Inter-cultural communication at work

Cultural values in discourse

Michael Clyne
Monash University

CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

Contents

List of figures *page* ix
List of tables ix
Acknowledgements x

1 Introducing the field 1
1.0 Scope of this book 1
1.1 Approaches to inter-cultural communication 3
1.2 The study and the data 4
1.3 Literature survey 7
1.4 Closing remarks 31

2 Setting up the project 32
2.0 Australia's multilingual and industrial situation 32
2.1 Criteria for selecting workplaces 34
2.2 Identifying research sites 35
2.3 Role of, and criteria for, selecting informants 40
2.4 Nature and purpose of the corpus 42
2.5 Method of transcription 45
2.6 Video experiment 46
2.7 Closing remarks 47

3 Speech acts in inter-cultural discourse 48
3.0 The interactions 48
3.1 Complaints/whinges 49
3.2 Directives 63
3.3 Commissives 71
3.4 Apologies 77
3.5 Small-talk 84
3.6 Foreigner talk 89
3.7 Closing remarks 89

4 Variation in communication patterns and inter-cultural communication breakdown in oral discourse 90
4.0 Opening remarks 90
4.1 Turn taking 90
4.2 Back-channelling 110
4.3 Negotiation 114
4.4 Meetings 125

4.5 Turn length in relation to speech acts: communicative styles 137
4.6 Variation in communicative styles 141
4.7 Success and failure in communication: why and how? 144
4.8 Discourse patterns and expectations: comparison with video experiment 155
4.9 Core and peripheral groups 157
4.10 Closing remarks 158

5 Written discourse across cultures 160
5.0 The cross-cultural study of written discourse 160
5.1 German/English 161
5.2 Studies of other European languages 168
5.3 East and South-east Asian/English, German 169
5.4 South Asian/English 172
5.5 Arabic 172
5.6 (Chilean) Spanish, Vietnamese/(English) 173
5.7 Israeli-born/Western and Eastern European/Asia Minor immigrants in Israel 173
5.8 South Asian/Middle Eastern 173
5.9 Closing remarks 175

6 Towards a linguistics of inter-cultural communication 176
6.0 Opening remarks 176
6.1 Cultural boundaries 177
6.2 Cultural values systems 178
6.3 Discourse/cultural parameters 186
6.4 Language in action and politeness 191
6.5 Grice revisited 192
6.6 Some remarks on other theoretical frameworks 195
6.7 A linguistics of inter-cultural communication? 196
6.8 Universality and specificity 198
6.9 Closing remarks 200

7 Some theoretical and practical implications 202
7.0 Opening remarks 202
7.1 Synthesis of conclusions so far 202
7.2 Sociocultural models 205
7.3 Educational implications 208
7.4 Implications in the multicultural workplace 211
7.5 The international scene 213
7.6 Closing remarks 214

Appendix 1 Non-key informants 215

Appendix 2 Index of informants' pseudonyms, ages, and ethnolinguistic background 217

Appendix 3 Two long transcriptions 221

References 231
Index of text transcriptions 245
Index of names 246
Index of subjects 249

Figures

Work plans of research sites

1 Amcar *page* 37
2 Nipponcar 38
3 Weavers 39
4 Elektro 40
5 Catering 41

Tables

2.1	Data by workplace: audio and video	*page* 35
2.3	Key informants by gender, language, and workplace status	43
2.4	Spontaneous data and meetings data by workplace: audio and video	45
3.1.3	(Exercitive) complaints and whinges: cultural and gender variation	61
3.1.4	(Exercitive) complaints and whinges: comparison between workplaces	62
3.2.2	Directives: cultural and gender variation	70
3.2.3	Directives: comparison between workplaces	70
3.3.3	Commissives: cultural and gender variation	76
3.3.4	Commissives: comparison between workplaces	77
3.4.2	Apologies: cultural and gender variation	82
3.4.3	Apologies: comparison between workplaces	83
4.1.8	Relation between English competence and length of turns	110
4.2.2	Back-channelling: cultural and gender variation	112
4.2.2.1	Some actual back-channelling phenomena: gender and cultural variation	113
4.2.3	Back-channelling: comparison between workplaces	113
4.9	Communicative styles	157
6.2.8	Summary of contrasts	185