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The Ethnography of Communication

AN INTRODUCTION

Third Edition

Muriel Saville-Troike

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Introduction

Ethnography is a field of study which is concerned primarily with the description and analysis of culture, and linguistics is a field concerned, among other things, with the description and analysis of language codes. In spite of long-standing awareness of the interrelationship of language and culture, the descriptive and analytic products of ethnographers and linguists traditionally failed to deal with this interrelationship. Even anthropological linguists and linguistic anthropologists until the 1960s typically gave little attention to the fact that the uses of language and speech in different societies have patterns of their own which are worthy of ethnographic description, comparable to – and intersecting with – patterns in social organization and other cultural domains. The realization of this omission led Dell Hymes to call for an approach which would deal with aspects of communication which were escaping both anthropology and linguistics.

With the publication of his essay "The ethnography of speaking" in 1962, Hymes launched a new synthesizing discipline which focuses on the patterning of communicative behavior as it constitutes one of the systems of culture, as it functions within the holistic context of culture, and as it relates to patterns in other component systems. The *ethnography of communication*, as the field has come to be known since the publication of a volume of the *American Anthropologist* with this title (Gumperz and Hymes 1964), has in its development drawn heavily upon (and mutually influenced) sociological concern with interactional analysis and role identity, the study of performance by anthropologically oriented folklorists, and the work of natural-language philosophers. In combining these various threads of interest and theoretical orientation, the ethnography of communication has become an emergent discipline, addressing a largely new order of information in the structuring of communicative behavior and its role in the conduct of social life.

As with any science, the ethnography of communication has two foci: particularistic and generalizing. On the one hand, it is directed at the description and understanding of communicative behavior in specific cultural

settings, but it is also directed toward the formulation of concepts and theories upon which to build a global metatheory of human communication. Its basic approach does not involve a list of facts to be learned so much as questions to be asked, and means for finding out answers. In order to attain the goal of understanding both the particular and the general, a broad range of data from a large variety of communities is needed.

A major early contribution to the field included an outline of information to be collected in doing ethnographies of communication, by Dell Hymes, Joel Sherzer, Regna Darnell, and others (1967), and this served as a guide for the scope and organization of the first edition of this book in 1982. Other major contributors to the development of the field have included John Gumperz, Dan Slobin, Richard Bauman, Susan Philips, Susan Ervin-Tripp, Shirley Brice Heath, and Ben Blount. Hymes's influence has been so pervasive that it is impossible to specifically credit each of the concepts and visions for which he was initially responsible, and which inform this book and the work of others in various ways.

Scope and Focus

The subject matter of the ethnography of communication is best illustrated by one of its most general questions: what does a speaker need to know to communicate appropriately within a particular speech community, and how does he or she learn to do so? Such knowledge, together with whatever skills are needed to make use of it, is *communicative competence*. The requisite knowledge includes not only rules for communication (both linguistic and sociolinguistic) and shared rules for interaction, but also the cultural rules and knowledge that are the basis for the context and content of communicative events and interaction processes. Each of these components will be further delineated in the chapters which follow.

The focus of the ethnography of communication is the *speech community*, the way communication within it is patterned and organized as systems of communicative events, and the ways in which these interact with all other systems of culture. A primary aim of this approach is to guide the collection and analysis of descriptive data about the ways in which social meaning is conveyed: "If we ask of any form of communication the simple question what is being communicated? the answer is: information from the social system" (Douglas 1971: 389). This makes the ethnography of communication a mode of inquiry which carries with it substantial content.

Among the basic products of this approach are ethnographic descriptions of ways in which speech and other channels of communication are used in diverse communities, ranging from tribal groups in Africa and the Amazon regions, to nomadic herdsmen, to highly industrialized peoples in Europe, Asia, and North America. The priority which the ethnography of communication places on modes and functions of language is a clear point of departure from the priorities announced for linguistics by Chomsky: "if we hope to understand human language and the psychological capacities on which it rests, we must first ask what it is, not how, or for what purpose it is used" (1968: 62).

Hymes repeatedly emphasizes that what language is cannot be separated from how and why it is used, and that considerations of use are often prerequisite to recognition and understanding of much of linguistic form. While recognizing the necessity to analyze the code itself and the cognitive processes of its speakers and hearers, the ethnography of communication takes language first and foremost as a socially situated cultural form, which is indeed constitutive of much of culture itself. To accept a lesser scope for linguistic description is to risk reducing it to triviality, and to deny any possibility of understanding how language lives in the minds and on the tongues of its users.

Method

"Doing ethnography" in another culture involves first and foremost field work, including observing, asking questions, participating in group activities, and testing the validity of one's perceptions against the intuitions of natives. Research design must allow an openness to categories and modes of thought and behavior which may not have been anticipated by the investigator. The ethnographer of communication cannot even presuppose what a speech community other than his own may consider to be "language," or who or what may "speak" it: "language" for the Ojibwa includes thunder; dogs among the Navajo are said to understand Navajo; the Maori regard musical instruments as able to speak; and drums and shells are channels through which supernatural forces are believed to speak to members of the Afro-Cuban Lucumí religious cult.

Ethnography by no means requires investigating only "others": one's own speech community may be profitably studied as well. Here, however, discovering patterned behavior which operates largely unconsciously for the native investigator presents quite different problems for "objectivity." One of the best means by which to gain understanding of one's own "ways of speaking" is to compare and contrast these ways with others, a process that can reveal that many of the communicative practices assumed to be "natural" or "logical" are in fact as culturally unique and conventional as the language code itself. A valuable by-product which emerges from this process is an

essential feature of all ethnography: a deeper understanding of cultural relativism.

Complete escape from subjectivity is never possible because of our very nature as cultural animals; however, the constraints and guidelines of the methodology are intended to minimize our perceptual and analytical biases. The tradition of participant-observation is still basic for all ethnography, but it may be augmented by a variety of other data collection and validation procedures depending on the focus of investigation and the relation of the investigator to the speech community being studied.

Historical Background

Ethnographic study has been at the core of anthropology virtually since its inception, both in Britain and America. The American tradition, begun by Franz Boas and Alfred Kroeber, tended toward a somewhat static presentation of cultural patterns and artifacts which was sometimes criticized as the "trait list approach." The British tradition, which came to be called "functionalist," was developed along two rather different orientations by A. R. Radcliffe-Brown and Bronislaw Malinowski, both of which strongly influenced American anthropology. The British tradition, especially following Malinowski, was much concerned with the social and cultural "meaning" of actions, events, objects, and laws as they functioned within the immediate or larger cultural context.

North American anthropologists, beginning with Boas, were primarily concerned with preparing ethnographic descriptions of Native American cultures before they were destroyed or assimilated by European settlers. Even before Boas, however, the Bureau of American Ethnology (BAE) under John Wesley Powell had placed a priority on describing Native American languages and collecting texts, which still serve as a major source of data for comparative studies of languages on the North American continent. Few of the linguistic descriptions from this period go beyond a sketch of the phonological system and grammatical structures (as outlined in Powell 1877; 1880; Boas 1911) and a list of vocabulary items collected according to a schedule distributed by the BAE (e.g., see Powell 1880), but accompanying reports often include observations which are relevant to understanding patterns of communication. In his *Introduction to the Study of Indian Languages*, Powell clearly states his intent to relate the description of language to other aspects of culture:

> It has been the effort of the author to connect the study of language with the other branches of anthropology, for a language is best understood when the habits, customs, institutions, philosophy – the subject-matter of thought embodied in the language – are best known. The student of language should be a student of the people who speak the language; and to this end the book has been prepared, with many hints and suggestions relating to other branches of anthropology. (1880: vi)

One of the earliest sociolinguistic descriptions I can find within this tradition was prepared by a physician, J. B. White, who described Apache greeting behavior in an unpublished manuscript from the 1870s:

> Kissing which seems to us natural [as] an expression of affection is never practised by the Apaches – and they seem to have no form of salute or of greeting – when meeting or of taking leave of each other. On one occasion the writer of this – being curious to know what kind of reception an Indian would give his wife and family after an absence from them of several months – placed himself in a position, where he could overlook (without himself being noticed) an Apache's entrance into his dwelling after a long absence. In this instance the Indian simply rode up to his little brush dwelling and dismounted. One of his wives took charge of the horse. [He] approached a fire along side of his hut where his family were collected without exchanging a word to any of them – not even to the wife who had taken the horse. There he stood motionless and speechless for some ten to fifteen minutes when at last he took a seat on the ground and engaged in ordinary conversation without having observed any form of greeting. (Cf. the more recent description of Apache greetings in Basso 1970.)

Occasionally, descriptions of traditional educational practices contained references to training in "speaking well," as in this brief mention of sociolinguistic constraints imposed on girls of the Carrier Indian tribe of Canada: "The stone labret worn by the noble maiden was a perpetual reminder to her that she should speak slowly and with deliberation" (Jenness 1929: 26). Most information on communication beyond the vocabulary lists and structural sketches of the language codes was limited to listings of kinship terms, reflecting social organization and role-relationships within the groups; ethnological dictionaries, indicating plants and animals in the environment and of importance to the culture; and accounts of language origins and attitudes toward language reflected in creation myths and other folkloristic texts.

The American tradition of descriptive linguistics in conjunction with anthropological fieldwork continued with such notable figures as Edward Sapir, and (in spite of the divergence of an "autonomous linguistics") more recently in the work of such Amerindian language scholars as Floyd Lounsbury, Mary Haas, Carl Voegelin, Paul Friedrich, and Dell Hymes.

Ethnography underwent a period of decline within anthropology during the middle years of the last century as values began to favor more "scientific"

studies of social structure and issue-oriented research. There was a resurgence of interest, however, deriving from Goodenough's cognitive reformation of the concept of culture, and in the wave of growing disenchantment with behaviorism. Observed behavior was recognized as a manifestation of a deeper set of codes and rules, and the task of ethnography was seen as the discovery and explication of the rules for contextually appropriate behavior in a community or group; in other words, culture was conceived to be what the individual needs to know to be a functional member of the community.

Concurrent with this latter development in anthropology was the introduction of interactionist and cognitive orientations in sociology by Goffman and Cicourel, which focused attention on the processes by which members of a community negotiate relations, outcomes, and meanings, and construct new realities and meanings as they do so. Hymes reports that he and others who were advancing "a social approach to language" during this period were influenced by developments in European linguistics:

> Some of us with interest in the Prague School saw its attention to a range of functions and factors (e.g. Jakobson 1960) as healthy and desirable. That was a stimulus to me, in any case, seeming to provide a basis in linguistics itself for the study of language as organized as a part of social life. (2000: 313)

The convergent interest in sociology and linguistics, and the description of language use in a social context, raised serious questions about the autonomy of linguistics and the "ideal speaker-hearer" in the "completely homogeneous speech-community" (Chomsky 1965: 3), central concepts in the dominant theoretical model of American linguistics during the 1960s. By the end of that decade, merely accounting for *what* can (and cannot) be said in a language, but not *when*, *where*, *by whom*, *to whom*, *in what manner*, and *under what particular social circumstances* it can (or cannot) be said, came to be considered inadequate as a goal for linguistics by many linguists, and by all identifying themselves as "sociolinguists."

Significance

While the goals of ethnography are at least in the first instance descriptive, and information about diverse "ways of speaking" is a legitimate contribution to knowledge in its own right, the potential significance of the ethnography of communication goes far beyond a mere cataloging of facts about communicative behavior.

For anthropology, the ethnography of communication extends understandings of cultural systems to language, at the same time relating language to social organization, role-relationships, values and beliefs, and other shared patterns of knowledge and behavior which are transmitted from generation to generation in the process of socialization/enculturation. Further, it contributes to the study of cultural maintenance and change, including acculturation phenomena in contact situations, and may provide important clues to culture history.

For psycholinguistics, the ethnography of communication means that studies of language acquisition must now not only recognize the innate capacity of children to learn to speak, but must account for how particular ways of speaking are developed in particular societies in the process of social interaction. Experimental design can no longer presume that mothers are primary caregivers in all societies, for example, nor can a researcher assume that the presence of an observer (and a tape recorder) will distort data comparably in all settings among all groups. Any study of language pathologies outside of one's own speech community must include culture-specific information on what is considered "normal" and "aberrant" performance within the other group. Claims about universal strategies and processes need to be tested against descriptive data from other cultures, and such cross-cultural research requires the openness and relativism of ethnographic methods.

For sociolinguistic research, which generally involves recording naturalistic speech in various contexts, the potential contribution of this perspective was noted by Gumperz:

> Even after the material has been recorded, it is sometimes impossible to evaluate its social significance in the absence of ethnographic knowledge about social norms governing linguistic choice in the situation recorded. (1970: 9)

Again, the qualitative information which forms an essential part of ethnographies of communication should become an important prerequisite for sampling, data collection, and interpretation in quantitative studies. Experimental design which is based only on the researcher's own cultural presuppositions has no necessary validity in a different speech community.

For the field of applied linguistics, one of the most significant contributions made by the ethnography of communication is the identification of what a second language learner must know in order to communicate appropriately in various contexts in that language, and what the sanctions may be for any violations or omissions. There are also important applications for contrasting whole communicative systems in cross-cultural interaction and translation, and for recognizing and analyzing communicative misunderstandings.

For theoretical linguistics, the ethnography of communication can make a significant contribution to the study of universals in language form and use, as well as to language-specific and comparative fields of description and

analysis. Its approach and findings are essential for the formulation of a truly adequate theory of language and linguistic competence.

Throughout this book, an attempt has been made to relate the methods and products of the ethnography of communication to the other disciplines which are concerned with the description, explanation, and application of various aspects of communication. Because the book is included in a series on sociolinguistics, particular emphasis is placed on the relationship of the ethnography of communication to other developments in this field. In particular, the position is taken here that qualitative and quantitative approaches to the study of culturally situated communication are not mutually exclusive, and that each can and should inform the other. While ethnography has tended to be identified exclusively with qualitative approaches, many practitioners today are recognizing the need to extend the boundary to include quantitative data in ethnographic descriptions. Gumperz and others have also stressed the need to look at the larger sociopolitical contexts within which culturally situated communication takes place, as these contexts may determine features of communication in ways that are not evident from a narrow focus on communicative patterns alone. An important development in ethnography and related fields has been emphasis on how sociopolitical contexts may be determined and reinforced by features of communication, as well as determinative of them.

Thus while the ethnography of communication has a unique contribution to make in terms of the questions it asks and its relativistic perspective, its contribution to the description and understanding of culturally constituted patterns of communication will be limited if its methods and findings are not integrated with other descriptive and analytical approaches. It is the nature of ethnography to be holistic in nature, and this should also characterize the disciplinary orientation of its practitioners.

A well-known fable tells of three blind men describing an elephant: to one (feeling the tail) it is like a rope; to one (feeling the side) it is flat and leathery; and to one (feeling the trunk) it is like a long rubber hose. While each perception is accurate so far as it goes individually, they fail to provide an accurate picture of the total animal because there is no holistic perspective. Such an integrative approach seems essential if we are to fulfill Hymes's call to develop an ethnographic model for the study of communication which will help us more fully to understand its role in human affairs.

Organization of the Book

Beyond this introduction, chapter 2 defines and discusses basic terms, concepts, and issues which are central to the ethnography of communication.

Chapter 3 surveys varieties of language which may constitute the communicative repertoire of a group, along with their relationship to social organization and practices, and considerations of selection and use. Chapters 4 and 5 emphasize methods for conducting research in the field: Chapter 4 focuses primarily on the description and analysis of recurrent, bounded units of communication within a single speech community, while chapter 5 extends application of descriptive and analytic procedures to longer stretches of discourse and to cross-cultural communication. Chapter 6 considers various aspects of attitudes toward communicative performance, including discussion of methods which may be used in this area of research and related considerations of language maintenance, shift, and spread. Chapter 7 on acquisition of communicative competence emphasizes the development of communicative knowledge by children and older learners in relation to socialization contexts, processes, and outcomes. Chapter 8 on politeness, power, and politics explores the interaction and reciprocal impact of these constructs with linguistic structure and use. Finally, chapter 9 provides a summary and projection.

2

Basic Terms, Concepts, and Issues

The principal concerns in the ethnography of communication, as these have been defined by Hymes and as they have emerged from the work of others, include the following topics: patterns and functions of communication, nature and definition of speech community, means of communicating, components of communicative competence, relationship of language to world view and social organization, and linguistic and social universals and inequalities.

Patterns of Communication

It has long been recognized that much of linguistic behavior is rule-governed: i.e., it follows regular patterns and constraints which can be formulated descriptively as rules (see Sapir 1994). Thus, sounds must be produced in language-specific but regular sequences if they are to be interpreted as a speaker intends; the possible order and form of words in a sentence is constrained by the rules of grammar; and even the definition of a well-formed discourse is determined by culture-specific rules of rhetoric. Hymes identifies concern for pattern as a key motivating factor in his establishment of this discipline: "My own purpose with the ethnography of speaking was . . . to show that there was patterned regularity where it had been taken to be absent, in the activity of speaking itself" (2000: 314).

Sociolinguists such as Labov (1963; 1966), Trudgill (1974), and Bailey (1976) have demonstrated that what earlier linguists had considered irregularity or "free variation" in linguistic behavior can be found to show regular and predictable statistical patterns. Sociolinguistics and the ethnography of communication are both concerned with discovering regularities in language use, but sociolinguists typically focus on variability in pronunciation and grammatical form, while ethnographers are concerned with how communicative units are organized and how they pattern in a much broader

sense of "ways of speaking," as well as with how these patterns interrelate in a systematic way with and derive meaning from other aspects of culture. Indeed, for some, pattern *is* culture: "if we conceive culture as *pattern that gives meaning to social acts and entities* . . . we can start to see precisely *how* social actors enact culture through patterned speaking and patterned action" (Du Bois 2000: 94; italics in the original).

Patterning occurs at all levels of communication: societal, group, and individual (cf. Hymes 1961). At the societal level, communication usually patterns in terms of its functions, categories of talk, and attitudes and conceptions about language and speakers. Communication also patterns according to particular roles and groups within a society, such as sex, age, social status, and occupation: e.g., a teacher has different ways of speaking from a lawyer, a doctor, or an insurance salesman. Ways of speaking also pattern according to educational level, rural or urban residence, geographic region, and other features of social organization.

Some common patterns are so regular, so predictable, that a very low information load is carried even by a long utterance or interchange, though the social meaning involved can be significant. For instance, greetings in some languages (e.g. Korean) may carry crucial information identifying speaker relationships (or attitudes toward relationships). An unmarked greeting sequence such as "Hello, how are you today? Fine, how are you?" has virtually no referential content. However, silence in response to another's greeting in this sequence would be marked communicative behavior, and would carry a very high information load for speakers of English.

Greetings in many languages are far more elaborate than in English (e.g. Arabic, Indonesian, Igbo), but even a lengthy sequence may convey very little information as long as it is unmarked. In all cases, patterned variations can be related to aspects of the social structure or value and belief systems within the respective cultures.

The potential strength of a pattern may be illustrated by the opening sequence of a telephone conversation in English (Schegloff 1968). The ring of the telephone is a summons, and the person who answers must speak first even though the caller knows the receiver has been picked up. (Many people will not pick up the telephone in the middle of a ring because they feel it is an interruption of the summons.) Even an obscene telephone caller generally waits for the person who is answering to say something before the obscenities begin. If someone picks up the telephone and does not say anything, the caller cannot proceed. He or she can either say something like "Hello, hello, anybody there?" as a second summons, or else hang up. The caller may dial back again to repeat the sequence, but not continue if there has not been an appropriate response.

The relationship of form and function is an example of communicative patterning along a different dimension. Asking someone in English if he

or she has a pen is readily recognized as a request rather than a truth-value question, for instance, because it is part of the regular structural pattern for requesting things in English; the person who answers "Yes, I do," without offering one is joking, rude, or a member of a different speech community.

Finally, communication patterns at the individual level, at the level of expression and interpretation of personality. To the extent that emotional factors such as nervousness have involuntary physiological effects on the vocal mechanism, these effects are not usually considered an intentional part of "communication" (though they may be if deliberately manipulated, as in acting). An example of a conventional expression of individual emotion (and thus part of patterned communication) is the increased use of volume in speech conveying "anger" in English. A Navajo expressing anger uses enclitics not recognized as emotion markers by speakers of other languages, and a friendly greeting on the street between Chinese speakers may have surface manifestations corresponding to anger for speakers of English. Similarly, American Indian students often interpret Anglo teachers' "normal" classroom projection level as anger and hostility, and teachers interpret students' softer level as shyness or unfriendliness. Perceptions of individuals as "voluble" or "taciturn" are also in terms of cultural norms, and even expressions of pain and stress are culturally patterned: people in an English speech community learn withdrawal or anger, in Japanese nervous laughter or giggling, and in Navajo silence.

Although I have listed societal, group, and individual levels of patterning separately, there is an invisible web of interrelationships among them, and indeed among all patterns of culture. There may very well be general themes that are related to a world view present in several aspects of culture, including language. There are societies that are more direct than others, for instance, and this will be manifested in ways of speaking as well as in belief and value systems. The notion of a hierarchy of control seems to be pervasive in several cultures, and must first be understood in order to explain certain language constraints as well as religious beliefs and social organization (see Witherspoon 1977; Thompson 1978; Watkins 1979).

The concern for pattern has always been basic in anthropology (cf. Benedict 1934; Kroeber 1935; 1944), with interpretations of underlying meaning dependent on the discovery and description of normative structure or design. More recent emphasis on processes of interactions in generating behavioral patterns extends this concern to explanation as well as description.

Communicative Functions

At a societal level, language serves many functions. Language selection often relates to political goals, functioning to create or reinforce boundaries in order to unify speakers as members of a single speech community and to exclude outsiders from intragroup communication. For example, establishing the official use of Hebrew in Israel functioned to unify at this level in building the new nation-state, while the refusal of early Spanish settlers in Mexico to teach the Castilian language to the indigenous population was exclusionary. Members of a community may also reinforce their boundaries by discouraging prospective second language learners, by holding and conveying the attitude that their language is too difficult – or inappropriate – for others to use.

Many languages are also made to serve a social identification function within a society by providing linguistic indicators which may be used to reinforce social stratification, or to maintain differential power relationships between groups. The functions which language differences in a society are assigned may also include the maintenance and manipulation of individual social relationships and networks, and various means of effecting social control. Linguistic features are often employed by people, consciously or unconsciously, to identify themselves and others, and thus serve to mark and maintain various social categories and divisions. The potential use of language to create and maintain power is part of a central topic among ethnographers of communication and other sociolinguists concerned with language-related inequities and inequalities.

At the level of individuals and groups interacting with one another, the functions of communication are directly related to the participants' purposes and needs (Hymes 1961; 1972c). These include such categories of functions as *expressive* (conveying feelings or emotions), *directive* (requesting or demanding), *referential* (true or false propositional content), *poetic* (aesthetic), *phatic* (empathy and solidarity), and *metalinguistic* (reference to language itself).

The list is similar to Searle's (1977a) classes of illocutionary acts (representatives, directives, commissives, expressives, declarations), but there are differences in perspective and scope which separate the fields of ethnography of communication and speech act theory. Among these are the latter's primary focus on form, with the speech act almost always coterminous with sentences in analysis; for ethnographers, the functional perspective has priority in description, and while function may coincide with a single grammatical sentence, it often does not, or a single sentence may serve several functions simultaneously. Further, while speech act theorists generally exclude the metaphorical and phatic uses of language from basic consideration, these constitute a major focus for ethnographic description. Phatic communication conveys a message, but has no referential meaning. The meaning is in the act of communication itself. Much of ritual interaction is included in this category, fully comprising most brief encounters, and at least serving to open and close most longer encounters (Goffman 1971). Not accounting for such functions of communication is ignoring much of language as it is actually used.

The distinction between *intent* and *effect* in function (Ervin-Tripp 1972) is comparable to the difference between *illocutionary* and *perlocutionary* acts in pragmatics (Searle 1969, 1977b). The difference between the functional intent of the speaker and the actual effect on the hearer is part of the notion of functional relativity (Hymes 1972c). Both are relevant to the description and analysis of a communicative event.

While many of the functions of language are universal, the ways in which communication operates in any one society to serve these functions is language specific. The same relative status of two speakers may be conveyed by their choice of pronominal forms in one language; in another, by the distance they stand apart or their body position while speaking; and between bilinguals, even by their choice of which language is used in addressing one another.

The social functions or practices of language provide the primary dimension for characterizing and organizing communicative processes and products in a society; without understanding why a language is being used as it is, and the consequences of such use, it is impossible to understand its meaning in the context of social interaction.

To claim primacy of function over form in analysis is not to deny or neglect the formal structures of communication; rather it is to require integration of function and form in analysis and description. Sentences and even longer strings of discourse are not to be dealt with as autonomous units, but rather as they are situated in communicative settings and patterns, and as they function in society.

Speech Community

Since the focus of the ethnography of communication is typically on the speech community, and on the way communication is patterned and organized within that unit, clearly its definition is of central importance. Many definitions have been proposed (e.g. Hudson 1980: 25–30), including such criteria as shared language use (Lyons 1970), shared rules of speaking and interpretation of speech performance (Hymes 1972c), shared attitudes and values regarding language forms and use (Labov 1972), and shared sociocultural understandings and presuppositions with regard to speech (Sherzer 1975).

Linguists are generally in agreement that a speech community cannot be exactly equated with a group of people who speak the same language, for Spanish speakers in Texas and Argentina are members of different speech communities although they share a language code, and husbands and wives within some speech communities in the South Pacific use quite distinct languages in speaking to one another. Speakers of mutually unintelligible

dialects of Chinese identify themselves as members of the same larger speech community (they do indeed share a written code, as well as many rules for appropriate use), while speakers of Spanish, Italian and Portuguese are not members of the same speech community although their languages are to some degree mutually intelligible. Questions arise in deciding if speakers of English from England and the United States (or Canada and Australia, or India and Nigeria) are members of the same speech community. How different must rules of speaking be to be significantly different? Are deaf signers and hearing interpreters members of the same speech community? Answers to such questions are based on history, politics, and group identification, rather than on purely linguistic factors. It is thus useful to distinguish between participating in a speech community and being a member of it; speaking the same language is sufficient (yet not necessary) for some degree of participation, but membership cannot be based on knowledge and skills alone.

All definitions of *community* used in the social sciences include the dimension of shared knowledge, possessions, or behaviors, derived from Latin *communitae* 'held in common,' just as the sociolinguistic criteria for speech community enumerated above all include the word 'shared.' A key question is whether our focus in initially defining communities for study should be on features of shared language form and use, shared geographical and political boundaries, shared contexts of interaction, shared attitudes and values regarding language forms, shared sociocultural understandings and presuppositions, or even shared physical characteristics (e.g., a particular skin color may be considered a requirement for membership in some communities, a hearing impairment for others). The essential criterion for "community" is that some significant dimension of experience be shared, and for "speech community" that the shared dimension be related to ways in which members of the group use, value, or interpret language.

While sociolinguistic research has often focused on the patterning of language practice within a single school, a neighborhood, a factory, or other limited segment of a population, an integrated ethnographic approach would require relating such subgroups to the social and cultural whole. There is no necessary expectation that a speech community will be linguistically homogeneous, nor that it will be a static entity which necessarily encompasses the same membership over time or situations – although degree of fluidity will depend on the nature of bounding features and attitudes concerning their permeability.

At any level of speech community selected for study, the societal functions of language will include the functions served by such bounding features, of *separating*, *unifying*, and *stratifying*. The interactional functions which are present will be dependent on the level of community studied, with a full complement of language functions and domains present only at the level

defined as including a range of role opportunities. At this more inclusive level, a speech community need not share a single language, and indeed it will not where roles are differentially assigned to monolingual speakers of different languages in a single multilingual society (e.g. speakers of Spanish and Guaraní in Paraguay, discussed in chapter 3).

An informal typology of speech communities as "soft-shelled" versus "hard-shelled" may be distinguished on the basis of the strength of the boundary that is maintained by language: the "hard-shelled" community has of course the stronger boundary, allowing minimal interaction between members and those outside, and providing maximum maintenance of language and culture.

Speech communities which primarily use one of the world languages are more likely to be "soft-shelled," because it will be known as a second language by many others, and interaction across the boundary will be relatively easy in both directions. A speech community speaking a language with more limited distribution would more likely be "hard-shelled," because relatively few outside the community learn to use it. Educated speakers learn a world language for interaction across the boundary, but this is unidirectional, with outsiders still very restricted in their internal linguistic participation. The most extreme form of a "hard-shelled" community would be one like Mongolia, where members speak a language outsiders do not know, yet few learn a world language for wider communication; another would be the Tewa-speaking San Juan pueblo in New Mexico, where outsiders are forbidden even to hear the language, and only a few insiders traditionally learn either English or Spanish.

Language often serves to maintain the separate identity of speech communities within larger communities, of which their speakers may also be members. Within the United States, for instance, Armenian continues to function in some areas as the language of home, religion, and social interaction among members of the group. Because the Armenians are bilingual and also speak English, they participate fully in the larger speech community, but because outsiders seldom learn Armenian, the language is a barrier which keeps others from participating in their internal social and religious events. A similar situation exists in Syria, where Armenians bilingual in their native language and Arabic participate in two speech communities; these remain separate entities because of the one-way boundary function the Armenian language serves. In cases where individuals and groups belong to more than one speech community, it is useful to distinguish between primary and secondary membership.

On the other hand, there is no necessary reason for a speech community to be geographically contiguous. Armenians in California and Syria may be considered members of the same speech community even if they have little interaction with one another, and (especially with widespread access to

telephones and e-mail) individuals and groups who are dispersed may maintain intensive networks of interaction. Largely because of the internet, "virtual" communities of interest have been established world-wide. Even with no face-to-face contact, patterned rules for communication have emerged and become codified.

Individuals, particularly in complex societies, may thus participate in a number of discrete or overlapping speech communities, just as they participate in a variety of social settings. Which one or ones a person orients himself or herself to at any moment – which set of rules he or she uses – is part of the strategy of communication. To understand this phenomenon, it is necessary to recognize that each member of a community has a repertoire of social identities, and each identity in a given context is associated with a number of appropriate verbal and nonverbal forms of expression. It is therefore essential to identify the social categories recognized in a community in order to determine how these are reflected linguistically, and how they define and constrain interpersonal interaction in communicative situations.

The use of the speech community as a basic social unit for study has been criticized by some because of its implicit acceptance of existing social/political boundaries and categories as legitimate entities. One alternative is a more complex model of "nested" speech communities reflecting expanding fields of individuals' interactions and networks (Kerswill 1994; Santa Ana and Parodi 1998). Another is the *discourse community*, which is a flexible grouping of individuals who share rules for "discursive practice." This construct (based on notions from Foucault, e.g. 1972)

> creates a group of compelling unspoken historic rules, which in turn determine in a certain social, economic, geographic or linguistic area what can be said, how it can be expressed, who may speak, where, and under which dominant predictions. A discursive practice oversees the distribution of knowledge and arranges certain ways of speaking into a hierarchy. (Lehtonen 2000: 41–2)

Yet another alternative is the *community of practice*, defined as "a group whose joint engagement in some activity or enterprise is sufficiently intensive to give rise over time to a repertoire of shared practices" (Eckert and McConnell-Ginet 1999: 185; see also Holmes and Meyerhoff 1999). This latter construct seems especially appropriate for the study of processes in the development of norms of interaction within dynamic groups, involving either enculturation or acculturation and sometimes lengthy periods of apprenticeship.

Of particular interest in relation to all of these constructs is how membership involves learning how to use language – the acquisition and extension of communicative competence.

Communicative Competence

Hymes (1966a) observed that speakers who could produce any and all of the grammatical sentences of a language (per Chomsky's 1965 definition of *linguistic competence*) would be institutionalized if they indiscriminately went about trying to do so without consideration of the appropriate contexts of use. *Communicative competence* involves knowing not only the language code but also what to say to whom, and how to say it appropriately in any given situation. Further, it involves the social and cultural knowledge speakers are presumed to have which enables them to use and interpret linguistic forms. Hymes (1974, 1987) augmented Chomsky's notion of linguistic competence (knowledge of systematic potential, or whether or not an utterance is a possible grammatical structure in a language) with knowledge of appropriateness (whether and to what extent something is suitable), occurrence (whether and to what extent something is done), and feasibility (whether and to what extent something is possible under particular circumstances). The concept of communicative competence (and its encompassing congener, social competence) is one of the most powerful organizing tools to emerge in the social sciences in recent years.

Communicative competence extends to both knowledge and expectation of who may or may not speak in certain settings, when to speak and when to remain silent, to whom one may speak, how one may talk to persons of different statuses and roles, what nonverbal behaviors are appropriate in various contexts, what the routines for turn-taking are in conversation, how to ask for and give information, how to request, how to offer or decline assistance or cooperation, how to give commands, how to enforce discipline, and the like – in short, everything involving the use of language and other communicative modalities in particular social settings.

Clear cross-cultural differences can and do produce conflicts or inhibit communication. For example, certain American Indian groups are accustomed to waiting several minutes in silence before responding to a question or taking a turn in conversation, while the native English speakers they may be talking to have very short time frames for responses or conversational turn-taking, and find long silences embarrassing. Conversely, Abrahams (1973) has pointed out that among African Americans conversations may involve several persons talking at the same time, a practice which would violate White middle-class rules of interaction. And as mentioned earlier, even such matters as voice level differ cross-culturally, and speaker intent may be misconstrued because of different expectation patterns for interpretation.

The concept of communicative competence must be embedded in the notion of cultural competence, or the total set of knowledge and skills which speakers bring into a situation. This view is consonant with a semiotic approach which defines culture as meaning, and views all ethnographers (not just ethnographers of communication) as dealing with symbols (e.g. Douglas 1970; Geertz 1973). The systems of culture are patterns of symbols, and language is only one of the symbolic systems in this network. Interpreting the meaning of linguistic behavior requires knowing the meaning in which it is embedded.

Ultimately all aspects of culture are relevant to communication, but those that have the most direct bearing on communicative forms and processes are the social and institutional structure, the values and attitudes held about language and ways of speaking, the network of conceptual categories which results from experiences, and the ways knowledge and skills (including language) are transmitted from one generation to the next and to new members of the group. Shared cultural knowledge is essential to explain the shared presuppositions and judgments of truth value which are the essential undergirdings of language structures, as well as of contextually appropriate usage and interpretation.

While referential meaning may be ascribed to many of the elements in the linguistic code in a static manner, situated meaning must be accounted for as an emergent and dynamic process. Interaction requires the perception, selection, and interpretation of salient features of the code used in actual communicative situations, integrating these with other cultural knowledge and skills, and implementing appropriate strategies for achieving communicative goals.

The phonology, grammar, and lexicon which are the target of traditional linguistic description constitute only a part of the elements in the code used for communication. Also included are the paralinguistic and nonverbal phenomena which have conventional meaning in each speech community, and knowledge of the full range of variants in all elements which are available for transmitting social, as well as referential, information. Ability to discriminate between those variants which serve as markers of social categories or carry other meaning and those which are insignificant, and knowledge of what the meaning of a variant is in a particular situation, are all components of communicative competence.

The verbal code may be transmitted on oral, written, or manual (signed) channels. The relative load carried on each channel depends on its functional distribution in a particular speech community, and thus they are of differential importance in the linguistic repertoire of any individual or society. Full participation in a deaf speech community requires ability to interpret language on the manual channel but not the oral, for instance; a speech community with a primarily oral tradition may not require interpretation of writing; and a speech community which relegates much information flow to the written channel will require literacy skills for full participation. Thus, the traditional linguistic description which focuses only on the oral channel

will be too narrow to account for communicative competence in most societies. Although it may cause some terminological confusion, references to *ways of speaking* and *ethnography of speaking* should be understood as usually including a much broader range of communicative behavior than merely speech.

The typical descriptive focus on oral production has tended to treat language as a unidirectional phenomenon. In considering the nature and scope of communicative competence, it is useful to distinguish between *receptive* and *productive* dimensions (Troike 1970); only shared receptive competence is necessary for successful communication. Knowledge of rules for appropriate communicative behavior entails understanding a wide range of language forms, for instance, but not necessarily the ability to produce them. Members of the same community may understand varieties of a language which differ according to the social class, region, sex, age, and occupation of the speaker, but only a few talented mimics will be able to speak them all. In multilingual speech communities, members often share receptive competence in more than one language but vary greatly in their relative ability to speak one or the other.

The following outline summarizes the broad range of shared knowledge that is involved in appropriate communication. From the ethnographer's perspective, this inventory also indicates the range of linguistic, interactional, and cultural phenomena which must ultimately be accounted for in an adequate description and explanation of communicative competence (see also Gumperz 1984; Hymes 1987; Duranti 1988).

1 Linguistic knowledge
   (a) Verbal elements
   (b) Nonverbal elements
   (c) Patterns of elements in particular speech events
   (d) Range of possible variants (in all elements and their organization)
   (e) Meaning of variants in particular situations
2 Interaction skills
   (a) Perception of salient features in communicative situations
   (b) Selection and interpretation of forms appropriate to specific situations, roles, and relationships (rules for the use of speech)
   (c) Discourse organization and processes
   (d) Norms of interaction and interpretation
   (e) Strategies for achieving goals
3 Cultural knowledge
   (a) Social structure (status, power, speaking rights)
   (b) Values and attitudes
   (c) Cognitive maps/schemata
   (d) Enculturation processes (transmission of knowledge and skills)

Communicative competence within the ethnography of communication usually refers to the communicative knowledge and skills shared by a speech community, but these (like all aspects of culture) reside variably in its individual members. The shared yet individual nature of competence reflects the nature of language itself, as expressed by von Humboldt (1836):

> While languages are in the ambiguous sense of the word . . . creations of nations, they still remain personal and individual creations of individuals. This follows because they can be produced in each individual, yet only in such a manner that each individual assumes a priori the comprehension of all people and that all people, furthermore, satisfy such expectation.

Considering communicative competence at an individual level, we must additionally recognize that any one speaker is not infrequently a member of more than one speech community – often to different degrees. For individuals who are members of multiple speech communities, which one or ones they orient themselves to at any given moment – which set of social and communicative rules they use – is reflected not only in which segment of their linguistic knowledge they select, but which interaction skills they utilize, and which aspects of their cultural knowledge they activate. The competence of non-native speakers of a language usually differs significantly from the competence of native speakers; the specific content of what an individual needs to know and the skills he or she needs to have depend on the social context in which he or she is or will be using the language and the purposes he or she will have for doing so.

This further emphasizes why the notion of an "ideal speaker-listener, in a completely homogeneous speech-community" (Chomsky 1965: 3) is inadequate for ethnographic purposes. Also, multilingual speakers' communicative competence includes knowledge of rules for the appropriate choice of language and for switching between languages, given a particular social context and communicative intent, as well as for the intralingual shifting among styles and registers which is common to the competence of all speakers. An extension has been made to "intercultural communicative competence," which requires an additional level of metacompetence involving explicit awareness of differential usages and ability to adapt communicative strategies to a variety of cultural situations (Kim 1991). Liu (2001) further extends the construct to "adaptive cultural competence" as a goal for second language learners, which also encompasses social identity negotiation skills and culture-sensitivity knowledge. He argues that such a higher level competence is needed for appropriate and effective social participation of non-native speakers who are in roles of international students or immigrées.

Accounting for the nature of communicative competence ultimately "requires going beyond a concern with Language (capital L) or a language.

It requires a focus on the ways in which people do use language . . ." (Hymes 1993: 13). Problems arise when individual competence is judged in relation to a presumed "ideal" monolingual speech community, or assessed with tests given in a limited subset of situations which do not represent the true range of an individual's verbal ability (Hymes 1979b). The problems are particularly serious ones when such invalid judgments result in some form of social or economic discrimination against the individuals, such as unequal or inappropriate educational treatment or job placement. Awareness of the complex nature of communicative competence and the potential negative consequences of misjudgments is leading to major changes in procedures and instruments for language assessment, but no simple solutions are forthcoming (see Philips 1983a; Milroy 1987a; Byram 1997).

The Competence of Incompetence

Part of communicative competence is being able to sound appropriately "incompetent" in a language when the situation dictates. This may be done to signal deference when interacting with someone of high rank: e.g., in Burundi, lower ranking persons are expected to speak in a bumbling and hesitating manner to those of higher rank, but the same individuals speak fluently with peers or others of lower rank than they (Albert 1972). Similarly, members of a subordinate group in the community may adopt a "powerless speech style" with members of the dominant group, including women with men, ethnic minorities with majorities, and children with adults (Giles, Scherer, and Taylor 1979). Conversely, in Wolof "for the highest of the nobles incorrectness in certain aspects of speech is considered appropriate, since high-ranking persons are not supposed to be very skilled at speaking, at least in terms of superficial elaboration" (Irvine 1973: 40–1).

On some occasions, faking "incompetence" may have practical benefits. Actors or actresses may cultivate a "sexy" foreign accent to increase box office receipts, and applicants to at least one federally funded training project for which limited English proficiency was an entry criterion were caught cheating downward on the language test used for admission.

In a religious context, such as "speaking in tongues" among charismatic Christian groups, inarticulateness may be taken as evidence of divine inspiration, proof that the speaker is not in conscious control of what is being said (Douglas 1970: 109–10). Paradoxically, saying "I don't know what to say" to someone who is bereaved may be interpreted as the most sincere expression of deep sympathy.

Speakers of a second language are often well advised not to try to sound too much like a native. A foreign accent will often allow as yet imperfectly learned rules of etiquette to be excused as such, while a speaker who has mastered the phonology of a language is assumed to have also mastered all other aspects of its use, and violations are more likely to be interpreted as rudeness or worse. Additional consequences of perfecting pronunciation in a second language may be suspicion or resentment from native speakers if they do not welcome new members, or feelings from the primary speech community that one is being disloyal to it.

Units of Analysis

In order to describe and analyze communication it is necessary to deal with discrete units of some kind, with communicative activities that have recognizable boundaries. The three units suggested by Hymes (1972) are *situation*, *event*, and *act*.

The *communicative situation* is the context within which communication occurs. Examples include a religious service, a court trial, a holiday party, an auction, a train ride, or a class in school. The situation may remain the same even with a change of location, as when a committee meeting or court trial reconvenes in different settings, or it may change in the same location if very different activities go on there at different times. The same room in a university building may successively serve as the site of a lecture, a committee meeting, or a play practice, and a family dwelling may provide the venue for a holiday party. A single situation maintains a consistent general configuration of activities, the same overall ecology within which communication takes place, although there may be great diversity in the kinds of interaction which occur there.

The *communicative event* is the basic unit for descriptive purposes. A single event is defined by a unified set of components throughout, beginning with the same general purpose of communication, the same general topic, and involving the same participants, generally using the same language variety, maintaining the same tone or key and the same rules for interaction, in the same setting. An event terminates whenever there is a change in the major participants, their role-relationships, or the focus of attention. If there is no change in major participants and setting, the boundary between events is often marked by a period of silence and perhaps a change in body position.

Discontinuous events are possible, if one is interrupted and then resumes without change in major components. A conversation between student and professor in an office may be interrupted by a telephone call, for instance. The professor then participates in a different event with the caller, leaving the student "on hold." They may say "Now where were we?" before resuming the first event, but participants can usually continue from the point of

interruption. In this case the student has not been an active participant in the intervening event, generally looks elsewhere, and at least pretends not to listen. He or she has essentially left the situation, although physically still present.

Discovering what constitutes a communicative event and what classes of events are recognized within a speech community are a fundamental part of doing ethnography of communication. The designation of some events may be inferred from the fact they are given different labels in the language, and may be identified as categories of talk, but some are not neatly differentiated. However, an important first step in research is determining the existing inventory of labels in the language for such events.

The *communicative act* is generally coterminous with a single interactional function, such as a referential statement, a request, or a command, and may be either verbal or nonverbal. For example, not only may a request take several verbal forms (*I'd like a pen* and *Do you have a pen?* as well as *May I please have a pen?*), but it may be expressed by raised eyebrows and a "questioning" look, or by a longing sigh. In the context of a communicative event, even silence may be an intentional and conventional communicative act, and used to question, promise, deny, warn, insult, request, or command (Saville-Troike 1985). The same observable behavior may or may not constitute a communicative act in different speech communities. A belch at the end of a meal is not a communicative act if it is merely a sign of indigestion, but it is a communicative act in societies where one burps to symbolize appreciation and thanks for the meal; the ways stones, shells, or bones configurate when thrown are considered communicative in many parts of the world, but they are not considered potential elements of communication in others.

The study of speech acts within linguistic theory is the basis for this level of analysis, but must be extended to account for a broader range of phenomena within the ethnography of communication, and to allow for possible differences with regard to what segments of language are considered basic functional units by members of different speech communities.

The following examples illustrate the three different units of analysis.

I observed and videotaped a group of limited-English-speaking elementary school students each week over the course of an entire school year in a *communicative situation* that occurred when these children left their regular English-medium classrooms for 30 minutes each day for a common class in English as a Second Language (ESL) (Saville-Troike 1984; Saville-Troike, McClure, and Fritz 1984). Although the composition of the group changed as the result of student illness or family trips and the appointment of a new teacher at midyear, and the specific activities changed with seasonal interests and the students' developing English language proficiency, the overall structure and purpose of the sessions remained the same. Selecting a simple communicative situation such as this in longitudinal and/or comparative research provides a consistent frame wherein the effects of minimal variation in components of communication (e.g. setting, participants, goal) can be observed and interpreted. (These components are discussed in chapter 4.)

Within the ESL situation, the class periods were found to divide into a regular sequence of recurring *communicative events*:

1 Unstructured play
2 Claiming a seat at the large table where the lesson was conducted
3 Opening routines (e.g., *What day is it today?*)
4 Teacher-directed lesson on a targeted language form
5 Follow-up activity (usually involving arts and crafts or a game)
6 Closing routines (e.g., *Time to clean up, See you tomorrow*, etc.)

The event as a unit for analysis is important in part so that observations made at different times will be comparable, and so that generalizations can be made about patterns of communication within a constant context. In the ESL situation I studied, for instance, patterns and forms for communication varied greatly from event to event, and yet they stayed relatively constant for each type of event throughout the year. It was possible, therefore, to analyze the development of students' competence in English and the strategies that they used to achieve different communicative functions within each event; any comparison of student or teacher language forms and rules for language use at different points of the lesson (or in other situations) would have been quite misleading without taking this unit into account.

For example, the word *is* in such sentences as "Today is Monday" or "This is a table," which was used consistently in the ESL opening routines and teacher-directed lessons beginning during the first week of school, was still absent in the speech of several students in all other events (and in the other situations) after weeks and even months of English instruction. Without reference to different event structures, it might appear that this grammatical form occurred randomly, rather than as part of memorized patterns that were used only during teacher – student interaction when the focus was on the form, and not on the content, of communication. Students and teachers also (unconsciously) recognized that organizational rules, such as raising hands and talking one at a time, operated only during certain segments (events) of the class.

In this research, analysis at the level of the *communicative act* made it possible to determine the relative frequency of different communicative functions for students in different events and across time (e.g., warnings and threats to other students declined significantly, and requests for clarification increased) and to compare the linguistic form that was selected within events across time for each type of act (e.g. from gestures and nonspeech sounds used for warnings and threats at the beginning of the year, to holistic routines, to increasing syntactic complexity in English).

A second communication situation I have regularly observed is a Christian religious service. It typically includes these communicative events:

1 Call to worship
2 Reading of scriptures
3 Prayer
4 Announcements
5 Sermon
6 Benediction

Even though a single set of participants is involved (perhaps even a single speaker), and the setting and general purpose remain the same, the change between events is clearly marked by different ways of speaking, different body position for both leader and congregation, and periods of silence or musical interludes. Within the event labelled "prayer," the sequence of communicative acts predictably includes the summons, praise, supplication, thanks, and closing formula.

Robbins describes the clear boundaries of this event as it is enacted in a Papua New Guinea Society:

> Urapmin prayers have discrete beginnings. To begin a prayer, one first asks all of those present to close their eyes. Once people have closed their eyes and thus marked a discrete break with the flow of social life up to that point, the person praying will use one of several formulae to call out to God and mark the formal beginning of the prayer . . . Along with these openings, prayers also have patterned closings, wherein the person praying intones that "I have spoken (or asked) sufficiently and what I have said is true". . . With this ending, eyes open, marking the return to life outside of prayer. (2001: 906)

Categories of Talk

As with the identification of communicative events, labels used by a speech community for categories of talk provide a useful clue to what categories it recognizes and considers salient. The elicitation of labels is one aspect of *ethnosemantics* (also called *ethnolinguistics*, *ethnoscience*, *ethnographic semantics*, and *new ethnography*). These may be coterminus with some notions of genre, in that they may serve "as a nexus of interrelationships among the constituents of the speech event and as a formal vantage point on speaking practices" (Bauman 2000: 84).

As a procedure to discover categories of talk, on various occasions when verbal interaction is observed, the ethnographer may ask an informant the equivalent of "What are they doing?" Frake (1969) provides an excellent

example in his study of the Philippine Yakan. Their native categories talk elicited in this manner include *mitin* 'discussion,' *qisun* 'conference *mawpakkat* 'negotiation,' and *kukum* 'litigation.' Frake then analyzes each these categories in terms of their distinctive communicative features, whic in this case contrast on the dimensions of focus, purpose, roles, and integrit (the extent to which the activity is perceived as an integral unit).

In a collection of studies on categories in the domain of political orator (Bloch 1975), ethnographers have elicited labels as part of their procedu for segmenting and organizing political activities into meaningful units f analysis. A listing of some of these illustrates the diverse dimensions alon which such units occur: the Melpa speakers in Mt. Hagan, New Guine reportedly categorize types of oratory as *el-ik* 'arrow talk' or 'war talk' (th most formal), *ik ek* 'veiled speech' or 'talk which is bent over or folded,' an *ik kwun* 'talk which is straight' (Strathern 1975); communicative eve labels for the Maori of New Zealand include *mihimihi* 'greeting speeches *whai koorero* 'exchange of speeches,' and *take* or *marae* 'discussion of seriou matters' (Salmond 1975); and labels for speech acts in Balinese includ *mebetènin ngeraos* 'self-abasement,' *nyelasang* 'statement of common know ledge,' *ngèdèngang pemineh pedidi* 'statement of current speaker's opinion and *nyerahand tekèn banjar* 'commitment to follow what the assembly decide (Hobart 1975). Listings of category labels in English include *conversatio* *lecture*, *oratory*, *gossip*, *joking*, *story-telling*, and *preaching*.

Categories of talk in each language have different functional distribution and most are limited to a particular situation, or involve constraints on wh may speak them, or what topic may be addressed. Their description is thu of interest not only because of the linguistic phenomena which distinguis one from another, but also because these categories may provide clues t how other dimensions of the society are segmented and organized.

Since we cannot expect any language to have a perfect metalanguage, th elicitation of labels for categories of talk is clearly not adequate to assure full inventory and must be supplemented by other discovery procedure but it is basic to ethnography that the units used for segmenting, ordering and describing data should begin with the categories of the group which use them, and may include, but should not be limited to, the a priori categorie of the investigator (see Wierzbicka 1985).

Language and Culture

The intrinsic relationship of language and culture is widely recognized, bu the ways in which the patterning of communicative behavior interrelate with that of other cultural systems are of interest both to the developmen

of general theories of communication, and to the description and analysis of communication within specific speech communities. Virtually any ethnographic model must take language into account, although many relegate it to a separate section and do not adequately consider its extensive role in a society. The very concept of the evolution of culture is dependent on the capacity of humans to use language for purposes of organizing social cooperation.

There are still questions regarding the extent to which language is shaping and controlling the thinking of its speakers by the perceptual requirements it makes of them, or the extent to which it is merely reflecting their world view, and whether the relationship (whatever it is) is universal or language-specific. There is no doubt, however, that there is a correlation between the form and content of a language and the beliefs, values, and needs present in the culture of its speakers. The vocabulary of a language provides us with a catalogue of things considered important to the society, an index to the way speakers categorize experience, and often a record of past contacts and cultural borrowings; the grammar may reveal the way time is segmented and organized, beliefs about animacy and the relative power of beings, and salient social categories in the culture (e.g., see Whorf 1940; Hill and Mannheim 1992; Gumperz and Levinson 1996).

Hymes suggests a second type of linguistic relativity which sees in grammar evidence not only of static social categories, but also of speakers' social assumptions about the dynamics of role-relationships, and about what rights and responsibilities are perceived in society. While the first type of linguistic relativity claims that cultural reality in part results from linguistic factors, Hymes contends that

> people who enact different cultures do to some extent experience distinct communicative systems, not merely the same natural communicative condition with different customs affixed. Cultural values and benefits are in part constitutive of linguistic relativity. (1966b: 116)

The interrelationship of patterns in various aspects of culture is pervasive enough in many cases for us to call them *themes*, or central organizing principles which control behavior. Opler (1941) exemplifies this concept with the Apache theme of male superiority, which is realized in patterns of communication as well as in religious and political domains. At tribal meetings, for instance, only a few older women may speak before all of the men have been heard, and it is very unusual for a woman to pray out loud in public. The Manus of New Guinea have been characterized in part as having an anti-sex theme in their culture: there are no purely social dances, no love songs, no romantic myths – and no word for 'love' in their language (Mead 1930).

Where directness or indirectness are cultural themes, they are always language-related. As defined in speech act theory, *direct acts* are those where surface form matches interactional function, as "Be quiet!" used as a command, versus an *indirect* "It's getting noisy in here" or "I can't hear myself think," but other units of communication must also be considered.

Indirectness may be reflected in routines for offering and refusing or accepting gifts or food, for instance. A *yes* or *no* intended to be taken literally is more direct than an initial *no* intended to mean "Ask me again." Visitors from the Middle East and Asia have reported going hungry in England and the United States because of a misunderstanding of this message; when offered food, many have politely refused rather than accept directly, and it was not offered again. English speakers have the reverse problem in other countries when their literal no is not accepted as such, and they are forced to eat food they really do not want.

An indirect apology is illustrated by Mead (1930), who reports a situation where a Manus woman fled to her aunt's home after being beaten by her husband. His relatives, coming to retrieve her, engaged her relatives for an hour of desultory chatter about such topics as market conditions and fishing before one made a metaphorical reference to men's strength and women's bones. Still without saying a word, the wife joined the husband's relatives in their boat, and returned with them.

The use of metaphors and proverbs is a common communicative strategy for depersonalizing what is said and allowing more indirectness. Criticism is often couched in this form, as when chiefs of the San Blas Cuna Indian tribe of Panama express opinions in metaphoric songs (Sherzer 1974, 1983), or when an English speaker reproves another with "People who live in glass houses shouldn't cast stones."

Joking is also a common way of mitigating criticism that might not be acceptable if given directly. This has reached the level of art in Trinidad, where ritual verbal protests culminate in the song-form of the calypso. "It is a means of disclaiming responsibility for one's words. It is only because the norms of the event are shared by members of the community – political leaders included – that many a calypsonian does not end up with a law suit filed against him" (Sealey).

At the level of the grammatical code, using passive rather than active voice, or using impersonal pronouns are yet other common means of indirectness. Talmy (1976) illustrates the difference this may make in directness with his example of a Yiddish story in which a boy invites a girl to the woods. In English, she would have to respond with embarrassingly direct pronouns, "I can't go with you. You'll have to kiss me." In Yiddish this is avoided with a nonspecific pronoun, *Me tor ništ geyn ahin. Me vet zix vein kušn.* 'One mustn't go there. One will want to kiss another.'

While it may be easier to be indirect in some languages than others, communicative patterns are not necessarily tied directly to language forms. The native speaker of Arabic, Yiddish, Farsi, Indonesian, or Japanese often uses English more indirectly than does a native speaker of English, for instance. There is no intrinsic reason that the structures and vocabulary for one language cannot be used in many domains of communication within other speech communities to express the cultures of those communities, and in ways in keeping with their rules of appropriate behavior. As it is developed and used creatively as an auxiliary language in Nigeria, India, and elsewhere in the world, English becomes "Englishes" (Kachru 1980; 1986) in the enactment of different cultural values and beliefs.

Although language is unquestionably an integral part of culture, to assume that specific cultural experiences and rules of behavior will invariably correlate with specific linguistic skills is a naive oversimplification of the relationship of language and culture. The issue of their relationship is one which pervades the whole of the ethnography of communication.

Social Structure and Ideology

The role of language is not the same in all societies, but it often includes the identification or marking of social categories, the embodiment of sociopolitical ideologies, the maintenance and manipulation of individual social relationships and networks, and various means of effecting social control.

The relationship is not a static one, but varying and constitutive in nature. Social categories are primarily part of the social system, but also become embedded in the language system as it is used to mark them; the use and valuation of the linguistic markers in turn may affect the nature and persistence of the categories themselves.

Societies vary in the extent to which communicative behavior is bound up with the definition of social roles. In some, such as that of the Cuna Indians of San Blas, Panama, speaking ability is an integral and necessary part of role achievement and validation (Sherzer 1974; 1983). In others, communicative ability may have little or no significance in terms of roles, although certain social categories (such as age and sex) may be marked by characteristic communicative behavior. Also, societies may recognize distinctive role types, such as Abrahams' (1983) "man of words" in African American culture, which are defined primarily in terms of communicative behavior.

There are many who feel that language markers help perpetuate inequalities in the social system, and that language can be changed to eliminate the inequality. It is felt, for instance, that using generic terms like *policeman* rather than *law enforcement officer*, or calling all doctors *he* and all nurses *she* perpetuates occupational inequality between men and women by influencing thought and perception. Some feel that the way to break down social categories is to break down the language distinctions that mark them; others feel that the symbols would only be replaced by new ones unless the underlying social structure is itself changed in some more basic way. Still others believe that changing labels may have little effect on present beliefs and values, but will prevent their being transmitted as readily to the next generation.

Similarly, there is widespread belief in both the United States and England that speaking nonstandard English is a causal factor in the low economic status of large segments of minority group populations, and that learning "good" English will automatically erase class boundaries and prejudice. This view is epitomized in Shaw's *Pygmalion*, where Henry Higgins succeeds in changing Eliza Doolittle's social class status by changing her speech patterns. However, working-class members may value the group-identificational features of their speech, and actively resist or subvert efforts to change it. This may explain the perduring survival of *ain't* despite massive institutional attempts to eradicate it.

Major changes in categories in the social structure, as in social revolutions, usually entail change in communicative patterns as well. Movement to the political left may be accompanied by changing terms of address or titles and pronominal forms to symbolize class leveling (e.g., see Brown and Gilman 1960; Paulston 1976; Fang and Heng 1983). Since the Communist revolution in Cuba, a rural, once nonstandard variety of Spanish has become prestigious, and the variety once considered an educated standard has been disparaged and devalued, although to be sure, differential pronominal distinctions are creeping back into Hungarian, and the Indonesian language, originally adopted as more democratic than Javanese, has developed the capacity to make most of the same social distinctions.

Change in language use caused by changing ideologies is illustrated by the decline in Cuba of such exclamatory terms as *Jesús* and *Dios mío*, which are now used almost exclusively by the older generation. This change is attributed to the influence of Marxist attitudes toward religion. Another illustration of this relationship is the banning of the Bavarian greeting *Grüss Gott* during Hitler's reign in Germany.

The effect of social change on language use is clearly evident when we contrast a sociolinguistic domain such as address terminology among Mandarin Chinese speakers in Mainland China and in Taiwan. On the basis of interviews with students in the US from both locations in the 1980s, Jin found two significant differences in patterns of address. During the Cultural Revolution in Mainland China (1966–78), the use of *tongzhi* 'comrade' largely replaced professional titles. The usage has diminished with subsequent

social change, however, and *tongzhi* is now used only with (1) strangers, (2) those whose occupations are unknown, and (3) those whose occupations carry no title and with whom the speaker is not familiar. It is also noteworthy that while the introduction of *tongzhi* served to neutralize male-female distinctions (in accordance with political ideology), the gender distinction has been reintroduced with the invention of *nu tongzhi* 'female comrade' and *nan tongzhi* 'male comrade.' More recently, Yang reports that without that modification, *tongzhi* has taken on the connotation of 'gay' or 'gay rights,' especially in internet messages. Use of simple *tongzhi* unmarked for gender does continue in official Communist Party meetings, but private usage (as by employer to employee) implies that a negative message is coming. Another recent change is in the use of *shifu* 'master' as a general title in Mainland China, contrasted with a narrower use of the term in Taiwan to refer to individuals who actually teach skills (such as a locksmith or a Kungfu instructor). *Shifu* is apparently beginning to replace *tongzhi* when addressing members of the working-class in Mainland China, in order to signal their higher position.

The differences found in norms of address terms between Mainland China and Taiwan thus reflect differing social organization and political values, while the far more extensive similarities suggest there is still more shared culture. The changes within Mainland China in recent years are evidence of the responsiveness of language use to the dynamics of social development, even within a relatively short time span. This is also reflected in reports that

> Terms such as nouveau riche and "middle-class" now abound in the non-government media. This class rhetoric represents the myths of the right and the exaggerated image of urban consumption spreading throughout Chinese society. (Hsu 2002)

The wider acceptance in US society of male-female cohabitation without marriage, and increased recognition of the validity of homosexual relationships, has been accompanied by pressure for change in the English language. A major etiquette problem of our day, judging from letters for advice submitted to such syndicated newspaper columnists as Ann Landers and Miss Manners, may well be what term of reference to use for the person with whom someone lives, but is not married to. *Mistress* is considered condescending, *boy friend* or *girl friend* childish, *partner* too businesslike, and *roommate* confusing. *Consort* makes Miss Manners "think of Prince Philip walking three paces behind," and *coviviant* of someone "who will only cook on copper pots," and so the problem continues. The response that it should not be necessary for people to declare their sexual affiliation is sociolinguistically naive; if the relationship does not have a label, others cannot be sure of how to interact appropriately.

Social change may impact whole genres, as Taminian reports in contemporary Yemen, where "poetry constitutes an integral part of the socio-political realm and practices, [and] is employed to stimulate local and national debates" about "the polemical relation between modernity and authenticity" (2001: 50). On another dimension, the type of orthography or print used may be significant: e.g., Ataturk mandated a shift from Arabic to Roman script in 1928 as part of a policy of turning Turkey ideologically toward the West; for some former republics of the USSR, abandonment of the Cyrillic alphabet has accompanied dissociation from Russia; and connotations currently associated with Gothic type in Finland would possibly be "German," even "Fascism" (Lehtonen 2000: 52). The use of Cyrillic to write Romanian spoken in Moldova when this republic was part of the Soviet Union has impeded efforts to reunify the province with Romania.

The pervasiveness of connections between orthography and politics is illustrated in the history of writing reform in China: the first emperor who unified China (Qin Dynasty 221–207 BC) decreed a standard way of writing characters as one means to consolidate centralized power; movement toward modernization and the end of imperialism essentially involved *bai hua* 'plain speech' style of writing to make written language more accessible to the people; and the ideological struggle between the Communists and the Nationalist government during the 1930s and 1940s was symbolized in part by the former's promotion of simplified characters and the latter's resistance "in order to strengthen unity under its leadership" (Gao 2000: 40). The continued division between the People's Republic of China and Taiwan is still reflected in simplified versus traditional writing, although recent economic influence from Hong Kong and Taiwan has made it popular for mainland Chinese businessmen to write advertisements and brand names in traditional characters. (The National Language Committee of the PRC issued directives in the 1990s for provisional and municipal language committees to be watchful for such orthographic ideological incursions; see Gao 2000: 29–51.) Another example of language practice linked to economic change is the renaming of Russian businesses for their owners as a public symbol of privatization since 1991 (Yurchak 2000).

One of the most obvious indications of the relationship of language and social organization is in the renumeration or reclassification of languages which may accompany political change. For example, the demise of Yugoslavia as a political entity led to the official distinction of Bosnian and Montenegrin, which had been categorized within former Serbo-Croation. That region is also facing issues of orthography and standardization in Macedonian and Albanian, and debates concerning the use of Albanian, Roma, and other languages in the media and in education.

At an interactional level, the maintenance and manipulation of social relationships are importantly served by greeting events in many communities,

which for first encounters may include questions about family, income, occupation, place of origin, or where one went to school. This is usually interpreted as "friendly" behavior, but it also provides information for assignment of the new acquaintance to a social category. What is considered "appropriate" interactional behavior is largely determined by such categorization.

Language most obviously serves a role in social control by providing a medium for telling people directly what to do, but it also allows for such indirect control forms as threats, curses, teasing, and gossip. One of the strongest control forms in many societies is silence, or "shunning," which is also part of the communicative system.

Stories told to children are often intended to control their behavior: Aesop's fables in Western tradition, Anancie tales of Africa and the Caribbean, Monkey tales of Japan, Coyote stories of North American Indians, and Brer Rabbit stories of African Americans all serve this function, as the Trickster's antisocial behavior focuses attention on the social norms, and allows for the verbalization of morals and collective group wisdom.

Rights and responsibilities involved in such systems as law, medicine, and religion cannot be fulfilled without language. Its importance is perhaps most clearly seen in situations where the social systems are thwarted because of a breakdown in communication. A man who was jailed in the state of Illinois, for instance, could not be tried because he could not hear or speak. He had to be taught sign language first so that he could defend himself. More problematic are people on trial in a speech community other than their own, or through the medium of a language in which they lack fluency, who may be equally unable to defend themselves.

Language also serves in social control by the way it is used in politics. Much attention has been given to the thought control potential of "Newspeak" in George Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, and a standing committee of the National Council of Teachers of English in the US is devoted to "Doublespeak." It gives annual awards for particularly flagrant euphemistic or evasive language use by government agencies or representatives seeking to justify or minimize the impression of negatively-perceived actions, such as "terminate with extreme prejudice" (meaning 'to kill') and "collateral damage" (meaning 'civilian casualties during war') (Shearer 1988). During the Nazi regime, the Office of the Press in Germany issued "Language Regulations" stipulating the terms to be used or abandoned in newspaper reporting, or redefining them: e.g., on January14, 1937, "According to the new government, the term 'propaganda' is a legally protected one, so to speak, and cannot be used in a derogatory sense . . . In short, 'propaganda' only if it serves us; 'agitation' for those who are against us" (Mueller 1973: 31).

A different dimension of the effect of patterns of communication on political thought and activity has been explored extensively by Maurice Bloch (1974), whose general thesis is that political language should be

studied as a preliminary to studying politics, since the intentions of speakers may be inferred from the implications of the type of speech they use.

Bloch distinguishes between formal language and informal language, or formal speech situations and everyday speech situations, and their relative degree of social control. When a speech event is formalized, there are fewer options for participants; thus, as language becomes more formalized, more social control is exerted on participants. In formalizing a situation, the propositional content, the logic, is essentially removed. What is said is accepted because it is the right thing to say, and not because it is true or false. Bloch and others claim that in societies where there is more emphasis on ritual events, there is less freedom and more direct control than in societies where there is less emphasis on ritual. The control may be in both directions, controlling those in authority as well as those being governed: i.e., the speaker also gives up some freedom in ritual, even if he or she has power.

Ritual events are much more likely to be important to closed social groups than to those that are open. In making this point, Douglas (1970) contrasts the lack of ritual among the mobile Ituri pygmies of Africa (Turnbull 1961) and the Basseri nomads of Persia (Barth 1964b) with the pervasive ritual activity among the Navajo, which demands exact ordering in fixed ceremonial events (Aberle 1966).

Both Bloch and Douglas relate the formal-informal communicative situations to the ritual and anti-ritual in types of religion, and to Bernstein's (1971) distinction between positional and personal family structures and their relation to strong boundary maintenance and weak boundary maintenance in education. According to them, Bernstein's restricted code is appropriate in a ritualized situation where the context is highly coded, roles are rigidly delineated, meanings are local and particular, and there is a small range of alternative forms. An elaborated code is appropriate in a less structured context where meanings must be made more explicit, and speakers have a wide range of choice. The restricted code serves the social function of control as well as communication, and creates solidarity. Bloch and Douglas interpret Bernstein's general distinction as essentially one of context, with the structural characteristics of the two types of code in any one speech community a matter for investigation: "the distinction between restricted and elaborated codes must be relative within a given culture or within the speech forms of a given group" (Douglas 1970: 77). (Additional issues of language and power are discussed in chapter 8.)

Routines and Rituals

Linguists are very interested in humans' ability to be creative with language as part of defining competence, but also in how, when, and why humans

choose not to be creative, to repeat what has been heard and said many times before, often in exactly the same form. The relation of ritual to social control has already been discussed, but the general nature of routines and rituals requires further consideration.

Linguistic routines are fixed or relatively fixed utterances or sequences of utterances which must be considered as single units, because meaning cannot be derived from consideration of any segment apart from the whole. In form, they often constitute a sentence "stem" (Aijmer 1996), a core which may be expanded in conversational contexts but is often frozen in ritual ones. The routine itself fulfills the communicative function, and in this respect is performative in nature. Such communication essentially defines the situation.

Routines must be learned, as well as analyzed, as single units, although they may vary in length from single syllables (*Hi*) to phrases (*How do you do*, *April fool*, and *Have a nice day*) to a sequence of sentences (the well-rehearsed pitch of a door-to-door salesman or telemarketer). They may be uttered by an individual, or may require cooperation between two or more persons, as in a greeting sequence or in minister/congregation alternation in the reading of scriptures.

Non-native speakers of English often complain that native speakers do not really care about the state of their health when they ask *How are you?* The non-natives are not recognizing that this question is part of a greeting routine, which by nature has no meaning apart from its phatic function in communication. If English speakers *really* want to know how someone is feeling, they repeat the question after the routine is completed, or they mark the question with contrastive intonation to indicate it is for information, and not part of the routine.

Understanding routines requires shared cultural knowledge because they are generally metaphoric in nature, and must be interpreted at a non-literal level. They include greetings, leave takings, curses, jokes, condolences, prayers, compliments, and other formulaic language. Sneezes, hiccoughs, or other involuntary noises may require routines to repair the situation, as may simultaneous talking or spontaneous silence in a group. In Japan or Korea, a sneeze means someone is talking about you, and many English speakers say *Bless you* to a sneezer because of traditional beliefs that it is the soul or spirit escaping, or a sign of illness; Turkish speakers wish the person a long life. Someone who hiccoughs in Germany makes a wish, and in Puerto Rico, a common response is "Did you steal something?"

Speech communities place differential value on knowledge of routines versus creativity on the part of individual speakers, with oral versus literate traditions a significant factor (cf. Tannen 1979a), along with degree of formalization and ritualization of other aspects of culture. English speakers are often quite opposed to routines and rituals at a conscious level, because they are "meaningless" and depersonalize the ideas expressed. One occasion where a prescribed routine is considered too impersonal is the bereavement of a friend; condolence therefore often takes the form of *I don't know what to say*, which has itself become a routine. This contrasts sharply with other speech communities where fixed condoling routines are considered an essential component of funerary ritual.

Ritual is made up of routines, but these are given far greater cultural significance for being part of a ritual context, rather than everyday encounters. Its context-bound nature was noted by Malinowski (1935), who found in studying ritual that the meaning of symbols could not be interpreted in isolation, but only in the context of the meaning of the ritual situation. This observation creates serious problems for any discipline of autonomous semantics, which requires individual units of meaning to carry a semantic load in themselves. On the other hand, because the total meaning is already known to the group from the context, we can explain why it is the case that even though "the receiver of a ritual message is picking up information through a variety of different sensory channels simultaneously (and these over a period of time), all these different sensations add up to just one 'message'" (Leach 1976: 41).

Magical incantations provide one example of ritual: the language is fixed, and the linguistic formulae themselves are expected to exert some control over the supernatural. Parts of a spell have no meaning uttered by themselves; the whole must always be recited in full to have effect. Paralinguistic features of production are clearly differentiated from "normal" language, with spells often recited in a sing-song manner, and with distinctive rhythm and pitch.

Comparable to the sing-song of magical incantation, intoned speech (or "wailing") is common for expressing grief, and both intoned speech and chanting are often used in religious rituals. These varieties of language are on a speech-song continuum, with the song end of the continuum used in more formal contexts (Bloch 1974).

As routines often mark the boundaries of speech events by opening and closing them, rituals serve as boundary markers for major changes in social status: puberty rites, weddings, funerals, and graduation ceremonies. Perhaps the most important characteristic of routines and rituals is that truth value is largely irrelevant. Their meaning is dependent on shared beliefs and values of the speech community coded into communicative patterns, and they cannot be interpreted apart from social and cultural context.

To return to considerations of routines in social control, this irrelevance of truth value in routines is an obviously important factor. So, too, is the potential of slogans and chants to organize and control mass energy, whether the *Sieg Heil* of Hitler's rallies, the *Go, team, go* of athletic contests, or the *We shall overcome* of US civil rights demonstrations.

Universals and Inequalities

It is precisely because the ritual use of language encodes cultural beliefs and reflects community social organization that it has been of primary interest to ethnographers, but this has led to the criticism that the field has focused on the ceremonial or "special" uses of language to the neglect of more everyday communication.

Bloch (1976) asserts that nonritual communication has much more in common cross-culturally, while ritual communication reflects "strange other ways of thinking," which may explain why such researchers as Levi-Strauss, Geertz, and Douglas stress differences in systems of classification which link systems of cognition to social structure, while such researchers as Berlin and Kay find universal criteria for classification. The former concentrate almost exclusively on ritual communication, the latter on nonritual. "Only concentrating on the picture of the world apparent in ritual communication obscures the fact of the universal nature of a part of the cognitive system available in all cultures" (Bloch 1976: 285).

The nature of language cannot be described or explained without both perspectives. Hymes considers the type of explanatory adequacy proposed by Chomsky and that of a socially constituted linguistics to have complementary goals:

> Chomsky's type of explanatory adequacy leads away from speech, and from languages, to relationships possibly universal to all languages, and possibly inherent in human nature. The complementary type of explanatory adequacy leads from what is common to all human beings and all languages toward what particular communities and persons have made of their means of speech. (1974: 203)

To be sure, the ethnographer is interested in such constructs as a proposed universal framework of conversational maxims (e.g., see Grice 1975), but as working hypotheses against which conversational patterns in different speech communities may be tested and compared rather than as facts or as a given framework for analysis. Keenan (1976) has reported that speakers of Malagasy regularly violate the maxim to "be informative," for instance, as do Kaingáng speakers in Brazil (Kindell), and undoubtedly speakers of many other languages. In fact, in many communities (including the most technologically advanced societies) ". . . it may be one's obligation to lie, successfully, or avoid giving pertinent information" (Hymes 1987: 222). The degree to which Grice's maxims hold in a particular community, and in relation to what particular sociocultural conditions, is important for the ultimate understanding of all human communication as well as for descriptions of conversational patterns in particular communities.

Similarly, while there is a finite general set of functions which language may serve in a society, and it is indeed universal that language serves a plurality of functions in each community, it is fundamental to the ethnography of communication that research begin from the perspective *that functions are problematic rather than given*. Hymes contends

> that the role of language may differ from community to community; that in general the functions of language in society are a problem for investigation, not postulation. . . . If this is so, then the cognitive significance of a language depends not only on structure, but also on patterns of use. (1967: 116)

It is quite probable that some aspects of language function will prove to be universal, although perhaps in a hierarchy of importance which is relative to particular communities, but this remains a topic for empirical investigation. Clearly in multilingual societies, different languages often serve differential functions, and a single a priori assumption regarding Language might obscure enlightening sociolinguistic data.

A related issue which this raises is that of the inequality of languages: not all languages are equally capable of serving the same functions in a society. This assertion violates most pronouncements of linguists made during the last half century that all languages are adequate as communicative systems for members of a social group, but it will be accepted by most administrators concerned with education and economics in developing countries. While all languages are inherently capable of expressing all concepts and fulfilling all functions, they have evolved differently through processes of variation, adaptation, and selection. The fact that each language may retain the *potential* to serve all functions does not alter this conclusion.

> The official preference is to stress the potentiality of a language and to ignore the circumstances and consequences of its limitations. Yet every language is an instrument shaped by its history and patterns of use, such that for a given speaker and setting it can do some things well, some clumsily, and others not intelligibly at all. The cost, as between expressing things easily and concisely, and expressing them with difficulty and at great length, is a real cost, commonly operating, and a constraint on the theoretical potentiality of language in daily life. (Hymes 1973: 73)

Hymes enumerates "the sources and consequences of linguistic inequality" as differences in adaptive resources, patterning of agents and personalities (e.g. male and female roles) developments in relation to a community's institutions (e.g. styles associated with science, religion, and politics), and in values and beliefs (1996: 57–8).

It therefore remains central to our concerns to describe what a community has made of its language, and why, and how – not only as part of our

scientific inquiry, but because one of the responsibilities and motivations of a socially constituted study of language is the welfare of its human speakers. Ethnographers, who by the nature of their perspective reach beyond the "facts" of observable behavior to interpret meaning/culture, have an ethical responsibility to the "subjects" of investigation.

The question of inequality is also raised with respect to the degree to which individual speakers are competent in the language(s) of their group. The concept of possible "semilingualism" (cf. Cummins 1979) in some language contact situations is rejected by many on philosophical grounds, yet it may be one of the social problems to which findings from ethnography of communication may be applied. From this perspective, Hymes suggests that the term *competence*, rather than be defined as ideal knowledge, "should retain its normal sense of actual ability."

> As a term for ideal knowledge, competence may overcome inequality conceptually, but only as a term for actual abilities, assessed in relation to contexts of use, can it help to overcome inequality practically. (1996: 59)

Bloomfield, in a study of the North American Menomini, noted:

> White-Thunder, a man around forty, speaks less English than Menomini, and that is a strong indictment, for his Menomini is atrocious. His vocabulary is small; his inflections are often barbarous; he constructs sentences of a few threadbare models. He may be said to speak no language tolerably. His case is not unknown among younger men, even when they speak but little English. (1927: 437)

We are thus concerned with the obsolescence and loss of ways of speaking as well as with their development and maintenance. Of central interest will be the community's attitudes toward these phenomena, and ultimately the potential applications of our findings in furtherance of its goals.

3

Varieties of Language

Within each community or complex of overlapping and interacting communities there exist a number of different language codes and ways of speaking available to its members, which constitute its *communicative repertoire*. This includes "all varieties, dialects or styles used in a particular socially-defined population, and the constraints which govern the choice among them" (Gumperz 1977). Any one speaker also has a variety of codes and styles from which to choose, but it is very unlikely that any individual is able to produce the full range; different subgroups of the community may understand and use different subsets of its available codes.

The means of communication used in a community thus may include different languages, different regional and social varieties of one or more of the languages, different registers (generally varying on a formal-informal dimension which cross-cuts regional and social dimensions), and different channels of communication (e.g. oral, written, manual). The nature and extent of this diversity is related to the social organization of the group, which is likely to include differences in age, sex, and social status, as well as differences in the relationship between speakers, their goals of interaction, and the settings in which communication takes place. The communicative repertoire may also include different occupational codes, specialized religious language, secret codes of various kinds, imitative speech, whistle or drum language, and varieties used for talking to foreigners, young children, and pets.

Identification of the varieties which occur in any community requires observation and description of actual differences in pronunciation, grammar, lexicon, styles of speaking, and other communicative behaviors which are potentially available for differentiation, but it must ultimately depend on the discovery of which differences are recognized by members of the group as conveying social meaning of some kind. In addition, the communicative repertoire of a group includes the variety of possible interaction strategies available to it. These are most commonly used to establish, maintain, or manipulate role-relationships. Speakers' choices of interaction strategies

provide a dynamic connection between the language code, speakers' goals, and the participant structure in specific situations.

Language Choice

Given the multiple varieties of language available within the communicative repertoire of a community or complex, and the subset of varieties available to its subgroups and individuals, speakers must select the code and interaction strategy to be used in any specific context. Knowing the alternatives and the rules for appropriate choice are part of speakers' communicative competence. Accounting for the rules or system for such decision-making is part of the task of describing communication within any group, and of explaining communication more generally.

The concept of *domain* developed by Fishman (1964, 1966, 1971, 1972) remains useful for both description and explanation of the distribution of means of communication. He defines it as:

> . . . a socio-cultural construct abstracted from topics of communication, relationships between communicators, and locales of communication, in accord with the institutions of a society and the spheres of activity of a speech community. (1971: 587)

Factors determining domains may thus include the general subject area under discussion (e.g. religion, family, work), the role-relationships between the participants (e.g. priest–parishioner, mother–daughter, boss–secretary), and the setting of the interaction (e.g. church, home, office).

No fixed set of domains can be posited a priori for all speech communities, since the set of activities which will constitute a cluster of purpose, role-relations, and setting will be culture-specific. Different levels of *focus* have also proved to be salient in different communities: e.g. societal–institutional (family, school, church, government) versus social–psychological (intimate, informal, formal, intergroup). These levels tend to coincide (family with intimate, for instance, and religious institution with formal), but may provide an interesting additional dimension for investigation (Fishman 1971).

Topic is often a primary determinant of language choice in multilingual contexts; bilinguals have often learned about some topics through the medium of one language and other topics through the medium of the second, and thus only know the vocabulary to discuss a topic in one of their languages, or feel it is more "natural" to use one language for a particular topic.

Linguists from non-English speaking countries who were trained in an English-medium university provide a good example: they sometimes continue to discuss, lecture, and publish about linguistics in English, often even when their students are not fluent in that language. This may be because they do not know the necessary terminology in their national language, or because they have come to believe it is more appropriate to use English to talk about such subjects as grammatical analysis, and even to use English examples rather than their own Chinese, Arabic, or Japanese. This may also be due in part to the "power" of English, as discussed in chapter 8.

In bilingual education programs in the United States, native speakers of other languages frequently find it easier to teach in English if they themselves are products of English-only education. For this reason, university training programs are recognizing the need to teach methods and content area courses in the language the teachers will be using to teach the subject. Some teachers have asserted it is impossible to teach a subject like American History in languages other than English because "only English can be used to express American concepts." A similar belief is held even more strongly by many Navajo teachers, that Navajo history and culture cannot be taught adequately in English. In this case, the Navajo language is believed to be so integrally related to the culture that religious beliefs must be understood in order to know how to use the language correctly, and the beliefs can be fully expressed only in Navajo.

In addition to topic, appropriate language choice may depend on *setting* (including locale and time of day) and *participants* (including their age, sex, and social status). A bilingual child may regularly use English at school with a grandmother if she has come to observe the class, and English at home with the teacher if he or she has come to visit. Language choice is also importantly influenced by social and political *identity* (discussed further in chapter 6), especially in areas of the world where regional or ethnic languages have become symbols for emerging nationalism (e.g., see Woolard 1987 on factors in speaker choice of Catalan versus Castilian in Spain).

Choice of varieties within a single language is governed by the same factors. Speakers may select from among regional varieties in their repertoire depending on which geographic area and subgroup of the population they wish to express identity with, or as they travel from one area to another. On a paralinguistic dimension, whispering is likely to be chosen for conversation in a church, or when the topic is one that should not be overheard by others, while shouting may be chosen for greeting out of doors, and from a distance. Shouting may be an appropriate choice even in this setting only for males under a certain age, and only when greeting other males of the same or lower age and status, or with other restrictions (including perhaps time of day). *Choice of channel* may depend on environmental conditions: drums may be used in jungle regions, signal fires where there are barren bluffs, and whistle languages or horns where there is low humidity. Choosing oral or written channels is usually dependent on distance, or the need for a permanent record.

Choice of register depends on the topic and setting, and also on the social distance between speakers. The possible complexity of levels of formality may be illustrated by different forms which would be chosen in a single speech event, in this case a Japanese woman offering tea in her home. According to Harumi Williams, the act of offering a cup of tea in upper- and middle-class homes demonstrates how Japanese place each other in society, and so requires careful choice of language forms and manner of speaking. The hierarchy of forms used with addressees of lower to higher status is usually as follows:

1 *Ocha?* (to own children) [tea]
2 *Ocha dō?* (to own children, friends who are younger than self, own younger brothers and sisters) [tea how-about]
3 *Ocha ikaga?* (to friends who are the same age, own older brothers and sisters) [tea how-about (polite)]
4 *Ocha ikaga desu ka?* (to husband, own parents, own aunts and uncles, husband's younger brothers and sisters) [tea how-about (polite) is Q]
5 *Ocha wa ikaga desu ka?* (to own grandparents) [tea topic how-about (polite) is Q]
6 *Ocha ikaga deshō ka?* (to husband's elder brothers and sisters) [tea how-about (polite) is (polite) Q]
7 *Ocha wa ikaga deshō ka?* (to teachers, husband's parents, husband's boss, husband's grandparents) [tea topic how-about (polite) is (polite) Q]

Williams reports that ranking varies with such factors as how often she sees the people, and the level of respect form used for her husband would be different if the marriage were *miai* 'arranged marriage' rather than *renai* 'love marriage.'

Nonverbal alternatives are also important in this event: when tea is offered in a Japanese *tatami* room it should not be offered standing, but standing is appropriate if the room is Western style. If there is a picture on the tea cup, the picture side should face the receiver; the cup should be held with the right hand on the body of the cup and the left supporting the base. When offering tea to people ranking higher than her own husband, a woman should bow slightly. Vocally, increased formality not only involves choice of higher level respect forms, but a higher pitched voice. In general, the longer the sentence, the more polite; but the most honorific expression is silence, which would be the appropriate choice when offering tea to a guest of a very high position in the society.

The choice of appropriate language forms is not only dependent on static categories, but on what precedes and follows in the communicative sequence, and on information which emerges within the event which may alter the relationship of participants.

Rules for language choice are usually not consciously formulated by native speakers, as they are in the Japanese example above, and must be inferred by the ethnographer from a variety of observation and interview techniques (which will be discussed in chapter 4). Essentially, the questions of language choice we are seeking answers to are: who uses what (variety of) language; with whom; about what; in what setting; for what purpose; and in what relationship to other communicative acts and events. Relating patterns of language choice within a speech community to these dimensions of context is discovering and describing the rules of communication.

Diglossia and Dinomia

The clearest example of language choice according to domain is *diglossia*, a situation in which two or more languages (or varieties of the same language) in a speech community are allocated to different social functions and contexts. When Latin was the language of education and religious services in England, for example, English and Latin were in a diglossic relationship.

The term was coined by Charles Ferguson (1959), who used it initially to refer only to the use of two or more varieties of the same language by speakers under different conditions. He exemplified it in the use of classical and colloquial varieties of Arabic, Katharevousa and Demotike varieties of Greek, Haitian Standard French and Creole, and Standard German and Swiss German. In each case, there is a high (H) and low (L) variety of a language used in the same society, and they have the following relationship:

1 There is a specialization of function for H and L.
2 H has a higher level of prestige than L, and is considered superior.
3 There is a literary heritage in H, but not in L.
4 There are different circumstances of acquisition; children learn L at home, and H in school.
5 The H variety is standardized, with a tradition of grammatical study and established norms and orthography.
6 The grammar of the H variety is more complex, more highly inflected.
7 H and L varieties share the bulk of their vocabularies, but there is some complementary distribution of terms.
8 The phonology of H and L is a single complex system.

Diglossia was extended by Fishman (1972) to include the use of more than one language, such as the situation in Paraguay where Spanish is the H language of school and government, and Guaraní is the L language of home (cf. Rubin 1968). Since the term diglossia refers to language distribution in

the whole society and not in the usage of individuals, the fact that only a relatively small percentage of the population of Paraguay speaks both H and L does not affect the designation; only those who speak Spanish have traditionally participated in education and government, although this situation may be changing with the advent of bilingual education. To distinguish societal and individual language distribution, Fishman suggests a four-way designation: both bilingualism and diglossia, diglossia without bilingualism, bilingualism without diglossia, and neither bilingualism nor diglossia.

Regional distribution is not a determining factor in identifying a diglossic society. French and Flemish are in complementary regional distribution in Belgium, but each is used for a full range of functions in each part of the country; this is characterized as bilingualism without diglossia. The situation in Paraguay is characterized as diglossia without bilingualism.

Most (but not all) of the features by which Ferguson characterized monolingual diglossia are also true of multilingual situations. There is a comparable specialization of function for H and L languages; the H language generally has more prestige; and L is learned at home and H at school. Also, although the L language in a multilingual society may well have a literary heritage, tradition of grammatical study and established norms and orthography, these often are not known to its speakers in a diglossic situation. The only clear differences between monolingual and multilingual diglossia are those that relate to the structures of the codes themselves: i.e. the relationship of their grammars, vocabularies, and phonological systems.

Because our interest in communicative behavior includes not only language structures, but also the social and cultural systems which govern how they are used, I have added the concept of *dinomia* (Saville-Troike 1978), which translates roughly from Greek as 'two systems of laws.' There are clear analogies between language domains and choice, and cultural domains and choice, and obvious parallels with language in the appropriate use of cultural rules, and in switching between alternative cultural systems. The minority culture first learned by many Spanish speakers in the United States, for instance, is comparable to the L variety of a language in a diglossic situation, and the dominant US "mainstream" culture is analogous to the H variety of a national language. Just as with L and H language varieties, the L culture is generally learned by children at home, and H at school; the H culture has more prestige in the society than the L; and there is a specialization of function for H and L. Dinomia may thus be defined as *the coexistence and complementary use within the same society of two cultural systems*, one of which is the dominant culture of the larger society and the other a subordinate and less prestigious subculture from within that same society. The relationship of these terms is shown in figure 3.1. As with diglossia, dinomia may apply to situations where there is an indigenous tradition of differences in sociocultural strata (often associated with urban/rural or

	Language code	Culture
Society	diglossia	dinomia
Individual	bilingualism	biculturalism

Figure 1

social or occupational class distinctions) and to situations which result from migration or conquest.

Dinomia, like diglossia, is a societal state of affairs; biculturalism, like bilingualism, refers to individual distribution. A society in which an entirely different set of cultural norms governs behavior in home and school, for example, is considered dinomic. This is the case in many African and Asian communities where Western educational systems (often including Western teaching and administrative personnel, as well as curriculum and instructional material) have been incorporated without adaptation into the indigenous cultures. This is also the case in the Navajo community, where the dominant US culture governs behaviors in most educational contexts, but a different culture governs behaviors at home (even though one language – either English or Navajo – may be used in both domains). Individual Navajos who are both bilingual and bicultural and travel off the reservation may change ways of speaking as well as language codes, including greeting forms, nonverbal behavior, and timing between questions and responses. A complete switch of rules for appropriate communicative behavior involves more than language; otherwise, the switch is only a partial one which identifies speakers as bilingual, but not bicultural.

Nonverbal aspects of communication are likely to prove more closely associated with dinomia and biculturalism than with bilingualism, since most individuals who can switch language codes with ease still use the gestures and proxemics of their native language, as well as its interactional strategies.

Part of my intent in coining the term dinomia is to separate language code from patterns of use of the language code (and other means of communication) at the societal level; it is quite possible for language codes and rules of communicative behavior (as part of culture) to be distributed differently in the society. Fishman (1980) has accepted the analogy of *diglossia/bilingualism: dinomia/biculturalism* given here, but suggests a narrower concept would be more useful, which he terms *di-ethnia*. However, a concept relating to ethnicity is not coordinate with the *language:culture* distinction envisioned here. To adapt his suggestion in turn, one may find cases of biculturalism with or without dinomia, as well as dinomia with and without either bilingualism or diglossia.

Code-Switching and Style-Shifting

Because of the proliferation of terms and inconsistent usage in the field, it is necessary to begin any discussion of this topic with definitions. I have been intentionally vague in using *varieties* to indicate any patterned or systematic differences in language forms and use which are recognized by native speakers as being distinct linguistic entities, or "different" from one another in some significant way. More precise distinctions must be made about types of varieties within any one speech community, but their nature cannot be presumed for all languages prior to investigation.

We first require a definition of *codes*, by which I will mean different languages, or quite different varieties of the same language (comparable to classical versus colloquial Arabic, or Katharevousa versus Demotike Greek). *Code-alternation* (Gumperz 1976) refers to change in language according to domain, or at other major communication boundaries, and *code-switching* to change in languages within a single speech event. *Style-shifting* will refer to change in language varieties which involves changing only the *code-markers*; these are variable features which are associated with such social and cultural dimensions as age, sex, social class, and relationship between speakers (discussed in the next section).

The distinction among these three types of code-variation is illustrated in the following sequence of speech acts (reported by Silverio-Borges) at the Cuban interest section office in an embassy in Washington, DC prior to official political recognition of the Castro government and full embassy status. To begin with, the receptionist is talking to a visitor in Spanish when the telephone rings. This *summons* marks a major boundary point, a change in events, and the receptionist changes to English (an example of *code-alternation*). The conversation begins:

1 Receptionist (R): *Cuban Interest Section.*
2 Caller (C): *¿Es la embajada de Cuba?* (Is this the Cuban embassy?)
→3 R: *Sí. Dígame.* (Yes, may I help you?)

This is an example of the receptionist *code-switching* (→) from English to Spanish, changing languages within the same speech event, because she had identified the caller as a Spanish speaker.

4 C: *Es Rosa.* (This is Rosa.)
↓ 5 R: *¡Ah, Rosa! ¿Cóma anda eso?* (Oh, Rosa! How is it going?)

This is downward *style-shifting* (↓) from formal to informal Spanish as the receptionist identifies the caller as a friend, still in the same event. There is a shift to more marked intonation and faster speed, as well as use of

the informal *¿Cóma anda eso?* rather than formal *¿Cómo le va?* or *¿Cómo* *usted?* There is also a change to louder voice volume because the cal recognized as long distance, which may also be considered a kind of st shifting. (I am introducing here an "arrow convention" to distinguish betw code-switching (→) and style-shifting (↑) or (↓), indicating shifts to hig or lower level, respectively.)

On another dimension, we may distinguish between *situational co switching* and *metaphorical code-switching* (Blom and Gumperz 1972) distinction which applies to style-shifting as well.

Situational code-switching occurs when a language change accompar a change of topics or participants, or any time the communicative situat is redefined. Within a single conversation, Navajo teachers usually sp English to one another when discussing matters related to school, for instar but may switch to Navajo to discuss their families, or rodeos and ot community activities. They may also situationally switch into English non-Navajo speakers join the conversation, so the new arrivals will not excluded. Nishimura (1997) describes switching among three codes second-generation Japanese-English bilinguals (Niseis) in Canada deper ing on their addressees: a basically Japanese code to Japanese-domin speakers, a basically English code to other Niseis, and a combination of two when a group being addressed includes both. Code-switching wit a conversation may be used to create a new *participation framework*, or sl in "footing" (Goffman 1979). Cromdal and Aronsson describe this p nomenon in the context of children's interaction in an English-Swed setting as "important rhetorical and dramaturgic play devices, e.g. when c textualizing changes of addressee and shifts of frame (e.g. serious, nonseriou (2000: 435).

Style may also shift situationally within a conversation, perhaps as addressee shifts from female to male, or adult to child, or with a shift topic from personal to work-related: e.g., D. H. Lawrence employs sty shifting as a literary device to redefine situations in *Lady Chatterley's Lo* as Mellors shifts from standard English to a "broad Derbyshire dialect" w changes in topic and addressee (Shuy 1975). Similarly, N. Scott Momac makes conscious and effective artistic use of style alternation in *On the W to Rainy Mountain* to cyclically tell stories in three different voices: ancestral voice of Kiowa tradition, the voice of historical commentary, a the voice of personal reminiscence.

Metaphorical code-switching occurs within a single situation, but ac meaning to such components as the role-relationships which are be expressed. Since speaking different languages is an obvious marker of c ferential group membership, by switching languages bilinguals often h the option of choosing which group to identify with in a particular situati and thus can convey the metaphorical meaning which goes along with su choice as well as whatever denotative meaning is conveyed by the code its

An example of such metaphorical switching was reported by Tuladhar, who described an event which occurred at a border checkpost between India and Nepal. A woman was stopped by the guard, accused of carrying too much tea, and threatened with a heavy fine. The woman first used Nepali (the official language) to make an appeal to the law, and to argue on legal grounds that she was within her limits of legitimate allowances. From the guard's accent in Nepali she inferred he was also a native speaker of Newari and switched into that language to make an entreaty on the grounds of common ethnic identity, an appeal to solidarity. She finally switched into English "for formulation of thought above the system," which was both an implicit attack on the corruption of the system, and an assertion that she belonged to an educated class in society which had no intent or need of "smuggling" across a few packages of tea. She consciously used code-switching as a verbal strategy in this instance, and was successful.

A third type is *discourse contextualization switching*, defined by Bailey as switches which "do not co-occur with external changes in the context or significant shifts in sociocultural framework" (2000: 242). These function to frame components such as quotations, to mark them off from surrounding verbal context.

Yet another dimension to be distinguished is the scope of switching, or the nature of the juncture at which language change takes place. The basic distinction in scope is usually between *intersentential switching*, or change which occurs between sentences or speech acts, and *intrasentential switching*, or change which occurs within a single sentence. Some sociolinguists refer to the latter type as "code-mixing," but I avoid that term because of the pejorative connotation it carries that intrasentential switching involves a random or unprincipled combination of languages.

I recorded the following examples of intrasentential switching by Navajo-English (1)–(3) and Chinese-English (4)–(6) bilingual children. These are the most common type, which involves the incorporation of a single noun, noun phrase, or "routine" (i.e. memorized chunk) from one language into the other.

1 *The boy → łééchaʼí bilanné.*
[dog with-him-playing]
'The dog is playing with the boy.'
2 *Table → yaa sidá.*
[under-it seated]
'[He] is seated under the table.'
3 *Table → tł'ááhi → dollie → dóó → drum → sinil.*
[under] [and] [are (in position)]
'The doll and drum are under the table.'

4 *Neige → fox → yao chi ta.*
[that] [want eat him]
'That fox wants to eat him.' (Telling a story)
5 *Ta yong yige → picture of a fox.*
[he use a]
'He used a picture of a fox.' (Another child telling the same story)
6 *Clean up time → le.*
[aspect marker]
'It's already clean up time.'

Switches at other constituent boundaries occur, but with much less frequency (e.g. example 7 in Navajo and English):

7 *Boy is → łééchaʼí yilaané.*
[dog with-it-playing]
'The boy is playing with the dog.'

Gunarwan recorded informal conversation among Bahasa Indonesian (I), Dutch (D), and English (E) trilinguals, including the following sentences:

1 (I) *Akan ada rapat* → (D) *van avond.*
[will be meeting] [this evening]
'There will be a meeting this evening.'
2 (D) *Samengaan,* → (I) *yok?*
[go-together] [let's]
'Shall we go together?'
3 (I) *Berapa panjangnya* → (E) *this side?*
[how-many length-the]
'How long is this side?'
4 (I) *Jam berapa* → (E) *New Year's Eve's party* → (I) *-nya?*
[clock how-many] [the]
'What time is the New Year's Eve party?'

The greatest number of his examples are also of switching for a noun phrase, but some are at other constituent boundaries (e.g. the tag in 2), and some even within words (e.g. the article in 4, which is a suffix). Gunarwan reports some utterances in which all three languages were used by the same speakers within a single turn:

5 (I) *Ini, ini.* → (D) *Tien* → (E) *centimeter.*
[this this] [ten]
'This, this. Ten centimeters.'

6 (I) *Ee,* → (D) *Tante, je hebt verkeerd gedaan.* →
[hey] [aunt you have mistake made]
(I) *Kan harus begini.* → (E) *You see?*
[must like-this]
'Hey, Aunt, you have made a mistake. It should be like this. You see?'

When the two languages used in intrasentential switching do not share the same word order, an additional distinction is needed between *guest* and *host* languages in an utterance (e.g. Sridhar and Sridhar 1980), or between *matrix* and *embedded* languages in Myers-Scotton's (1993) model. The host or matrix language is the one to which the basic grammatical structure is assigned; elements of the guest or embedded language are switched into it following systematic rules and constraints. In the following sentence, for instance, a child inserted an English noun while maintaining Korean Subject-Object-Verb word order (Korean-English examples from Oh 1988):

Na → *toy* → *chueyo.*
[me] [give]
'Give me a toy.'

Korean is also considered the host or matrix language in the following example, where a Korean inflection (s.m. = subject marker) is attached to an English noun:

Bird → *-ga wasseyo.*
[s.m. came]
'The bird came.'

The guest language or embedded component may maintain its own integrity of word order, as in the following sentence (in this case, Korean is embedded in an English structure):

I'm → *palli wa* → *-ing.*
[quick come]
'I'm coming quickly.'

The integrity of embedded structures is further illustrated in the following utterance by an adult Arabic speaker from Jordan, who was receiving technical training in electronics in the US (Al-Rusan):

Es → *circuit* → *lat ṭandhīm,* → *but you can bypass it* →
[the] [this regulator]
bidūn mushkileh idha kān el → *voltage* → *9adi.*
[without problem if was the] [normal]
'This is a regulator circuit, but you can bypass it without any problem if the voltage is normal.'

There is need to distinguish further between code-switching and borrowing, in which lexical items from one language are adapted phonologically to the sound system of the other, and are frequently subject to its morphological inflections. If someone says *I'm going to* <u>*Los Angeles*</u> (pronounced as Anglicized [las ænǰıləs]), the place name is a borrowing from Spanish. If someone says *I'm going to* → <u>*[los ánxeles]*</u>, using Spanish pronunciation, they are code-switching. Similarly, *He's going to work on one of the kibbutzes next year* includes a lexical borrowing from Hebrew because the term *kibbutz* has been used with an English plural inflection. *He's going to work on one of the* → <u>*kibbutzim*</u> → *next year* is code-switching for some, because the Hebrew plural inflection is used along with the lexical item.

This is not an absolute distinction, because there are lexical borrowings in English such as *datum*, *data*, *alumnus*, and *alumni* where these have included the morphological inflection and they have been incorporated as exceptions in English grammar; this does not mean they involve code-switching into Latin. *Kibbutzim* is a borrowing in English for those who are not consciously using a Hebrew inflection. Speakers' attitudes about how "native" a word is must be taken into account, as well as formal criteria. It is possible that a word which is a borrowing for the person speaking may be perceived as code-switching by the listener, or vice versa, depending on subgroup membership within the speech community. A New Yorker may use Yiddish words like *schlemiel* and *schlok* quite natively, but the initial consonant sequence is considered non-English in most other parts of the country, and thus code-switching.

Intrasentential style-shifting occurs when the variety of language being used changes within a sentence, as in *Hi,* ↑ *Mr. President*, where an informal greeting is followed by a formal term of address. A more extreme example is *Hey,* ↑ *Professor Smith,* ↓ *ain't ya'* ↑ *promulgating* ↓ *a gob of* ↑ *unwarranted presuppositions?*, which involves not only a shift in level of formality between greeting and term of address, but also in grammar and lexicon.

Unless it is being intentionally used for humorous purposes, such shifting is likely to be viewed negatively as "style-slipping" by school teachers, particularly if it occurs in a written mode. In other languages, however, such intrasentential style-shifting may be quite appropriate. In Javanese (prior to World War II), for instance, there were at least three levels of "status styles" encoded in both grammar and lexicon: *Krama*, the most formal and polite (H); *Madya*, intermediate (M); and *Ngoko*, informal (L). Since the

choice of levels to be used depended not only on the relationship and relative status of speaker and hearer, but also on that of persons being referred to, a single sentence often contained words from different levels. If a speaker was using an H style to speak to a person of superior rank and said:

Dalem bade ↓ *kesah* ↑ *dateng* ↓ *gryanipun katja* ↑ *dalem.*
H H M H M M H
'I am going to my friend's house.'

the forms referring to 'I go' and 'friend's house' would be shifted down to M. If he was using M style speaking to a friend and said:

Kula adjeng kesah teng ↑ *daleme pak guru.*
M M M M H H H
'I am going to my teacher's house.'

he would shift the forms referring to 'teacher's house' up to H (examples from Retmono 1967).

The sociolinguistic resources on the island expanded with the addition of the Bahasa Indonesia language; switching became more complex, illustrating the analogous functions of alternating styles and languages. Errington (1998) reports that *Ngoko* and *Básá* styles of Javanese are used for lower and higher references, respectively, with Indonesian serving a more objectifying, referential function.

Some languages, such as Japanese, mark foreign words as such visually in their written form (using katakana rather than the usual hiragana symbols for Western borrowings, and kanji for Sino-Japanese), which adds another dimension to code-switching. Studies of code-switching have been limited almost entirely to the spoken channel of communication, but consideration should be given to written and nonverbal channels as well.

A number of linguists have suggested universal constraints on where within a sentence switching may occur, and interest in this topic continues (e.g., see Muysken 2000). Our emphasis here is rather on the variety of functions that code-switching and style-shifting may have within or between speech communities: group identification, solidarity, distancing, and redefinition of a situation have already been mentioned. Additionally, switching languages may serve either to soften or strengthen a request or command, and saying something twice in different languages may serve either to intensify or to eliminate ambiguity. Jong A. Kiem reports that a superlative seems more powerful in Sranan than Dutch, for instance, and that a bilingual reduplication is used if something is really "out of this world." Morray provides the following examples for degrees of intensification in Sranan: *pikin* 'small'; *pikin-pikin* 'very small'; *pikin-tjoti* 'very, very small' ('small' in Sranan + 'small' in Hindi).

Even young children make use of the choices in their linguistic repertoire for a variety of communicative purposes. They commonly use intrasentential code-switching, for instance, to give additional force to part of an utterance, such as highlighting the object of a claim or the thrust of an insult. The following insults were uttered by two four-year-old boys, the first Korean and the second Chinese, each in talking to his younger brother:

1 *He is a* → *baba.*
[idiot]
'He is an idiot.' (Referring to a third Korean child they were playing with)

2 *Ni shi* → *rug.*
[you are]
'You are a rug.'

In both of these cases, the child also knew the switched lexical item in the other language.

This strategy is in contrast to the intersentential code-switching that children often use to speak disparagingly about speakers of other languages who are within hearing when they do not wish them to understand. For example, a four-year-old Chinese girl spoke disrespectfully of two nearby nursery school teachers, knowing they did not understand Chinese:

3 *Tamen hao taoyan ei. Taoyande laoshi.*
'They are very disgusting. Disgusting teachers.'

A final example of this strategy involved a twelve-year-old Korean boy who was speaking to his brother disapprovingly about an Icelandic girl who was trying to talk to him:

4 *Zigo mueonde?*
'Who is she [to tell me]?'

Code-switching may be quite unconscious, and the fact of switching itself may be as meaningful in expressing a closer or more informal relationship as the referential content or specific language forms used. Blom and Gumperz (1972) report that speakers in Norway could not accurately recall their own switches between Ranamål, the local dialect, and Bokmål, the standard, and census takers in India have reported individuals who are not even aware of being bilingual although they can converse in more than one language, depending on the addressee (Kachru 1977).

Metaphorical style-shifting occurs in such situations as faculty meetings, where professors may address each other formally by title when making

motions and conducting other official business, but shift to a first name level when trying to win the support of a colleague for their point of view. In some universities a ritual shift occurs at the end of a successful dissertation defense, when professors address the (former) student as *Doctor* and may invite first names in return.

Mohammed Abdulaziz (personal communication) reports policemen in Kenya switch from Swahili to Pidgin English to establish authority in a confrontation situation, and professors may switch into English if someone comes to their office at an inconvenient time. They may say in English, "Oh, did we have an appointment at this time?" but different rules would be in operation if they used Swahili, and a referentially comparable expression would be considered rude. (If the visitor dropped by their house instead of their office, the professors would be constrained from switching into English, and would have no choice but to take time to visit.)

Switching may also be used for a humorous effect, or to indicate that a referentially derogatory comment is not to be taken seriously. It is also used for direct quotations, which may range from stereotypical imitative speech in joking to learned citations in Latin or Greek.

Switching may occur because of real lexical need, sometimes because formulaic expressions in one language cannot be satisfactorily translated into the second, sometimes because the speaker knows the desired expression only in one language, and sometime because access to one of the languages is diminished (perhaps in the process of language attrition). The first of these reasons explains why native speakers of English who have learned some French, German, or Arabic continue to use such expressions as *savoir faire*, *macht's nichts*, and *inshallah*, respectively, in otherwise English sentences, and why speakers of many other languages insert English *OK*.

The following examples illustrate the second and third types of lexical need (from Saville-Troike, Pan, and Dutkova 1995). These utterances were produced by children living in an English-dominant social setting. The first three show children inserting English lexical items for terms they do not know in their first language:

1 *Birthday cake* → *deedą́ą́.*
[it-we-ate]
'We ate a birthday cake.' (Navajo child, at 3 years 7 months)

2 *Wo gang gang cai* → *butter pecan.*
[I just to]
'I'm just now up to butter pecan.' (Chinese child, at 4 years 4 months, referring to a flavor of ice cream)

3 *Tohle je mu:j* → *summer sandwich.*
[this is my]
'This is my summer sandwich.' (Czech child, at 7 years 10 months)

The next three examples are utterances by children from the same first language groups who are more strongly influenced by English, due to longer periods of residence in the US (in the case of the Czech and Chinese speakers) or to stronger English dominance at home (in the case of the Navajo). These illustrate progressive incorporation from single words to longer segments, which we found to be a common pattern for children who seem to have decreasing access to their first language in processing:

4 *Shima* → *house clean* → *iilee.*
[my-mother] [it-do]
'My mother is cleaning house.' (Navajo child, at 4 years 0 months)

5 *Wo* → *wish* → *women* → *could build a house just for ourselves.*
[I] [we]
'I wish we could build a house just for ourselves.' (Chinese child, at 6 years 1 month)

6 *Homework* → *ya: ma:m kazhdey den* → *except Friday, Saturday, and Sunday.*
[I have every day]
'Homework I have every day except Friday, Saturday, and Sunday.' (Czech child, at 8 years 2 months)

Yet another social function of code-switching is to exclude other people within hearing if a comment is intended for only a limited audience, such as some of the children's insults I reported earlier. This may be considered rude, but it is not necessarily so. A Tanzanian professor residing in the United States, for instance, says that in the presence of guests in their home a husband and wife would employ code-switching for discussion concerning the comfort and needs of their guests. The exclusionary function was used by US President and Mrs. Herbert Hoover around the White House; they reportedly switched into Chinese when they did not wish to be understood by others. My husband made similar use of this strategy when we were hosting friends for dinner in a restaurant and he asked me in Chinese, *You qian ma?* 'Do you have any money?' In such situations, the other language functions as a "secret" language, as may artificial creations.

Indeed, the use of secret codes is apparently very common. In one study of the phenomenon, Gaudart (1995) reported that 94percent of her Malaysian informants who are speakers of English consciously used a code that they knew some listeners in the group would not understand. In addition to the exclusionary and "face-saving" functions noted above, many mentioned inclusion (group identity and group cohesiveness) and some "playing with language." Secret codes reported in Malaysia included "F Language," which involves the insertion of /f/ after every vowel. The secret languages of my own teen years were "Op Talk" and "Circus Language," which used insertion

of /ap/ or /iyəz/, respectively, in each syllable to make the words uninterpretable to listeners who didn't know the rule. Fluent speakers of these codes who were members of my church youth group could even perform recitation of Bible scriptures in the "languages," exemplifying both inclusive and playful motivation.

Most phonological changes intended to obscure various languages are quite simple. Of the secret varieties of Welsh which have been described, for instance, two involved merely inserting a vowel plus consonant in each syllable (Awbery 1984). (This process is essentially the same as the one I described for the creation of "Op Talk" and "Circus Language" in English.) These two Welsh varieties appear to have been quite widely used, while the distribution of another with a more complex structure seems to have been much more limited.

Code-switching is also used as an avoidance strategy, either if certain forms are incompletely learned in one of the languages, or if one language requires (usually because of pronominal selection or verb inflection) a social status distinction one does not wish to make. For this latter reason, a speaker of a status-marking language such as Korean or Thai may switch to English with another speaker of that language when he or she prefers not to be deferential.

In some cases code-switching functions as a repair strategy, when the speakers realize they have been using an inappropriate code. This was a relatively frequent occurrence in Greece, during the period when liberal politicians trained in a rhetorical tradition which ranked Katharevousa over Demotike for formal speaking realized they were (ironically) using Katharevousa to advocate democratization of the national language. Shifting for repair is necessary when speakers realize they have begun an event, such as a telephone conversation, at an inappropriate stylistic level. The unitary nature of the telephone calling/answering routine is evident in the fact that such repair usually requires backing up to start over with a different greeting form, rather than switching or shifting in the middle of the routine.

Switching may be used to make an ideological statement, as in the case of Mexican Americans referring to New Mexico as *Nuevo Mexico* [méxiko], or Texas as [téxas], in an otherwise English sentence. Not infrequently, such switching is employed even by monolingual speakers of English or English-dominant bilinguals who wish to assert their Hispanic ancestry. A contrasting function was observed in Barcelona during a period of considerable tension between speakers of Castilian and Catalan (Woolard 1987). Code-switching by a popular entertainer there helped to ease group boundaries, serving for boundary-leveling rather than for maintenance. Also involved in the Barcelona events was *bivalency*, or "the use by a bilingual of words or segments that could 'belong' equally . . . to both codes" (Woolard 1999: 7). Similar integration of ethnic identities has often been served by code-switching in

literature: for instance, Jean Giraudoux's *Ondine*, written in 1939, alternates lines in French and German to convey dual allegiances as war was breaking out between the two countries; and T. S. Eliot's *The Waste Land*, written at the end of World War I, alternates lines written by Wagner in German with lines written in English in order to convey a juxtaposition of emotions in a manner that a single language could not have achieved. In analyzing this poem, Kramsch says:

> The pain evoked by one language (the fear of death in the memory of a war that pitted English speakers against German) is soothed by the other (in Tristan and Isolde's longing for love and death). The combination of the two codes expresses a tragic mixture of sweetness and sadness. (1997: 367)

Using strategies of linguistic integration, entirely new identities may be created:

> By appropriating the language of others, multilingual speakers create new discourse communities whose areal existence monolingual speakers hardly suspect. (Kramsch 1997: 365)

Attitudes toward language switching and shifting are of interest for ethnographic description. These appear to be changing rapidly among English-speaking bilinguals in the United States, with the ability to code-switch now widely accepted as a symbol of ethnic viability and integrity. This is evident in the fact that in the American Southwest poetry is being written, songs sung, plays performed, and formal speeches delivered in an alternating Spanish-English mode (e.g., see Valdés 1977; Lipski 1982). Radio and television stations also utilize code-switching in commentaries and commercials. There are still conflicting attitudes about the phenomenon, however, based on both age and political sentiment.

Whatever specific functions are served by code-switching within and across communities, it adds to the verbal strategies that speakers have at their command, and is to be recognized as a dimension of communicative competence.

Code-Markers

The concept of code-markers is based on the distinction between *marked* and *unmarked* language forms which was first developed within the Prague School of linguistics. This distinction may be applied to all aspects of communicative behavior, and indeed has been adopted for more general

descriptive and explanatory purposes, including language choice (e.g., see Myers-Scotton 1998). The basic assumption is that behavior can be distinguished as marked or unmarked according to certain component features, and that the unmarked is more neutral, more normal, or more expected.

In explaining the recognition and interpretation of different varieties of language within a speech community, it is necessary to assume that speakers have a concept of naturalness both for their language in general and in any specific context. Markedness on the more general level identifies language forms as belonging to a particular variety, such as a regional dialect, register, or social category. Markedness in a specific context refers to usage which calls attention to itself, like an Australian variety of English being spoken in Canada, a formal register being used in an intimate relationship, feminine gestures and interaction strategies being used by a male, or adult language structures being used by a young child.

Language forms must be perceptibly different in some systematic way to be recognized as distinct varieties. Variability in any aspect of a language may potentially serve a marking function, including vocabulary, pronunciation, grammar, paralinguistic elements, and visual appearance (in the case of written and manual forms). Variation in interactional strategies may also pattern along these dimensions. Different variables will be considered significant in each speech community, so no single set may be posited, and different aspects of language may mark different kinds of varieties within a single community. In American English, for instance, regional varieties are most marked by vocabulary and pronunciation features, but seldom by grammar; social class is most marked by grammatical features; ethnicity, sex, age, and personality most by pronunciation, paralinguistic features, and discourse strategies; and register most by vocabulary, grammatical complexity, and rhetorical organization.

It is possible that some kinds of linguistic features are inherently more suitable for signaling particular kinds of social meaning, but it remains a topic for empirical investigation. The lexical, syntactic, and rhetorical features marking register in English are more likely to be under conscious control than the phonological and paralinguistic features marking ethnicity, sex, age, and personality, and thus more likely to be available for manipulation. Since relative level of consciousness is related to both circumstances of acquisition and neurological factors, it is a possible universal.

Although some neurological factors are also involved in determining how much of a difference in language productions will be perceived by humans, no single degree of variability can be established as significant in all languages; very small differences in an absolute sense may carry a heavy load of social information, while major absolute differences may be socially meaningless. The difference between [s] and [š] is the shibboleth of Biblical days (Judges 12: 4–6), which served a password function with mortal

consequences, yet the same variation in Tonkawa (once indigenous to Texas) apparently carried no social weight, and may not have even been noticed, e.g. as in [maslak] versus [mašlak] 'white.'

The term *code-marker* as I am using it includes all variable features which are available to members of a speech community for distinguishing among the varieties of a language in their communicative repertoire. It includes social markers (which mark such characteristics as social and educational status, occupation, and regional affiliation), physical markers (which mark such characteristics as age, sex, and physical condition), and psychological markers (which mark personality characteristics and affective states) (cf. Laver and Trudgill 1979).

In identifying and defining what a linguistic variable is, Labov (1972) distinguishes among three levels of these features, which he calls *indicator*, *marker* (with a different meaning than that used here), and *stereotype*. An indicator is a variable which is not perceived at a highly conscious level in the speech community, although it does serve to mark varieties of language. The pronunciation of *caught* with the same vowel as *cot*, for instance, is one regional marker in American English, but it does not carry much social significance. A marker for Labov is a variable which has taken on social valuation, and is perceived at a conscious level. Voicing of the medial consonant in *greasy* is also a regional distinction in English, but one that has more social significance: the voiced variant [z] generally carries a pejorative connotation toward the object being described for users of the [s]; the pronunciation is quite consciously perceived, and regional identity of the speaker inferred. The New York [r]-less variable described by Labov (1966) is also at this level, as is calling the evening meal *dinner* versus *supper*. Because this marker level is conscious, such variables may be used for intentional metaphorical switching, while indicators may not.

A stereotype for Labov is the highest level of code-marking. It is likely to be commented on, and is used in characterizing groups when joking about them, but it need not conform to actual usage. Someone from Brooklyn (New York) may be characterized as saying *Toidy Toid (33rd) Street*, but that pronunciation is disappearing from actual use because of being heavily stigmatized. Similarly, French speakers when speaking English are stereotyped as saying *I sink (think)*, Texans as greeting everyone with *Howdy, pardner*, and Britishers as calling all men *chap*. Others in the speech community will recognize the group being referred to by such marking since this, too, is part of communicative competence, but it does not necessarily conform to linguistic reality.

Some code-markers are absolute, or *categorical* in their distribution, occurring only and always in a particular variety of language, but most are *gradient phenomena* which occur more or less in one variety than in another. It is not clear exactly how and to what extent native speakers interpret

relative frequencies of marked occurrence, but perception is undoubtedly conditioned by the relative importance of the social information its use conveys.

Determining the social meaning of code-markers is an important contribution of qualitative ethnographic research to variation theory, since "Quantitative techniques can only sensibly be applied after a prior examination of the dependencies that a linguistic variable's significance has on other aspects of interaction structure and process" (Brown and Levinson 1979: 333). An illustration of the contrastive meaning which may be conveyed by alternating variables is found in Huspek's (1986) analysis of *-ing* versus *-in* in workers' speech. Huspek found that *He went jogging* conveyed an attitude of either respect or resentment toward the individual being referred to, while *He went joggin'* conveyed lower social status, but also in-group identification. On the other hand, the same linguistic variable may have different social meaning depending on other features in the interaction situation, and on other code-markers which may be present. The same intonational variables which mark "baby talk" signal warmth and affection toward a young child, but may be interpreted as mocking and demeaning if used with an older child or adult, for instance, and the [r]-less variant which has negative valuation when used by a working-class native of New York is a marker of social prestige when it (along with the different variants in vowel quality and lexicon) indicates the speaker is an upper-class native of Boston.

Statistical analysis of frequencies and correlations may help to verify or define certain tentatively identified relationships, but in general the identification of hypotheses to be tested regarding possible relationships should precede the application of statistical techniques. Occasionally, however, quantitative analysis will reveal previously unrecognized associations, or will demonstrate regular patterns in data which seemed amorphous.

The following sections of this chapter illustrate a number of the social and cultural dimensions with which varieties of language might be associated in a speech community, and the range of communicative phenomena which might be marked.

Varieties Associated with Setting

Varieties of language which are more closely associated with the setting or scene in which they are used than with the people who are using them are usually included in the concept of *register*, and distinguished from one another primarily on the dimension of relative formality.

The physical setting of an event may call for the use of a different variety of language even when the same general purpose is being served, and when

the same participants are involved. English greeting forms may differ inside a building versus outside, for instance, or inside an office versus inside a church, as well as between participants at differing distances from one another. In this case, primary markers are voice level and nonverbal behaviors, but often also involve a choice of lexical and grammatical structures along a polite-casual, impersonal-personal, sacred-secular, or public-private dimension; all of these may be generally subsumed under formal-informal (Brown and Fraser 1979).

In question-and-answer exchanges between professor and students, appropriate language use is determined in large part by the setting, including the size of the room and the seating arrangement (e.g. chairs in fixed rows, in a circle, or around a conference table). In this case, different levels of formality are signaled primarily by whether or not students are expected to raise their hands and be formally recognized before speaking, and by whether or not strict turn-taking applies. Relative level of formality as determined by the setting will also affect how questions and answers are phrased, and what topics may be queried.

A formal greeting in a locker room would be considered a highly marked communicative event (especially if the participants were not fully clothed), as would informal questions and interruptions by students in a large lecture hall. In these cases where level of formality in language use does not coincide with level of formality in the setting, language may serve to increase or decrease the distance between speakers. When physical distance cannot be maintained for some reason, such as in a crowded Japanese household where all four grandparents sometimes live with children and grandchildren, very polite language (the highest form of *Keigo*) may be used to maintain social distance, even though a less formal variety of Japanese would normally be appropriate.

In some communities a particular setting is required for an event to take place: e.g., there may be a particular place in which it is appropriate to pray, or teach, or to tell stories, and these events are often concomitant with choice of different language varieties. Language restrictions or taboos are also often related to setting, such as constraints against talking about certain topics at the dining table, whistling in the house, or cursing in a place of worship.

Varieties Associated with Activity Domain

Included in this category are languages or varieties of language which serve the wide-ranging purposes of groups that are organized along lines of shared beliefs, skills or training, and interests, and which are used in the conduct of their affairs. For illustrative purposes, we will consider the diverse domains

of religion, secret societies, governmental agencies, occupations, and hobbies or special interests. With the exception of some religious sects into which children may be enculturated from infancy, these languages and varieties share the trait of being no one's "native" language code; their addition may thus be conceived of as extended acquisition of communicative competence (discussed in chapter 7).

Language codes used primarily for religious purposes include Geez by Christians in Ethiopia, Latin by Catholics, Classical Arabic by Muslims, and Pali by Buddhists.

> When a Japanese Buddhist priest in a California Buddhist church recites a sutra in Pali with his English-speaking congregation, this is a fine example of the spread of a particular language variety over enormous distances in space and time. When accounts of the Buddha and his sayings were collected and came to be accepted as the canon of Buddhist scripture, they were in a Middle Indo-Aryan language, Pali, whose exact provenience is not clear. When the Pali scriptures were used in worship in India and Ceylon, the language functioned as a special religious register in many speech communities where related Indo-Aryan languages were the worshippers' mother tongues. When Buddhism spread to areas such as Burma, Thailand, China, and Japan, the sacred scripture went along. Buddhist missionaries and scholars translated Pali and Sanskrit texts into other languages, but just about everywhere at least some uses of Pali were kept. In these new areas, the Pali language, still functioning as a religious register, was no longer related at all to the language of the worshippers, but retained its aura of sacredness. (Ferguson 1978: 3)

The use of glossolalia, or 'speaking in tongues,' by certain charismatic Christian groups also exemplifies language choice for religious purposes, although much of its meaning is conveyed through features other than verbal code (Goodman 1969). Certain language forms themselves are believed in some communities to be prescribed by a supernatural being and the only ones mortals may use for communication with that force, or they may be considered the medium through which the supernatural may speak to humans. In other cases the language forms themselves are considered imbued with power, and they may be used to control the forces of nature. Harding (2000) adds the level of narrative framework for consideration, including fundamentalist Christian preacher Jerry Falwell's adaptation of biblical forms to contemporary themes and self-presentation, and to performance in contexts of modern media and political power.

When the same language is used in a community for both secular and religious purposes, the religious variety is often marked by more conservative forms: e.g. second person *thou*, *thee*, and *thy* in English. Other common markers are lexical (such as the use of different terms of address, or words used with unique meanings), morphological (often involving more deferential

forms), paralinguistic (intoned speech, or different patterns of pitch, stress, and rhythm), and kinesic (head, hand, and body position and movement). Different channels of communication are often utilized, including bones, shells, horns, and drums, and receptive senses may be heightened or otherwise altered by drugs and trance states. Organization of discourse in religious events is frequently marked, including prescribed ritual openings and closings and the genre-specific "one-many dialog, in which a speaker addresses the whole group and receives a unison response" (Ferguson 1986: 209).

Some opponents of modernization of the English Bible believe that modernization ignores speakers' feelings that sacred beliefs are more appropriately expressed in a "special" code rather than an everyday one, and that modernization thus reduces the capacity of English to serve aesthetic and religious purposes. Those who disagree often support Biblical language modernization on the grounds that religion should be accessible to each person without need for interpretation by others, and thus that its concepts are more appropriately expressed in the vernacular. Because the religious functions of language are not the same in all speech communities, any resolution of this controversy cannot necessarily be generalized to other societies.

A comparable issue in dispute is whether language used for such specialized purposes as curing, legal briefs, or contracts should be a "special" variety, or "plain" language. Specialized forms are required in many communities for curing rituals, including among the Rosebud Sioux, where a formal style of Lakota is used for such purposes.

> Labels for herbs, medicines and powers as well as prayers are uttered in the formal style because proper ritual prescriptions must be observed if the spirits are to respond as desired. Prayer is almost always spoken in formal speech, as supplication must be in the ritually prescribed form to be received. (Grobsmith 1979: 357–8)

Sociolinguists studying doctor–patient communication in English (e.g. Shuy 1974; Skopek 1975; Pliskin 1987) document the misunderstanding which can result when technical medical terms are used, but many patients do not have faith in a doctor who "doesn't talk like one."

Specialized varieties of language are often used when the purpose is to be secretive, or to deceive, although this function sometimes merely involves change in vocal quality (whispering). Argots have been created by criminals for secret communication among themselves since the days of the Roman underworld (Maurer 1940), and adolescents in many societies use a secret code comparable to Pig Latin in English, which involves permutation and addition of phonological segments. In a bar district of Addis Ababa, for instance, an Amharic argot which was created by schoolboys has reportedly been adopted by unattached young women for such purposes as "concealing

conversations and planning tricks at the customers' expense" (Demisse and Bender 1983: 340). The pattern also primarily involves phonological substitution and duplication, but in this case there is in addition grammatical change, with occurrence of compound verbs in a form that does not occur in "normal" Amharic.

Franklin (1977) describes three types of secret speech among the Kewa of New Guinea. *Ramula agaa* 'pandanus language' is used to protect people who travel in swamp forest areas where ghosts and wild dogs are present. People are instructed by their ancestors not to speak their "normal" language, and to use a secret variety marked by special vocabulary. *Mumu n agaa* 'whispering talk' is used whenever others within hearing of speech produced at normal volume are not supposed to know what is going on, as when the topic is trading, bespelling, or stealing something. *Kudiri ne agaa* refers to 'secret talk,' or talk limited to insiders, such as cult initiates. The first of these types is for external secrecy, known by all in the speech community and directed toward outsiders; the latter two are for internal secrecy, or inhibition of information flow within the community.

Brandt (1977) describes these phenomena in Pueblo societies, where internal secrecy assures that no single member possesses all necessary information for the performance of rituals, and preserves the interdependence of subgroups in the social organization. Pueblo strategies for secrecy include: barring outsiders from performance of ceremonies in ritual spaces, such as kivas; constructing false and misleading information; evasion of questions; purging the language of Spanish and English loanwords in the presence of those who might understand them (sometimes requiring elaborate circumlocutions); use of special ritual varieties which contain archaic words, borrowings from other languages, and different semantic systems (i.e. different referents); and special styles of speaking, such as "talking backwards."

Specialized language for governmental purposes in most Western societies includes the extensive use of acronyms (often deliberately chosen for pronounceability) to designate administrative units: e.g. US *OBEMLA* 'Office of Bilingual Educational and Minority Language Affairs,' British *CILT* 'Centre for Information on Language Teaching,' Belgian *AIMAV* 'Association Internationale pour la Recherche et la Diffusion des Méthodes Audio-visuelles et Structuros Globales,' Mexican *INI* 'Instituto Nacional Indigenista,' Peruvian *CILA* 'Centro de Investigación en Linguística Applicada.' This pattern is generally tied to an alphabetic writing system; Chinese, in contrast, regularly selects elements for combination that are no smaller than what is represented by a single character, as in *Bei Da* for *Bejing Daxue* 'Peking University.' In part, however, patterns are also related to political orientation. Since the communist revolution, the Russian pattern has been to use the first syllable of words rather than the initial letters; this

pattern was used metaphorically by Orwell in *Nineteen Eighty-Four* fo designating administrative units. The association of this linguistic patter with a particular kind of political system is further illustrated by Cuba change from an acronym to *Min Ed* 'Ministerio de Educatión' with th rise of Castro to power. Further study of comparable patterns in othe speech communities would be of interest, especially as they are related bot to typological features of language structures and orthographic systems, an to sociocultural features of the society. Specialized vocabulary and phrase must also be mastered in order to communicate about governmental func tions and processes, as in US "federalese": *zero-based budgeting*, *inhous capabilities*, *RFP* (request for proposal), and *regs* (regulations).

Lexical requirements are also quite specific to many occupational area (including linguistics), which is one reason why training received through th medium of one language cannot be easily discussed in others. It is probabl safe to estimate that no more than three percent of the English lexicon ca be considered immediately relevant to all of its speakers.

Very large corpuses of texts in different genres and registers are nov being used in computerized linguistic analyses to determine differential fre quency patterns in vocabulary and grammar (e.g., see Biber 1995). These ar proving to be highly relevant for development of programs and material targeting second language learners who need to function immediately withi a single occupational domain (e.g., see Conrad 1999), as well as for application to machine translation and artificial intelligence.

Beyond patterns of lexical selection and grammatical structure, sociolinguists have documented occupation-specific discourse structures, formula elements, and prosody. These are particularly notable in occupations whic involve public performance, such as auctioneering, weather forecasting, sport commentary, DJ patter, and pitching sales on TV for a used car lot. Further within a single general category such as auctioneering or sports commentary, there is systematic variation in forms for auctioning tobacco versus fin art, and for horse racing versus other venues (Kuiper 1996).

We may find many similar discrete varieties of language among avocationa special-interest groups which participate in structured interactional events Serious players of Bridge, for instance, have highly codified rules for usage strict turn-taking for bidding is observed, starting with the dealer an progressing clockwise; a "maxim of quantity" is enforced, with the amoun of information bidders may impart about their cards explicitly regulated and some bids have a conventional meaning that is shared only by othe members of the group (e.g., a bid of *four no trump* is never taken literally but interpreted as a directive for the partner to declare how many aces he o she has – a response of *five clubs* means 'no aces,' *five diamonds* means 'on ace,' etc.). Any violation of language usage in tournament play may resul in penalties or disqualification.

A special-interest group which has a very different membership base is that of the pop group 'N Sync's fans, but it also has highly codified rules for language use. As reported to me by one of the fans, the content of intragroup communications is often mocking or derogatory toward members of 'N Sync, but the tone is affectionate and teasing; much of the discourse is based on recreating conversations used by 'N Sync in television appearances, in which phrases are co-opted and used to create new utterances; and commonly used phrases have meaning only to members of the group. This interest group may interact via e-mail as well as face-to-face.

Because the languages or varieties associated with activity domain are normally no one's "native" language code, but are usually acquired in relation to training and social practices which are not uniformly accessible to members of a community, this is one dimension of its linguistic repertoire which clearly illustrates the unequal distribution of competence which was discussed in chapter 2.

Varieties Associated with Region

Regional varieties of language develop as different norms arise in the usage of groups who are separated by some kind of geographic boundary. This is commonly in vocabulary, as when English speakers in New England carry water in a *pail* and those in Texas in a *bucket*, and in pronunciation, as when Navajo speakers call 'snow' *yas* versus *zas* on different sides of the Lukachukai mountain range. Grammatical markers associated with region are less common, but they do develop: e.g., English speakers in the south and southeastern regions of the United States use such double modal constructions as *might could* and *might will*, which are rare or nonexistent elsewhere in the country.

As geographic boundaries increase in strength, so generally do the degrees of difference between speakers of the "same" language. The very rugged terrain of the state of Oaxaca, Mexico, for instance, and the resultant difficulty in traveling from one village to another, is in large part responsible for the maintenance of 25 distinct languages in an area no larger than the US state of Indiana (ca. 36,000 square miles). The major distinction in the colloquial Arabic spoken in Algeria is between sedentary and nomadic dialects, which although not a strict regional division, similarly reflects ecological influences in limiting interaction between subgroups.

Regional phonological and lexical markers have been studied in many languages as the result of research on dialect geography, but little attention has been paid to regional patterning in other aspects of communication. One notable difference which has been studied in the United States is in

naming practices, with southerners using double names (e.g. *Billy Joe*, *Billy Gene*, *Larry Leroy*, *Mary Fred*) and nicknames or diminutives, even in formal contexts (e.g. former First Lady *Lady Bird Johnson*, *Dr. Billy Graham*, *President Jimmy Carter*); also *Bobby*, *Johnny*, and *Jimmy* are bisexual only in southern usage (Pyles 1959). Another regional difference is in terms of address: e.g., a southern man may call his wife or a female friend *ma'am* with no negative connotation intended, while a northern interpretation would be one of distancing, or implications that the woman is of a more advanced age. It has also been more common in southern deferential address to use title plus first name, rather than last. Well-known examples are "Mister Sam" (Rayburn) for the former Speaker of the US House of Representatives, and "Miss Scarlet" (O'Hara) for the main character is Mitchell's *Gone with the Wind.* The pattern also occurs in more general usage, as with "Judge Judy" and "Dr. Laura" on popular TV.

Nonverbal behavior may also differ regionally, including facial expressions and the scope of body movements, but these patterns have received little attention as markers associated with regional varieties. Some nonverbal behaviors pattern regionally even across unrelated languages. The emblem for "no" is a vertical head movement in Greece, Turkey, the Arabian Peninsula, and most of North Africa, for instance; Israel seems to be the one regional exception, using the horizontal head movement of the Northern European area. Other gestures which exhibit areal over genetic influence are those of greeting and farewell.

Although the development of mass communication and rapid transportation has done much to retard the forces of regional differentiation, local forces remain most powerful during the early years of language acquisition and hence are unlikely to be entirely offset. Furthermore, since these markers themselves serve a boundary function between a local group and "outsiders," or provide a means of identifying people from "home" when in another area, the differences may be accentuated (cf. Labov's 1963 report of linguistic change in Martha's Vineyard, which illustrates this process). The importance of this function differs from community to community, and is related to the value placed on being different or unique.

Prestige factors contribute to this process, which supports Baugh's argument that linguistic standards in the US may be considered from both national and regional perspectives:

> The national standard . . . may be reinforced through broadcast speech, whereas regional standards can be traced to the old upper-class families who still speak with strong regional dialects. Many of our senators and congressional representatives reflect these regional standards in their speech. (2000: 35)

When several members of a group migrate to another area where the group is identified with higher or lower than average status, markers

associated with their regional variety may become associated with social class. The stigmatized [r]-less variety of English used by lower-class African Americans in New York City as reported by Labov (1966), for instance, represents a subgroup immigration from the south, where that is a non-stigmatized regional pronunciation.

Varieties Associated with Ethnicity

A multiethnic speech community may pattern in several different ways with respect to language use: (1) subgroups in the community may use only their minority ethnic language(s); (2) minority group members may be bilingual in their ethnic language(s) and the dominant language; or (3) minority group members may be monolingual in the dominant language. In conditions (2) and (3), members of minority groups who identify themselves as such often speak a distinctive variety of the dominant language. These "accents" are usually interpreted simply as arising from the influence of the ethnic language(s), and features indeed may be attributed to substratum varieties or to the mother tongue, but they may be maintained and cultivated (consciously or unconsciously) as linguistic markers of ethnic identity (Giles 1979).

Ethnicity code-markers occur at levels of phonology, vocabulary, morphosyntax, and overall style, although in English grammatical markers are more likely to be associated with social class and educational level on a standard-nonstandard dimension. One notable exception is the "invariant *be*" of African American Vernacular English (AAVE), which is generally recognized as an ethnic marker (except by teachers in the schools, who misinterpret it as "ungrammatical"); the use of a "double negative" in English, on the other hand, is not considered a marker of Hispanic or French ethnicity (although it is a grammatical feature in both mother tongues), but rather as nonstandard and uneducated usage.

African American English in the United States has been the best described ethnically marked speech, although linguists' attention has generally been limited to nonstandard varieties, and has rarely focused on the range of social levels within identifiably African American usage (Wright 1975; a notable exception is Baugh 1983). Most attention has been given to AAVE phonology and morphosyntax (e.g. Rickford 1999), with some significant additional contributions made to understanding differences in discourse patterns and ways of speaking (e.g. Kochman 1972; Folb 1980; Gumperz 1982; Heath 1983; Morgan 1998).

African American standard varieties differ from White standard varieties primarily in intonational features, and in the marked pronunciation of a few lexical items (including *particularly*, in which the penultimate syllable has secondary stress and an unreduced vowel). Other descriptions of ethnically marked speech include Indian English (Kachru 1976; 1983; Gumperz 1977), Gästarbeiterdeutsch (Dittmar 1977), American Indian English (Leap 1993), Puerto Rican English (Wolfram 1973), and Chicano English (Ornstein-Galicia 1984). Ethnic markers also occur in American Sign Language, where African American signers in the south have developed some characteristics which are different from the signs used by Whites in the same region (Woodward 1976). Differences in signs are both lexical and phonological: African American signing has not shared with White signing the same changes with respect to centralization, symmetry, and morphological preservation.

Markers associated with ethnicity may include nonverbal features as well, including the side-to-side head movement of some speakers of Indian English, and the different eye contact patterns of several ethnic groups (cf. Harper, Wiens, and Matarazzo 1978).

Tannen (1981) discusses ethnic markers in conversational style, including differences in the use of questions, methods for getting and keeping the floor, topic cohesion, and the use of irony and humor. Dimensions of differences between New York Jewish and Los Angeles non-Jewish style in her study include relevant personal focus of topic; paralinguistic features of pitch, loudness, voice quality, and tone; pacing and timing with respect to other utterances; rate of speech; and choice of lexical items and syntactic forms. Analysis of narratives collected from different groups (e.g. Tannen 1980) provides additional interesting information on ethnic markers in patterns of language use.

Ethnic differences in style may be modified in accordance with the situation, of course, as may other variables. Baugh reports the perceptions of one of his African American constituents about an event which required consistent style-shifting when he addressed different participants:

> I'm in the middle cause I know them both. They are both my friends. . . . I have to talk to them [the whites] one way and then I have to turn back around and talk to them [the black girls] another way . . . and try to keep him [the white man] from feeling left out of this conversation, and the girls from feeling left out in the other conversation . . . so . . . it's kind of hard to sit in the middle of a situation like that. (1983: 28)

Unlike using a foreign language, using an ethnically marked variety of a language generally requires being born into group membership, unless the intent is to ridicule or joke (which indeed is often the case). One of the best sources of data on which ethnic markers are stigmatized and stereotyped is the imitative language markers used in telling ethnic jokes.

On the other hand, individual speakers born into the ethnic group – or the entire group membership – can generally succeed in eliminating all ethnic

markers in their speech if they desire to fully assimilate to the dominant group, or they can develop both marked and unmarked varieties and shift between them depending on desired group identification in specific situations. However, because ethnic varieties of speech are often salient and evaluated dimensions of ethnicity, adopting the linguistic norms of another group may be viewed with suspicion and hostility.

Changes which are occurring in AAVE provide good evidence for the types of social factors that may be involved in ethnic marking. The usage of young speakers appears to be diverging further from White norms than does the speech of adults. Bailey and Maynor (1987) attribute this increasing divergence to such social developments as migration to inner cities, economic stagnation, and residential segregation. African American youth appear to be cultivating linguistic divergence as a vehicle for identification and solidarity, as well as covert prestige. Folb (1980) additionally reports secrecy and identification of non-group members as motivation among the teens for ethnically marked language use, along with peer-group pressure in contexts where those prevail.

Varieties Associated with Social Class, Status, and Role

When describing patterns of language use in a complex and heterogeneous speech community, determining what subgroups are accorded differential status and prestige, and understanding what criteria are used within the community for defining subgroup membership, must precede discovery of how the rights and means of communication within the total linguistic repertoire may be differentially allocated according to social class, status, and role.

Social class may be defined primarily by wealth, or by circumstances of birth, or by occupation, or by other criteria specific to the group under investigation. If wealth is a criterion, this may be calculated in terms of money, or in terms of how many pigs, sheep, or blankets an individual or family possesses, or how much land they claim. *Status* is often largely determined by social class membership, but age or education may be more salient, or whether a person is married and has children. *Role* refers to the position(s) an individual holds which entails particular expectations, rights, and responsibilities vis-á-vis others in the society: e.g. chief, minister of education, head of family, friend.

In rigidly stratified communities social class membership is clearly defined, roles strictly compartmentalized, and associated varieties of language clearly differentiated. In such communities members of the lower strata have little opportunity to acquire "higher" language forms. In more democratic communities individuals have a wider range of roles potentially open to them,

and generally command a wider range of socially marked speech. Studies in the United States and Canada have shown that those who are upwardly mobile tend to adopt the variety of language spoken by the group just above them, often to the point of hypercorrection, although a social revolution may include the overthrow of prestige language forms as well as people who speak them.

The wider range of language available to higher social classes is exemplified by speakers of the East Godavari (India) dialect of Telugu (Sjoberg 1962). In this group only members of the upper class can use both formal and informal varieties, which are marked by two distinctive phonemic systems. This range relates directly to patterns of education, since the formal variety is learned only by those who attend school. For the same reason, written means of communication in many societies are available only to the upper class.

Most research on social class markers in language have focused on phonology and grammar, but other aspects of language may also be involved. There appears to be a social stratification in the use of color terms for women's fashion in English, for instance, with advertisements of clothes targeted for lower income groups using a limited set of color terms such as *blue*, *red*, *green*, *yellow*, and *purple*, perhaps together with the modifiers *light* and *dark*. Expensive clothes are advertised using a much greater variety of basic color terms: e.g., an advertisement from Saks Fifth Avenue included *rust*, *russet*, *camel*, *plum*, *wine*, *fuchsia*, *teal*, *sapphire*, *turquoise*, *emerald*, *seafoam*, *bone*, and *taupe*. A similar observation has been reported to me by native speakers of German, Spanish, and Arabic, although there is some disagreement over whether the diversity of color terms carries connotations of higher prestige or merely reflects the greater range of hues available in more expensive fabrics.

Status is often marked in forms of address, and in different levels of formality corresponding to different levels of prestige or deference. These include differential naming patterns for married versus unmarried women in many societies, and the Iranian practice of shaking hands with an unveiled woman, but not with one wearing a *chadour*. Change in status may be signaled linguistically, as with the change in name at marriage.

Roles are also often marked by different pronouns or terms of address. English-speaking rulers may refer to themselves with the "imperial" *we*, for instance, and a French businessman was fined for addressing a policeman as *tu*. This was judged to be a "rude" form of address to someone in that role (Eliason 1980). Such linguistic marking of a particular social role is to be distinguished from markers of the dyadic role-relationship of speakers, which will be discussed below.

Another linguistic characteristic of the rights and responsibilities inherent in some roles is the type of performative that can be uttered, and how others must respond. For example, *You're out* is felicitous only if spoken by

someone in the role of baseball umpire, and *I hereby sentence you to . . .* only if spoken by someone in the role of judge (cf. Searle 1969). The function of clothing in signaling role or status is illustrated by all uniforms, whether nurse, police, or soldier (with auxiliary markings indicating exact rank). Complaints about nuns and priests abandoning religious garb generally reflect the uncertainty caused by the loss of signals of identity, which in turn help to structure appropriate interaction with them.

The comprehensive description of royal communication in Akan by Yankah (1995) gives an integrative view of how forms of speech, participant structure, rhetorical strategies, discourse organization, dress and props, and other contextual and cultural features contribute to the construction and fulfillment of political roles in that society.

Change in role may also be signaled linguistically by a change in the term of reference for the individuals after they assume the position and again after they step down. Soon after Haile Selassie was deposed as emperor of Ethiopia, for instance, official references changed from "king of kings" to merely "king" (used to distinguish him from other people with the same name). The choice of ways to refer to him constituted a conscious political statement at that time, as conservatives continued to refer to him with a respectful pronoun and the imperial title *janhoi*, radicals used an informal pronoun, and extremists used his former name *Teferi*.

Individuals being trained to fill particular roles in a society may learn varieties that others do not: e.g., a Samoan "talking chief" learns to use rhetorical forms limited to speakers in that role, and a boy who is expected to assume his father's role as curer, chief, or judge often learns the appropriate language forms in the process of informal observation, an opportunity which is not open to other children.

The use of "role-playing" techniques often allows a researcher to elicit informants' perceptions of the speech of people who are in the particular roles they pretend to assume. Children playing "school" or "house" often adopt the language markers they consider typical of teacher or parent roles, while adults asked to take the role of children use high voices and their perception of "baby talk."

A number of questions have been raised about the accuracy of judgments on social class which are based on linguistic markers alone, but several studies suggest they may in fact be quite reliable. Ellis (1967) for English found a correlation of 0.80 between the actual social class of speakers and the estimation of judges merely hearing them count from one to ten, and Shuy, Baratz, and Wolfram (1969) found considerable accuracy in social class identification of their Detroit sample based only on 30-second speech samples. Reviews of these and similar studies are available in Brown, Strong, and Rencher (1975) and in Robinson (1979); cross-cultural research is quite limited. Of interest is not only what markers are being perceived, but also beliefs people have in different speech communities about the relationship of language markers and social class and how these may affect both social organization and patterns of language use.

Varieties Associated with Role-Relationships

While many aspects of language use consistently mark a particular role, the roles which individual speakers assume and the status they are accorded is generally dependent on their relationship to other participants in the communicative event. While the French court declared it "rude" to call a man *tu* while he was in the role of a policeman, for instance, it would be equally inappropriate for the same man to be addressed as *vous* if he were in the role of husband or friend. The relativity is clearly illustrated in Japanese, Javanese, Korean, Thai, Tibetan, and other languages which make extensive use of status-marking honorifics; the same speakers use different forms when speaking to someone in a superior versus someone in an inferior social position, even within the same conversation. These forms are not static markers of social class, but markers of the relative status of speakers in dyadic role-relationships. Further, other contextual dimensions influence choice of indexing elements in the constructive and creative processes of communication, even when addressee and relative status remain the same (e.g., see Agha 1993 for Lhasa Tibetan; Morford 1997 for French; Keating 1998 for Pohnpeian (Micronesia); and Cook 1999 for Japanese).

In addition to the choice of pronouns and use of honorific particles, the relative status of speakers and their role-relationship may be marked in a variety of ways. These include other linguistic elements such as grammatical particles and address terms, paralinguistic features such as voice pitch or volume, nonverbal behaviors, discourse and event ordering, selection of pragmatic strategies, and avoidance or taboo. The wide-ranging occurrence of these phenomena is suggested in the following references:

1 Tyler's (1972) description of kinship terminology used by Koya speakers in India illustrates how choice of terms relates in a systematic way to both expectations and differences in contextual features; and Nahuatl (Aztec) speakers in central Mexico use reflexive prefixes with causatives to imply respect for the person addressed or spoken of: e.g., "he sleeps" is more politely expressed as "he causes himself to sleep" (Sapir 1915).

2 Tzeltal speakers in Chiapas, Mexico use a sustained falsetto to express deference to the addressee (Brown and Levinson 1979). Among the Sierra Popoluca (Mexico), women whisper to their husbands as a mark of deference, and children are expected to whisper when they are first learning

to talk. This is an example of the "powerless speech style" which women may adopt with men, children with adults, or ethnic minorities with majorities, and it marks a power relationship rather than the social categories of sex, age, or ethnicity (Giles, Scherer, and Taylor 1979). (Markers of politeness and power are discussed more fully in chapter 8.)

3 An example of nonverbal relative status-marking is reported by Goffman (1967), who notes that doctors touch other (lower) ranks as a means of showing support and comfort, but others consider it presumptuous to even return (let alone initiate) such contact with a doctor. Nonverbal relative status marking in body attitude is also common, including inclination of the head, bowing or prostration, and hand position (e.g., see Keating 1998 for Pohnpeian).

4 In conversation, subordinates more often pursue topics raised by those with superior status than the other way around, and superiors interrupt more frequently (Zimmerman and West 1975). In a cyclic or interaction event with several people in sequence, such as greetings, introductions, or thanks, the order of address may mark relative deference or closeness. A subordinate or younger individual may be expected to initiate greetings with a superior or elder, for instance, as in Yoruba, Ogori, and Nigerian English (Adegbija 1989). The cycle of Iranian families exchanging traditional New Year Greeting visits always begins with an early call of the youngest on the eldest relative, then the closest relative or friend, and then acquaintances, with the ordering considered an important sign of relative love and respect for each. The eldest in the family does not pay return visits until the third day or later in the celebration (Jafapur).

5 The strategic selection of different linguistic forms for such functions as requesting or directing also indicates the nature of the role-relationship between speaker and addressee: i.e., pragmatic strategies are potential markers of social relationships (Brown and Levinson 1979). Various markers of indirectness are most general in conveying deference, including hesitancy, hedging, and circumlocution. The form of reply for subordinates in age as well as social status is not uncommonly complete silence, with perhaps a nod of the head.

6 In some speech communities particular role-relationships require that clearly distinct varieties of language be used, often involving avoidance or taboo in some respect. An aboriginal Guugu Yimidhirr man in Australia must use only a specialized vocabulary with his brother-in-law (Haviland 1979), for instance, and a Navajo man traditionally cannot speak directly to his mother-in-law, or even be in her presence. Furthermore, he cannot refer to her with the usual third person pronoun form, but employs a more remote fourth person to indicate deference and respect. Avoidance of personal names in some role-relationships is also found in several languages, for direct address and/or in reference. For example, Subrahamian (1978) reports this taboo is observed in Indian villages where women cannot mention their husband's name; this must be circumvented in census taking by asking neighbors.

Relative status in particular role-relationships involves complex consideration of situational factors, and the relative importance of such features as age, sex, occupation, kinship, and social class in the determination differs in different speech communities. Their relative salience is interesting not only for discovering patterns of language use in interaction, but as potential indicators of the communities' social organization and cultural values. Such complexities are likely to be magnified at stages when dyadic relationships become more ambiguous: e.g. a child is reaching adulthood, a parent is becoming aged or infirm, a student is becoming a professional colleague, or close friends or lovers are severing ties.

Varieties Associated with Sex

The label for this category is in dispute, between advocates of *gender* versus *sex*. Those who advocate "gender" consider it a socially-constructed category, versus "sex," which is biologically determined. I use "sex" (including sexual orientation) because "gender"-marking in linguistics relates to noun class and includes such phenomena as object shape (e.g. round versus straight and rigid in Navajo) and such arbitrary grammatical assignment as the German article *der* (masculine gender) to males, *die* (feminine gender) to married women, but *das* (neuter gender) to young females. I mean to refer to a socially-constructed category, but one that is delimited to a male-female dimension.

A differential distribution of language resources by this definition of sex in a complex community is often associated with differential patterns of education and distribution of labor, including trade versus childrearing responsibilities. Males are more likely to be educated, and thus to control the formal and written varieties of a language. They are also more likely to be bilingual, both because of educational level, and because of mobility and contact in military encounters and trade. In Algeria, for instance, the only remaining monolingual speakers of Berber are women. Exceptions to this pattern occur in societies where women have equal opportunities for education, and possibilities for mobility without dependence on indigenous social structures (e.g. where there are no preferred cross-cousin marriages or other family-arranged alliances), or in communities where women assume a primary marketing role (e.g. in Guatemala, where women take products to market and are most likely to be bilingual in Spanish and their native Mayan language).

In some communities, participation in certain kinds of events is restricted to a single sex, as where it is considered appropriate only for men to tell stories or preach; in others a particular mode of communication is restricted, as where only men whistle, or only women wail. The "tuneful weeping" mode of northern India is used only by women, for instance (Tiwary 1975). Educated, urban women in that area have refused to accept this communicative role as one aspect of change in their social role in the community. A comparable shift among women in eastern Austria from German-Hungarian bilingualism to German-only is reported by Gal (1978, 1979) as a correlate of social change, including women's rejection of peasant life (and peasant husbands).

Some type of sexual differentiation in patterns of speech is likely, perhaps universal, whenever there is social differentiation between male and female roles. Linguistic markers associated with sex often include phonology: e.g., English-speaking women tend to use more socially prestigious speech forms than men (Labov 1966; Trudgill 1975), as well as higher pitch and more variable intonation patterns (Smith 1979); Boas (1911) found that female speakers of some Eskimo dialects used voiced nasals in final position, which corresponded to male stops; and Sapir (1915) found Yana women devoicing final vowels.

Morphological markers include different first person inflections used by men and women in the North American language Koasati (Haas 1944; cf. Saville-Troike 1988), reduplication for emphasis of a verb by Thai women versus the addition of *mak* by Thai men, and the sentence-final particle *ne* in Japanese used almost exclusively by female speakers (Smith 1979). Morphology may also be marked for the sex of the addressee, as with the second person inflections of Hebrew, or the different terms for "they" in the North American language Tunica depending on whether a man or woman is being addressed (Haas 1941). Based on data collected for the Linguistic Atlases of the Upper Midwest and the North Central States, Van Riper (1979) reports that women at all levels of education use significantly more of the past tense forms prescribed as "correct" in English usage handbooks than do men, although there is less difference between male and female speakers who have more formal education. Grammatical markers associated with sex in Japanese include affirmative and nonaffirmative usage of the copula, and differential use of interjections at the beginning and end of utterances; syntactically, women are more likely to use subject inversion and topic-comment constructions.

Lexical markers may also be associated with the sex of either speaker or listener: e.g., a Hopi woman would use a different term if expressing the concept "That's a beautiful area" to a man than she would to a woman, and swear words in many languages differ not only with the sex of the speaker, but also with whether a member of the opposite sex is within hearing. Some English words, such as *adorable* and *lovely*, are associated more with female speakers, and *beautiful* and *handsome* are more appropriately used in reference to females and males respectively.

Topics considered appropriate for discussion may also differ for men and women, as may form or content of insults or other speech acts. In a study of the topics of teachers' conversations in a US faculty room, for instance, Kipers (1987) found females most likely to talk about social issues such as child abuse and women's rights, and males about recreational and work-related activities. At the University of Illinois, in one department female graduate students lodged a formal protest that they were excluded from the opportunity for interaction with male faculty equal to that accorded male graduate students because the principal topic of conversation was usually sports, with which they were less familiar than the males. Tiwary (1975) reports males in Northern India may insult each other by threatening the chastity of mother, sister, or daughter, while women assert the other's sexual activities with father, brother, or son, and curse each other with barrenness or widowhood. In English, a man is traditionally congratulated on the occasion of engagement or marriage, while a woman is offered "best wishes."

Nonverbal marking associated with sex traditionally included male hat-doffing and handshaking in English, although handshaking between women or between men and women has become increasingly common, providing another example of sex differentiation in communicative patterns declining with the lessening of division in social roles. In Mali, where role distinctions are more strictly maintained, Bambara men also shake hands in greeting, but women never do; a female may kneel down when greeting a man, which is never done by males, and she may use only limited eye contact. Clothing markers associated with sex may be relevant to interpreting patterns of communication, including whether or not one or more participants are veiled. (Although this is usually associated with women, men are also veiled in the nomadic Atobak tribe of southern Algeria, and can show their faces to no one except their wives.) Whether women wear dresses or trousers may also be significant, as may whether members of a non-Western society wear traditional or Western garb. (A type of "code-switching" may be observed on flights from Western Europe into some Islamic countries as women depart their seats for the lavatory facilities in Paris fashions and return in traditional dress.)

The maintenance of clearly distinct male/female roles is also illustrated by the rules of speech such as those followed by Tamil couples, at least in rural areas of central Tamil Nadu: the husband can address his wife by her name, but the wife is expected to use a non-specific respect term; the

husband uses a familiar verb inflection with his wife, while the wife uses the more respectful second person plural ending in return; and the wife is expected to give the "right of way" to her husband in conversation with other adults (Britto).

Either men or women are often considered to be more polite or indirect than the other in their style of speech. For example, Keenan (1975) reports only men in Malagasy possess the valued skills of using metaphor and proverb, with women perceived as informal and direct, and Strathern (1975) finds Melpa women excluded from taking part in public verbal display because they cannot use "veiled talk" and are always direct; on the other hand Laver and Trudgill (1979) report men use a higher percentage of direct imperative constructions in English when "giving suggestions," while women use a higher percentage of more indirect interrogatives and tag questions. Some of the stylistic differences attributed to men versus women have not been corroborated in observational studies of actual usage, or yield contradictory evidence (e.g. Tannen 1993b; Freed and Greenwood 1996; see also Holmes 1995).

The potential of sex-related differences in English to contribute to sexism and sexist discrimination against women has been hotly debated, and has resulted in some change in usage. Targets include obligatory sex-marking in third person singular pronouns *he* and *she*, pairs of terms such as *actor/actress*, and titles with *man* such as *chairman* and *policeman*. Change (including official style guidelines from publishers) includes rewording to plural *they* or indefinite pronouns *everyone* and *anybody*, use of an unmarked term for both sexes (e.g., the Screen Actors Guild winner is now called *Outstanding Female Actor*), and retitling positions as *chairperson* and *police officer*. Specific changes are especially noticeable in the revision of scripts for long-running TV shows: in *Star Trek*, for instance, the opening routine ". . . where no man has gone before" has changed to ". . . where no one . . . ," and female officers are addressed as *sir*.

The attitudes and expectations revealed even by unsupported stereotypes within a community are of considerable ethnographic interest, as are their social implications. Also of interest are perceptions and attitudes regarding apparent violations in sex-differentiated usage, such as female markers used by males and vice versa. A Japanese female who uses less polite forms is considered "rough," for instance, while a Japanese male who is too polite is "effeminate," as is a Tunisian male who speaks a Parisian variety of French. Male speech considered imitative of women's is called "sweet-talking" by African Americans, on the other hand, and is quite appropriate for use in a courting situation without threatening male identity (Abrahams 1973). Part of the distinction between male and female speech may be because many societies seem to expect women to adhere more strictly to social norms than they do men (Trudgill 2000).

Switching to a style of speech in which stereotyped features considered characteristic of the opposite sex are exaggerated may function as a marker of homosexual identity, or may be used in teasing or mocking the addressee by suggesting sexual deviance. The mocking signs used to refer to deaf homosexuals are touching the middle finger to the nose and flinging it back with a limp wrist, for instance, or by touching it to the tongue and then flattening the eyebrow (Rudner and Butowsky 1980). A general characteristic of American Sign Language which may also be interpreted as reflecting sex stereotypes is that signs associated with males are made on the forehead (as are those referring to intellect and decision-making), while those associated with females are made near the mouth (as are those for words of emotion and feeling, or for personal appearance).

Description and analysis of varieties of language actually used in gay and lesbian communities has received increasing attention, with a range of identifiable patterns found in phonology, morphosyntax, lexicon, and ways of speaking comparable to other socially constructed groups. The topic of study is commonly known as "queer speech," or "lavender linguistics"; a Lavender Language Conference has been held annually since 1993, with presentations generally focusing on these phenomena. Usage specific to sexual orientation includes the lesbian spelling of "women" as *womyn* and the addition of *ze* as a transgender third person singular pronoun. (Important contributions to the sociolinguistics literature include Leap 1995, 1996; Livia and Hall 1997; Moonwomon-Baird 2000.)

Sex differences in language forms and patterns of interaction cannot be understood apart from situation and social factors. In all speech communities they are interrelated with setting, age, social class, education, occupation, and (perhaps most importantly) with the role-relationship of participants in the communicative event, as well as the activities in which they are engaged.

Varieties Associated with Age

In most speech communities, age is a major dimension for social categorization. Three kinds of markers associated with age should be distinguished: those which yield information about the speaker, those which yield information about the receiver, and those which yield information about the role-relationships between the two which are influenced by their relative age. Markers associated with young children as speakers, for instance, generally relate to developmental stages and processes in language acquisition. "Baby talk" is associated with young children as receivers; it is characterized by the linguistic modifications which adults make when addressing young children, rather than direct imitation of child language forms. The use of

baby talk is often associated with a caretaker role-relationship, and marks this relationship even if participants are not adult and young child: e.g., a young child who does not speak baby talk with adults or peers may use baby talk with a doll or infant sibling, or an adult may use baby talk with a small pet. Use of baby talk between adults may mark an affectionate relationship or be interpreted as insulting, depending on the context.

Baby talk is not part of the linguistic repertoire in all speech communities, but where it is, similar modification of adult language forms are to be found. In his characterization of baby talk in 15 languages, Ferguson (1964) lists these shared features: processes of reduction (especially in phonology), substitution, assimilation, and generalization; repetition of words, phrases, and sentences; exaggerated intonational contours and deliberate articulations; diminutive affixes; and high pitch. A few alternative modifications have been reported for other languages, including using a relatively fixed word order and whispering in Quiché, a Mayan language of Guatemala (Pye 1986).

The actual effect of such modifications on child language development is not clear, although there is some evidence children may attend better to baby talk (Snow 1972), and that its prosodic features may facilitate the acquisition of segmentation (Garnica 1977).

Beliefs about the appropriateness of baby talk and its relation to child language acquisition are of considerable interest. Among English speakers, baby talk is generally considered appropriate for females to use with children from birth to age three or four. The use of baby talk with a child approaching school age is considered potentially damaging to his or her emotional and linguistic development, both by parents and teachers. Children who use baby talk when they enroll in kindergarten or first grade are the subject of peer ridicule, and they almost immediately switch to more mature linguistic forms. Some English-speaking males use baby talk with young children, but father's language does not usually indicate the same caretaking relationship as does "motherese" (cf. Gleason 1975; Gleason et al. 1977; Gleason and Weintraub 1978). This difference may be diminishing with the middle-class trend to share childrearing responsibilities; Gleason (1976), for instance, does not find significant differences in the speech of male and female day care attendants, although she reports that English-speaking children taking the role of father when playing with dolls typically do not use baby talk, but use a "gruffer" voice quality and a greater percentage of threats and imperatives than when they play "mother." In addition to linguistic forms, communicative phenomena associated with young children include beliefs about the appropriateness of children listening to or participating in conversations among adults, beliefs about what topics should be discussed by them or in front of them, different terms of address used by them and for them, and expectations regarding their nonverbal behavior.

Other age-specific ethnographic research has focused primarily on how forms and patterns of communication relate to group identity. These include studies of adolescents (e.g. Mendoza-Denton 1997; Eckert 1999; Cheshire 2000) and elderly women (e.g. Paoletti 1998).

The elderly in a society may be accorded higher status and greater deference, or they may be considered less competent. General ways in which deference for age may be marked are listed by Silverman and Maxwell (1978): spatial (special seats), victual (given choice foods), linguistic (addressed in honorifics), presentational (special posture assumed in their presence), service (housekeeping performed for them), presentative (given gifts, or having the right to sing certain songs), and celebrative (ceremonies held in their honor).

The view that they are less competent may be conveyed by others talking to old people in a loud voice and at a very slow rate, assuming they are hard of hearing and losing mental faculties (Helfrich 1979), or the elderly may be recipients of demeaning caretaker behavior similar to that used with children: e.g., a son or daughter may order meals for them in a restaurant, or speak about them in the third person when they are present. Infantilizing intonation is viewed as the most patronizing characteristic of this variety by non-institutionalized elders (Whitbourne, Krauss, Culgin, and Cassidy 1995).

Some of the speech markers associated with age relate to physiological change, but many more are stylistic in nature, or reflect the different status or rules of speakers which relate to age. Some markers may also be the result of language and culture change, but we cannot assume that age-grade differences in a speech community indicate diachronic processes until their relation to the life cycle has been explored. An American's age may be marked by saying *ice box* rather than *refrigerator*, for instance, or *Negro* rather than *Black* or *African American*, reflecting actual shifts in usage. However, in some languages it may be the case that a different term is appropriate for an older person to use, and that the young person who uses one term today will change to the other at age 50 or so.

One very interesting age marker has been reported by Gardner, who says the Paliyans of south India "communicate very little at all times and become almost silent by the age of 40" (1966: 398). There has been speculation that elderly speakers of English employ different strategies for topic switching than younger speakers, and that they pause longer in narratives or conversations without giving up the floor. Helfrich (1979) reports age differences in a speaker's preference for action-oriented style (verbs dominating) or qualitative style (adjectives and nouns dominating), but few studies have yet been done which identify markers associated with speaker age other than those dealing with child language development.

enlightening dimension in revealing the perceptions and attitudes of a group, and in defining "normal"; it deserves more attention than it has thus far been accorded in sociolinguistics.

Non-Native Varieties

Three very different types of language varieties are included in this category: (1) the marked forms and patterns used by speakers in a foreign or second language; (2) the lingua francas or international language codes; and (3) the languages which have developed with official or auxiliary but "transplanted" status in societies where there are no indigenous speakers.

Within the first category there is a major distinction to be made between foreign and second languages in terms of function and the relationship of their speakers to a speech community. The former are generally used for learning about another culture or for intercultural communication, and may enable speakers to participate more or less successfully in that speech community without becoming members of it; sometimes they are used for one-way knowledge transfer, and many are content to acquire only reading skills, and do not become "speakers." Second languages are used within a speech community for many of the same functions they serve for native speakers, and their speakers must usually be considered members of the community in its sociological/anthropological sense even when the linguistic forms and rules are as yet quite imperfectly acquired. Both kinds of varieties are most commonly marked by an "accent" which identifies speakers' native language identity, intralingual developmental phenomena, and ways of speaking and writing which are inappropriately translated into the target language.

English has replaced French as the most common international language, and the variety generally used for international communication is characterized by minimal use of metaphorical or idiomatic expressions, and neutralization of regional differences. Suprapto calls this "Standard English for Foreigners," and reports from her observation:

> Even the native speakers of English strive to minimize their type of English in pronunciation and syntax. Thus, for example, an Englishman would try not to sound too British, nor an American too American.

This variety functions as a lingua franca at the World Bank and many other international agencies, and at meetings and conferences where there is a forum for the exchange of information in various academic or political domains. It is an elaborated code which makes minimal assumptions about

shared cultural experiences among its speakers, other than that they all have a high level of formal education.

The essential difference in the nature and functions of non-native official/auxiliary languages from those of the other varieties has been argued most extensively with respect to "Indian English" by Kachru (e.g. 1976; 1980; 1983), who extends the distinctions to the Englishes of the Philippines, the Caribbean, and West Africa as well. He is primarily concerned with a situation

> in which *Indian* English is used as a language of interaction, for maintaining *Indian* patterns of administration, education, and legal system, and also for creating a pan-Indian (Indian English) literature which forms part of the world writing in English. (1976: 223, emphasis his)

In other words, "The medium is non-native, the message is not" (Kachru 1986: 12).

It is interesting that this role for English has developed while efforts to promote a more artificial international language, such as Esperanto, Novial, Occidental, Interlingua, and Volapük have had only limited success. This may be because of language attitudes, or because a natural language is more adequate as a medium for communication.

The range of varieties used for auxiliary national purposes even within a single country, such as India, runs from pidginized English on the one extreme, through regionally marked varieties (e.g. Punjabi English, Kashmiri English), to "educated Indian English," and finally to varieties which very closely approximate British or American norms.

Such varieties are part of the communicative repertoire in India, West Africa, South Asia, and the West Indies, with important functions in each of the national contexts. Kachru (1983) lists these as: (1) instrumental, especially for education; (2) regulative, in legal systems and administration; (3) interpersonal, as a "link language" between speakers of different languages and a symbol of prestige and modernity; and (4) imaginative/innovative. The use of a non-native language in creative contexts, as a medium for literature and drama, indicates that it is being more deeply embedded in the culture of its speakers and undergoing nativization. Subvarieties develop as part of this process, as variables in the transplanted language begin to serve as markers in the society.

The development and creative use of non-native varieties of language provides further evidence for the point made earlier that there is no intrinsic reason that the structures and vocabulary of one language cannot be used in many domains of communication within other speech communities to express the cultures of those communities, and in ways in keeping with their rules of appropriate behavior.

4

The Analysis of Communicative Events

In undertaking an ethnography of communication in a particular locale, the first task is to define at least tentatively the speech community to be studied, attempt to gain some understanding of its social organization and other salient aspects of the culture, and formulate possible hypotheses concerning the diverse ways these sociocultural phenomena might relate to patterns of communication (as discussed in chapters 2 and 3). It is crucial that the ethnographic description of other groups be approached not in terms of preconceived categories and processes, but with openness to discovery of the way native speakers perceive and structure their communicative experiences; in the case of ethnographers working in their own speech communities, the development of objectivity and relativity is essential, and at the same time difficult. Some early steps in description and analysis of patterns of communication include identifying recurrent events, recognizing their salient components, and discovering the relationship among components and between the event and other aspects of society.

The ultimate criterion for descriptive adequacy is whether someone not acquainted with the speech community might understand how to communicate appropriately in a particular situation; beyond that, we wish to know why those behaviors are more appropriate than alternative possibilities. Observed behavior is recognized as a manifestation of a deeper set of codes and rules, and a major goal of ethnography is the discovery and explication of the rules for contextually appropriate behavior in a community or group; in other words, accounting for what the individual needs to know to be a functional member of the community.

Relationship of Ethnographer and Speech Community

In part because anthropology until relatively recently has been concerned primarily with non-Western cultures, and has relegated the study of Western

cultures to sociology, psychology and the other social sciences, the techniques of ethnography were little applied in our own society except occasionally in caricature. It has been observed that this division of effort was not accidental, and that anthropology traditionally reflected Western ethnocentric distinctions between conquered colonial (or internal neo-colonial) groups and their conquerors. The outside observer, foreign to the society and unfamiliar with the culture, could innocently collect and report any information, confident that the group would allow indulgence for breaches of etiquette, and that protection would be provided by the fact that involvement in the society could be terminated at any point by returning home.

In recent decades awareness has grown that the researcher can develop a deeper understanding of the culture under study by adopting a functional role and becoming a participant. This may in fact be necessary at times if the lack of a defined status and role would cause problems of acceptance by the community. Some kind of rationale may be required for the observer's presence, particularly in studies within his or her own society. When the observer knows the rules of the culture, and the members of the community know that he or she knows the rules of the culture, they expect the observer to behave like a member of the society. Thus, they are likely to find it aberrant for observers to inquire about or record behavior which they are assumed to know, and little tolerance will be shown for violations of rules. There is considerable awkwardness, severe constraints are involved, and problems of ethics emerge. In addition, observers, taking for granted large aspects of the culture because they are already known "out of awareness," may find it difficult and less intellectually rewarding to attempt to discover and explicate the seemingly obvious, the "unmarked" case.

Nevertheless ethnographers, precisely because of this knowledge of a broad range of the world's cultures, are able to bring a comparative perspective to work even within their own society. And by keeping a mental distance from the objects of observation, and by treating subcultures such as that of the school or the factory as "exotic," they can maintain some of the detached objectivity for which anthropology is noted.

One of the advantages of studying one's own culture, and attempting to make explicit the systems of understanding which are implicit, is that ethnographers are able to use themselves as sources of information and interpretation. Chomsky's view of the native speaker of a language as knowing the grammar of the language opened the way to introspection by native speakers as an analytical procedure, and recognized that the vastness of this knowledge extended far beyond what had been revealed in most linguistic descriptions by non-native speakers. The extension of this perspective to the study of culture acknowledges the member of the society as the repository of cultural knowledge, and recognizes that the ethnographer who already possesses this knowledge can tap it introspectively to validate, enrich, and expedite the task of ethnographic description.

A further advantage to ethnographers working within their own culture is that some of the major questions regarding validity and reliability raised by the quantitatively oriented social sciences can be at least partially resolved. While there may be no one to gainsay claims concerning cultural practices in a remote New Guinea village, any description of activities in the observer's own society becomes essentially self-correcting, both through feedback from the community described and through reactions by readers who are themselves members of the same society.

At the same time, the emphasis in ethnographic work on an existential/phenomenological explication of cultural meaning further justifies the value of ethnographers working within their own culture. Combining observation and self-knowledge, the ethnographer can plumb the depths and explore the subtle interconnections of meaning in ways that the outsider could attain only with great difficulty, if at all. In the same way then, with the ethnographer able to function as both observer and informant, some of the problems of verification can be overcome, and a corrective to unbridled speculation provided.

When ethnographers choose to work in other cultures, the need for extensive background study of the community is critical, and a variety of field methods must be employed to minimize imposition of their own cultural categories and perceptions on recording the interpretation of another system. In some cases "outsiders" may notice behaviors that are not readily apparent to natives of the community, for whom they may be unconscious, but conversely no outsider can really understand the meaning of interaction of various types within the community without eliciting the intuitions of its members. Garfinkel notes:

> The discovery of common culture consists of the discovery *from within* the society by social scientists of the existence of common sense knowledge of social structures. (1967: 76–7, emphasis his)

It is likely that only a researcher who shares, or comes to share, the intuitions of the speech community under study will be able to accurately describe the socially shared base which accounts in large part for the dynamics of communicative interaction.

A second issue is that of community access. Milroy provides good illustrations of how this may be negotiated in her discussion of the methodology used by Blom and Gumperz in Norway and of her own in Belfast:

> I introduced myself initially in each community not in my formal capacity as a researcher, but as a "friend of a friend"... so that I acquired some of the rights as well as some of the obligations of an insider. (1987b: 66)

Obtaining access to minority communities which may have a history of exploitation poses ethical as well as practical problems. In the United States, most research on minority communities has traditionally been conducted by members of the majority group or by foreigners (e.g. the work of Madsen, Rubel, and Holtzman and Diaz-Guerrero on Mexican Americans, or Hannerz and Ogbu on African Americans). A member of the group under study who is also a researcher will already have personal contacts which should contribute to assuring acceptance, although taking such a role can result in the (sometimes justified) perception that a group member has "sold out" to the dominant establishment.

Often access can be negotiated to the benefit of all by including relevant feedback into the community in a form it may use for its own purposes. Positive examples can be found in the work of a number of anthropological linguists working with Indian groups in the United States. These include Ossie Werner (Northwestern University), whose research on Navajo anatomical terminology and their beliefs about the causes and cures of disease provided input to improvements in the delivery of health care, and William Leap (American University), whose research on Isletan Tiwa yielded a written form of the language and bilingual reading materials. These materials were developed in response to community fears that the language was in a state of decline, and to their desire to maintain it.

There are some data that should go unreported if they are likely to be damaging to individuals or the group. Whenever the subjects of research are human beings, there are ethical limits on scientific responsibility for completeness and objectivity which are not only justified but mandated. Furthermore, information which is given confidentially must be kept in confidence. The two linguists whose work with communities was cited above also provide positive examples of this dimension of professional integrity: some of the information about Navajo health beliefs and practices should be disseminated only within the Navajo community, and although the complete data base was reported by Werner, this portion will remain untranslated into English. Leap made no attempt even to elicit stories which had religious significance for the Tiwa (and thus were secret in nature), and his selection of content for the bilingual readers was submitted to a Parents' Advisory Board for approval prior to publication. Leap and Mesthrie (2000: 373–6) describe similar sensitivities in a bilingual program on the northern Ute reservation, where the community had strong beliefs that the Ute language could not and should not be written, as well as the procedures that were used with and within Tribal groups to achieve acceptable compromises which enhanced educational outcomes.

A third issue, partly contained within the second, is that of interviewer race or ethnicity. In the past, when studies were carried out in foreign environments or in minority communities by members of the majority

group, the myth of the observer as a detached, neutral figure obscured the social fact that whether a conscious participant or not, the observer was inescapably part of the social setting and affected the behavior of other participants, as well as being influenced and sometimes even manipulated by them. The lack of familiarity of researchers with the culture, the language, and the community often made them vulnerable to such influence, the more so since it was unperceived.

The effect of the observer's presence on other participants – the *observer's paradox*, so called because the observer cannot observe what would have happened if he or she had not been present – has been studied in certain situations, and appears to be variable. In a classic case, Labov (1970) discovered that replicating the interview procedures of Bereiter and Engelmann (1966), using a White interviewer with African American children in a threatening environment, produced a very low amount of verbalization compared with using an African American interviewer in a familiar (home) environment. However, Galvan and Smith (Smith 1973), both White, were successful in eliciting fluent speech from African American children in Texas schools, suggesting that ethnicity is not necessarily a critical inhibitor to communication. The bilingual situation is perhaps even more complex, at least as it affects the study of language behavior, but the effect on the study of other cultural features is less certain. We may be quite sure, however, that at the outset researchers must know the general framework, institutions, and values which guide cultural behavior in the community and be able to behave appropriately, both linguistically and culturally, within any given situation, if their participation is to be genuinely accepted. Similarly, researchers must be able to establish a common basis of shared understandings and rules for behavior if interviews or interactions are to be productive. (For discussion of network analysis theory and procedures in sociolinguistic research, see especially Milroy 1992; Milroy and Milroy 1997.)

Types of Data

While not all types of data are necessarily relevant for every study conducted, at least the following should be considered for any ethnographic research on communication:

1 Background information

Any attempt to understand communication patterns in a community must begin with data on the historical background of the community, including

settlement history, sources of population, history of contact with other groups, and notable events affecting language issues or ethnic relations. A general description is also generally relevant, including topographical features, location of important landmarks, population distribution and density, patterns of movement, sources and places of employment, patterns of religious affiliation, and enrollment in educational institutions. Published sources of information should be utilized as background preparation wherever they are available, and a search should be made of MA and PhD theses to avoid duplication of research effort. Relatively current data may be available from national, state, regional, or local levels of government, or through embassy representatives.

2 *Material artifacts*

Many of the physical objects which are present in a community are also relevant to understanding patterns of communication, including architecture, signs, and such instruments of communication as telephones, radios, books, television sets, computers, and drums. Data collection begins with observation and may include interviewing with such questions as "What is that used for?" and "What do you use to . . . ?" The classification and labeling of objects using ethnosemantic procedures is an early stage in discovering how a speech community organizes experience in relation to language.

3 *Social organization*

Relevant data may include a listing of community institutions, identities of leaders and office holders, and composition of the business and professional sectors, sources of power and influence, formal and informal organizations, ethnic and class relations, social stratification, and residential and association patterns. Information may be available in newspapers and official records of various types, and collected through systematic observation in a sample of settings and interviews conducted with a cross section of people in the community. A network analysis may also be conducted, determining which people interact with which others, in what role-relationships, and for what purposes. The procedure may also be used to identify subgroup boundaries within a heterogeneous community and discover their relative strength.

4 *Legal information*

Laws and court decisions which make reference to language are also relevant: e.g. what constitutes "slander," what "obscenity," and what is the nature

and value of "freedom of speech," or how is it restricted. Laws may also prescribe language choice in official contexts, as those enacted in Quebec and Belgium, or as in bills passed in most US states intended to prohibit use of languages other than English for governmental functions. In communities where such information is formally codified, much is available in law books, court records, and on web sites, and in all communities it is accessible through interviews with participants in "legal" events of various kinds, and observation of their procedures and outcomes.

5 *Artistic data*

Literary sources (written or oral) may be valuable for the descriptions they contain, as well as for the attitudes and values about language they reveal. Additionally, the communicative patterns which occur in literature presumably embody some kind of normative idealization, and portray types of people (e.g. according to social class) in terms of stereotypic use of language. Relevant artistic data also include song lyrics, drama and other genres of verbal performance, and calligraphy.

6 *Common knowledge*

Assumptions which underlie the use and interpretation of language are difficult to identify when they are in the form of unstated presuppositions, but some of them surface after such formulas as "Everyone knows . . . ," and "As they say . . . ," or in the form of proverbs and aphorisms. These are "facts" for which evidence is not considered necessary, the "rules of thumb," and the maxims which govern various kinds of communicative behavior. Some of the data can be elicited with questions about why something is said the way it is in a particular situation instead of in an alternative way, and even more by studying the formal and informal processes in children's acquisition of communicative competence (discussed in chapter 7). Ethnoscience and ethnomethodology are most directly concerned with discovery of this type of data (discussed under Data Collection Procedures below).

7 *Beliefs about language use*

This type of data has long been of interest to ethnographers, and includes taboos and their consequences. Also included are beliefs about who or what is capable of speech, and who or what may be communicated with (e.g. God,

animals, plants, the dead). Closely related are data on attitudes and values with respect to language, including the positive or negative value assigned to volubility versus taciturnity.

8 Data on the linguistic code

Although it is a basic tenet in this field that a perspective which views language only as static units of lexicon, phonology, and grammar is totally inadequate, these do constitute a very important type of data within the broader domain. These, along with paralinguistic and nonverbal features in communication, are included in the model for the analysis of speech events as part of the message form component (discussed under Components of Communication below). Preparation to work within any speech community, particularly if the language used is not native to the ethnographer, should include study of existing dictionaries and grammars. Skills in ethnography of communication are probably best added to skills in linguistic analysis in its narrower sense in order to assure that this component is not neglected or misinterpreted.

Survey of Data Collection and Analytic Procedures

There is no single best method of collecting information on the patterns of language use within a speech community. Appropriate procedures depend on the relationship of the ethnographer and the speech community, the type of data being collected, and the particular situation in which fieldwork is being conducted. The essential defining characteristics of ethnographic field procedures are that they are designed to get around the recorders' biased perceptions, and that they are grounded in the investigation of communication in natural contexts.

Ethnographers should thus command a repertoire of field methods from which to select according to the occasion. Although an ethnographic approach is quite different from an experimental one, quantitative methods may prove useful (even essential) in some aspects of data collection, especially when variable features of language use are being explored. Quantitative methods are essentially techniques for measuring degree of consistency in behavior, and the amount and nature of variation under different circumstances. The ethnographer may profitably collaborate with the sociologist, psychologist, or sociolinguist interested in quantitative analysis, but if quantitative methods are to be used, they must first be developed and validated by qualitative procedures. Quantitative procedures may in turn serve to

determine the reliability of qualitative observation, which is apt to be casual and uncontrolled, and to further test the validity of generalizations which may be made on the basis of a very limited sample.

The criterion for descriptive adequacy which will be kept in mind is that enough information should be provided to enable someone from outside the speech community under investigation to fully understand the event, and to participate appropriately in it.

1 Introspection

Introspection is a means for data collection only about one's own speech community, but it is an important skill to develop for that purpose. This is important not only for data collection per se, but for establishing the fact that everyone has a culture, and that questions about various aspects of language and culture require answers from the perspective of researchers' own speech communities as well as those of their subjects. Ethnographers who are themselves bicultural need to differentiate between beliefs, values, and behaviors which were part of their enculturation (first culture learning) and acculturation (second culture learning or adaptation), and this exercise in itself will provide valuable information and insights on the group and on individuals.

The most productive means for developing this skill in a training program is to ask individuals to formulate very specific answers from their own experience to various questions about communication, such as those listed in the section below on Components of Communication. A second step is to recognize the significance of differences between answers which reflect the cultural *ideal* or norm, and the *real*, or what actually occurs. This distinction between the "ideal" and the "real" – long familiar to anthropologists – is not a matter of truth and falsehood, and should not be put in a negative light. Rather it is a recognition of specific behaviors. A useful analogy may be drawn with the question of what drivers do when they encounter a stop sign: the "ideal" answer is that they always stop; the "real" specific behaviors show that slowing (but not completely stopping) is a common response, and sometimes drivers fail to slow at all. Distinguishing between "ideal" and "real" behaviors is an important stage in viewing culture objectively. Responses to questions about language and culture will usually be in categorical "ideal" terms, and learning the "ideal" answers is an important part of the formal education of group members. "Real" behaviors, which exist on a continuum, are more often acquired by informal modeling, and are more likely to occur "out of awareness" where they may be difficult for individuals to consciously recognize. Thus there is no inherent contradiction if someone asserts that he or she never fails to stop at a stop sign, and then proceeds to

do so. The actual behavior may be quite honestly denied even if it is pointed out, or dismissed as an aberration which does not affect the validity of the general categorical statement.

Thus, even when researchers are sure they "know" about patterns of language use in their own speech community, it is important to check hypotheses developed on the basis of their own perceptions with the perceptions of others, and against objective data collected in systematic observation.

2 Participant-observation

The most common method of collecting ethnographic data in any domain of culture is participant-observation. The researcher who is a member of the speech community was born into that role, and anthropologists have found it possible to perceive and understand patterned cultural behaviors in another society if they are immersed in the community for a year or more. The key to successful participant-observation is freeing oneself as much as humanly possible from the filter of one's own cultural experience. This requires cultural relativism, knowledge about possible cultural differences, and sensitivity and objectivity in perceiving others.

Malinowski was responsible for leading a revolution in fieldwork about 1920, and is credited with the establishment of this approach. Prior to that date, ethnographers described other cultures on the basis of travelers' reports, or at best lived apart from the group under investigation (often in the more comfortable housing of colonial administrators), merely visiting on a regular basis to observe and take notes.

One of the most important benefits of participation is being able to test hypotheses about rules for communication, sometimes by breaking them and observing or eliciting reactions. Participation in group activities over a period of time is often necessary for much important information to emerge, and for necessary trusting relationships to develop. The role of the outside ethnographer in a community remains problematic, but if at all possible it should be one which contributes to the welfare of the host group in a way they recognize and desire. Whether this is as teacher or construction worker cannot be determined out of context, but the ethnographer should not be "taking" data without returning something of immediate usefulness to the community.

Potential problems for "outsider" ethnographers include not only what role to assume, but what information to provide about themselves before knowing the meaning of such information in the community. Furthermore, it is very difficult to behave "appropriately" (even when one knows what to do) when one is ill, or when appropriate behaviors violate one's own values

and mores. Ethnographers must first of all understand their own culture, and the effects it has on their own behavior, if they are to succeed in participant-observation in another.

It should be clear that for a participant-observation approach, a high level of linguistic as well as cultural competence is a *sine qua non* for successful fieldwork, particularly if it is to take place within a delimited time frame. The investigator, to be able to enter into various speech events relatively unobtrusively as a participant-observer, and one with whom other participants can feel comfortable, should share as closely as possible the same linguistic background and competence as the members of the community under observation. Nevertheless, some naturalistic experimental variation of conditions or interaction will be desirable in order to evoke or test for the occurrence of different response patterns.

Collecting data in situations in which they themselves are taking part requires ethnographers to include data on their own behaviors in relation to others, and an analysis of their role in the interaction as well as those of others.

3 Observation

Observation without participation is seldom adequate, but there are times when it is appropriate data collection procedure. Some sites are explicitly constructed to allow unobtrusive observation, such as laboratory classrooms with one-way mirrors, or others which allow the researcher to be visible but observe quite passively without being disruptive to the situation. Also, in observing group dynamics in a meeting or other gathering, it is generally better for a marginally accepted observer to refrain from taking active part in the proceedings. Observation from a balcony or porch is usually less disruptive to the patterns of children's interaction when their play is under observation than any attempt at participation.

Observation of communicative behavior which has been videotaped is a potentially useful adjunct to the participant-observation and interview, particularly because of the convenience of replaying for microanalysis, but it is always limited in focus and scope to the camera's perception, and can only be adequately understood in a more holistic context. Furthermore, ethnographers should always remember that the acceptability of taping, photographing, and even note-taking depends on the community and situations being observed. When filming or videotaping is feasible in a relatively fixed context, it is best to use a stationary wide-angle studio camera for "contextual" footage as well as a mobile camera to focus on particular aspects of the situation. To obtain a visual record of interactional events in which participants are more mobile (such as children playing together

out-of-doors, or scenes in a hunting or fishing expedition), a hand-held and battery-operated video camera is most suitable. In such situations a small radio microphone may be attached to a single focal participant, with a receiver on the camera which records the sound directly on film. Most radio microphones will pick up not only what the focal participant says, but anything said by a speaker within at least three or four feet. When a wider range of audio coverage is needed, a second radio microphone and receiver tuned to a different frequency can provide input to an auxiliary tape recorder. Multiple input from different frequencies directly to the camera audio track requires additional equipment which greatly reduces portability. Microphones which record sound from the full scope of video input are most appropriate in some cases, but they often pick up sounds extraneous to the focal communicative event which make decipherment of speech more difficult. (For a discussion of electronic recording in linguistic fieldwork, see Troike and Saville-Troike 1988; Duranti 1997a.)

Since the potential range of settings for observation is enormous, priority must be determined by the focus or primary purpose of investigation. If the focus is on children in an educational situation, for instance, these include most obviously school itself, but also the playground, home, and the social environs most frequented by the child or which appear to have the greatest affective and linguistic effect on the child, such as perhaps the church. The work plan should be sufficiently flexible and open ended so that important settings which emerge in the course of ethnographic and linguistic research can be added or substituted, as appropriate. It would not be adequate in this education example to limit observation to the classroom setting without taking into account the larger social context of communication.

Persons first developing skill in this method should just report observable behaviors without imposing value judgments or drawing conclusions; more advanced steps involve making inferences about such unobservable aspects of culture as beliefs and values from the behaviors or things which are observed. The key to successful observation and inference is, again, freeing oneself from one's own cultural filter.

4 *Interviewing*

Interviewing may contribute a wide range of cultural information, and may include collection of kinship schedules, information on important religious and community events, and elicitation of folktales, historical narratives, songs, exposition of "how to" in relation to various aspects of technical knowledge, and descriptions of encounters among members of the community in different contexts. While an interview setting is often formal and contrived, it need not be, and the procedure is an efficient – perhaps necessary – supplement

to observation and participation. Types of questions and interviewing styles may be so different that few overall generalizations can be made.

The most common ethnographic interview is composed of questions which do not have predetermined response alternatives. These are appropriate for collecting data on virtually every aspect of communication: what regional varieties are recognized, and what features distinguish them from one another (e.g., Do the people who live on Red Mountain/in Green Valley, etc., talk in a different way from you? Can you understand them? What are some examples?); attitudes toward varieties of language (e.g., Who talks the "best"? Who talks "funny"? Why do you think they talk that way?); identification of different kinds of speech events (e.g., What are they doing [with reference to people interacting in various ways]? What kind of talk is that?); social markers in speech (e.g., How do you greet someone who is older than you? Younger? A man? A woman? A servant? Your employer?).

Where possible, it is probably best to impose as little structure as possible on an interview, and to insert questions at natural points in the flow rather than having a rigid schedule of questions to follow.

The essence of the ethnographic interview is that it is open ended, and carries as few preconceptions with it as possible, or at least constantly attempts to discover possible sources of bias and minimize their effect. The ethnographer must be open to new ideas, information, and patterns which may emerge in the course of interviewing, and to differences between "ideal" and "real" culture as reflected in statements of belief or values and in actions, respectively.

Closed-ended questions which are precoded for statistical analysis may also be used, but only after the probable range of answers and possible interpretations have been established. Even so, in precoding there is danger of violating the principle of being open to new meanings and unforeseen patterns of behavior, and continuous qualitative validation is required.

Answers to the "simplest" of survey questions are culture specific. Responses regarding age and number of children, for instance, cannot be interpreted without first knowing on what basis age is calculated within a particular speech community, or if "how many children" means only living children, or only male children, or only children of the same sex as the respondent. In interviewing Tanzanian nationals living in the United States, Jalbert discovered it is inappropriate to ask how many children are in a family because, he was told, "We don't count children." The desired information can be elicited by asking "How many of your children were born in Tanzania and how many were born here?" Especially when interviewing members of a minority group in a society, family membership and house occupants may be considered sensitive topics if dominant marriage customs are not being followed, and they may be very threatening if undocumented aliens are present in the home.

The meaning of terms typically used in the closed-ended survey questions must often be explained, even when administered to native speakers of the same language. When I have asked about "marital status," for instance, a common answer has been "yes," and questions on the "ordinal rank" of a child have often been answered with identification of religious affiliation.

Questions which utilize scaled responses, such as a semantic differential, may also be used in some situations, but only if they are preceded and followed with open-ended questions to allow valid interpretation. The importance of probing scaled responses was illustrated when I asked students from several different countries to rate characteristics like ambitious, competitive, dominating, sympathetic, and tactful according to whether they are more typical of men or women in their own speech community. Responses were then used as a basis for elicitation of how these characteristics are reflected differentially in the ways males and females speak. While almost all students rated men as more "dominating," some said this was reflected in their talking more, while others said the same characteristic was reflected in their greater taciturnity. Similarly, when students rated members of speech communities other than their own on such traits as friendliness, subsequent discussion on what constitutes "friendly" verbal behavior revealed substantial differences: the same questions about school and family background which Japanese perceived as "friendly," for instance, were considered "unfriendly" by Americans, who thought they were an attempt to rank addressees socially; and the quantity of small talk considered "friendly" by speakers of Spanish was considered "unfriendly" by Japanese, who in general feel a great quantity of talk indicates social distance rather than friendliness. As one Japanese student exclaimed, "If you are friends with someone you know them, and thus have no need to talk much."

Such group interviews of members of several different speech communities can be very useful for developing concepts of relativity during the training process; while all of the students participating in this discussion agreed that "friendly" behavior is a good thing, it became clear that communicative behaviors that will be interpreted as being "friendly" are language and culture specific. The ethnographer can never assume that the same labels used in close-ended or scaled responses refer to similar patterns of language use, even if they have been translated into the respondents' language; that remains to be determined by open-ended interview and observation-participation procedures.

Possible effects of interviewer ethnicity have been discussed above, but sex and age are factors which must also be considered. Females are considered less threatening than males in many communities, and are thus more readily accepted as interviewers, but in other communities it is considered entirely inappropriate for women to behave in such a manner.

Further, there are often limitations on what kinds of questions an interviewer of one sex may ask an interviewee of the other.

Eliciting information from child informants involves additional considerations, both because their perspective on the world is different from adults' (even within the same speech community), and because an adult–child interview is likely to embody an unequal power relationship in which children cannot communicate freely. Special precautions must be taken to avoid "adult-centrism" in interpreting responses (Tammivaara and Enright 1986), and to convey complete openness to a child's knowledge and point of view. When children's responses are carefully probed, it becomes apparent that they have their own well-developed notions about the world around them, including the language(s) they hear and speak, and how people learn them.

Among the critical issues in any kind of interviewing are:

(a) Selecting reliable informants. Often the people who make themselves most readily available to an outsider are those who are marginal to the community, and may thus convey inaccurate or incomplete information and interfere with the acceptance of the researcher by other members of the group.
(b) Formulating culturally appropriate questions. This includes knowing what is appropriate or inappropriate to ask about, why, and in what way.
(c) Developing sensitivity to signs of acceptance, discomfort, resentment, or sarcasm. Such sensitivity relates to the first two issues by contributing information on informant reliability and the appropriateness of questions, and on when an interview should be terminated.
(d) Procedures for data transcription, arrangement, and analysis. These will differ to some extent with the kind of information that is being collected and often with the theoretical orientation of the researcher; whenever the interview is conducted in a language not native to the researcher, however, transcription requires skill in using another orthographic system or a phonetic alphabet (even if a tape recorder is in use).

These issues are discussed at length in Briggs (1986) and Spradley (1979), while Brislin, Lonner, and Thorndike (1973) provide a useful list of potential communication problems between interviewer and respondent which may affect the validity of the findings. The potential biases they describe include cultural differences in respondents' feelings of ability to answer questions. People in the US, for instance, often feel they must answer any question that is put to them, but this may or may not reflect real knowledge of the subject. Some respondents will answer questions in the way they feel will most please the interviewer (the "courtesy bias"), while others consider it great sport to "put on" outsiders (the "sucker bias"). In some speech

communities, respondents are concerned about possible "after effects" of talking (either social or supernatural), and these must be given particularly serious consideration. It must also be remembered that an interview itself is a communicative event which will have culture-specific rules for conduct and interpretation. Indeed, an "interview" may not be an appropriate mode at all for getting information. Briggs (1984; 1986) discusses how metacommunicative competence in native events which function to elicit information may increase the "cooperativeness" of collaborators, and similar insights are reported by Stoller (1986) regarding his work among the Songhay. The following exchange was with an elder in the community who was willing to advise Stoller after he found out that he had not been getting truthful responses to his questionnaire:

> "You will never learn about us," he told me, "if you go into people's compounds, ask personal questions, and write down the answers. Even if you remain here one year or two years and ask us questions in this manner, we would still lie to you."
>
> "Then what am I to do?"
>
> "You must learn to sit with people," he told me. "You must learn to sit and listen. As we say in Songhay: 'One kills something thin only to discover that it is fat'.'" (Stoller 1986: 53)

Many problems can be avoided by doing a pretest before attempting a large-scale data collection, including an exploration of who can be interviewed, how people within the community exchange information, and what forms of questions are appropriate (Hymes 1970).

The reliability of information can best be judged by asking similar questions of several people in the community and comparing their answers, and by relating information collected through interviews to observations. These should be required steps in all interview procedures.

5 *Ethnosemantics (Ethnoscience)*

Ethnosemantics is concerned primarily with discovering how experience is categorized by eliciting terms in the informants' language at various levels of abstraction and analyzing their semantic organization, usually in the form of a taxonomy or componential analysis. Because an adequate ethnography of communication must include the categories and contexts which are culturally significant within the speech community under investigation, including how they group language use into kinds of communicative events (as described in chapter 2), the perspective and methods of ethnosemantics are highly relevant.

A possible initial step in data collection is selecting a domain or genre, and then asking (recursively), "What kind of insults are there?" for instance; if the response was "Friendly insults and unfriendly insults," the next question would be "What kind of friendly insults are there?" in order to elicit subcategories and examples, and then "What kind of unfriendly insults are there?" etc. This step is usually followed by questions which elicit the dimensions which the speaker is using for comparison and contrast: e.g., "In what way are these two things/acts/events different?" "How are they the same?" "Of these three, which two are more alike and in what way?" "How does the third differ from them?" The first type of questioning strategy yields information primarily about hierarchically structured categories, and the latter primarily about feature sets.

An extension of this method might be called *ethnopragmatics*, or the discovery of why members of a speech community say they do things as opposed to why ethnographers say they do them: e.g., why people say what they do when someone sneezes.

The ultimate goal of ethnographic description is an *emic* account of the data, in terms of the categories which are meaningful to members of the speech community under study; an *etic* account in terms of a priori categories is a useful preliminary grid for reference and for comparison purposes, but is usually not the ultimate goal of description.

6 *Ethnomethodology and conversation analysis*

As developed by Harold Garfinkel (1967; 1972), ethnomethodology is concerned primarily with discovering the underlying processes which speakers of a language utilize to produce and interpret communicative experiences, including the unstated assumptions which are shared cultural knowledge and understandings. According to Gumperz (1977; 1984), this is the first tradition to deal with conversations as cooperative endeavors, and to focus on sociological analysis of verbal interaction. To Garfinkel, social knowledge is revealed in the process of interaction itself, and the format required for description of communication is dynamic rather than static.

There are general (perhaps universal) processes through which meaning is conveyed in the process of conversational interaction (Gumperz 1977):

(a) Meaning and intelligibility of ways of speaking are at least partially determined by the situation, and the prior experience of speakers.
(b) Meaning is negotiated during the process of interaction, and is dependent on the intent and interpretation of previous utterances.
(c) A participant in conversation is always committed to some kind of interpretation.

(d) An interpretation of what happens now is always reversible in the light of what happens later.

A clearly emerging concept is that of the extent to which speakers must share experience to successfully develop conversational exchanges of any depth and duration.

Gumperz builds on this in proposing the outline of a theory of conversational inference, of how social knowledge is acquired through communicative experience, stored in the mind, retrieved from memory, used in formulating expectations of what is to follow, and integrated with grammatical knowledge in the act of conversing (Gumperz 2000).

A similar tradition in Conversation Analysis (CA) follows from the work of Harvey Sacks in the 1960s (see Sacks 1992). The basic theme is summarized by Pomerantz and Fehr:

> The organization of talk or conversation (whether "informal" or "formal") was never the central defining focus in CA. Rather it is the organization of the meaningful conduct of people in society, that is, how people in society produce their activities and make sense of the world about them. (1997: 65)

Because of its cultural base, the "meaning" that emerges in a conversation is likely to be different for different participants if they are not members of the same speech community. Examples of cross-cultural (mis)communicative events serve to highlight the importance of such factors as the information or presuppositions the communicants bring to the task, the extralinguistic context, and the nonverbal cues. For example, I observed the following exchange in a kindergarten classroom on the Navajo Reservation:

> A Navajo man opened the door to the classroom and stood silently, looking at the floor. The Anglo-American teacher said, "Good morning" and waited expectantly, but the man did not respond. The teacher then said "My name is Mrs. Jones," and again waited for a response. There was none.
>
> In the meantime, a child in the room put away his crayons and got his coat from the rack. The teacher, noting this, said to the man, "Oh, are you taking Billy now?" He said, "Yes."
>
> The teacher continued to talk to the man while Billy got ready to leave, saying, "Billy is such a good boy," "I'm so happy to have him in class," etc.
>
> Billy walked toward the man (his father), stopping to turn around and wave at the teacher on his way out and saying, "Bye-bye." The teacher responded, "Bye-bye." The man remained silent as he left.

From a Navajo perspective, the man's silence was appropriate and respectful. The teacher, on the other hand, expected not only to have the

man return her greeting, but to have him identify himself and state his reason for being there. Although such an expectation is quite reasonable and appropriate from an Anglo-American perspective, it would have required the man to break not only Navajo rules of politeness but also a traditional religious taboo that prohibits individuals from saying their own name. The teacher interpreted the contextual cues correctly in answer to her own question ("Are you taking Billy?") and then engaged in small talk in an attempt to be friendly and to cover her own discomfort in the situation. The man continued to maintain appropriate silence. Billy, who was more acculturated than his father to Anglo-American ways, broke the Navajo rule to follow the Anglo-American one in leavetaking.

This encounter undoubtedly reinforced the teacher's stereotype that Navajos are "impolite" and "unresponsive," and the man's stereotype that Anglo-Americans are "impolite" and "talk too much."

Describing and analyzing the negotiation of meaning requires discovering what aspects of speech signal role and status relations, and serve as a metalanguage for transmitting information about them. The researcher then infers changes in assumptions about the relationships as a conversation progresses. Potential problems arise in applying these methods to research in other speech communities because speakers' inferences must usually in turn be inferred by the researchers, and this secondary level of inference may be based on quite different assumptions.

While the foci and procedures of traditional ethnography and various models of interaction analysis differ, they are in a necessary complementary relationship to one another if an understanding of communication is to be reached. Ethnographic models of observation and interview are most useful for a macro-description of community structure, and for determining the nature and significance of contextual features and the patterns and functions of language in the society; interactional microanalyses build on this input information, and feed back into an ethnography of communication clearer understandings of the processes by which members of a speech community actually use and interpret language, especially in everyday interaction – a vital aspect of their communicative competence. (See Watson and Seiler 1992; Schiffrin 1994; Titscher, Meyer, Wodak, and Vetter 2000 for descriptions and comparisons of methods.)

An ethnographic perspective on data collection and analysis is summarized by Duranti:

> to be an ethnographer of language means to have the instruments to first hear and then listen carefully to what people are saying when they get together. It means to learn to understand what the participants in the interactions we study are up to, what counts as meaningful *for them*, what they are paying attention to, and for what purposes. (1997a: 8)

7 Philology

The interpretation and explanation of texts, or *hermeneutics*, has traditionally been a science or art applied to writing, rather than speech, and especially to Biblical texts. (The Greek term for "to interpret" derives from *Hermes*, the messenger of the gods.) In addition to the referential meaning of the texts themselves, a variety of written sources may yield information on patterns of use in the language, and on the culture of the people who read and write it. According to Lehtonen:

> Hermeneuticians particularly concern themselves with such questions as producing certain meanings from a text, the role of the author's intentions in the formation of meanings, historical variability and the reader's part in the creation of textual meanings. (2000: 123)

As discussed under Types of Data above, much of the necessary background information on a community may be found in written sources, including theses and dissertations, governmental publications, old diaries and correspondence, and archival sources. Newspapers and census records may also be used as clues to the social organization of the community, law books and court records to language-related legal information, and literature to idealized patterns of language use, and to attitudes and values about language.

For information on contemporary language usage, one good source is the advice columns published in most US newspapers (e.g. "Ann Landers," "Miss Manners," and "Dear Abby"). These contain letters from people asking advice or giving opinions, with replies from the columnists. They regularly include questions and comments on appropriate forms of address, appropriate responses to compliments, etc. These might be compared with the older advice columns and books written by Emily Post, in order to document changing ideals of usage. An example of the use of this type of data source comes from Kempf (1985), who demonstrates how use of pronouns and terms of address in a newspaper, *Neues Deutschland*, can be used to study language variation in relation to social class, political party membership, and other social factors. Although generalization from written text to other channels must be used with caution, direct investigation of spoken usage in this case would have been subject to severe political and practical limitations.

Obituary notices in newspapers may provide information on social organization and values by allowing inferences as to who is given special treatment when they die (e.g., is the notice on the front page or near the classified section, and of what length), what accomplishments are mentioned (e.g., for women, the husband's occupation is frequently mentioned; the

reverse is almost never the case), and what is taboo or requires euphemisms. Classified advertising sections are an index to goods and occupations that are available, and their organization indicates salient categories and labels in the community.

For communities with a literate tradition, written sources may be used to document language shifts over time: e.g., historical reconstruction for English speech communities has long included contrasting the forms used in letters versus plays, and secular versus religious writings, and has been used to document changes in such aspects of the language as the use of second person pronouns, and the relation of such changes to the sociocultural context of time. Changes in the status and functions of languages can be inferred in the shift of language choice for the same genre: e.g. Latin versus English, English versus French.

Old travelers' accounts, texts, dictionaries, and grammars are the only evidence now available from which we may reconstruct cultural information about many communities which have been exterminated or have fully assimilated to another culture, including many American Indian groups. A combination of techniques from ethnomethodology and literary analysis has been applied by Hymes (1980; 1981) and others to the oral texts recorded as prose by linguists and anthropologists, uncovering internal poetic structure and coherence, verbal patterns of openings, closings, and transitions, and assumptions about characters and their appropriate behaviors and fates – the "common knowledge" we seek to understand.

Identification of Communicative Events

Communication in societies tends to be categorized into different kinds of events rather than an undifferentiated string of discourse, with more or less well defined boundaries between each, and different behavioral norms (often including different varieties of language) appropriate for each kind. Descriptive tasks include enumerating the kinds of events which are recognized or can be inferred in a community, the nature of boundary markers which signal their beginning and end, and the features which distinguish one type from another.

Since a communicative event is a bounded entity of some kind, recognizing what the boundaries are is essential for their identification. A telephone conversation is a communicative event bounded by a ring of the telephone as a "summons" and hanging up the receiver as a "close." Event boundaries may be signaled by ritual phrases, such as *Did you hear this one?* and then laughter to bound a joke; *Once upon a time* and *They lived happily ever after* to bound a story; or *Let us pray* and *Amen* to bound a prayer. Instead of

these, or in addition, there may be changes in facial expression, tone of voice, or bodily position between one communicative event and the next, or a period of silence. Perhaps the surest sign of a change of events is code-alternation, or the change from relatively consistent use of one language or variety to another. Boundaries are also likely to coincide with change of participants, change in topical focus, or change in the general purpose of communication. Major junctures in communication are signaled by a combination of verbal and nonverbal cues.

Consecutive events may be distinguished in a single situation. In a trial, for instance, the opening event begins when the bailiff cries *Hear ye, hear ye* and ends when the judge enters the courtroom and sits down on the bench, and all others are seated. Within the same situation, direct and cross examination of witnesses or the defendant may be identified as separate events because participants are in a different role-relationship, and there is a change in manner of questioning and responding: i.e. different rules for interaction. These events may be bounded by a change in participants, and perhaps by a verbal routine such as *I call – to the stand* to open and *You may stand down* or *Your witness* to close. If a recess is called before a boundary is reached, the interaction can be considered a single discontinuous speech event, even if continued on another day.

Formal ritual events in a speech community have more clearly defined boundaries than informal ones because there is a high degree of predictability in both verbal and nonverbal content of routines on each occasion, and they are frequently set off from events which precede and follow by changes in vocal rhythm, pitch, and intonation. Brief interactions between people almost always consist of routines, such as greetings and leavetakings, and the boundaries of longer and most informal communicative events, such as conversations, can be determined because they are preceded and followed by them (Goffman 1971).

Since the discovery of communicative norms is often most obvious in their breach, examples of boundary violations may highlight what the appropriate boundary behavior is. Some people are annoyed with what they consider to be premature applause by others at the end of an opera, for instance, which indicates differences in what "the end" of the event is perceived to be: the end of the singing or the end of all music. Still others may whisper through the overture, since for them the event has not yet begun. Christina Paulston (personal communication) reports the occurrence of a serious misunderstanding between Jewish and Christian parents attending an ecumenical service because the Jewish parents continued conversing after entering the place of worship, while the Christians considered this inappropriate behavior once the physical boundary into the sanctuary was crossed.

Microanalysis of boundary signals in less formal situations commonly requires filming a communicative situation, and then asking participants to

view the film themselves and to indicate when "something new is happening." The researcher then elicits characterizations of the event, and expectations of what may happen next (and what may *not* happen next), in order to determine the nature of the boundary signals, and how the context has changed from the point of view of the participants.

The communicative events selected initially for description and analysis by one learning to use this approach should be brief self-contained sequences which have readily identifiable beginnings and endings. Further, they should be events which recur in similar form and with some frequency, so that regular patterns will be more easily discernible: e.g. greetings, leavetakings, prayers, condolences, jokes, insults, compliments, ordering meals in restaurants. More complex and less regular events yield themselves to analysis more readily after patterns of use and norms of interpretation have already been discovered in relation to simpler and more regular communicative events.

Components of Communication

Analysis of a communicative event begins with a description of the components which are likely to be salient (cf. Hymes 1967, 1972c):

1. The *genre*, or type of event (e.g. joke, story, lecture, greeting, conversation)
2. The *topic*, or referential focus
3. The *purpose* or *function*, both of the event in general and in terms of the interaction goals of individual participants
4. The *setting*, including location, time of day, season of year, and physical aspects of the situation (e.g. size of room, arrangement of furniture)
5. The *key*, or emotional tone of the event (e.g. serious, sarcastic, jocular)
6. The *participants*, including their age, sex, ethnicity, social status, or other relevant categories, and their relationship to one another
7. The *message form*, including both vocal and nonvocal channels, and the nature of the code which is used (e.g. which language, and which variety)
8. The *message content*, or surface level denotative references; what is communicated about
9. The *act sequence*, or ordering of communicative/speech acts, including turn-taking and overlap phenomena
10. The *rules for interaction*, or what proprieties should be observed
11. The *norms of interpretation*, including the common knowledge, the relevant cultural presuppositions, or shared understandings, which allow

particular inferences to be drawn about what is to be taken literally, what discounted, etc.

All of these will be discussed in turn below.

Scene (genre, topic, purpose/function, setting)

The first four components comprise the *scene*, or extra-personal *context* of the event. Identification of the *genre*, or category of communication, requires procedures which elicit perceptions from within the speech community under study (as discussed in chapter 2 and in the section on Ethnosemantics above). Its importance as an organizing principle in communication is summarized by Bauman, who defines genre as

> a constellation of systematically related, co-occurrent formal features and structures that serves as a conventionalized orienting framework for the production and reception of discourse. . . . a speech style oriented to the production and reception of a particular kind of text. (2000: 84)

Topic also requires culture-specific inferencing, since it is frequently not overtly identified.

Determination of *purpose* involves the potential for multiple levels which need to be taken into account. The genre of greeting, for instance, may simultaneously function to reinforce solidarity and to display (or manipulate) relative status. In an exploration of its universal versus culture-specific functions, Duranti (1997b) also identifies greeting functions as searching for new information and sanctioning social behavior.

Indeed, the *setting* is the only component of the scene which may be directly observed, although even for this component researchers might not notice an aspect of the setting which is not salient in their own culture: e.g. the relative elevation of chairs (as in Japanese) or seatings at the front, back, or side of a space (as for Polynesians), which may be very important for understanding the meaning of the event; and whether chairs in a classroom are arranged in straight rows or a circle, which may signal the appropriate level of formality (as for Americans).

The time of day, day of the week, or season of the year often affects choice of language form. This may include whole genres of events designated only for particular times; e.g., in Navajo one cannot talk about hibernating animals except during winter months, so that traditional stories about them may only be told at certain times of the year, and Orthodox Jews are constrained from discussing secular topics on the Sabbath. Routines such as *Merry Christmas*, *Happy New Year*, and *April Fool*, when spoken out of their

appropriate temporal or physical context, can only be interpreted as joking or sarcastic.

Place and time may affect the meaning of greetings. It is not appropriate for a speaker of the Abbey language to greet everyone in just any location, for instance. Hepié reports on his own usage:

> Suppose I go back to my country [Côte d'Ivoire] and run into a relative in the street. I won't greet him, but quickly let him know that I am on my way to his home to greet him. [This is because] the greeting in such cases shows you care about such people. Therefore it has to be at home, where the relative can at his ease get the news from you.

Nwoye reports that for Igbo, morning greetings are the most significant,

> since the morning is the beginning of the day and it is believed that the sort of person you first encounter in the morning determines your fortune for that day. . . . Therefore people consciously refrain from speaking to those who they know or suspect can bring ill luck and ruin their entire day.

Descriptive questions to be answered regarding the scene are:

- What kind of communicative event is it?
- What is it about?
- Why is it happening?
- Where and when does it occur?
- What does the setting look like?

Additional questions which may prove relevant to understanding the significance of a setting include:

- How do individuals organize themselves spatially in groups for various purposes (e.g. in rows, circles, around tables, on the floor, in the middle of the room, around its circumference)?
- What geospatial concepts, understandings, and beliefs exist in the group or are known to individuals?
- What is the knowledge and significance of cardinal directions (north, south, east, west)?
- What significance is associated with different directions or places (e.g. heaven is up, people are buried with heads to the west, the host at a meal should sit facing the door)?
- What beliefs or values are associated with concepts of time of day or season, and are there particular behavioral prescriptions or taboos

associated with them (e.g. not singing certain songs in the summertime lest a snake bite, not telling stories until the sun has set)?

The organization of time and space is of enormous significance in most cultures, and one of the most frequent areas for cross-cultural conflict or misunderstanding, in large part because it is so often unconscious. In particular, ethnographers cannot assume that many of the concepts and attitudes regarding time and space (including personal space) which are held in their culture will hold for others.

Key

According to Hymes, "Key is introduced to provide for the tone, manner, or spirit in which the act is done" (1972c: 62). In labeling this component in English, we may think in terms of contrasts: e.g. teasing versus serious, sincere versus sarcastic, friendly versus hostile, sympathetic versus threatening, perfunctory versus painstaking. Key is often redundantly ascribed to genre (e.g., jokes are jocular, condolences are sympathetic), but this is not a necessary relationship. In some cases jokes may be made in a sarcastic key, or condolences may be threatening. A particular key may also be associated primarily with a particular function of language use, role-relationship between participants, or message form and content.

The importance of this component in the description and analysis of communicative events lies in the fact that while redundancy is common, key may be independently variable with respect to any other component of a communicative event. When there is an apparent conflict between components, the key generally overrides other elements. For example, if a compliment is made in a sarcastic key, the sarcasm overrides the form and literal content of the message, and signals a different relationship between participants than would be the case if the compliment were sincere.

Key may be signaled by choice of language or variety, by nonverbal signals (e.g. wink or posture), by paralinguistic features (e.g. degree of aspiration), or by a combination of elements. In the sample analyses later in this chapter, for instance, the sorrowful key of the formal condoling event among the Abbey is dependent on men's not standing fully erect during the ceremony, and the friendly and casual key of the Chinese dinner invitation event is signaled primarily by the frequency of interjections used in the message form and the extent of rising and falling intonation.

As with other components of communication, interpretation of key is culture-specific and must be determined according to indigenous perceptions. Because of its overriding importance to the meaning of an event, accounting for key is a crucial aspect of analysis.

Participants

The basic descriptive questions to answer about *participants* are:

- Who is taking part in the event?
- How are they organized?

This category includes not only speakers, but also hearers and overhearers (or writers and readers, signers and interpreters, etc., in other modalities).

An adequate description of the participants includes not only observable traits, but background information on the composition and role-relationships within the family and other social institutions, distinguishing features in the life cycle, and differentiation within the group according to sex and social status. An analysis of how participants are organized in an event is essential to understanding what roles they are taking in relation to one another, and how they are actively involved in the construction and performance of communication (cf. *participant structures*, Philips 1983b).

Answers to such questions as the following may prove relevant:

- Who is in a "family"? Who among these (or others) lives in one house?
- What is the hierarchy of authority in the family?
- What are the rights and responsibilities of each family member?
- What are the functions and obligations of the family in the larger social unit?
- What are criteria for the definition of stages, periods, or transitions in life?
- What are attitudes, expectations, and behaviors toward individuals at different stages in the life cycle? What stage of life is most valued? What stage of life is most "difficult"?
- Who has authority over whom? To what extent can one person's will be imposed on another? By what means?
- Do means of social control vary with recognized stages in the life cycle, membership in various social categories, or according to setting or offense?
- What roles within the group are available to whom, and how are they acquired?
- Do particular roles have positive or malevolent characteristics?

Among the questions relating participants to language and culture which will be answered in the process of ethnographic description and analysis are:

- How is language related to the life cycle?
- Is language use important in the definition or social marking of roles?

- What forms of address are used between people in various role-relationships?
- How is deference shown? How are insults expressed?
- Who may disagree with whom? Under what circumstances?
- How do the characteristics of "speaking well" relate to age, sex, or other social factors?
- How does speaking ability, literacy, or writing ability relate to achievement of status in the society?
- What roles, attitudes, or personality traits are associated with particular ways of speaking?
- Who may talk to whom? When? Where? About what?
- What is the role of language in social control? What variety is used? In multilingual contexts, what is the significance of using one versus the other language?

The dress of participants may also be relevant to the interpretation of their communicative behavior, and thus require description: e.g., Arab males may stand closer to females when talking if the woman is wearing a veil, and the Akan of Ghana assign communicative significance to the type of staff which is carried by royalty or the particular costume which is worn (Yankah 1995).

Belief about who may participate in communicative events is culture-specific, and is often not limited to humans. In the sample analyses below, for instance, Abbey speakers consider the drum and the invisible people who are invoked by the drum to be participants in condoling events, and the spirit of the deceased is an important participant for Igbo speakers; speakers of English and other European languages often believe they can communicate with pets.

Message form

In studying the various social, cultural, and situation constraints on communicative behavior, both verbal and nonverbal codes are significant in the *message form*, *message content*, and *act sequence* components of communicative events, and each type of code as transmitted by both vocal and nonvocal channels. This four-way distinction on the dimensions of verbal-nonverbal and vocal-nonvocal is shown in figure 2. Where there are varieties recognized on any dimension (e.g. register or regional dialect), this is also considered part of message form.

Each of these cells may be further subdivided by channel. Patterns in spoken language differ significantly, for instance, if the channel of transmission is face-to-face communication, telephone, or a tape recording which

CHANNEL

CODE		Vocal	Nonvocal
	Verbal	Spoken language	Written language (Deaf) Sign language Whistle/drum languages Morse code
	Nonverbal	Paralinguistic and prosodic features Laughter	Silence Kinesics Proxemics Eye behavior Pictures and cartoons

Figure 2

will be played by the addressee at a later time. Patterns in written communication differ if the channel of transmission is hard copy or electronic, with e-mail typically exhibiting many characteristics of vocal communication, perhaps in part because it also involves little preplanning or post-editing. E-mail has even developed nonverbal visual symbols to represent affective states which are conveyed by intonation in speech: e.g. : -) 'happy,' : -('sad,' etc. Written electronic communication has become even more spontaneous with the development of two-way pagers that buzz with instant messages.

Descriptions of verbal codes are generally limited to spoken and written language, but other modes of verbal communication are quite widespread. Communicative systems based on instrumental sounds (such as whistles and drum beats) are found in several parts of the world, for instance, and codes have been developed for electronic and telegraphic transmission, communication between ships, and other specialized purposes. Whistle or drum codes may involve a signal mode where short texts are repeated over and over, or they may involve a "speech" mode in which a much wider range of texts is transmitted.

A more common example of verbal/nonvocal communication is the occurrence of well developed systems of manual sign language in communities which include individuals who are deaf or hearing impaired. Even though sign language may not be accompanied by any vocalization, it shares all other features of verbal communication with speech. In signing, a range of visual behaviors in addition to hand movements (which would be considered nonverbal in speech) operate on the verbal dimension. These include some facial expressions, which may even function at a syntactic level in

this code. The nonverbal dimension of sign language includes the silence deliberately induced by closing the eyes or averting eye gaze.

Within linguistics, silence has traditionally been ignored except for its boundary-marking function, delimiting the beginning and end of utterances. The tradition has been to define it negatively – as merely the absence of speech. I will focus on it here in the discussion of message form to emphasize that adequate description and interpretation of communication requires that we understand the role of such phenomena as silence, as well as of speech.

In considering silence, a basic distinction must be made between silences which carry meaning, but not propositional content, and silent communicative acts which are entirely dependent on adjacent vocalizations for interpretation, and which carry their own illocutionary force. The former include the pauses and hesitations that occur within and between turns of talking – the prosodic dimension of silence. Such nonpropositional silences may be volitional or nonvolitional, and may convey a wide variety of meanings. Their meanings are nonetheless symbolic and conventional, as is seen in the various patterns of use and norms of interpretation in different speech communities (see examples in Tannen and Saville-Troike 1985).

Silent communicative acts conveying propositional content may include gestures, but may also consist of silence unaccompanied by any visual cues. Even in a telephone conversation where no visual signals are possible, silence in response to a greeting, query, or request which anticipates verbal response is fraught with propositional meaning in its own right. Just as "One can utter words without saying anything" (Searle 1969: 24), one can say something without uttering words. Silence as part of communicative interaction can be one of the forms a "speech" act may take – filling many of the same functions and discourse slots – and should be considered along with the production of sentence tokens as a basic formational unit of linguistic communication.

Analyzing the structure of silent communication might best be approached by considering how silence which carries grammatical and lexical meaning may replace different elements within discourse. One form of the WH- question typically used by teachers, for instance, is a fill-in-the-blank structure, e.g., "This is a –?" (often said with lengthened or tensed *a* and nonterminal intonation), meaning "What is this?" This form may also occur in conversational contexts when one speaker asks someone he or she has just met, "And your name is –?" Utterances are also commonly completed in silence when the topic is a particularly delicate one or the word which would be used is taboo, or when the situation is emotionally loaded and the speaker is "at a loss" for words. The Japanese term *haragei* "wordless communication" captures the essence of this latter type of silence. There is a belief in Japanese that as soon as an experience is expressed in words (oral or written), the real essence disappears.

Complete "utterances" may also be composed of silence, as illustrated in the following conversational exchange:

P1 We've received word that four Tanzanian acquaintances from out of town will be arriving tomorrow. But, with our large family, we have no room to accommodate them. (Implied request: "Would you help us out?")
P2 [Silence; not accompanied by any distinctive gesture or facial expression] (Denial: "I don't want to" or "I don't have any room either.")
P1 What do you think?
P2 Yes, that is a problem. Were you able to finish that report we were working on this morning?

The negative response by the second participant (P2) in the cultural milieu in which this took place violated P1's expectation that guests would be welcomed, and frustrated his goal in initiating the conversation (reported by Jalbert). Communicative events which include silent "utterances" are also included in the sample analyses below.

Silence is often used over even longer segments of communication to convey a more generalized meaning, as in the "stylized sulking" by young African Americans that Gilmore observed in classrooms. This was intended to call attention to the "speaker" and express disapproval of others' behavior. The following excerpts are from her description of this phenomenon:

> Girls will frequently pose with their chins up, closing their eyelids for elongated periods and casting downward side glances, and often markedly turning their heads sidewards as well as upwards. . . . Striking or getting into the pose is usually with an abrupt movement that will sometimes be marked with a sound like the elbow striking the desk or a verbal marker like "humpf."
>
> Boys usually display somewhat differently. Their "stylized sulking" is usually characterized by head downward, arms crossed on the chest, legs spread wide and usually desk pushed away. Often they will mark the silence by knocking over a chair or pushing loudly on their desk, assuring that others hear and see the performance. (1985: 149)

Entire communicative events without sound are also common. Especially in ritual contexts, silence may be conventionally mandated as the only form which could achieve the event's communicative goals. Thus the invocation in Christian ritual: "The Lord is in His holy temple; let all the earth keep silence before Him."

Methodologically, in the description of an unfamiliar (or even a familiar) culture, silence is often not documented because it does not attract attention

in the same way that audible or visible behavior does. Because linguists typically define silence negatively as the *absence* of other features, Whorf's ghost stalks the pages of field notes and tape transcripts which omit potentially meaningful occurrences of silence. A special meta-awareness is needed to attend to the range of possible silences, and particular care is required in seeking their proper interpretation.

A similar case might be made for the importance of including occurrences of backchannel signals and laughter in the description of communicative events. The *backchannel* in an interaction is composed of the responses of participants who are being addressed. In English conversations, for instance, these include such nonverbal vocalizations as *mm hm* and *uh huh*, verbal *yeah* and *I see*, or nonvocal head nods and postural shifts. These may function merely as passive acknowledgment, actively encourage continuation, or indicate that change of topic or speaker turn is called for. Similar phenomena in other genres include responses of *Amen* by Christian congregation members during a preacher's sermon, or audience feedback to performers during an entertainment event. Although laughter is seldom even transcribed, it too is socially organized and thus patterns in relation to type of event, topic, key, and other components of communication.

One problem which must be faced in recording communicative behavior other than spoken and written language codes is the complexity it adds to transcription. In describing such nonverbal/nonvocal behavior as kinesics and facial expression, for instance, it is important to identify: (1) the part of the body (i.e. what is moving or in a marked position), (2) the directionality of the movement, or how it differs from an unmarked state, and (3) the scope of movement, if any. Several systems for transcribing nonverbal behaviors have been developed (e.g. Birdwhistell 1952; Hall 1963; Ekman, Friesen, and Tomkins 1971) especially for use when this channel is the primary focus of analysis. It is particularly important to correlate verbal and nonverbal behavior with an indication of their relationship to the verbal act sequence.

In most communicative events the message is carried by both verbal and nonverbal codes simultaneously, albeit only one or the other may be involved. Although such forms are universal, the specific value and meanings of each are relevant only in terms of individuals or particular groups.

Selection rules govern the use of particular message forms when a choice is made between possible alternatives. An example is provided by the selection of kinship terminology: while ethnographers may collect a single set of static reference terms for people in a particular genealogical relationship, in actual use speakers may select from a great variety of alternatives for the same individual in order to express nuances of feeling, or because of differences in other components in the event.

Once a selection has been made there are restrictions on what other alternative forms may co-occur. The usual distinction is between *paradigmatic*

constraints and *syntagmatic constraints*: paradigmatic constraints govern selection of a form from among a possible set of items which might fill the same slot, and syntagmatic constraints govern the sequential selection within the same speech act.

Message content

Message form and message content are closely interrelated, and the two components often cannot be separated in description and analysis. Message content refers to what communicative acts are about, and to what meaning is being conveyed. Hymes (1972c: 60) suggests that one context for distinguishing form and content would be: "He prayed, saying '. . .'" (quoting message form (which also includes content)) versus "He prayed that he would get well" (reporting content only). In the conversational exchange reported in the previous section, both the direct quotation of speech and the silent response exemplify message form, while their interpretation as a request for help in providing room for guests and a denial of help, respectively, exemplify message content which is not included in what was actually said.

In face-to-face communication meaning is derived not only from verbal and nonverbal message form and its content, but also from extralinguistic context, and from the information and expectations which participants bring to the communicative event. Because the various elements are processed simultaneously, it is difficult in most instances to isolate any subset for analysis. In order to examine the role of nonlinguistic factors in communication, I have chosen to study interaction between speakers of mutually unintelligible languages who lack knowledge of the language being spoken by the other participant – a phenomenon I call *dilingual discourse* (Saville-Troike 1987).

The following examples illustrate the extent to which negotiation of meaning can be successful even without the availability of a common linguistic code. These exchanges involved a young Chinese-speaking child (P1) who had just arrived in the US and an English-speaking nursery school teacher (P2) who did not understand any Chinese:

1 P1 *Wode xie dai diao le.*
'My shoelace is loose.'
P2 *Here you go.* [She ties it.]

2 [P1 holds up a broken balloon.]
P1 *Kan. Kan. Wo zhei mei le. Kan. Kan.*
'Look. Look. Mine is gone. Look. Look.'
P2 *Oh, it popped, didn't it? All gone.*

3 [P1 is looking at water standing in the sink.]
P1 *Zemme zheige shui dou bu hui liu a?*
'How come the water doesn't drain out?'
P2 *It fills up, uh huh. It doesn't drain out very fast, does it?*

In each of these examples, agreement on the topic of interaction is achieved because there was an object or an unusual condition upon which mutual attention could be focused, and which was needing repair or was otherwise worthy of mention. P2 responded appropriately to what P1 had said both because of the physical context, and because her experience had given her the skill to anticipate what a child would likely comment on in that context (an inexperienced teacher whom I observed was far less successful at this).

The importance of expectations is highlighted in the next example, where semantic coherence was not achieved. In this dialogue, the teacher had just shown some children a picture of a dog, and she expected that any comments they made would be about a dog in their own experience. She thus interpreted P1's Chinese utterances to be about a dog he had, and his gestures to be indicating the dog's size. Instead, P1 was informing her about dinosaurs, and his horizontal hand movements were illustrating geological formations. The teacher could not infer the message content in this case because it was outside of her *structures of expectations*, or *interpretive frames* (Tannen 1993a), for what a child in nursery school would be talking about, as well as for the setting.

4 P1 *Konglong hao jiu hao jiu. Konglong xian zai dou yi jing bian cheng mei huang le.*
'Dinosaurs long time ago, long time ago. Dinosaurs now all already become coal mine.'
P2 *Do you have a dog with you?*
P1 *Hen shen o. Yi bo yi bo yi bo. Benlai di zai zhe bian. Di shi zhe yang chi lai. Gao dao zhe bian.*
'Very deep. One layer after another. Originally it was on the ground. The ground rose up like this. The ground is here.'
[P1 uses his hands in horizontal gestures to show what the ground looked like.]
P1 *Konglong zai zhe bian.*
'Dinosaurs are here.'
P2 *Oh. Growing big.*

Correctly conveying and interpreting message content is central to the establishment of even a minimal level of what is to be considered "successful communication," although that concept may best be dealt with in terms of degree rather than absolutes. The first three examples of dilingual discourse

related above can be considered successful at least to the extent that there was a shared topic for reference and understanding of speaker intent. While these illustrate that message content can be conveyed in some (highly predictable) situations even in the absence of a common linguistic code, abundant examples could also be cited of misunderstandings of message content when participants are speaking the same language, but do not share the same intralinguistic knowledge and expectations. To ignore any of these elements in the analysis of communicative interaction is to limit understanding of the processes involved.

Act sequence

The *act sequence* component includes information about the ordering of communicative acts within an event.

> We deal with the sequencing of action in which the move of one participant is followed by that of another, the first move establishing the environment for the second and the second confirming the meaning of the first. (Goffman 1971: 149)

Ordering is usually very rigid in ritual events, such as greeting, leavetaking, complimenting, and condoling, and less so in conversation.

In describing a sequence, communicative acts may be characterized in terms of their function, with a typical example of the message form and content often also listed. Although description is usually at a level of abstraction which accounts for regular patterns in recording events, verbatim examples are useful as illustrations. In analyzing opening sequences in Japanese door-to-door sales encounters, for instance, Tsuda (1984) bases her generalizations on 23 which she observed and recorded, but includes a verbatim transcript of only one which she considers "typical." Her data might be arranged in the following manner:

P1 (Salesperson): Greeting
Gomen kudasai.
'Excuse me.'

P2 (Housewife): Acknowledgment
Hai.
'Yes.'

P1: Identification
Shitsurei shimasu. J degozai masu. Hai, J de gozaismasu.
'Excuse me, I'm from J [company's name]. Yes, J [company].'

P2: Question about purpose
Nande shō?
'What do you want of me?'

P1: Information about purpose
Anō, Okusan terebi de senden shite orimasu de shō? Anō, atsumono demo usumono demo nuero to yū.
'Do you know, *Okusan* [meaning housewife] about television commercial? The one we can sew even very thick ones or even very thin ones. . . .'

P2: Expression of disinterest/interest
Un, anō, mishin uchi ni aru wa.
'Well, a sewing machine. We have one at home.'

This level of abstraction not only allows regular patterns to be displayed, but cross-cultural comparisons to be made. In this case, the act sequence is found to be the same in openings of "typical" door-to-door sales encounters in the United States, although there are significant differences in the form and content: e.g., American salespeople usually identify themselves first by name rather than by company affiliation, as in Japan.

Rules for interaction

The *rules for interaction* component includes an explanation of the rules for the use of speech which are applicable to the communicative event. By *rules* in this context, I am referring to prescriptive statements of behavior, of how people "should" act, which are tied to the shared values of the speech community. They may additionally be descriptive of typical behavior, but this is not a necessary criterion for inclusion in this component. How, and the degree to which, this ideal is indeed real is part of the information to be collected and analyzed, along with positive and negative sanctions which are applied to their observance or violation.

The rules may already be codified in the form of aphorisms, proverbs, or even laws, or they may be held unconsciously and require more indirect elicitation and identification. Rules for interaction are often discoverable in reactions to their violation by others, and feelings that contrary behavior is "impolite" or "odd" in some respect. Because of such reactions, violation of accepted rules is a common strategy in the construction of comedy.

One example of rules for interaction is turn-taking rules in conversation: in English, if one speaker utters a compliment, request, or invitation, politeness usually requires the addressee to make an appropriate response on the next turn; in describing communicative patterns of speakers who live on the Warm Springs Indian reservation, Philips (1976) reports politeness would not require any response, or the response might be given at a later date.

In the sample analyses below, rules for interaction in a Bambara village meeting require turn-taking based on order of influence or importance in the group, and that each prospective speaker first request permission to

speak from the chief. Rules may also prescribe nonverbal behavior, as in the examples of Abbey condolences, a Japanese marriage proposal, and a Newari prospective bride interview. They may even prescribe silence, as in the Igbo condolence when there had been a "premature" death.

Norms of interpretation

The *norms of interpretation* component should provide all of the other information about the speech community and its culture which is needed to understand the communicative event. Even the most detailed surface level description is inadequate to allow interpretation of the meaning conveyed. In the sample analyses below, for instance, a Bambara speaker in a village meeting must know that direct speech is used to defend a point, while riddles or parables are to be interpreted as opposition; an Igbo speaker condoling family members must know that an early death cannot be by natural causes, and that someone who causes another's death cannot stand before the spirit of the deceased without incurring immediate retaliation.

I am calling these *norms* of interpretation because they constitute a standard shared by members of the speech community. They may also be related to rules of use in the prescriptive sense (cf. Shimanoff 1980), but the positive or negative valuation and sanctions on use which characterize rules are not a necessary condition for inclusion in this component.

Relationship among Components

In addition to identifying the components of a communicative event, it is important to ask questions which relate each component to all of the others. For instance:

- *How do the genre and topic influence one another?* There is probably a limited range of subjects which can be prayed about, joked about, or gossiped about. Conversely, it may be appropriate to mention a particular topic only in a religious genre, or perhaps only in a joke.
- *What is the relationship between genre and purpose?* The primary purpose of myths might be to entertain, to transmit cultural knowledge, or to influence the supernatural; jokes might serve primarily to entertain, or might be a means of social control, or a testing ground for determining hierarchical relationships between speakers in the social structure.
- *How are genre or topic and setting related?* Prayers might be said in a particular place, perhaps with altar and specified religious paraphernalia,

and at certain holidays or seasons. Topics for stories might be limited by location, with different ones appropriate at the dinner table or in a classroom from those appropriate in a clubroom or a camp in the woods. Often topics are limited by season, as illustrated above.

- *What is the relationship between genre, topic, setting, participants, and message form?* Some genres will require a more formal variety of language than others, or a different language entirely. In two events of the same genre, such as a greeting, the form might differ depending on season, time of day, whether indoors or outside, or other features in the setting. A lecture on the same topic might be more or less formal depending on the size of the room, the arrangement of furniture, and the number (or identity) of persons in the audience. The genre may also influence word order: Kululi speakers prefer Object-Subject-Verb for requests and teasing, for instance, but Subject-Object-Verb for narratives and stories (Duranti 1985).

The interrelationships of components may be very complex, as when the message form of a greeting is influenced not only by the season, time of day, and physical location, but the age, sex, and role-relationship of the participants, and the purpose of the encounter. While not all components will be salient in each event, nor even necessarily in each speech community, they provide one type of *frame* (Bateson 1955) within which meaningful differences can be discovered and described. The interpretation by the addressee of the utterance "It's cold in here" as an informative statement, complaint, request, or command depends on the scene, participant role-relationships, what precedes and follows in the sequence of communicative acts, and such paralinguistic and prosodic features of speech as pitch, intonation, rhythm, and amplitude. These signal what kind of speech event participants are engaged in: i.e. their metacommunicative frame.

Elicitation within a Frame

Part of the task of analysis is discovering which components are relevant within the particular speech community under investigation. At an early stage in description it is generally useful to consider the *frame*, a somewhat static entity which may be manipulated in the data collection process to allow elicitation of what differences in and among the components are meaningful from the perspective of native speakers.

In its simplest form the use of the frame is not unlike the minimal pair technique of structural linguistics. In investigating possible differences in a greeting event, for instance, the ethnographer may observe and record several

greetings, noting any differences in message form, content, participant, key, and scene. Participants may then be interviewed to discover if they perceive any difference in meaning among varieties of greeting which have been observed. The ethnographer may probe further by holding the frame constant except for minimal changes and elicit information about what differences these would make in communicative behavior or its interpretation. Questions might include: What if one participant were older than the other? What if one were male and one female? Would it make a difference whether or not the woman wore a veil? What if it were evening instead of morning, or on the street instead of in a building? And so on.

A more complex discovery procedure discussed earlier calls for role-playing on the part of informants, where they are asked to pretend to be in a particular situation so the ethnographer can observe what they believe appropriate behavior would be. Role-playing often yields idealized or stereotypic behavior which cannot be accepted as actual usage unless validated by more naturalistic observation, but in itself provides interesting insights into the perceptions of native speakers in the event.

A creative extension of this technique of elicitation within a frame was used by Laughlin to collect data on communicative situations in the Zinacantán (Mayan) community in Chiapas, Mexico, which he was not permitted to directly observe.

> Amorous intrigues and daredevil elopements are the spice of daily gossip; but so vigilant is the watch upon the trails and waterholes that it has always seemed to me a nearly superhuman feat to exchange a word with a girl without the knowledge and chastisement of the town. Piqued by curiosity, but despairing over the prospects of ever becoming a participant observer, I finally handed Romin Teratol [his informant] three titles and asked him to provide the scenarios and script for the melodramas that follow. These fictional accounts present what Romin believes to be typical exchanges of conversations between a man and his prospective girlfriend. (1980: 140)

Laughlin is thus able to include in his ethnographic texts "Fictitious Seduction of Girl," "Fictitious Seduction of Widow by a Married Man," and "Fictitious Seduction of Girl by a Drunk."

Analysis of Interaction

Adequate analysis must go beyond a static concept of frame to the consideration of frame in an interactive model, as dynamic *schemata* or *structures of expectation* (as discussed under message content above). This approach requires us to recognize that:

> people approach the world not as naive, blank-slate receptacles who take in stimuli as they exist in some independent and objective way, but rather as experienced and sophisticated veterans of perception who have stored their prior experiences as "an organized mass," and who see events and objects in the world in relation to each other and in relation to their prior experience. This prior experience or organized knowledge then takes the form of expectations about the world, and in the vast majority of cases, the world, being a systematic place, confirms these expectations, saving the individual the trouble of figuring things out anew all the time. (Tannen 1979b: 144)

Understanding what the speakers' frames are, what processes they are using to relate these expectations to the production and interpretation of language, and how the schemata and interaction processes relate to their shared cultural experiences, is the ultimate goal in explaining communicative competence; but developing methods for collecting and analyzing such information is a formidable challenge.

A project directed by Wallace Chafe has involved showing a film to subjects in ten different countries, and then eliciting narratives describing its content (the *Pear Stories*). Speakers' culturally determined structures of expectation were then inferred from the way objects and events were organized and changed in the retelling (Chafe 1980; Tannen 1981). Films (or even still photos) of various communicative situations within the community may also be used in eliciting subsequent explanations from participants about what was going on at the time the picture was taken, from their own perspective. Since the film maker must select and focus on particular features in the total context, another potentially useful technique in collecting ethnographic data is to have one or more members of the group being studied control the camera themselves, collecting examples of different types of speech events. Where culturally appropriate and acceptable, this is likely to yield data not only on the classification of events and their salient components, but also on their temporal and spatial boundaries, and on the "point" of the interaction.

Another model for dynamic analysis is provided by the work of Gumperz in the analysis of cross-cultural conversation events. In one interview session between a British counselor and a Pakistani mathematics teacher, for instance, Gumperz (1979) illustrates how the different sociocultural rules for appropriate language use each participant brings to the encounter yield different interpretive frames. The types of rules highlighted there include those in the "structures of expectation" as they emerge in the process of *conversational inferencing* (Gumperz 1977), as discussed in the section on ethnomethodology and conversation analysis above. This analytic procedure makes an important contribution to the description of speech events by yielding not only abstract communicative frames, but by accounting for

the dynamic interaction processes which occur within those frames – the construction and negotiation of meaning.

Other methods which have proved useful in inferring the principles being used by speakers in their dynamic use of language include *playback* (Fanshel and Moss 1971; Labov and Fanshel 1977), in which participants are interviewed in depth about the meaning of their own utterances in the process of microanalysis, and the study of institutionalized speakers who are judged by psychiatrists to exhibit communicative behavior which is "inappropriate in the situation" (Goffman 1963). Such procedures may be profitably integrated with more traditional ethnographic methods to assist in discovering patterns of communication.

Sample Analyses of Communicative Events

The following are examples of communicative events based on descriptions by former graduate students at Georgetown University and the University of Illinois who are native speakers of the languages involved: Bambara, Abbey, Japanese, Thai, Igbo, Cebuano (Bukadon/Philippines), Newari, and Chinese. In these events the message form, content, and act sequence are generalized as "typical," and are reported here without verbatim examples. They are intended to illustrate the type of information perceived as relevant in the components that are identified by these speakers, and one possible model for the arrangement of data.

(1) Issiaka Ly describes a traditional village meeting among Bambara speakers in Mali.

TOPIC: How animals should be kept away from farms

FUNCTION/PURPOSE: Making a decision that will regulate the village life

SETTING:
If mid-afternoon with a hot sun overhead, under trees
If in the late afternoon or during evening hours, in the village common place

KEY: Serious

PARTICIPANTS:
All of the male inhabitants of the village
P1 – Chief
P2 – Herald

P3 – Active inhabitants (age 45+)
P4 – Semi-active inhabitants (age 21–45)
P5 – Passive inhabitants (age 14–20)

MESSAGE FORM:
Spoken Bambara
P2 uses loud voice; others use soft voices

ACT SEQUENCE:
P1 recites agenda
P2 transmits agenda to assembly
P3 (one) asks for floor
P2 transmits request to P1
P1 grants consent or rejects request
P2 transmits consent or rejection to speaker P3
P3 gives opinion (if P1 consents)
P2 transmits opinion to P1 and assembly
[Acts 3–8 are repeated as active members (P3s) take turns giving their opinions]
P1 summarizes the debate and makes a proposal
P2 transmits the summary and proposal to the assembly

RULES FOR INTERACTION:
Only active members (age 45+) may ask to speak.
Semi-active members (21–45) may be asked their opinion, but not volunteer it.
Each speaker must request permission to speak from the chief.
The chief and other participants should not talk directly to one another; the herald always transmits speech from the chief to the assembly, or from any individual speaker to chief and assembly.
Active inhabitants should take turns speaking in order of influence or importance.

NORMS OF INTERPRETATION:
Direct speech (laconic and clear) means the speaker is defending a point.
Indirect speech (e.g. riddles and parables) means the speaker is opposing a point.
The people in the assembly are serious.
The Herald is not necessarily being serious.

(2) Marcellen Hepié describes a greeting event between Abbey speakers in the Côte d'Ivoire to illustrate the concept of "variation in a frame" with respect to the sex and age of participants. His focus is on differences

this makes in the act sequence. The setting of the greeting also makes a difference in the content and sequence, but that component is held constant in this example.

FUNCTION/PURPOSE: Reaffirming the good relationship between participants at the beginning of a visit

SETTING: A private home

KEY: Friendly

PARTICIPANTS:

P1 – Resident of home

P2 – Visitor

Variable conditions

A P1 and P2 are both adult males, or P1 is male and P2 female

B P1 is female, P2 male

C P1 is child, P2 adult

D More than one visitor comes at the same time

ACT SEQUENCE:

Condition A

Phase One – "Greeting and response"

P2 Greeting

P1 Acceptance of greeting

P1 looks for chair for P2 (if none is immediately available, this may involve a long pause in the greeting sequence)

Phase Two – "Having a seat"

P1 offers P2 a seat

P2 returns greeting

Phase Three – "Asking the news"

P1 and P2 sit down

P1 asks P2 of the news

P2 gives standard, formulaic response

Condition B

Phase One and Phase Two are the same

P2 then rushes to seek nearest man to complete greeting sequence

If she does not find any, she breaks the rules, apologizes, and completes the greeting herself by "Asking the news"

Condition C

If P1 is a young child, no greeting takes place

P2 asks P1 to call parents

If P1 is older child, Phase One and Phase Two may be completed before seeking an adult

Condition D

The youngest visitor who is considered an adult is the one who carries out the news

For Phase Three, P1 talks directly to the one who has been appointed by the group to give the news; the person must consult the group before responding

RULES FOR INTERACTION:

A child beyond age ten has a "right" to be greeted.

Between friends, the order of greeting may be relaxed, but "a woman who always greets first would not be well-judged."

NORMS OF INTERPRETATION:

If Phase Two or Phase Three is omitted, or there is any change in order, it indicates there is something amiss in the relationship between P1 and P2.

"Asking the news" is part of the greeting and not considered the point of the visit.

After conventional responses regarding the "news," P2 will bring up the actual reason for the visit (beginning another speech event).

(3) Hepié illustrates variation within another genre of Abbey communication as he contrasts formal (A) and informal (B) condoling events.

PURPOSE/FUNCTION:

A The goal of formal condolence is more than simple sympathy to the family of the deceased. It is a proof of solidarity and unity within a village, and between villages, because outsiders come to condole the afflicted village.

B The goal of informal condolence is to provide moral support for the bereaved, plus material assistance.

SETTING:

A Takes place on a street nearest to the bereaved family's residence

The time is in the evening after dark, within 24 hours of death; it is prior to the burial ceremony

Two lines of seats are up – one for receivers (on the right side), the one facing it for visitors

B Takes place at the bereaved's home, usually under a shelter in the courtyard (A shelter is normally built for any dead person, except perhaps a baby.)

It may take place a week or more after death, and after burial

KEY: Sorrowful

PARTICIPANTS:

A P1 – Males from the village which receives condolences
P2 – Principals who come to condole, both male and female
P3 – Spectators, including women, children, and men who are not directly involved (and will not occupy seats)
P4 – The drum, a sacred instrument only used in formal situations for communicating with the invisible world and transmitting bad news to neighboring villages
P5 – Invisible people invoked by the drum

B P1 – Men and women in two separate groups, usually members of the family (children are normally kept away from a place where a dead body is exposed)
P2 – Outsiders, men and women who come to condole, whether they are from the same village or not

MESSAGE FORM AND SEQUENCE; RULES FOR INTERACTION:

A Condolences are nonverbal. Participants offering condolence gesture with their right hand, one after another. A participant in such an event is expected to walk appropriately. A condoling person should not be standing fully erect during the ceremony. Also, he should bow when he arrives in front of an important person. Women in the condoling visitors line do not make any gesture, but just walk normally and usually go to the end of the line.
P4 transmits the bad news.
P2 arrive, announced by three guns firing.
P4 spreads the news of the arrival of P2.
P1 are already in place, seated in chairs, are waiting to be condoled.
P3 get closer to the scene to watch.
P2 are joined by some people in the host village who guide them to act appropriately.
P2 condole P1 in a line, from right to left – nonverbal, as described above.
P1 watch condoling gestures seriously.

B P2 can cry loudly while approaching the scene. Crying is the women's duty. Men, whether P1 or P2, are not expected to cry except for a very short time (less than one minute).
P2 women are crying.
P2 men walk straight and verbally condole P1 men.
P1 women then take a seat among the P1 men.
P2 women keep on crying until P1 women demand that they stop, then P2 women verbally condole P1 men.
P2 women take seats among P1 women.
(Men usually sit in chairs, women on the ground.)

NORMS OF INTERPRETATION:

Formal condoling is required in situations such as where a woman from one village marries a man in another. If she dies, she will be buried in her village of origin (except where there is strong opposition). People from her village of origin go to the village of residence to condole not only her relatives there, but the whole village as well; i.e., those being condoled include affinal kin, those condoling include consanguinal kin.

(4) Harumi Williams describes a Japanese marriage proposal, a communicative event which consists of only one verbal utterance.

FUNCTION/PURPOSE:

To declare intention to marry
To establish or develop an appropriate role-relationship

KEY: Serious

PARTICIPANTS:

P1 – Male; young adult
P2 – Female; young adult
(Their occupation and status is not relevant)

MESSAGE FORM:

Verbal – spoken Japanese; silence
Nonverbal – kinesics; eye gaze

MESSAGE CONTENT AND SEQUENCE:

P1 Holds P2's hand (optional)
Looks at P2
Says "Please marry me"
P2 Stands with head down
Silence

RULES FOR INTERACTION:

A man must propose to a woman.
At an emotional climax, there should be silence.
The woman's head should hang down, and the direction of her eye gaze should be lower than the man's.

NORMS OF INTERPRETATION:

The head of the household is to be the man, and therefore he has to take the initiative in the decision of marriage. This custom has its roots in an early Japanese myth when Ezanami (female god) and Izanagi (male got) married. First Ezanami proposed marriage to Izanagi and they married, but they

could produce only evil creatures like worms, so they had to have the marriage ceremony again. This time Izanagi proposed, and the marriage was a success, producing a country called "Japan." This custom continues until the present day and the commonly held view is that the rule should not be violated.

There is also a belief that as soon as an experience is expressed in words (oral or written), the real essence disappears. When parents die, when the son passes the entrance examination to a university, and when we see something extremely beautiful, there should be silence. There is a well-known poem which starts "Oh, Matsushima (name of an island in Japan) . . . ," but because the poet was so impressed by its beauty he could not continue; this poem is considered one of his masterpieces.

Marriage is a climax in a girl's life, its main goal. The proposal is therefore such an important event, the only appropriate response can be silence. The hanging head and lowered gaze imply modesty, a highly prized virtue in a girl.

This response is what the young man expects, and it confirms that this is indeed the girl he wants for his wife; their future life will be quiet, and one with him as head of the household. He was not really asking her a question and expecting an answer, but declaring his decision to marry her.

(5) Suphatcharee Ekasingh describes an introduction among Thai speakers.

PURPOSE/FUNCTION:
To establish participants' relationship

SETTING:
An informal social gathering

KEY: Friendly and polite

PARTICIPANTS:
P1 – Thai female in early 40s
P2 – Thai male student in mid 20s
P3 – Thai female in late 40s
P1 and P2 know each other very well; P1 is a very close friend of P2's parents and she considers P2 to be a relative
P1 and P3 are acquaintances; both have lived in the same neighborhood for more than ten years

MESSAGE FORM:

Spoken Thai, central dialect, polite register

The polite register includes the tone of the utterances and the use of appropriate pronouns according to age, sex, and social status

Hand gestures and body position

The *wai* is a gesture made by putting the palms of the hands together and then raising them in front of the face while bending down the head and bowing the body

MESSAGE CONTENT AND SEQUENCE:

P1 introduces P2 to P3, using their first names

P2 greets P3, using male polite particle; simultaneously performs the *wai*

P3 accepts greeting, using female polite particle; simultaneously performs the *wai*

P1 provides P3 with more information about P2

P3 then continues conversation with P2, asking primarily about his studies

RULES FOR INTERACTION:

In an informal setting like this where differences in social status are not salient, P2 and P3 should be introduced by first name. Once the relationship has been established, nicknames may be used.

The younger P should be introduced to the older P.

The polite register must be used.

NORMS OF INTERPRETATION:

Age plays a significant role in this genre; it is believed that if the older does the *wai* first, they will have short lives.

The height of the *wai* indicates the degree of respect.

Asking personal questions is part of getting to know another and not considered impolite, although questions about income or age may be offensive.

(6) A communicative event may take place with no speech at all, as illustrated by Gregory Nwoye in this description of a condoling event among Igbo speakers in Nigeria on the occasion of a "premature" death.

PURPOSE/FUNCTION:

To express sympathy, and to prove innocence of being responsible for the death

SETTING:
Inside the home of the bereaved family
Approximately four days following the death
Seats are around the room for mourners

KEY: Sympathetic

PARTICIPANTS:
P1 – Sympathizer/mourner; adult male
P2 – Family members
P3 – Spirit of the deceased
P4 – Other mourners; adult males

MESSAGE FORM:
Silence and proxemics

ACT SEQUENCE:
P2 are standing inside the house
P3 is hovering nearby
P1 a) enters
b) stands before P2 and P3
c) sits silently among P4
d) again presents himself to P2 and P3
e) leaves

RULES FOR INTERACTION:
The bereaved family should be avoided for several days after the death.
Mourners should present themselves in the home of the bereaved while the spirit of the deceased is still present (before final burial rites).
Mourners should not speak.

NORMS OF INTERPRETATION:
Death is a normal part of the life cycle and should occur only at a ripe age; premature death causes profound grief, and must have been caused by malevolent forces.
Verbal reference to death increases grief.
Physical presence indicates sympathy with the bereaved.
Someone who causes another's death cannot stand before the spirit of the deceased without incurring immediate retaliation.

(7) Genoveva M. Ablanque describes a ritual response to lightning among the Bukidons of the southern Philippines.

FUNCTION/PURPOSE:
To avoid punishment for doing something unnatural

SETTING:

Inside a house during a severe thunderstorm, usually in afternoon
Lightning and thunder often accompanied by impending rain and strong wind
Air sometimes dark and heavy

KEY: Foreboding

PARTICIPANTS:

P1 – Evil spirits
P2 – All persons in the house
P3 – Member of household who accepts responsibility for ritual acts

MESSAGE FORM:

Silence
Cutting and burning of locks of hair

ACT SEQUENCE:

P1 arrival signalled by lightning and thunder
P2 cease speech and all other activity
P3 builds a fire, if there is not one; gets scissors and cuts a lock of hair from each P2 (including self); carries locks to stove and burns them

RULES FOR INTERACTION:

The individual who performs the ritual cutting and burning of hair (P3) self-selects, but it should be a mature adult (usually the mother).
There must be absolute silence during the ritual.
The smell of burning hair should be strong enough to dominate the air.

NORMS OF INTERPRETATION:

After someone does something unnatural, evil spirits are present.
"Unnatural" acts include marrying a relative, causing animals of some different species to fight, talking to an animal, and laughing while playing with worms, picking lice, or watching dogs copulate.
Lightning is sent as punishment from the spirit who presides over destiny; if a person is struck by lightning, it would be presumed that the individual was guilty.
The belief is traced to a legend that a girl and her suitor were struck by lightning after she talked to her pet dog; the rain fell so hard that the place became Pinamaloy ('punishment') Lake.
Children are most likely to be guilty since they may not know how to discern what is considered "unnatural," but they are still vulnerable to the punishment.

(8) Jyoti Tuladhar describes a typical event among Newari speakers in Nepal in which a prospective bride is being interviewed by a member of the suitor's family.

PURPOSE/FUNCTION:
To determine the suitability of the bride by initial superficial examination

SETTING:
The prospective bride's home, in the evening
The participants are seated close to one another

KEY: Judgmental

PARTICIPANTS:
P1 – Suitor's aunt
P2 – Prospective bride's aunt
P3 – Prospective bride

MESSAGE FORM:
The Kaltimandu dialect of the Newari language as used in traditional households, interspersed with no foreign loan words except *school* and *college*
The women's bodies are relaxed, but still

CONTENT AND SEQUENCE:
P1 Such a pretty girl, your niece. Where do you go to school, child?
P3 At Kirtipur.
P2 She'll be graduating in April.
P1 Wonderful! I hear you're very smart?
P3 (Smile) (Silence)
P2 She's never stood second in her class.
P1 My nephew broke the record in his college, too. Did you hear about that?
P3 (Nod) (Silence)

RULES FOR INTERACTION:
Genteel women do not make "gross" hand gestures. The position of the body should be relaxed and still.
Young girls should be shy, silent, and accept compliments with a smile.
Direct remarks like "such a pretty girl" in the presence of the subject can be made only by an elderly person to a young girl, and only in such situations as this interview. It is not the general practice among Newars to compliment someone on her beauty directly in social interchanges. A

girl may even be offended by such a remark on other occasions.

Genteel young girls stay silent in the presence of unfamiliar elderly women (even more so with men), unless addressed with direct questions. Their replies should be short or even monosyllabic. If they choose not to reply at all, this is not considered rude or impolite.

A verbal response to the final question might have been considered arrogant; its intent was to place her in a difficult situation as a test of her manners.

NORMS OF INTERPRETATION:

In a situation such as this, the girl's family already have decided that the suitor was a suitable match for their daughter, and would have agreed to the encounter so that his family could decide if she was appropriate for him. The girl would generally be unaware of the purpose of the visit.

Even though the suitor's aunt asks the girl a number of questions she is not interested in the answers so much as the manner of response. She had obtained all necessary information from the girl's aunt prior to this meeting. The girl's performance in this case would be considered quite satisfactory.

(9) As a final example, Hong-Gang Jin describes an informal dinner invitation between Chinese graduate students who are temporarily residing in the US.

FUNCTION/PURPOSE:

To enhance personal relationships

To express gratitude for help which others have offered

SETTING:

P2's office at a US university, 5 p.m.

KEY: Friendly and casual

PARTICIPANTS:

P1 – Chinese graduate student, male

P2 – Chinese graduate student, male

P1 and P2 are from the same city in China, and got to know one another through relatives there

P2 recently returned to China for a short visit, and brought back some things for P1 from P1's parents

MESSAGE FORM:
Spoken standard Chinese, Beijing dialect
Casual register, including many interjections during discourse; rising and dropping intonation
Head movement (nodding, shaking); facial expression

CONTENT AND SEQUENCE (organized into phases):
Phase One: Opening
P1 Greeting
P2 Accepts greeting
Offers a seat
Returns greeting
Phase Two: Invitation
P1 hints that he will ask P2 to do something; pauses to look for P2's reaction (observes facial expression); offers the invitation to dinner at his home
P2 refuses the invitation (surprised expression, then frown)
P1 insists on acceptance
P2 accepts indirectly (facial expression indicates he has no alternative)
P1 reassures P2 of sincerity of invitation; sets definite time
P2 agrees on time; expresses thanks
P1 reassures P2 it will be informal
Phase Three: Closing
P1 confirms the time; makes an excuse for leavetaking
P2 thanks P1 again
Closing salutation
P1 Closing salutation

RULES FOR INTERACTION:
The host should insist at least two or three times, but control his insistence according to the reaction of the person being invited.
The invitation should be refused two or three times before it can be accepted:
First decline modestly, then accept indirectly.
Show through facial expressions that one is reluctant to accept the invitation, and accepts it because there is no other alternative.

NORMS OF INTERPRETATION:
In China, inviting someone to a dinner is seen as an important social activity which fulfills basically two functions: (a) to enhance social relationships, and (b) to express appreciation for

something another has done for the host, or sometimes to express a need for someone to offer help.

The host's degree of insistence varies according to his reading of the guest's face and the wording and tone of his answer.

If the guest's face shows hesitance or indifference, or if the answer is directly "no" or a good excuse, the host will not insist further.

The way of accepting an invitation reflects a person's manners and self-discipline: modestly declining and then accepting indirectly and with thoughtfulness is considered courteous, good-mannered, and considerate; the opposite will be considered discourteous or ill-mannered.

Further Illustrations of Ethnographic Analysis

The ethnography of communication, like the blend of scientific and humanistic approaches which it is, seeks always to discover the general from the particular, and to understand the particular in terms of the general, to see the unique event and the recurrent pattern both from the perspective of their native participants and the vantage point afforded by cross-cultural knowledge and comparison. There are a number of published studies which provide excellent models of procedures for data collection and analysis. The few listed here as exemplary differ greatly from one another in focus and scope, but all involve extensive and intensive observation and attention to participants' points of view, as well as interpretation which is grounded in the social and cultural situations of performance.

General ethnographies on ways of speaking are still very limited in number despite the general recognition of their theoretical and methodological importance. One of the notable exceptions remains the work of Ethel Albert with the Burundi of Central Africa from 1955 to 1957, which was conducted before the concept of the ethnography of communication was enunciated by Hymes (Albert 1972). She relates situation-specific "rules for speaking" to Burundi cultural views and social structure, relates both to personal strategies, and discusses some of the problems encountered in cross-cultural communication and fieldwork.

Other important holistic models are provided by such work as that of Blom and Gumperz (e.g. 1972), who account for the interrelationship of social constraints, cultural values, and language rules in Norway; Barth's ([1964a] 1972) study of social processes and language boundaries in Pakistan; Abrahams' (1983) analysis of African American speaking behavior; the

Scollons' (1979a) analysis of linguistic convergence at Fort Chipewyan, Alberta; Philips' (1983b) description of the Warm Strings Indian Reservation in Oregon; Sherzer's (1983) extensive study of the ways of speaking among the Kuna population of San Blas, Panama; Duranti's (1994) situated linguistic analysis of a Samoan village, and Graham's (1995) community study of the Xavante of central Brazil.

Most other holistic research has focused on a single subculture within a society, such as those defined by religion (Bauman 1974; 1983; Enninger and Raith 1982; Schiffrin 1984), by age (Eckert and McConnell-Ginet 1999 on adolescents and others mentioned in chapter 3 and chapter 7), or by ethnicity (e.g. Blacks in a neighborhood in Washington, DC (Hannerz 1969) or a bar in Philadelphia (Bell 1983), immigrants from Mexico near El Paso, Texas (Valdés 1996), or a Puerto Rican neighborhood in New York City (Attinasi et al. 1982; Torres 1997; Zentella 1997). Other research has focused on a particular social function or setting, such as medical encounters (Treichler et al. 1984; Ainsworth-Vaughn 1998), law (Conley and O'Barr 1990; Goldman 1993; Gibbons 1994), occupation (Kuiper 1996), and the marketplace (Lindenfield 1990).

Many exemplary descriptions and analyses of single genres or individual communicative events in diverse communities have appeared. Most of these focus on ritual events rather than on everyday encounters, in part because such events by their nature are most likely to recur in regularized form, and in part because their meaning is most clearly dependent on shared beliefs and values of the speech community. Some of these are book-length (e.g. Maskarinec 1995 on Nepalese shamanic texts; Yankah 1995 on Akan (Ghana) royal oratory; Wilce 1998 on complaints in Bangladesh), and many shorter works appear in the journals *Anthropological Linguistics, Journal of Sociolinguistics, Language in Society*, and *Linguistic Anthropology*. A number of these are referenced in relation to other topics in this book.

The wedding of the ethnography of communication with research on folklore has yielded a productive model which is performance-centered and analyzes folkloric events as they involve setting, performer, audience, and the other components of communication. Particularly noteworthy contributions include Hymes' (1981) development of *ethnopoetics* and Clements' (1995) wide-ranging survey of issues and methods in the field, as well as earlier work by Paredes and Bauman (1972) and Bauman (1977). The potential significance of such analysis for sociolinguistic study in general is noted by Hymes, who says in part:

> In its analysis of performance, folklore recognizes the differentiation of knowledge and competence within a community with regard to speaking; it recognizes the structure that obtains beyond the individual in the norms

> of interaction of communicative events; and it recognizes the emergent properties of such interactions, both normally and as specific to particular performances . . . . (1972a: 48)

A final caveat is in order in this discussion of methodology. Even as we attempt to be faithful to the realities of behavior as it is enacted, we must not ignore the broader context within which the actions we observe are situated. We must constantly seek for both the antecedents and the contingencies which give meaning to the scenes we witness. At the same time, we must continually test our perceptions and understandings against those of the participants, if our "objective" account of their communicative competence is to adequately reflect the experienced reality of their own subjective world.