, Yunnan, China]

0009: Yep. But then, you know it's very funny because I am already used to it, that Chinese people have English names, but I know uh, whenever I have family or friends from abroad coming over, they always find it funny that all Chinese have English names.

L: Why that is funny? Do, do you feel that's funny, yourself?

0009: Ye, uh, uh, no. I don't feel it's funny. But for example if you look at other countries, for example if you look at Western countries, for example, Holland, or France or Germany, uh, people there have German names, French names, uh Dutch names, but they never will take an English name. They will always use their own French name, German name, or Dutch name and in uh international, with international friends.

L: Why they wouldn't want to have an English name? Even they are engaged in certain intercultural communication with native speakers of English?

0009: Uh, I think they never have thought of the idea.

L: Ok.

0009: Of taking an English name.

Note when being invited to project the simulated scenario of using an English name, which is not the informant's own name, at work, the informant rejected the option and confessed that he had never thought about the idea. In addition, his social circle may not be used to the idea of having an English name for convenience, even if their work is in an English-speaking environment to some degree. This weakens the explanation informant nine offered just a few seconds before, when he explained why Chinese colleagues should use an English name at work. In other words, if this is out of convenience, why would it be out of the question for him to use an English name as well? What is the premise behind the prioritization?

One interpretation can be inspired by Philipsen's (2000) case study involving Gerberding's remark on difference and people who are different from him. It's possible that informant nine follows some rules to differentiate between the social groups for whom these different rules are prescribed, namely, "I (informant nine)" and "Chinese people." In this way, the rules can be formulated as follows and these rules no longer contradict one another as they are now referring to different social groups:

- 1) I should not forget other people's names in a professional setting;
- 2) Chinese people should use an English name for convenience;
- 3) I should not use an English name because it is not my own name;

Of these three rules, rule number two, “Chinese people should use an English name for convenience”, seems to align very well with the code of normalcy and it points to the notion of what a proper (Chinese) person should do in situations like this. In addition to rule number two, informant nine also follows two other rules pointing to the significance of names in a professional setting. While not immediately associated with the code of normalcy in regards to use of English, rules one and three nonetheless speak to the informant’s expression of his own notion of personhood. To begin with, the group of three rules explains the way informant nine understands the nature of a person as a unique individual. When it comes to names, a proper person should stick to his or her name to defend such uniqueness and one should remember others’ names to pay respect, or collectively defend such a notion of uniqueness. Rule number two seems to contradict rules one and three when it comes to names; but once the distinction between “I” and “Chinese people” is applied, the contraction of rules, or contradiction between diverging versions of personhood now disappears because rule number two refers to a different group social actors. In other words, what a proper Chinese person should do is different from what a proper “self” should do in the same situation.

The fact that different rules apply to different social groups can be confirmed through the internal prioritization among the three rules, with rule number three, “I should not use an English name because it is not my own name,” as the most important. This fact is indicated by the informant’s use of words like “never” and phrases like “never have thought of the idea” to indicate that a violation of rule number three is unacceptable. To summarize the argument, I argue that such prioritization among multiple rules reflects the distinctive notion of personhood that the informant understands in his own terms, and the distinction between

himself and other different types of people. In this case, it is clear that he considers himself an international professional, who appreciates local Chinese people's use of English names for communication purposes, but who would reject the idea of using an English name for himself simply for communication concerns.

Informant nine uses the code of normalcy and the group of rules reveals both how he understands what is a person and what a proper person should do when it comes to names. Such groups of rules can be formulated from narratives reflecting other codes as well. For instance, informant two, an American manager working with a Chinese team, constructed a narrative of language experience generally reflecting the code of social capital, explaining how his own use of Chinese in professional settings helped generate additional social support for him. After explaining to me how he personally does not think it is necessary for Chinese colleagues to have an English name simply for communication purposes, he mentioned the fact that he is not "thrilled with his Chinese name":

[Informant two, native speaker of English, interviewed in English, works between Beijing and the US]

0002: I will tell you that oddly from now, that I have gone from other direction, that for all Chinese that I have to be given a Chinese name, I personally is not thrilled about it, it's like my name is my name. You just go by my name. Why would I have a different name? So there is a funky, cultural difference that the way people would approach it.

L: OK. Why did you say that "you have to be given" a Chinese name?

0002: Oh there's no way to write in Chinese (your name?) there's no way to write "Tom", right? So, en, the first thing that a lot of Chinese would do is "here is what your Chinese name would be". And then they suggested the name for you. And mine is "汤姆"(Chinese for Tom). So, that was kind of, "no, I just liked my name".

I don't want to take another name, because of the personal overall preference.

“My name is my name. You just go by my name. Why would I have a different name” (0002), are all strong statements here. If we repeat the above mentioned formulation of multiple rules, we have the following two:

- 1) I should speak Chinese to generate additional social support;
- 2) I should not use a Chinese name because it is not my own name.

In a sense, although in general informant two agrees that using Chinese is helpful to nurture a good working relationship with the Chinese team, when it comes to his own situation, informant two quickly backs off from his enthusiasm for Chinese. Such a shift of attitude demonstrates a distinctive prioritization of rules, and the prioritization in itself reflects the distinctive personae as understood by informant two. In other words, rule number one aligns very well with the code of social capital and points to how he understands what a proper person should do and can do; at the same time, rule number two points to how he understands the nature of personhood when it comes to names.

These examples illustrate how a rule or multiple rules can be formulated from informants' answers to two interview questions: which language to speak at work and whether to have an English name at work for non-native-English speakers. Most of the rules formulated align with specific speech codes associated with use of English at work, and they help to reveal the distinctive personae as understood by the speaker.

Speech codes reflect a distinctive sociology

Proposition three of speech codes theory also states that a speech code “implicate[s] a culturally distinctive sociology” (Philipsen, et al., 2005, p. 61), which addresses the question, “what is society?” In this proposition, the term “sociology” refers to the notion with which social actors make sense of the society in which they live through distinctive

ways of speaking, or shared norms and premises. Philipsen (1992) described in detail how the statement “speaking is social” can be further understood through close observation of the “patterned knowledge, use and nonuse of the meanings, rules, and speech habits of a local group” (p. 14). Specifically:

Knowledge of, and ability to participate in, a particular community’s spoken life are not only resources for information transmission but are resources for communal identification, and communal being, as well. Speech is both an act of and a resource for “membering” (ibid).

In other words, speech codes implicate a distinctive sociology, or understanding of the behavior of human beings in groups, reflected through social actors’ daily communicative conduct. Members of a particular speech community know the proper ways of speaking within that community; they may follow the rules and premises of the proper ways of speaking for their speech community, or they may reject these ways of speaking. Out of such speech selection, speakers reveal their commitment to a particular type of social relationship that they have already established. In addition to established social relations, a particular code may also help reveal “the particular kinds of social relations that persons can and should enter into” (Philipsen, 1997, p. 138). Such social relations imply possibility for social actors to associate with one another in a way they desire.

Shared premises, as formulated from narratives reflecting one code, at times point to social actors’ defense of social relations to which they have already committed. At other times, these shared premises indicate social actors’ desire to establish association with new social groups. Such committed or desired social relations, in return, illustrate how social actors understand the nature of society and how they are linked to society through communication. In both cases, such social relations illustrate how speakers understand how

the social world around them may be structured or defined through their language choices. To open the discussion of previous studies of premises leading towards shared understanding of society, I restate the definition of a premise in the context of speech codes theory here: “expressed beliefs of existence (what is) and of value (what is good and bad)” (Philipsen, 1992, p. 8).

Two previous studies highlight the intimate relationship between shared premises and distinctive versions of understanding society. The first study, Philipsen’s (1992) analysis of Mayor Daley’s 1971 council speech and public reaction to that speech, identified two codes, “honor” and “dignity”, which reflected distinctive understandings of society through premises formulated from social actors’ speech. For users of the Teamsterville code, honor is a very important concept in social relations, and society is understood as “more important than any individual” (p. 16). Within this code, honor is closely related to a sense of place. Within the Teamsterville cultural community, references to residence, e.g., “the neighborhood” and “a resident of 33rd Street” (p. 15) point to the premise linking one’s residence location to his or her community membership. Such references illustrate a world view that “associates places with people” (p. 42). In other words, the “socio-spatial boundaries that residents perceive as ‘the neighborhood’” (p. 31) are relevant to the way Teamsterville people define the community they live in. Mayor Daley’s speech was in response to public criticism of his action appointing a young friend to a government position, an action generally labeled nepotism. Mayor Daley’s speech responding to the criticism was later further criticized as “false and totally untrue” and accounts reported that Mayor Daley “reacted furiously and stormed” (p. 47). However, if using the code of honor to approach Mayor Daley’s speech, a distinctive premise can be formulated that explains “a

neighborhood belief and preference that men do, and should, act out of self-interest in their political and economic dealings” (p. 51).

The code of dignity within Nacirema culture, on the other hand, emphasizes “the uniqueness and legitimacy of each person’s cognitive and affective world” (p. 114) and communication is used as a “resource for elaborating individual intent... [and] forging agreement” (p. 114). In Philipsen’s (1992) study of public reaction to Mayor Daley’s speech, a premise can be formulated that aligns with the code of dignity. This premise states that individuals are unique social beings; society’s value rests in its “capacity to enhance the individual” (p. 16). Behavior leading towards failed enhancement, such as nepotism or hiring an individual for reasons other than individual merit is perceived as bad. Such contrasting understandings of society, as exhibited through premises from the code of honor and the code of dignity, are rooted in different systems of values and reflect “expressed beliefs of existence and of value” (p. 12).

In a second study, Bassett (2010) explored aspects of the speech code she identified in the community of nanoscientists and engineers. Specifically, in regards to the role of science and industry in society at large, informants’ answers reflected the rather consistent premise that for ethical issues, scientists usually “let someone else worry about societal implications and ...if I don’t do it [with ethics concerns] someone with lower ethical standards might” (p. 121). Another example of different premises emerged regarding the appropriate role of either basic or applied research. Tensions surrounding these conflicting premises were evident in interview speech, and may have been the result of different values of each type of research (p. 127). For both issues, informants, who were research scientists in the same area, produced responses reflecting either shared or contrasting premises that stemmed from their

distinctive beliefs about the constitution of society. This case presents contrasting premises regarding ethical concerns in scientific research and the distinction between basic and applied research. In their own way, each premise reflects the social actors' own way of understanding the nature of society, and how they may fit in society.

These two studies have informed the current study in the following ways: I argue that the informants I interviewed produced responses reflecting distinctive premises about what society is and how one should fit into such a society. Just as distinctive speech codes reflected distinctive views of personhood, these distinctive premises about society were revealed through informants' responses to two questions: why do you learn English and should one use an English name at work? I will group prototypical answers from my interviews according to these two questions. Premises formulated from interview excerpts help reveal how informants understand the nature of society and how they may fit into this society through their use and command of either English or Chinese.

“Why do you learn to use English?”

Informant eleven (Chinese native language, interviewed in English, worked in Beijing, China) offered her insight into why Chinese people learn to speak English:

[Chinese native speaker, interviewed in English, worked in Beijing, China]

0011: I think China, um, even back ten years ago was ex...um, expanding um...its economy at, uh at great speed. So there were a lot of opportunities for people who could speak English.....I think a lot of people back then, um...I think especially for people who work in the um international company, they get paid a lot better than people who work in uh Chinese company. And then among the Chinese companies, if they do any international business they get paid a lot better than just people who do the, just companies that do domestic business. So speaking, being able to, being able to speak English means being able to find a job that deals with international companies or um or companies that do international business and that, that means you get better paid and uh um have a um wider choice when you go look for a job.

Two premises can be summarized from this excerpt as follows:

- 1). English proficiency is related to better career prospects
- 2). Economic growth motivates people to learn English

These premises reflect how the informant constructed the internal connection between hiring prospects and one's English proficiency. This is regardless of whether one's employer is domestic or foreign because within Chinese companies people who "deal with international businesses get paid a lot better than just people who [deal] with companies that do domestic businesses" (0011). The second premise reflects how the informant constructed the internal connection between economic development and the demand for English speakers. A code of normalcy can be summarized from informant eleven's answers; the two premises reflected from this excerpt point to the close relationship between English proficiency and career prospects or society's economic development. Collectively, the two premises explain a distinctive understanding of society as a locus on which to stage tangible economic development or progress achieved through individual efforts; the way one seeks to fit into society is to find the most practical niche to perform such effort. When it comes to English proficiency, it is understood as an important way to demonstrate the capacity to perform this socially beneficial effort. Returning to the excerpt, the speaker's reference to types of employers, such as "international company" or "Chinese companies...doing international businesses" as an indicator of economic growth, rationalizes the connection between English proficiency and better career prospects. The code of normalcy, in this sense, exhibits a similar sense of place or "neighborhood belief" (Philipsen, 1992, p. 51) that draws a direct correlation between the place one works and the way one fits into society, which in this case would be through a speaker's English proficiency.

A similar premise can be formulated from the interview with informant seven that connects economic growth to interests in learning English. The following excerpt documents his experience teaching English in China back in the 1980's, approximately ten years before informant eleven began working in a different Chinese city.

[English native speaker, interviewed in English, worked in China]

0007: So it's been, for them, they have their reasons they were, um also 1984 was when China really started opening up. That's when the, the free market started and so food, like uh vegetables, and meat, fruit became much more available. The diet improved. Um, people relaxed much more. The old Mao suits started disappearing and people started dressing in much smarter clothes and the whole environment was much easier for us as foreigners then. We could interact much more. We could get out and about. So the first year was very difficult, but the second year was much more relaxed. I, I stayed until 1987 and by 1987 it was completely different. There were, there were far fewer restrictions on our lives and um one of my colleagues, um an Englishman...

L: Um hm.

0007: ...married one of the um, one of the students and so this was a big first, you know a foreigner marrying a local Chinese...

L: Um hm.

0007: ... that again was another barrier which was broken. So things by, by 1987 were really very, very different in that regard. I did a lot of chatting in the street. A lot of people wanted to practice their English. I started going to the English corner in Wuyguanchun, we used to have an English corner every Saturday, but I actually stopped going because I realized that I was distracting people from practicing English with each other. They would all gather round the foreigner so it could be about a hundred people surrounding me, but only one or two people would be practicing their English, but if I wasn't there, all the Chinese people would be speaking to each other and getting far more English practice.

A premise can be formulated from this excerpt:

Economic growth motivates people to learn English

This premise reflects an approach to explaining the nature of society similar to that identified in the interview with informant eleven: society is the locus to stage tangible

economic development or progress achieved through individual efforts. The way one seeks to fit into society is to find the most practical niche to perform such effort. This excerpt, however, differs from the previous one because in this case, instead of referring to a place of work, the tangible economic development is measured through various aspects of people's daily life: "vegetables and meat", "disappearing old Mao suits" and "smarter clothes" (0007). After a brief description of the improved standard of living in China, the informant begins to describe Chinese people's increased curiosity about the English language, including reference to his participation in conversations at the English corner, recounting how local people reacted strongly to his participation by "all gathering round the foreigner so it could be about a hundred people surrounding me, but only one or two people would be practicing their English" (0007).

Aside from the above mentioned two examples, informant four, whose speech reflects the code of tool, offered an explanation for Chinese people learning English that reflects a distinctly different premise.

[native English speaker, interviewed in English, works in China]

0004: I have frequently seen, en, I have frequently run into people in a lot of countries, something in Japan, Korea, Sri Lanka, where learning English has been a way for them to sort of looking west and explore opportunities to leave their country. I don't know if this has something to do with their economic situations? Or it's just that the people I am meeting are just like me, who are just curious about other places. Like you don't have to hate your current life, or your current economic situation and suddenly decided that Germany is such an incredible and fascinating place that you want to learn German or go visit Germany or something. So I have no need to backup that economic argument. I have met three Chinese people who said their primary motivation to learning English was to interact more with Westerners and maybe work for Western companies, or maybe to explore opportunities to go visit Western countries but the data are skewed and it's hard to make speculations based on that.

This excerpt reflects two premises: one is the informant's own way of understanding the society, the other is what he speculated was the case with the "three Chinese people" and

people he met elsewhere who learn English as a way to leave their country, a premise that resonates with the code of normalcy. The informant's own premise can be formulated from this excerpt as follows:

Curiosity about other countries motivates one to learn English.

This premise explains how the informant understands society as a locus to facilitate an individual's understanding of human life; one seeks to fit into society by demonstrating knowledge of others without clear correlation to economic interests. Studying English, in this sense, serves as a tool or a bridge to develop such knowledge. In other words, the social relations a proper person can and should enter into, according to informant four, should be the type of social relations among a group of independent, free-willed thinkers who travel and learn foreign languages out of curiosity. Informant four is aware of a competing premise as mentioned above that draws a direct connection between economic growth and the motivation to learn English. This can be seen through his suggestion "like you... suddenly decided that Germany is such an incredible and fascinating place that you want to learn German" (0004) as well as the clear statement, "I have no need to backup that economic argument" (0004).

The above three examples demonstrate how respondents use distinctive versions of understanding society and how individuals may fit into society. The following section shares prototypical answers to the question of whether non-native-English speakers should use an English name. I present these examples to explain how the premises reflected in the answers to this question point to different understandings of society.

“Why do you use an English name, or prefer others using an English name?”

Informant sixteen (Chinese native language, interviewed in English, works in Shanghai, China) explained to me the reason why she uses an English name at work and how this is a choice made by everybody in the company:

[Chinese native speaker, interviewed in English, works in Shanghai, China]

0016: Uh, within my company this is a 100 percent true. And also then another thing is, it is easy to call. You know? For example, you have a bilingual environment. You need to aside from this, this is Chinese persons when I mention about these feature Chinese person.

L: Yes.

0016: But ab, also about others it's because bilingual environment you need to think about your foreign colleague. They need to, to find a way easy to communicate with you. If your name was too hard to pronounce.

L: Um hm.

0016: You know.

L: Um hm.

0016: It is not uh good.

A premise can be formulated from this excerpt:

English is superior to Chinese for the purpose of better communication with foreigners

This premise is primarily based on her rationalization of the use of an English name among Chinese colleagues out of considerations “about your foreign colleague” because “they need to find a way easy to communicate with you, if your name was too hard to pronounce” (0016) and if “your name was too hard to pronounce, it is not good” (0016). If compared to the two previous examples that correlate desire for economic growth to

motivation to learn English, a similar understanding of society can be projected here, that society is a locus on which to stage tangible economic development and progress achieved through individual effort; the way one fits into this society is to find a practical niche to perform such effort. In this case, English stands for a superior, more sophisticated and more desirable state of being; the proper way for Chinese people to fit in is to use an English name to facilitate office communication.

Such an understanding of the world is different from the premise reflected in informant nine's narrative of the code of social capital, in which he offered an account of a disagreement between him and local Chinese employees:

[Dutch native speaker, interviewed in English, works in China]

L: Ok. When um, may I ask when you went through this kind of disagreement, and addressed those differences, um do you remember were you using English or Dutch?

0009: No. Then, then, then I will use Chinese. Specifically in those kind of forums, I will use Chinese because, um, now, now I'm uh, I'm, I'm now I'm General Manager of the company, I speak uh Chinese. Before I came here, I was uh, I was not General Manager, I was Assistant Manager and our General Manager could not speak uh Chinese. And I often noticed that when he was speaking the Chinese were listening, he was speaking English, but then they were talking with each other like uh, that doesn't, in Chinese, that doesn't work in China and our General Manager could not understand, not, not get that, that part of the conversation. And uh, with me, with those kind of problems, I will certainly speak Chinese, and then uh, try to uh address that uh directly with them in Chinese. Definitely.

L: Um hm. How would people feel when you first started to use Chinese? I mean local Chinese colleagues, how would they feel?

0009: I've got the feeling that they, that uh they like it because also some uh Chinese colleagues who speak English very well, they, they like to speak uh Chinese because of course it is less uh it's more easy to speak your own language than to speak a foreign spoken language.

L: Um hm.

0009: Yeah. And I, I also feel that the Chinese uh, they for Chinese it's uh, they like it if you, if you show them some kind of respect by speaking their language cause that also means that, that, that, that you respect their culture because I think if you don't, if you don't

like a place, if you don't like a country, you also, you will don't, you will never learn their language.

A premise can be formulated from this excerpt as follows:

Use of local language can generate social support from local colleagues.

This premise is confirmed through the informant's evaluative comments such as, "I will certainly speak Chinese...definitely" and "(speaking English to local Chinese) doesn't work in China" (0009). This premise reflects an understanding of society as a collection of social members with emotional needs, who can be pleased, recognized or honored through proper communicative conduct. The way a person can fit into this society would be to use such proper ways of communicating with one another, in this case using Chinese to communicate with local Chinese staff members, especially during a disagreement. This notion of society is confirmed by the informant's later reference to the idea that a foreigner, speaking Chinese, could make "them (local Chinese employees) like it (Chinese)" because "you show them some kind of respect by speaking their language" (0009).

Such a notion of society is different from what can be summarized from speech that reflects the code of normalcy. Take for example the previous quoted excerpt from the interview with informant twelve: throughout the entire interview, informant twelve seldom mentioned that local Chinese employees using an English name could generate additional social support from their foreign colleagues. Instead, she consistently emphasized the benefit of having an English name to improve the quality of communication. Although the informant did say that having an English name is out of consideration of foreign colleagues, it was unclear or irrelevant whether those English names in any way satisfied foreign

colleagues' emotional needs or generated social support for local Chinese employees. Instead, a more evident premise was that English is superior to Chinese and if one wishes to fit in this sophisticated world, one should use an English name and be considerate of foreign colleagues.

Both narratives offer interesting examples in which social actors use ways of speaking to reflect premises that function as “resources for communal identification... and a resource for ‘membering’” (Philipsen, 1992, p. 14), when it comes to having an English name for non-native-English speakers. Through their expression of such premises, informants actively illustrate what they consider to be a proper way to fit into society through social relations. To informant twelve, for example, such proper social relations might be defined with English names and English-speaking colleagues, so that she can see herself contributing to a sophisticated, well-functioning social machine. In the case of informant nine, on the other hand, such proper social relations might be defined with fluency of local language to generate social support from local colleagues. It can also be argued that the type of social relations and social groups with which they each wish to associate are distinctly different.

Speech codes reflect a distinctive rhetoric

Proposition three of speech codes theory addresses the question, “how are persons and societies linked through communication?” By definition, a speech code provides “a system of rules and premises that is a rhetorical resource [used] in appealing to others to act” (Philipsen, 1992, p. 15). Proposition three of speech codes argues that elements of a speech code “implicate[s]...strategic conduct (rhetoric)” (Philipsen, et al., 2005, p. 61). The term “rhetoric” in proposition three refers to notion of strategic communicative action, especially

notions of how social actors can and should act strategically to guide, shape and regulate each other's daily communicative conduct purposefully. As speech codes scholars understand it, any speech act that occurs is guided by order and such order can be detected. Generally such order refers to local notions of what is right (when it comes to personhood or society) and what is effective communicative conduct to express such notions strategically.

A quick example could be drawn from the previous discussion of the codes of honor and dignity identified in Philipsen's (1992) study of Mayor Daley's council speech. Specifically, the code of dignity and the code of honor each represent distinctive notions of proper personhood and social structure. Such notions may translate into rules guiding social actors' daily communicative conduct. When Mayor Daley's act was labeled nepotism by the general public, he responded to this label in a dramatic way. His speech, although documented as "furious and stormed" (p. 47), can be interpreted as guided by a code of honor that is itself structured. In other words, Mayor Daley's speech act reflects the rule in the code of honor in which stipulates that a "right" person should utilize whatever political or economic resources he or she can marshal to his or her best advantage. This notion is rooted within the local "sense of neighborhood" that stresses social differences and guides social actors to utilize resources in defense of a social system that recognizes such differences. Mayor Daley's speech act, although generally interpreted as "furious and stormed" (ibid), may also be seen as his strategic and effective way to express local notions of personhood and society.

Public reaction to Mayor Daley's speech, on the other hand, was guided by a code of dignity that criticized the mayor's speech as "false and untrue" (p. 47). In other words, the general public demonstrated through their reaction to Mayor Daley's speech their local

notion that a “right” person should observe equality and society should be constructed to enhance individual ability. Based on such a notion, the code of dignity values open dialogue and communication to judge sensitive issues. The public reaction to Mayor Daley’s speech, in this sense, reflects their notion of what is right through ways of speaking that are culturally distinctive and purposeful. All participants in this case used strategic and purposeful speech to defend their own notions of personhood and society, and to motivate or sway listeners.

The understanding that speech codes reflect a distinctive rhetoric also prompts scholars to examine specific outcomes within local speech communities, since such strategic use of speaking can produce either desired or unexpected consequences, depending on local interpretation. The following section further explains how such strategic, purposeful use of communicative action may produce a system of symbols and purposeful use of such system of symbols may express, in a shared and informed way, social and symbolic tension (Carbaugh, 1988; Baxter, 1993) or nurture cooperation (Covarrubias, 2005); all three studies concerns social actors’ strategic use of speech codes within work environment.

Carbaugh (1988) described communicative dynamics inside a TV station where social actors using group of systematically connected symbols to describe the social world as they know of it within the organization. Symbols summarized from interview transcripts with informants working in that station included: “types of people,” “the building situation,” “the communication problem” and finally “the product”. Such use of symbols within the organization reflected distinctive rhetoric first because it showed local notion of how a proper person can and should speak in a way to guide and regulate others’ communicative conduct. This was done through purposeful use of the cluster of symbols detected in their

speech describing the “types of people”. For example, informants were documented to refer to different “types of people” in distinctively different ways. An informant, for example, once referred to “the mover” as “live, breathe, and eat their job. I think they are crazy” (p. 220). Meanwhile, the “secure” were described as “minor-task oriented and living the job at five o’clock” (p. 220). Secondly, such use was strategic and purposeful also because that the symbols are systematically connected to each other; using one symbol might evoke use of other symbols in the same system. Specifically, “types of people”, including “the movers,” “the secure” and “administration” were symbols used by workers in an informed way to share a cluster of meanings about workers. The “building situation” was related to “types of people” as it further “reinforce and accentuate the chasm between the ‘types of people’”(p. 226). Finally, such use of symbols was purposeful also because they were used to describe social and symbolic tensions as understood by local members; such local notion of tension had been constructed through purposeful use of the system of symbols and implied distinctive social consequences. Specifically the perceived tension existed “within a code of personhood, within the ‘buildings’ code, within the code of ‘communication problems’ and finally between codes of division and unit, ‘the product’” (p. 229). The intended results were identified as social consequences through such perceived tension, which includes

Enacting social stratifications and degree of alienation, one from another; workers speak of work locations as supporting classes of individuals, each ‘very different’ from the others; and workers experience both stratification and unity, and their symbol systems is used (p. 229).

To summarize, Carbaugh’s (1988) case study in the TV station confirms that social actors’ use of codes reflects local notions of what a proper person can and should speak to

regulate and influence others' communicative behavior. In this case this is done through distinctive ways describing the "types of people". In addition, use of symbols was strategic and purposeful as the symbols have been systematically connected to each other; such connection can be detected through the fact that some codes consistently evoke other codes. Finally, such strategic use of codes imply shared social consequences intended by social actors who were using them, as described in the above quote, to reinforce the local notion of personhood and society.

Baxter (1993) discussed the ways that faculty and administrative staff members within an educational institution deployed distinctive ways of speaking about their work, either "talking things through" or "putting things in writing." Specifically, the symbolic reference to "talking things through" represented a code of "collegiality" while reference to "putting things in writing" symbolized a code of "professional management". Use of either code can be considered as rhetoric in nature first because they each served to define two distinctive types of succinct notion of personhood and social relation; because of this, the college was divided into two distinctive communities, each embodied with one code. For example, code of "professional management" regarded people as "members of category groups (e.g., professionals, females, etc.)" while code of "collegiality" regarded people as unique individual who needs "informal, face-to-face talk" (p. 318). Consequently, for social actors sharing code of "professional management", the shared notion of proper social relation should uphold the value of social distance based on power distribution; while for social actors sharing code of "collegiality", the shared notion of proper social relation should emphasize on "minimized social distance between persons who have equal power" (p. 320). Secondly and similar to Carbaugh's (1988) case study within a TV station, Baxter's (1993)

study also confirms that social actors use codes strategically to regulate and influence others' communicative conduct. For example, "collegiality" code community members used two metaphors, the "U.S. Constitution," and "IRS Code" to refer to the differences between the governance documents as desired by either sides, in that the U.S. metaphor "evoked meanings of democracy and egalitarianism" while "the IRS Code" metaphor evoked images of bureaucracy...and a system that worked against the 'common man[sic]' to the advantage of the few" (p. 321). Interestingly enough, Baxter (1993) also discovered that social actors may use the same word to refer to different meanings. For example, both faculty members and administration used the word, "professional". But to faculty members, the value of being "professional" rests in the ability to make individualized choices; for administration, however, the value of being "professional" emphasized the boundary within which individual should be restricted out of personal discretion. Finally, members of either community are aware of the competing code and respond to the competing code by producing "negative dispositional attributes" (p. 324) and "discursive assertions and counter-assertions that proclaimed the superiority of their own governance model" (p. 324). Articulation of such assertions and counter-assertions, together with the opinionated accounts of either "talking things through" or "putting things in writing", serve as evidence to show the use of both codes has been strategic and purposeful to defend distinctive local notion of personhood and society, which in this case, were embodied by "collegiality" or "professional management".

Covarrubias (2005), in her study conducted in a Mexican organization, discussed how pronominal use may indicate organizational member's status and relationship with others. Specifically, Covarrubias argued that within the Mexican organization where she conducted

the field investigation, the code of *Respeto* and the code of *Confianza*, which related to the two pronouns *Tu* and *Usted*, were used both interdependently and oppositionally to indicate social actors' identity and how they chose to associate with one another. Covarrubias' study reveals how social actors make sense of the world they collectively live in and how social actors define their relationships with one other through strategic use of the code of *Respeto* and the code of *Confianza* as they implicate distinctive, unspoken rules regulating communicative conduct. Specifically, the code of *Respeto* stands for "a network of communicative strategies for categorizing humans into levels and for demarcating social gradation to organize them unequally" (p. 93). The code of *Confianza*, on the other hand, can be viewed as "a communicative resource for leveling hierarchical social structures by establishing relational linkages that minimize relational gradation" (p. 100). Through close study of how these two codes may function both interdependently and oppositionally through pronominal use, Covarrubias (2005) argues that individuals can and do use contrapositional codes artfully and powerfully. One quick example is that women were observed who "strategically inverted the hierarchical pyramid by rejecting the available Code of *Confianza*...in order to constrain a superior's "potential sexual advances" (p. 103) while on other occasions, "interlocutors deliberately select the Code of *Confianza* over the Code of *Respeto* to frame equal-to-equal relational alignments" (p. 103) Such rejection and preference of codes was strategic and purposeful first rest in the fact that such informed ways of speaking was understood and shared by members within the organization; secondly, such rejection and preference reflect distinctive rhetoric also because they were constructed for intended social consequences: in this case cooperation and social harmony within the organization.

As introduced in chapter four, my research identified two types of relationship among the speech codes, exclusion and combination; they each may be seen as examples of how social actors use speech codes strategically achieve distinctive social consequences. Such consequences may include strategic influence and regulation over others' communicative conduct through evaluative comments on a competing code, or specific outcomes situated in the context. The following section presents evidence from interview excerpts, grouped as either examples of exclusion or combination of codes, to demonstrate such intended consequences. Discussion will focus on how those evidences may demonstrate respondents' notions of right and effective ways to guide and influence others through communication.

Exclusion of speech codes

The code of normalcy and the code of national pride are mutually exclusive from each other; that is to say, social actors who use premises associated with the code of national pride would never switch to premises associated with the code of normalcy, and vice versa. This can be demonstrated through the following paired examples where social actors describing very similar speech act, Chinese people speaking English with other Chinese people. In the first example, the speaker provided negative evaluative comments in reference to a competing code. In the second example, the speaker described the same occasion following a single code, without reference to the competing code. In both examples, code of national pride and code of normalcy has been used to the exclusion to each other. I will explain how such exclusion has been strategic and purposeful.

Informant one, who used the code of national pride, explained how he understood the practice of Chinese people speaking English with other Chinese people as “bragging”:

[Chinese native speaker, interviewed in English, works in China]

0001: I don't know...in some way it's just such profound inside feeling ...because showing off might be described as "I've ever received higher educational level than you. I was well educated; that's why I got promoted; I got higher rank than you; I don't know how to express that. Sometimes I just don't like that. In China what happen...very...very deep the racial of that rich...I don't know how to say that. Perhaps we do not have so many middle class in China. So that's why people hates someone if you are showing off and it's much easier for them to think that you are showing off .

In this excerpt informant one used the code of national pride, while explicitly rejecting the code of normalcy. This was done through rejection of the premise associated with the code of normalcy that links higher education level or organizational rank to English proficiency. Such rejection can be seen in expressions negatively describing the communicative conduct itself, such as "bragging," or "showing off," as well as in descriptions of other people's emotional reactions to such conduct, such as "hate" (0001). Use of such expressions reflected what informant one considered to be "right" behavior. He rejected the values of hierarchy and social gradation based on English proficiency implicit in the premise linking English proficiency to higher educational background or organizational ranking. His own speech upheld equality and the premise that a proper person within society should be concerned with equality. Such differences between notions of society were evident in his speech; he rejected the premises associated with the code of normalcy by repeatedly expressing his disapproval: "I just don't like that," "people hate someone if you are showing off" (0001). Such negative evaluative comments are similar to the "negative dispositional attributes" discovered through Baxter's (1993) study between faculty members and administration. Based on this analysis, the intended results this informant expected to produce through his speech is clear. for one, articulation of such evaluative comments was to make it known that English proficiency should not determine

social structure; in this sense, purpose of such articulation may be similar to purpose of referring to “types of people” in Carbaugh’s (1988) study, which is “to command a specific system of communicative codes, to share a cluster of symbols and meanings” (p. 221), with other social actors who also share code of national pride. Secondly, such negative evaluative comments were articulated in an informed way to defend the superiority of the local notion of personhood and society, which according to informant one embodies equality and has nothing to do with English proficiency.

The second example describes similar speech act without reference to the competing code. This is another way to use code exclusively to achieve intended, distinctive social consequences. In this example, informant sixteen, who used the code of normalcy, described similar occasion in a way that implies very different local notion of what a proper person can do and should do in a similar situation.

[Chinese native speaker, interviewed in English, works in China]

0016: Yeah, and also as I said example, like uh, you know each company will have several like “阿姨 (Chinese for janitor)” like uh what we call the cleaner, right?

L: Um hm.

0016: To clean the environment, clean the desk and uh you know sometimes we are, for example, he didn’t make my desk clean or something was missing or stolen and then we talk about something or even something uh we don’t want her to know and then we talk about in English so, it seems like we are doing other things.

L: Ok. But let me clarify, in situations like that it, it’s actually you using English with your Chinese colleagues?

0016: And my Chinese colleagues can reply with me in English or in Chinese or blended.

L: Oh, I see. How, how do you generally react to such blended language situation?

0016: Well, that depends on, sometimes I blend it back or sometimes I just say English and sometimes I use Chinese. That depends on how secret it is and how much things I don’t want other people to know.

L: I see. And how, how would other individual react to such blended language?

0016: Well, some people are trying to hear about that, some people just don't think they're related to them so they don't care.

Here two premises associated with such mixed usage can be summarized, with the first premise dealing with rationale of such mixed use and the second dealing with the proper reaction from other Chinese people:

- 1) One speaks English in front of other Chinese people to withhold information.
- 2) Speaking mixed English or English with other Chinese people is well received.

A few minutes ago the same informant had just finished arguing that Chinese people should speak English and use an English name out of courtesy towards foreign colleagues. Such an argument seems to contradict the first premise summarized here, unless the informant understands foreign colleagues and the janitor as fundamentally two different types of people who therefore deserve differentiated treatment, which shows characteristics of the code of normalcy. Instead of offering a cluster of negative comments about premises associated with the competing code, code of national pride, informant sixteen's speech included a rationalization for speaking English with other Chinese people: she spoke English in front of the janitor in order to express concerns to other Chinese colleagues because "[she] didn't make my desk clean" or "something was missing or stolen" (0016). To withhold information from the janitor, or concealment of information seems to be the intended social consequence here. Rationalization or legitimization of such concealment through language mixing was based on the premise associated with code of normalcy, which links English proficiency to social hierarchy and social gradation. Based on this premise, informant twelve assumed that the janitor doesn't speak any English due to her perceived

low organizational status; also based on this premise, informant twelve strategically used mixed languages, both English and Chinese in front of the janitor to achieve the concealment and enact her notion of social gradation based on English proficiency.

Informant sixteen also provided an account of others' reaction to such mixed use of English and Chinese. What is worth noticing here is that the reaction from the janitor was not included as all; while reactions from other Chinese colleagues being either "trying to hear about it" or "just don't think they're related to them so they don't care" (0016). When being invited to provide her own reaction when other people used blended languages, she replied: "I blend it back or sometimes I just say English and sometimes I use Chinese; that depends on how secret it is and how much things I don't want other people to know" (0016). A second premise can be summarized from such description that speaking mixed English or English with other Chinese people is well received, which reflects informant sixteen's notion of social gradation based on English proficiency and her perceived reality where such notion has been shared within the organization she works at. That is to say, informant sixteen's notion of society endorsed her judgment of what is right or wrong, and how people should be treated or react to a situation involving language mixing; such proper treatment or reaction can be summarized into three categories. The first category was the reaction of the janitor, which was intentionally left out. The second category was the reaction from other Chinese colleagues, which was either "trying to hear about it" or "don't care" (0012). The third category concerned her own reaction, which depended on "how much things I don't want other people to know" (0016). This reaction confirms the intended social consequences identified earlier of such blended use of language, which is concealment of information. Such judgment of right or wrong, was reflected through her casual tone describing (or

excluding) the three types of reactions. In this account, informant sixteen did not mention any premise associated with competing codes; however her casual tone describing the situation, which indicates that she did not expect any negative reaction from either the janitor or other Chinese colleagues, in a way enhances the superiority of her notion of social gradation; therefore, the causal tone describing (or excluding) reaction from janitor and other Chinese colleagues has been purposeful to reinforce the notion of social gradation as informant twelve understands it.

To summarize, exclusion of speech codes detected from this study can be demonstrated through either negative evaluative comments about the competing code or exclusive use of a single code without referring to the competing code. Both examples show how social actors use ways of speaking purposefully to reflect the nature of society, or the nature of persons as subjects know it. In doing so, speakers effectively expressed their notions of what is right, or what is moral and desirable. Moreover, both accounts also reflect informants' evaluation, judgment and speculation about other people's reaction to the speech act in question. This shows how social actors imply the specific type of social consequences they expect to produce (in case of the second example) or desire to reinforce the superiority of their local notion of personhood or society (in case of the first example). In short, exclusion of codes between code of normalcy and code of national pride has been strategic and purposeful in nature based of such intended social consequences or desired superiorities of local notions.

Combination of codes

In chapter four I discussed how speech codes can also be combined strategically to express a particular understanding of the world. I used three pairs of examples: the code of normalcy as primary code, and the code of tool as sub-code; the code of national pride as

primary code, and the code of social capital as sub-code; and finally, the code of normalcy as primary code, with the code of social capital as sub-code. I also argued that when the codes of tool or social capital are combined with the code of national pride or the code of normalcy, they become coated with the emotional preference towards either English or Chinese that comes with the primary code and no longer remain neutral towards either language. In the next section, I present the case of the code of tool and discuss how such combination of codes can be strategic and purposeful. I compare excerpts to illustrate the strategic nature of such combinations. In the first excerpt the code of tool can be summarized as the single code. In the second excerpt, the code of tool is combined with the code of national pride and functions as a sub-code.

The first excerpt comes from an interview with informant eighteen, who seems to follow the code of tool as the only code throughout the entire interview:

[Chinese native speaker, interviewed in English, works in China]

0018: Right, yeah. There is a functional. I promise you, language, uh proficiency is beyond a functional level then there is nothing to be afraid. And so the, especially for those people who are tend to be more outgoing, so like I said before it's, many things is beyond language. The first thing, if you want yourself to be understood better, you have to be logical, which it has nothing to do with language.

L : Um hm.

0018: And if you, you are illogical, and doesn't matter whether you are speaking your chin, your native language or a foreign language, it won't hurt, it won't help if you are illogical (0018).

Two premises can be summarized from this excerpt:

- 1) The logical aspect of communication is of primary significance.
- 2) Concern over particular language variety is irrelevant.

Informant eighteen believed in the logical aspect of communication. The first premise can be confirmed through expressions like “I promise you” and “there’s nothing to be afraid [if proficiency is beyond a functional level]” (0018). The second premise is related to the first premise in that “being logical” should be “beyond language (choice)” and being logical “has nothing to do with language” (0018). Both premises reflect his notion of society in which logic should be valued above other considerations. The key for a proper person to fit into society rests on that person’s ability to produce logical arguments in order to present his or her ideas. With this, informant eighteen presented an explanation of what he believed to be the best way for one to “be understood better,” which is “to be logical” (0018). In this excerpt, a neutral attitude towards both languages was evident, which signals that the code of tool was used as a single code. It’s important to notice the expression of “having nothing to do with language” (0018). This seems to be an expression, or counter-assertion against premises encouraging emotional implications towards language choices. This counter-assertion was confirmed by a later statement that “if you are illogical, and doesn’t matter whether you are speaking your ...native language or a foreign language...it won’t help if you are illogical” (0018). Both expression serve as evidence resonating earlier analysis of exclusion of codes and defend the superiority of the notion that upholds value of logical arguments.

Compare this with an excerpt from the interview with informant one, whose narrative follows the code of national pride as the primary code and the code of tool as a sub-code:

[Chinese native speaker, interviewed in English, works in China]

L: Do you speak English with Chinese people at work?

0001: No, never. Most Chinese people reject speaking English. Especially if you are ...I mean if you are working in international companies, but more convenient we are going to use our

mother language. So English is just a tool of working language because that for people who are dealing with high technology such as simulation industry, aircrafts manufacturing (0001).

In this excerpt the word “tool” was mentioned to refer to English to stress the functional aspect of the language. It seems that the word “tool” to informant one, was equivalent to “working language,” and was something required by the specific type of job he was doing. The word “tool” was also compared with “our mother language [Chinese]”, in which case the mother language was described as “more convenient” among Chinese people. The premise behind such equation and comparison could be this:

Speaking English at work is not desirable for Chinese people as it violates Chinese people’s cultural loyalty towards Chinese language.

Evidence for this premise was found in repeated references to English as a “tool” or “working language.” Although such references still stressed the functional aspect of the language, this functional perspective was presented in an undesirable or negative way. The negative tone can be detected through expressions such as “most Chinese people reject speaking English,” and “English is just a tool” (0018). In a fundamental way this premise is different from what was seen in the previous excerpt, where the functional aspect of a language was recognized as its most significant quality. Referring to English as tool, in this sense, was strategic in nature because of two considerations of this informant. One, informant one referred to the word “tool” to enact meaning of expressions connected to it, namely “working language”. This indicates that to informant one, “tool” represented emotionless instrument one needs to accomplish tasks at work. Secondly, “tool” was used to provide contrasting metaphorical images with that of “our mother language [Chinese]”, in which case the emotionless aspect of a tool was utilized to contradict the warm, loyal

inclination towards Chinese language. In a way this reminds one with Baxter's (1993) analysis within an educational setting where social actors used two metaphors, the "U.S. Constitution," and "IRS Code" to refer to the differences between the governance documents as desired by either sides. For informant one, the above mentioned two considerations were out of expectations to speak, in an informed way, such system of symbols that connects "tool" to "working language" and contrast this system of symbols against another competing one that connects "mother language" to "convenience". Comparing these two excerpts helps reveal how informants used the code of tool strategically to present what they considered to be morally right when it comes to using English at work.

A few minutes later in the same interview, the word "tool" was repeated:

L: Do you consider speaking Chinese as part of your cultural identity?

0001: en...to most people, I think we have the purpose of, eh...different people have different purposes, so using English as a second language; some people are working for a higher degree or receive further education; for employees, especially working for MNC (multinational corporations), they have to use that just because it's kind of tool because you have to report to headquarters, at United States, or...anyway United States represent most advanced technology in this field. That's why college students' first choice to receive further education is the US, and then Europe. So. But as to employees, I think...we are just using it for the job. No other meaning. We don't mean...we don't mean...to show...en...some types of capabilities, because language is just a tool. And...that's all.

Phrases like "just a tool" and "for the job" confirm the premise that speaking English at work is undesirable for Chinese people as the speaker continued to present such use in a negative way. The functional aspect of using English was stressed through the rationalization that "[Chinese people] have to use that just because it's kind of tool...you have to report to headquarters, at United States" (0001). In other words, the code of tool can

be identified in this excerpt but it is coated with an emotional tone aligned with the primary code, the code of national pride. Instead of remaining neutral towards either language, the code of tool in this excerpt displays a negative attitude towards English, as for example when the informant later stressed again that “[English proficiency] doesn’t mean to show some types of capabilities” (0001). Explanations like this confirm that the code of tool was used by this informant as a sub-code rather than a primary code. Instead of upholding the value of producing logical argument, the primary premise detected from this excerpt is that speaking English is not desirable for Chinese people. The code of tool was used to emphasize the functional aspect of using English; however, such a functional aspect was presented as less desirable. In these two excerpts from informant one, reference to language as a “tool” is no longer neutral but rather negative.

One way to understand how the combination of codes is strategic and purposeful is to think about the reason behind the emotional coating of the sub-code. In other words, what does such combination say about informant one’s notion of what’s morally right or desirable? What kind of intended social consequences may be expected by the informant through such combination? In this particular case, the value of being functional and logical was still relevant; however the emphasis on the functional aspect of using English at work was purely out of a concern to keep one’s job. In other words, the code of tool was essential to constructing the rationale for why English needs to be spoken at work by someone who clearly rejects the cultural and emotional implications that come with the use of English. At the same time, the code of tool, originally neutral towards either English or Chinese, may potentially violate the premise associated with the primary code, the code of national pride. To informant one, the most important premise he subscribes to is that speaking English at

work is undesirable for Chinese people. A solution would be coating the sub-code, the code of tool with the emotional inclination aligned with the code of national pride. That is to say, he must describe the functional aspect of using English as the only option available to make communication work. This claim can be demonstrated through his explanations such as, “we are just using it for the job” (0001). Such explanations are different from those offered by informant eighteen, where the logical aspect of communication was valued above all. Informant one’s response used the code of tool simply to rationalize why Chinese employees use English at work. The logical, functional aspect of language choice was relevant but was used only to confirm how such language choice (of choosing English over Chinese at work) was undesirable.

With this, I argue that the emotional coating that happens to the sub-code, as described in detail in the previous chapter, is the result of the informants’ strategic concern to rationalize their language experience in a more effective way. The result informant one aimed to achieve through such emotional coating was to offer a rationale for Chinese people to speak English at work in a way that resonates with the code of national pride. Informant one attempted to defend the premise that speaking English at work is undesirable for Chinese, through the combination of codes and the emotional coating of the sub-code.

Informants use codes either alone or in combination to construct speech that reflects their notions of personhood and society. No matter which way speakers choose to frame their language experience, in most cases they do so strategically to influence or regulate others’ communicative conduct; this is done usually to achieve intended social consequences or defend superiority of their local notion of personhood or society. In the context of this study, informants exclude or combine speech codes purposefully to

demonstrate the specific result they wish to achieve in order to evaluate, judge and regulate others' behavior through communication. This discussion finally goes back to Philipsen's (1992) earlier argument that although speech is structured and patterned, such patterning is not "absolute" in that "its creator can circumvent, challenge, and revise" (p. 10) and eventually "play is brought into structure and structure is brought into play" (p. 10).

Chapter summary

In this chapter, I situated the discussion within proposition three of speech codes theory and presented excerpts from interview data to further illustrate how speech codes identified through this study reflect culturally distinctive psychology, sociology and rhetoric. Specifically, when informants describe language experience at work, they use four speech codes to demonstrate their particular notion of personhood, or personae, as reflected through distinctive sets of rules. Informants also illustrate their notion of society and how a proper person should fit into such a society through use of language. Finally, I argue that informants use speech codes purposefully to influence and regulate others' communicative conduct; this is done through exclusion and combination of speech codes to either achieve intended social consequences or defend superiority of the local notion of personhood or society. The next chapter will cover unresolved issues and future research directions.

Chapter VI Summary and Discussion

Overview

In this final chapter I restate the research questions and research methodology employed. I also summarize the results of the study and address implications for speech code theory. I close the chapter with discussion of possible future research directions.

Review of research questions

As I described in Chapters I and II, I developed and implemented the study over two years of investigations, including two field trips to China and 23 phone interviews conducted with professionals working in multinational corporations in China who are using English or Chinese as either their first or second language. Materials analyzed for this study included 120 single-spaced pages of transcribed interviews, in either English or Chinese. Informants came from a wide array of industries ranging from education, information technology, and aviation to journalism and foreign trade. They varied in age, years of expertise and organizational ranking.

The research was guided by the theoretical framework of speech codes theory (Philipsen, 1997; Philipsen, et al., 2005). In analyzing interview transcripts, I used Briggs' (1986) approach to metacommunication that situates speech events "in a particular social situation and imbue[s] them with force and meaning" (p. 2). Therefore, before I presented the speech codes identified through this study, I discussed in chapter III the social situation and historical context of the bitter-sweet sentiments shared among Chinese people in regards to use of English in China. After that, I presented the four speech codes I identified through this study in chapter IV and discussed in chapter V how the speech codes may reflect "special sets of personhood, sociology and rhetoric" (Philipsen, et al., 2005, p. 61).

Results summary

The research question that guided this study were asked in relation to informants' experience working in China while using either English or Chinese as first or second language at work. In particular, I asked:

RQ 1: What are the patterned expressions shared among informants in regards to daily experience using either English or Chinese as first or second language at work?

RQ 2: What are the premises and rules reflected through such patterned expressions interpreting language experience in daily office space?

RQ 3: What speech code(s) associated with use of English or Chinese as either first or second language at work may be suggested through the grouped premises and rules?

RQ 4: How, if at all, do the speech code(s) identified reflect unique sociology, psychology or rhetoric?

In chapter IV, I presented elements of four speech codes identified through this study about informants' interpretation of their language experience at work. I also discussed two types of relationship among the codes: exclusion and combination. In chapter V, I situated my discussion of the speech codes in proposition three of speech codes theory (Philipsen, et al., 2005), which states that "a speech code implicates a culturally distinctive psychology, sociology, and rhetoric"(p. 61). The following section presents detailed summary of each chapter.

Chapter IV

In chapter IV, my analysis of the informants' reports revealed patterned expressions associated with the use of either English or Chinese as first or second language at work. The result of my analysis connected patterned expressions to particular sets of premises and rules, which generated answers to RQs 1, 2 and 3.

Responding to RQ1, I generated expressions describing daily language experience at work that repeatedly emerged in multiple informants' interview transcripts. For example, informants one and twenty both explained that using English, their second language, at work was the only option available to them if they wished to keep their job. Such patterned expressions pointed to a shared theme that the use of English created a tension between the working language, English and informants' native language, Chinese. On the other hand, informants three, eleven, twelve and sixteen all more or less described how using English at work was fashionable, desirable and the only normal way of working in a multinational corporation. These patterned expressions pointed to another shared theme that considered the use of English to be a superior, more sophisticated and desirable state of being. I grouped those patterned expressions according to the umbrella themes and the analysis in total yielded four distinctive themes.

The next step of analysis concerned the premises and rules reflected through the grouped themes, and generated an answer to RQ 2. I addressed each theme by presenting excerpts from interview transcripts representing each one of the patterned expressions associated with the umbrella theme. In doing so, I discussed the possible premises and rules behind such expressions and revealed how the patterned expressions presented were internally connected to each other underneath the umbrella theme. For example, informant number sixteen (Chinese native speaker, interviewed in Chinese) described how use of English in multinational corporations is "the only way things should be" (0016) while informant number three (Chinese native speaker, interviewed in English) stated that "having an English name is fashionable...and English is more powerful than Chinese" (0003). Although their speech described different aspects of their daily language experience, namely, general expectations of speaking English at work or a specific decision to use an English name, their descriptions are connected to each other through one

shared premise: use of English is a more desirable, sophisticated state of being. I analyzed all major patterned expressions summarized from interview transcripts and identified four sets of themes reflecting distinctive premises or rules.

The analysis of shared premises and rules prepared me to respond to RQ 3. I identified four speech codes that emerged from the grouped themes: the code of normalcy, the code of national pride, the code of tool and the code of social capital. They each represent distinctive sets of premises and rules associated with language experience at work. In addition, I discussed two types of possible relationships among the speech codes: exclusion and combination. Specifically, the code of normalcy and the code of national pride are mutually exclusive. That is to say, among the 23 informants I interviewed, no one described his or her language experience in a way reflecting both the code of normalcy and the code of national pride. Informants using the code of normalcy would never switch to the code of national pride and vice versa. The other possible relationship among speech codes is combination. Specifically, one speech code, usually the code of normalcy or the code of national pride, would function as the primary code and either the code of tool or the code of social capital would function as sub-code. Interestingly, when the code of tool or the code of social capital was combined with the code of normalcy or the code of national pride, they lost their emotional neutrality towards either English or Chinese and were coated with the preference aligning with the primary code.

Chapter V

In chapter V I presented my response to RQ 4 and situated discussion of the four speech codes identified in this study within the context of proposition three of speech codes theory (Philipsen, et al., 2005) which states that “a speech code implicates a culturally distinctive psychology, sociology, and rhetoric” (p. 61). In particular, I discussed how the four speech codes identified

reflect culturally distinctive notions of personhood and society, as well as how such notions were strategically reflected through informants' speech.

The chapter was divided into three sections, each addressing one of the three aspects of the proposition: psychology (notions of personhood), sociology (notions of society) and rhetoric (strategic expression). Each section began with a detailed review of selected past research to offer theoretical support to my own analysis. For example, before I discussed how the speech codes identified in this study reflected distinctive notions of personhood, I cited Philipsen's (2000) case study on a public speech made by William Gerberding, then President of the University of Washington and public reaction afterwards to illustrate how rules of speaking can be summarized from informants' own speech and how observation to such rules may reveal distinctive notions of personhood on their own terms. I also included discussion of Philipsen's (1992) earlier study comparing two speech codes, the code of honor and the code of dignity from Teamsterville and Nacirema culture. that each present a distinctive ideology offering systems of "interpretive resources with which interlocutors can make sense with each other" (p. 16). Finally, Edgerly's (2011) study on public reaction to journalistic reference to Hurricane Katrina's victims as "refugees" rather than "citizens" proved to be useful to present how distinctive notions of personae can be reflected through preferring or dispreferring certain rules in speech.

I then offered my interpretation of how the speech codes identified through this study revealed distinctive notions of personhood, or personae, by presenting rules of speaking generated from informants' responses to the following prototypical interview questions:

Why do you use English at work?

Should non-native English speaker use an English name at work?

I compared informants' responses to the same interview questions to reveal different sets of rules; following the explication of these different sets of rules, I then discussed how the rules connected to different notions of personae. By analyzing responses to prototypical questions like this, I analyzed the different sets of rules, each reflecting distinctive notions of personae, or "what is a person" (Philipsen, 1992, p. 15). For example, informant number one's response reflected the following rule:

One should not speak English when there are only Chinese present.

This rule first explains how informant number one views the nature of a person. According to him, the nature of a person should be primarily defined by his or her ability to produce certain consistent moral judgments of day-to-day communicative conduct. A proper person or a proper Chinese person, to follow this notion of personhood, should know how to behave accordingly to demonstrate loyalty towards Chinese language and Chinese culture by not flaunting English proficiency in front of other Chinese people. Violation of this rule will incur criticism or unfavorable judgment, like "bragging", "not fashionable at all" and "doesn't mean a thing." I provided analysis of rules identified through other informants' responses and indicated how different rules reflected different notions of personhood in accordance with other codes identified through this study.

Following the section connecting speech codes associated with language use to distinctive notion of personae, I discussed how such speech codes also reflected distinctive notion of society. I first discussed in detail two previous studies: Philipsen's (1992) interpretation of Mayor Daley's 1971 council speech and public reaction to that speech as well as Bassett's (2010) study within the community of nanoscientists and engineers on their interpretation of the

role of science and industry in society at large. The premises revealed in both of these previous studies were reflected in local community members' own terms and revealed distinctive notions of how society is constructed and how individual social actors may find ways to fit in. For example, Mayor Daley's 1971 speech reflected the code of honor, which holds that society is generally understood to be "more important than any individual" (p. 16). Such a notion of social structure or social relations was visible in distinctive expressions of neighborhood in Mayor Daley's speech. The best way for a proper person to understand and make sense of his or her social relationships could be defined as "a neighborhood belief and preference that men do, and should, act out of self-interest in their political and economic dealings" (p. 51).

I then offered my interpretation of the distinctive notions of society, and how a proper person should fit in society, revealed in the speech codes identified through this study. I presented interview excerpts that reflected these premises in informants' responses to the above mentioned prototypical interview questions.

For example, informant number eleven's response to the question, "why do you use English?" reflected the following premises:

- 1). English proficiency is related to better career prospects
- 2). Economic growth motivates people to learn English

Collectively, the two premises explain a distinctive understanding of society as a locus on which to stage tangible economic development or progress achieved through individual efforts; the way one seeks to fit into society is to find the most practical niche to perform such effort. When it comes to English proficiency, it is understood as an important way to demonstrate the capacity to perform this socially beneficial effort. I provided analysis of premises identified

through other informants' responses and indicated how different premises reflected different notion of society in accordance with other codes identified through this study.

Finally, I discussed how informants used codes strategically to express their notions of personae and society. I began the discussion with a review of several previous studies in order to provide examples of how researchers may detect such a strategic use of speech codes. For example, I reviewed Carbaugh's (1988) study describing communicative dynamics inside a TV station in which social actors used groups of systematically connected symbols to describe their social world. In particular, organizational members used internally connected symbolic codes to refer to "types of people," "the building situation," "the communication problem" and finally "the product" to describe social relations within the organization. Carbaugh argued that use of such symbolic codes was strategic in that use of codes implied social consequences. That is to say, by sharing the system of symbols, speakers evoked and enacted the sense of "tension" within the TV station. Construction of such shared sense of "tension" may in return reinforce the local notion of personhood and society shared among workers in the organization.

I then offer my interpretation of how the speech codes identified through this study revealed a distinctive rhetoric by analyzing two types of possible relationships among speech codes, exclusion and inclusion. To support my analysis I presented excerpts from informants' interviews to the above mentioned prototypical interview questions.

For example, for the question, "why do you use English?", I contrasted responses from informant number one and informant number twelve. Informant number one employed the code of national pride while informant number twelve employed the code of normalcy. Their responses to this interview question demonstrated the exclusion of codes; that is to say, their responses showed that the code of normalcy and the code of national pride are mutually

exclusive. This exclusion is evident when informants either offered either negative evaluative comments about the competing code or exclusively used a single code without referring to the competing code. Both examples showed how social actors use ways of speaking purposefully to reflect the nature of society, or the nature of persons as subjects know it. In doing so, speakers effectively expressed their notions of what is right, or what is moral and desirable. Moreover, both accounts also reflect informants' evaluation, judgment and speculation about other people's reaction to the speech act in question. This showed how social actors imply the specific type of social consequences they expect to produce, and their desire to reinforce the superiority of their local notion of personhood or society.

I then discussed how codes can be combined strategically with each other to reflect unique notions of personhood and society. I presented the case of the code of tool and discussed how such a combination of codes can be strategic and purposeful. I discussed responses in which the code of tool was used as a single code as well as responses in which the code of tool was combined with the code of national pride and functioned as a sub-code. When the code of tool was used as a single code, the following premises can be summarized:

- 1). The logical aspect of communication is of primary significance.
- 2). Concern over particular language variety is irrelevant.

In situations like this, the code of tool reflects no emotional preference for, or rejection of either English or Chinese. When the code of tool was combined with the code of national pride, however, different premises can be summarized:

Speaking English at work is not desirable for Chinese people as it violates Chinese people's cultural loyalty towards Chinese language.

In such situations, informants referred to English as “just a tool,” and “working language.” Although such references still stressed the functional aspect of the language, this functional perspective was presented in an undesirable or negative way. The changed emotional preference in accordance with the primary code, the code of national pride, marks one important aspect of the combination of codes. I presented my interpretation of the reason behind such emotional coating in chapter V to point out that the emotional coating is the result of the informants’ strategic concern to rationalize their language experience in a more effective way.

Theoretical implications

This study first motivates the scholar to further understand the “cultural distinctiveness” in the context of speech codes theory for two reasons: one is that this case presents more than one way the term “culture” can be conceptualized. Secondly, this study presents a case that points to the possibility where speech codes can be the result of on-going changes with rich historical and cultural implications. The following part discusses each of the three implications in view of speech codes theory and discussion in chapter III on historical and cultural background of speaking English in China.

This study has significant theoretical implications for speech codes theory, all having to do with the central concept of “cultural distinctiveness.” There are three features of this study that are related to the concept of “cultural distinctiveness”: first, this case study presents more than one way to conceptualize the term “culture.” Second, this case study deals with a speech community whose members do not have direct, face-to-face relationships. Third, this case study points to the possibility that speech codes may evolve in response to on-going changes in the social context, and that these changes may have rich historical and cultural implications. The following section discusses each of these three key features and their theoretical implications for

speech codes theory, and returns to the discussion in chapter III on the historical and cultural background of speaking English in China.

More than one way to conceptualize “culture”

This dissertation presents an empirical example of two different conceptualizations of the term “culture.” Proposition three of speech codes states that the psychology, sociology and rhetoric implicated through a speech code are “culturally distinctive” (Philipsen, et al., 2005, p. 61). Culture, in the theoretical context of Speech Code Theory, is further defined as separate from “geographic, political, or social unit... [but rather] a system of symbols, meanings, premises, and rules... about many aspects of life” (p. 61). This means that use of a particular speech code reflects a complex socio-historical background. Such socio-historical background sometimes directly correlates to national cultures, sometimes correlates to such “system[s] of symbols, meanings, premises and rules” (ibid) that are shared across national boundaries.

I will use examples of the code of normalcy and the code of national pride to illustrate both definitions of “culture,” the one bounded by national borders and the other bounded by a shared system of symbols, meanings, premises, and rules. Specifically, informants in my study who adhered to the code of normalcy shared a system of symbols, meanings, premises and rules that transcended national boundaries. Informants of different nationality shared the same premises associated with the use of English. On the other hand, informants adhering to the code of national pride shared another system of meanings and premises that directly correlated to their native national culture, the Chinese culture, and was, in this sense, bounded by the concept of the Chinese nation.

To begin with, the code of national pride seems to be exclusively reserved for informants who use Chinese as their native language. The reason for this is obvious: the code of national pride assumes strong emotional affiliation to Chinese language and considers use of English to be in conflict with Chinese people's cultural loyalty to their native language. As discussed in detail in chapter III, since the late 1600's when the first fleet from Great Britain arrived at the port of Macao, China, the spread of English in China has always been associated with mixed social sentiment; support or discouragement towards learning English has been closely associated with socio-political considerations. On one hand, the spread of English suggested opportunities to catch up with Western ideology and advanced technological development; on the other hand, the spread of English also implied betrayal of Chinese culture and language. In some extreme cases, when *compradores* moved into houses built and furnished following Western style, dressed in Western style clothing, and spoke English with their foreign bosses, they were viewed as traitors within the Chinese community and were described in negative ways in literary works (Chen, 1992). Such mixed social sentiments are reflected through the code of national pride. Informants who subscribed to the code of national pride usually described their experience using English at work with frustration. They had to use English because this is the way things are. They would also describe their experience using English at work as stressful and pressured, and they expressed the hope that someday they could have Chinese spoken instead. Overall, the code of national pride was immediately connected to the socio-historical context of the spread of English in China. Note that the "culture" mentioned here specifically refers to national culture.

The code of normalcy, on the other hand, reflected the premise that English should be spoken, and that it is normal to consider English superior to Chinese. Adherence to the code of normalcy may be rooted within different historical or social backgrounds, of course. As discussed in chapter I, organizational communication literature suggests that foreign expatriate managers or corporations involved in international business have for decades shared the understanding that it is common practice to let their local partners adopt English. For foreign expatriate managers, their choice of the code of normalcy may reflect such a lasting tradition. For local Chinese employees, on the other hand, their choice of the code of normalcy may suggest what Apple (1986) described as an everyday discourse, in which the decision of what things should be done generally follows “common sense needs and desires” (p. 639). In other words, for local Chinese employees, their choice of the code of normalcy may reflect their social understanding or sentiments that Western culture and ideology usually represent a more advanced state of being. Nonetheless, such shared use of the code of normalcy is one prominent example where a shared speech code is used to make sense of individuals’ social worlds in a multilingual environment. Identification of the code of normalcy also suggests the cultural distinctiveness of speech codes, but the “culture” here does not necessarily refer to national culture but rather to shared sets of premises or rules. Speech codes theory postulates that culture is not defined according to geographic location or political institutions, but rather in accordance with use of specific speech codes, and subscription to certain premises or observance of certain rules (Philipsen et al., 2005). Such shared use across different native language backgrounds is observed for the code of tool and the code of social capital as well.

Informant number eleven (Chinese native language, interviewed in English, worked in Beijing, China) talked in detail of reasons why Chinese people learn English:

...

L: How would you describe their motivation learning English?

0011: Um, they, like I said they want to find a better job, um they, they, they need English for um, career reasons I think. I think China, um, even back ten years ago was ex...um, expanding um...its economy at, uh at great speed. So there were a lot of opportunities for people who could speak English. Um, and these people, they felt a need to improve their English so they could look for a better job, they could um, get promoted at their present job or they could quit their job and go find a better one, they, I think a lot of people back then, um...I think especially for people who work in the um international company, they get paid a lot better than people who work in uh Chinese company. And then among the Chinese companies, if they do any international business they get paid a lot better than just people who do the, just companies that do domestic business. So speaking, being able to, being able to speak English means being able to find a job that deals with international companies or um or companies that do international business and that, that means you get better paid and uh um have a um wider choice when you go look for a job. Also there are not, not many, but there are a few students who were thinking about going to some European country or um other English speaking countries um for various reasons so they want to improve their English before they leave China for their destination country, but those are definitely minority. There, the majority of students are people who are looking for a better job.

...

“Better job” (0011) and “better pay” (0011) are mentioned several times in this excerpt to construct the rationale for learning English. Most of my informants who shared the code of normalcy shared similar premises when it came to the use and spread of English in China. Use of the code of normalcy, in a way, reflected their shared understanding of the social world they collectively live in, even though they do not know each other in person.

Such shared understanding was confirmed through interviews with informants three, eleven, thirteen and seventeen, all Chinese nationals whose speech reflected the code of normalcy. Each expressed the clear rationale that English should be the only language option within multinational companies and that English is superior to Chinese. Informant number two was an American national while informant number six was Dutch, but both

their narratives reflected the code of tool, with the clear rationale that whichever language spoken should be determined by “who’s around the table” (0006), or in other words, the existing mix of linguistic backgrounds. Among all my informants, there was no clear tendency for a certain cultural or language background to suggest or predict subscription to a particular code.

To summarize, the “culture” discussed here refers to shared sets of premises or rules; informants may choose such rules and premises based on their particular socio-historical background, but this choice is not always absolutely predicted by their socio-historical background. Although there was a general trend that informants of Chinese national origin would share the code of national pride, the code of normalcy was employed by informants with mixed socio-historical backgrounds. Whether speech codes are used exclusively by one native language group, shared across different native language groups, or combined with one another, in all cases they are used to reflect the specific set of shared meanings, premises and rules.

On the whole, this research case presents valid data to confirm that multiple ways through which the term “culture” can be conceptualized; moreover, speech codes theory may allow co-existence or switch among those different ways conceptualizing “culture” as a term to produce more accurate and comprehensive interpretation of data collected. This finding may inspire future scholars to examine field data from multiple perspectives by conceptualizing the term, “culture” in more than one ways. In a given situation, “culture” can be conceptualized as national culture while in other situation, “culture” may refer to shared premise and rules.

A speech community without face-to-face interaction

Speech codes identified in this study are also culturally distinctive in that when speakers invoked certain codes and shared communicative acts, they both revealed and constructed a speech community in which social actors did not have face-to-face interaction with one another. In my research, interviewees worked for different companies in different cities, but because they shared the same premises and rules associated with the use of English at work, they also shared membership in a distinctive speech community. This cluster of speaker confirmed the central notion in speech code theory that adherence to a particular speech code, among the cluster of multiple codes, can be distinctive.

Most of the previous speech code research reviewed above, while confirming that speech codes reflect distinctive views of personhood, sociology and rhetoric, explored only speech communities where social actors had the opportunity for face-to-face interaction (Carbaugh, 1988; Baxter, 1993; Covarrubias, 2005). Others explored speech communities that interacted through mass media and were bound by mass media or other non-face-to-face encounters (Coutu, 2000; Edgerly, 2011).

Most of this cited research, however, look at speech community in which one primary language, English, was shared as the native language. My study looked at a multi-lingual environment. Speakers may have Chinese, English or any other language as their native language. Clusters of speaker can be visualized as follows:

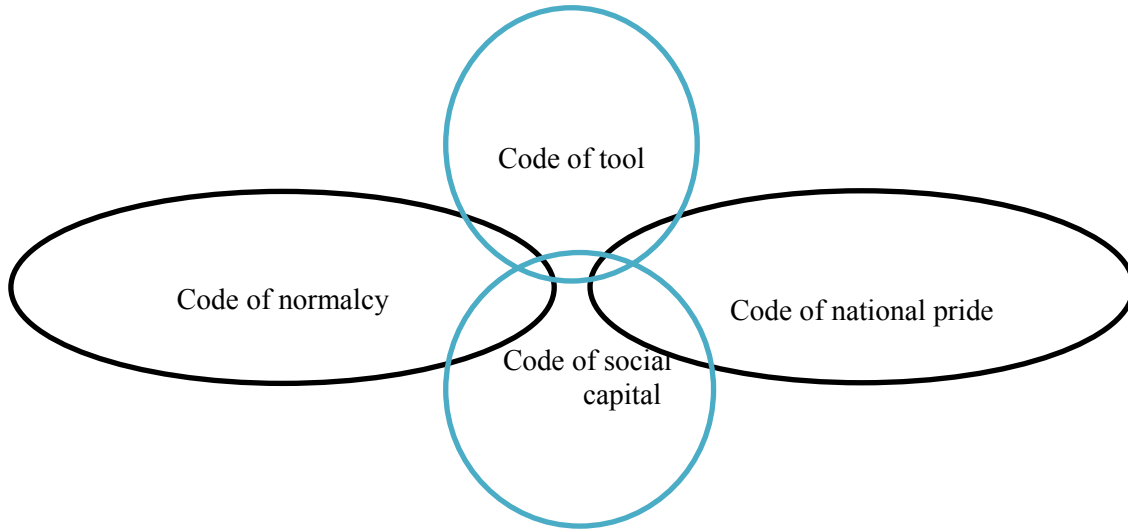


Figure 1. Repertoires of speech codes associated to interpretation of use of English at work

This complicated set up promotes scholars to further consider where the boundaries of a speech community really are, or what constitute a speech community within a multi-lingual environment like this, where face-to-face interaction among speakers are close to none but at the same time, their shared premises or rules can be detected through their speech. Scholars have explored speech communities bounded by means other than face-to-face interactions across different language groups before. Manchin and Van Leeuwen (2007), in their five year study on language and global communication carried out at Cardiff University's Center for Language and Communication, borrowed the concept of speech community (Hymes, 1972) to make sense of individuals' identity construction and negotiation in the globalized community. They extended the concept of speech community to a much larger scenario, including non-linguistic modes of communication. They argued that international readership of top fashion magazines, like *Cosmopolitan*, formed an interpretive community in which "they share an involvement with the same modalities and genres of linguistic and non-linguistic communication, and the same constructions of

reality” (p. 50). Through textual analysis of magazine content, examination of visual representations as well as interviews with individual readers, Machin and Van Leeuwen argued that readers of top fashion magazines constituted an international community, whose members do not engage in face-to-face interaction with one another. This community of readers, they claim, have constructed an internationally shared sisterhood of a “fun, fearless female” identity, epitomized by the figure of a childless woman on her own in a world with unreliable partners, competitive colleagues and difficult relationships.

Machin and Van Leeuwen’s (2007) study, however, presented only one speech community where only one version or understanding of reality was shared. My study, on the other hand, shows clusters of speakers that are at times exclusive from each other, and at other times overlap with one another. Do they belong to the same speech community, or do they belong to only one of the several speech communities that sometimes overlap with one other, while sometimes exclusive from one other?

The formulation of speech community as a concept has long taken into consideration multi-lingual environments. One of the early leading figures in the research cluster, Gumperz (Murray, 1993) began his research career using English as his second language. Other early scholars have also looked at multi-lingual speech communities, but the research attention has been focused on “language variation” (DeCamp, 1971, p. 30) or behavioral level characteristics (Morgan, 1988). In other words, the term speech community was originally defined with deep concern for pre-structured rules and interpretations of communicative conduct, but past research has been solely focused on the behavioral, observable, socio-linguistics level of evidence rather than exploring the indigenous interpretation of communicative conduct shared by community members. Hymes (1972)

defined speech community as a “community sharing rules for the conduct and interpretation of speech, and rules for the interpretation of at least one linguistic variety. Both conditions are necessary” (p. 55). Following Hymes’ line of argument, which respects “conduct and interpretation of speech”, there was a paradigm shift from the concept of homogeneous speech communities to the concept of repertoires of speech; a speech community was considered to generally include people with overlapping repertoires. More recent studies defined “speech community” as a “social unit that forms the starting point of the ethnographic study of communication in a given case” (Philipsen, et al., 2005, p. 367).

To relate my research findings to the above mentioned discussion, in the context of speech codes theory, can we distinguish each of these clusters of speakers as individual speech communities, or should we consider all of these clusters collectively belong to one speech community? In either case, exclusion and overlapping detected through this study points to future research directions where scholars may revisit Hyme’s (1972) “repertoires of speech” with focus on “conduct and interpretation of speech” as well as full respect to “indigenous interpretations.”.

Speech codes are not bound by national cultures

This study also presents a case that demonstrates the possibility that speech codes may evolve in response to on-going social changes with rich historical and cultural implications. As discussed in chapter III, the use and spread of English in China has always been associated with bitter-sweet sentiments. When *compradores* moved into Western-style houses, assumed a Western pragmatic value system and spoke English, they were usually viewed as betraying their traditional Chinese cultural origin and depicted in rather negative ways in literary works (Chen, 1992). On the other hand, foreign executives are often

reluctant to learn the local language, which in its own way presents clear emotional preferences over language choices. If such attitudes or beliefs about the use of language were patterned and absolute, we could almost predict that most informants coming from non-Chinese native background would use the code of normalcy while all native-Chinese speakers would use the code of national pride. Based on the findings, however, among the group of informants I studied, both Chinese and non-Chinese informants used the code of normalcy. Informants three, eleven, twelve and sixteen are Chinese nationals and use the code of normalcy to describe their language experience at work. Informants one and twenty are Chinese nationals and use the code of national pride to describe their language experience at work. For the informants I studied, therefore, it is unclear if native language or national cultural background can be used to predict whether informants may use or reject certain code. This provides an alternative account to existing literature and shows that use of speech codes is flexible and responsive to historical changes, rather than rigid or fixed.

To continue with the seemingly irregular pattern, the discovery of the code of tool, a speech code that sits between the code of normalcy and the code of national pride by remaining neutral towards both languages, offers evidence to support the argument that speech codes, while structured, do not follow an absolutely patterned use. I use the code of tool as an example here for two reasons. To begin with, when a Chinese informant adheres to the code of tool either as a primary or sub-code, such adherence may have historical and cultural implications. Historically, there are very few examples, at least in research literature, in which native-Chinese speakers exhibit an inclination for a middle ground concerning the use of English; that is to say, it seems that native-Chinese speakers have only been documented as either loving or hating the use of English. Secondly, when a foreign

informant adheres to the code of tool, such adherence suggests an alternative account deviating from classic organizational research literature as well, since existing literature indicates that foreign expatriate managers usually adopt the decades-long tradition of expecting their local counterparts to adopt English (Galbraith, 1975; Fishman, 1990).

Informants with either English or Chinese language background were observed using the code of tool to make sense of their language experience at work. The code of tool reflects a change of attitude towards English language in that assumption of Western values, such as a functional approach or pragmatism, may not necessarily be seen as betraying traditional Chinese culture and value. Informant number eighteen, for example, who is of Chinese cultural origin, repeatedly talked about how being “logical” (0018) should be the most important factor in determining which language to speak.

It might have taken a long time for the code of tool to develop since the spread of English in China has always been blended with political and cultural considerations, as discussed in chapter three. For a long time Chinese people have been seen as categorized into two distinctive groups when it comes to use of English: love it or hate it. A middle ground is hard to imagine and difficult to realize in practice. The code of tool offers speakers the chance to subscribe to Western values, like pragmatism, without rejecting traditional Chinese culture and language.

Limitations

This study has several limitations. Most of the interviews were conducted through conference calls without face-to-face interaction. For interviews conducted through video conference or face-to-face interactions, I was able to create a limited account to document the contextual and non-verbal cues that occurred during the interview. A study that could include a full analysis of

informants' non-verbal cues in response to interview questions, in this sense, would complement the present study well.

Secondly, the informants recruited for this study came from different organizations, working in different industries and in different Chinese cities. While such wide recruitment may potentially be more representative of the overall speech community bounded by the shared premises associated to use of English in China, it would be nonetheless useful to study one organization exclusively to further solidify the findings. The practical implication of a study like this are obvious: through field investigation within a single organizational setting, a scholar would potentially be able to detect the four speech codes summarized in this study and also analyze the impact of using such codes on organizational culture and organizational effectiveness.

Finally, the present study used intensive interviews as the primary method to collect data; because of the nature of the research, I let the informants choose the language they wished to use during the interview. This had two potential impacts on the data collected. For one, the interview is not generally considered a traditional speech act in China. The word, "interview", can be roughly translated in several ways. The first is "访谈 (fang tan)", which means journalistic account of purposeful conversation with someone under the spot light. The second is "面试 (mian shi)", which means formal conversation between potential employer and job candidates facilitating the hiring decision making process. The last one is "接见 (jie jian)", which means formal reception to important visitors. For all three ways of interpreting the act of the interview, some elements were common and consistent: the speech act happened in a formal or semi-formal setting; it had a clear purpose; informants were expected to come up with independent responses, including clearly expressed judgment on a given issue. This explains why culturally most

Chinese people may not feel comfortable about the interview as a speech act; such resistance may negatively influence the reliability of data collection in that informants may be motivated to create socially desirable responses to interview questions that deviate from what they truly think or believe. Participant observation, if the researcher could gain access to an organization, would provide an excellent complement to interview data, as it may confirm or disconfirm the speech codes identified through this study in an authentic organizational setting.

Future research

In addition to the study of an authentic organization in which both interviews and field observation can be employed as primary research methods, there are several possible directions for future research on the speech codes of language use.

The first possible direction is to further connect speech codes associated with language use to an understanding of organizational culture or organizational effectiveness in the global work space. As discussed in the beginning of chapter I, much of the current study was motivated by Andrew Ross's (2007) ethnographic account published in his book, *Fast Boat to China*, in which the low level of organizational loyalty among local Chinese employees in multinational corporations was documented and discussed. Literature (Tung, 1987; 1988) also indicated a high level of failure rate among expatriated managers returning from their overseas assignment in China, ranging from reported financial stress, disrupted operation to early return from the overseas post. There is a great deal of research still to be done in order to better understand the reasons for the co-existence of both phenomena. Is communication part of the solution? Is the "English only" language policy doing more harm than good within these organizations? In a larger sense, how should organizational members collectively come up with a language solution that may eventually produce harmony and cooperation? The present study collected evidence to

show that speakers do employ different codes to reflect culturally distinctive notions of personhood and society. It is left to future research to take one step further to explore how such distinctive speech codes may be used to create harmony and cooperation.

The present study also suggests the use of speech codes as an analytical tool in conflict-producing events, particularly within a multi-lingual environment where participants do not immediately agree with each other on basic cultural premises. Anecdotal accounts documented in this study has also suggested the potential for discovery in this area. Informant number nine, for instance, discussed a situation where an agricultural engineer works with local Chinese farmers and they don't agree with each other on the meaning behind the general term, "irrigation":

[Dutch native language, interviewed in English, works in Kunming, China]

The way of farming in China and in Holland is very different. Um, so we for example we used to do irrigation every, every day we do irrigation, but in, in China, the farmers they will, they don't, don't do irrigation, they will depend on the rain, uh on the rain, the natural rain which will fall. And of course for us, that's not acceptable because we want to control, uh, the irrigation (0009).

In this specific account, informant number nine explained that his way of dealing with this conflict was to use Chinese as the Chinese language may potentially bring greater social support, which shows employment of code of social capital. It is left unclear, however, whether the use of other speech codes may impact a similar conflict-producing event in either positive or negative ways. For instance, would speakers using the code of national pride naturally resist talking with speakers using the code of normalcy, and vice versa? Studies in this area may produce useful insights guiding not only scholars but also human resource professionals and intercultural management consultants.

Finally, this study may encourage scholars to approach the presence of multiple natural languages as potential benefits rather than barrier that hinder cooperation and communication. As suggested by literature review in Chapter I, much of the literature in the area of employee communication views the presence of multiple languages as a problem or a barrier; very few research accounts approach multiple languages as potential strategic tools that can be used to improve communication effectiveness. This study suggests that speakers may use speech codes strategically to reinforce and enact their notions of personhood and society; it is left to future research projects, therefore, to further reveal how the understanding of such strategic use of speech codes may be translated into improved organizational communication.

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