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CONVERSATION CLOSINGS: THE EFFECTS OF
GENDER, ETHNICITY AND SOCIAL PROXIMITY

by

Carol Montgomery

A dissertation submitted to the Graduate Faculty in
Linguistics in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the
degree of Doctor of Philosophy, The City University of New
York

1996

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abstract

CONVERSATION CLOSINGS: THE EFFECTS OF
GENDER, ETHNICITY AND SOCIAL PROXIMITY

by

Carol Montgomery

Advisor: Dr. John Dore

The purpose of this study was to investigate the orderliness and variability of conversation closings. Because closing a conversation is a sensitive undertaking, preclosing signals are often indirect and consist of one or more polite expressions. Closing rituals are conventional, collaborative and consciously taught to young children.

A number of contextual factors influence the initiation, length and level of politeness of the closing. The socio-cultural variables used in this study are gender, ethnicity (Spanish, Chinese and English L1), social proximity and power. A corpus of 142 audiotaped conversations was collected and analyzed.

The study addresses the following research questions:

- 1) Which party gives the first preclosing signal? The person who initiated the conversation (the ICP) or the other partner?

- 2) In which conversations are the longest closing sections found? Length was measured in speaker turns, actual time, and information phrases (Edwards and Lampert 1993). and
- 3) Which pairs of interlocutors produce the most polite expressions, oriented to positive or negative face?

The (ICPs) gave the first preclosing signal 74.6% of the time. In the male conversations, it was 96% and between strangers, it was 91%. In male/female conversations, it was lower ---63.2%.

The number of speaker turns remained fairly stable across the variables. Ethnicity was a significant determinant of length measured in seconds and number of information phrases. The Spanish speakers constructed long closings and Chinese short ones. But the longest and shortest closings were in closings of conversations between interlocutors of different ethnicities. Intimates and friends produced more talk in closings than strangers.

The ICPs employed more polite expressions than the OCPs, confirming that moving to close a conversation creates a risk to the addressee's face. Gender was an important variable in determining level of politeness, with the women's closings containing the most polite expressions and the men's the fewest. Ethnicity was also significant, with the Spanish speakers using more such expressions.

The Bulge Theory (Wolfson 1989) predicts that friends

will be more polite than either intimates or strangers. However, the degree of politeness of friends and strangers was similar, while intimates used unconventional types of closings. Power was not found to be important here.

FOREWARD

This dissertation is dedicated to my father, Edward E. Abbott who taught me the wonder of words.

I could not have written it without the help of many people. I apologize to those persons, particularly my students, I cannot mention here.

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INTRODUCTION

The polished conversationalist is a familiar figure. He breaks smoothly into conversations, picks up the thread effortlessly, holds his listeners enthralled as he develops his point, and then elegantly bows out of the conversation.

Eric Keller 1981: p 93

I find that sometimes, uh you know, ... human nature. You could be going someplace and maybe your sister that hasn't talked to you in a month calls you, you know, so in a nice, kind way, you know, you have to be able to ... but not to do it to say, 'well, can I call you back? See you later.' or something and be hurried in a way that you create a lot of enemies trying to be punctual.

Jerry,
age 50

Whenever I think of endings, I get stuck.

Erica Jong
writer 1994

Most competent language users identify with the problem of how to exit a conversation gracefully (Leech 1983). Why

is it that one cannot simply say to someone, "I have nothing more to say. Goodbye.?" In everyday conversations, after talking awhile, we come to a point where we realize that we want to move and that, should we continue for very long thereafter, we will feel distracted and restless. Still, the necessity to avoid the appearance of rejecting the other party compels us to stay engaged until we can give our partner the opportunity to add whatever he/she had been wanting to bring up and until we have expressed pleasure in having had the exchange.

Interlocutors everywhere use talk both to situate themselves in everyday activities and to extricate themselves from them. But the ways they manage this differ according to such socio-cultural variables as culture, gender, age, ethnicity, role relationships and social distance. Exploring these differences (and similarities) can tell us a good deal about who has the power in a society, how it can be wielded in subtle and largely unconscious ways, and why it is that people from diverse cultural backgrounds may misunderstand one another in spite of the ability to speak a lingua franca. We can also see how interpersonal relationships are initiated, maintained and redefined through verbal interaction.

Each of us lives in a world of social encounters (Goffman 1967, Heritage 1984) in which conversation (and thus language) is a defining component. Indeed, acquiring

the ability to take part in everyday conversations seems to be a crucial step toward becoming a fully-functioning person (Mead 1934; Potter and Wetherell 1987). Conversational competence is a major component of the cluster of skills necessary for the management of the discourses encountered in our daily lives, and without which one would not be a psychological being at all (Harre et. al. 1994:26-26). Thus, examining this basic aspect of conversational ability with respect to variations in form and meanings can shed light on the social processes by which an individual attempts to influence others and by which he/she takes in the attitudes of the interlocutor toward her/himself.

The literature is replete with metaphors likening communicators to social actors whose lines are provided by their speech communities (Firth 1964, 1972; Goffman 1959, 1967). These live performances are a function of their group's (e.g. age, class, gender, ethnicity or locale) linguistic-cultural resources and the individuals' own roles, needs and goals. There are also analogies comparing interlocutors to players of games or sports with a finite number of moves available to them (Goffman 1974, Nofsinger 1991). When M. Goodwin (1990) set out to research the social organization of a group of black children in Philadelphia, she found that, for the most part, it was the moment-to-moment talk itself which comprised the activities that constituted the youngsters' social world. Talk was used

to construct what the author calls 'participant frameworks'. She uses the term to encompass two types of phenomena: activities which align participants toward one another and those which identify or characterize the relevant parties in some significant fashion. What is at stake in learning to recognize and manipulate everyday conversational patterns is our membership in a world which provides the representational discourses necessary for the formation of our public and private selves (Mead 1934).

I chose to study closings, because, as Sacks (1992) said about greetings, they are overwhelmingly present features of conversation. When they do not occur, their absence is noticeable, as in 'he left without even saying goodbye.' In fact, beginning with greetings and ending with parting expressions are essential to the very notion of having had a conversation. Closings are signals that the talk is recognizably complete and are comparable to the "and-they-lived-happily-ever-after" codas in stories and musical pieces, the "over-and-out" signing offs in radio communication, and the falling of the curtain in a play. Greetings and partings serve as frames (Goffman 1974) or packaging units (Sacks 1992) which mark off an episode of verbal interaction from the ongoing flow of surrounding events.

A number of researchers working inside and outside the field of linguistics have examined the influence that the

gender, ethnicity, social proximity, and power of the interlocutors might have on conversational interaction. When such studies focus on only one set of variables, they inevitably distort the reality of human interlocutors.

A virtue of the present study, however, is that it does interrelate a number of variables. In our everyday conversations, we communicate not only as a man or woman, but also as a parent, daughter or son, nurse, supervisor, neighbor, friend, Italian-American, Democrat--- to name but a few interactional roles available to a single interlocutor. These multiple roles may be compatible, but they may also be contradictory. A female doctor treating a male patient, for example, may be simultaneously required to be both authoritative and 'feminine'. In such situations considerable negotiation and adjustment are needed in order for both discourses to be cotenable (Harre and Gillett 1994).

There are a number of other factors such as age (Coupland et.al. 1993) occupation and social status which undoubtedly have some effect, but they will not be variables in this study. These differences, if known, will be noted in discussions of the findings.

I conducted two pilot studies of preclosings in 1988 and 1989 and am expanding on this earlier work. In these preliminary investigations, ethnicity and gender both proved to be significant factors in determining who initiated the

closing as well as the number and types of moves participants used to terminate conversations. In ten of the sixteen male-female conversations, the first closing moves were made by males. But, as a group, they produced as many polite expressions of gratitude and pleasure as their female partners. On the other hand, of twenty-two conversations between native speakers of English and native speakers of Chinese or Spanish, thirteen preclosing signals were given by non-native speakers. Why didn't proficiency in English play a role? My guess is that when students initiated conversations with teachers or tutors, the former were likely to make preclosings moves out of respect for their partners' status and perceived time constraints. Also, formulaic expressions of greeting and parting tend to be learned early on in the process of acquiring a second language. In my field work, I have found numerous conversations conducted entirely in either Spanish or Chinese in which the last two utterances consisted of 'Bye-bye'.

In conversations between Americans and Chinese students, there were significantly fewer utterances in the preclosing sections than there were in conversations in which one of the interlocutors was a native speaker of Spanish. The Anglo-Americans tended to use more polite expressions when talking to the Latino students and fewer when conversing with the Chinese. The English speaking

interlocutors seemed to vary their farewells to order to approximate the styles of their non-native speaking partners (see Giles 1980).

Some linguists have noted the creativity of everyday language, noting that even very young children produce complex utterances that they have never heard before (Chomsky 1986, Pinker 1994). The system of linguistic knowledge posited by Chomsky as an innate property of the human brain, enables the speaker to vary his/her performance in accordance with the linguistic and situational context (Ellis 1986). Nonetheless, perhaps due to the recurring events which make up most of our existence, much of everyday conversation is highly routinized (Stubbs 1983, Shegloff 1988). Conversational beginnings and endings, as I shall demonstrate, are characterized by culturally-determined rituals, which contain sequences of prefabricated, lexicalized utterances like the following examples:

- (1) It's nice to see you.
- (2) How are you doing?
- (3) How's it going?
- (4) It's been a pleasure.
- (5) Gotta run.
- (6) See you later.

These are not idioms because their meaning is partially

derived from their conventional or literal meanings. But, having been continually called into use in standardized speech situations, they are either on the brink of lexicalization or have already become fixed idiomatic units of the lexicon (Searle 1979, Coulmas 1981). Thus, language use influences the linguistic system, just as the system and its details give the speakers a limited set of options from which they can choose as they construct messages.

After describing the characteristics of conversation as a genre of discourse, as well as the mechanics of conversation management, I will explore the nature of closings and preclosings and relate these features to the overall structure of conversation. I then will discuss my findings in relation to three variables---gender, ethnicity and social proximity. I will also discuss power as a variable, in somewhat less detail. This study is intended as both a linguistically-oriented microanalysis and a societally-oriented macroanalysis of linguistic form tied to social phenomena.

I. GOALS AND HYPOTHESES

Goals

The aim of this study is to explore the model of conversation closings formulated by Sacks and Schegloff (1973, 1984) in light of Laver's (1891) assertion that interaction rituals are key in negotiating interpersonal relationships. Sacks and Schegloff stress the orderliness of conversation and the orientation of interlocutors to that structure. Laver, and others (See Brown and Levinson 1987) emphasize the interpersonal variables that cause interactants to attend to one another psycho-social needs.

This study focuses on the material in a conversation beginning with the first signal a participant gives that he/she wishes to use his/her conversational turn to suggest the possibility of closing the interaction (the preclosing) to the last utterances produced (the closing). That this is a sensitive undertaking is demonstrated by the fact that relationships can be terminated by simply exiting a conversation without following "proper" closing procedures.

The specific questions to be addressed are:

- 1) Who initiates the closing, the person who initiated the conversation, or the other party?
- 2) which pairs of conversationalists produce the longest closing sections?, and
- 3) Which interlocutors use more polite expressions to close a conversation?

Hypotheses

Overall, I predicted that the initiating conversational participant (ICP) would more often make the first preclosing move than the other conversational participant (OCP) (Grosz and Sidner 1986). It is the ICP who has a particular purpose for initiating the interaction, so, intuitively, we would expect him/her to decide when the discourse purpose has been satisfied. This would obtain particularly in task-oriented conversations of which there are many in my data. Therefore, it will be revealing to examine the instances when it is not the ICP but the OCP who moves to terminate.

Gender

I expected that there would be an effect for gender, regardless of ethnicity and social proximity, and that, in the M/F conversations in all categories, more conversation

closings would be initiated by males. The findings of my pilot studies, as well as the naturalistic data I had collected indicated that in conversation, it was the male who decides when it is to be ended. It would not be unexpected to find that when gender was combined with ethnicity and power, gender would be found to be a significant variable.

I predicted that the closings of the female-female conversations would be longer, in part because I thought that the females would use more indirect (and therefore longer) closing signals, and partly because they would use more expressions oriented to both positive and negative face (Zajdman 1995). In other words, the women's closings would contain more mitigation.

The men's closings would be different. Since in most, if not all societies, they comprise the dominant group, their closings would reflect a modality of affinity and agreement (Hodge and Kress 1988). If the women's style is characterized by politeness and length, then the power-differentiation would cause the men's to be marked by lack of politeness and brevity. Other modal signs might be directness, humor and insults.

However, I also hypothesized that, in M/F conversations, males would use as many polite expressions as did females, and in so doing, they would use more polite expressions when addressing females than they would with other males. As initiators of the closings, males would need expressions of

mitigation since they would be the ones who were performing the face threatening acts. In using more polite expressions ending conversations with females than they would with other males, men would be accommodating to the more phatic, affiliative style associated with women's talk.

Ethnicity

In moving to close the conversation, I predicted that the native speakers of English, Spanish and Chinese would exhibit both similar and divergent cultural patterns. A preliminary look at the data showed, for instance, that 'bueno' in Spanish and 'hao' in Chinese (both of which can be translated as 'good') seemed to serve the same function as 'okay' in English. These are the evincives described earlier which indicate that the speaker has been engaging in some private thought which has relevance to the present conversation (Schourup 1983).

In my second pilot study, the closing sections of conversations in which one or more participant was Chinese were significantly shorter than those in which at least one speaker was Hispanic. Thus, I predicted that the Chinese speakers would terminate their conversations with fewer polite expressions and fewer utterances overall than those speakers whose first language was Spanish or English. It appears that for the Chinese, closing a conversation does not involve the

same risk to the interlocutor's face as it does for English or Spanish speakers. The Chinese would be constrained by the principles of sincerity and balance (Gu 1990). Also, according to Chen (1993), Chinese L2 learners are not risk-takers and rarely say anything they are not sure is correct.

The more elaborate Spanish closings would reflect the Latin American ideal of oratorical nobility which contrasts with the North American Protestant virtue of word efficiency. The Latins would use embellishment and "outwardly impeccable manners" as a way of earning dignity and social worth. The style of the English speakers would be closer to the Puritan-capitalist tradition which emphasizes sticking to the facts, being "sincere," and avoiding putting on patrician airs (Dealy 1992). Therefore, I predicted that in conversations in which one or both interlocutors were native speakers of Spanish, the closing sections would be longer and would contain more expressions oriented to positive face. I expected that the Spanish-speaking subjects would use as many polite expressions as their female compatriots, since in Latin American society, it is the males whose roles require displays of verbal mastery in the public domain (Dealy *ibid.*).

Social Proximity

Here, I predicted that my data would follow patterns supportive of Wolfson's (1988) Bulge Theory. The most

elaborate closings, with the most polite expressions, would be found in conversations between interlocutors who were acquainted with each other, but not intimately. I expected that the length and degree of politeness of the closings of the conversations between strangers and intimates would be less, but that the two groups would exhibit some differences, however, because many of the strategies employed by intimates are inappropriate between strangers and vice versa.

I thought that there would be some effect for ethnicity as well, with the Spanish-speaking strangers using more polite expressions than either of the other groups of strangers. I also predicted that the first-time encounters between females would produce more polite expressions in closings than those between male strangers.

Following Wolfson (1988), I theorized that the most abbreviated closings would occur in conversations between relatives or close friends who interacted frequently. Married couples or sweethearts were expected to have the briefest closings, partly because, owing to physical closeness, contact could resume after a short interval. In addition intimacy is signalled by private codes and "taken for granted."

Young male friends, I predicted, would use different, less conventional expressions than their female counterparts in their partings. For them, identity and solidarity are often achieved by using ellipsis and/or language that is not generally considered 'proper' or mainstream.

Power

Intuitively, we would expect the data to show that the interlocutor who holds more power in terms of the communicative situation will more often give the first preclosing signal, regardless of gender, social proximity or language proficiency. After all, theirs are the concerns which are given greater importance. Their purposes in conversing are more likely to be transactional than interactional in nature, and they do not need to earn approval by being proper or polite.

I guessed, though, that there would be some effects for gender with fewer of the higher-status females giving preclosing signals than higher-status males. On the other hand, in some cultures, the lower-status participant (particularly if they are female) are likely to initiate a closing out of respect for the superior's task-oriented goals.

With respect to politeness, I predicted that the partner of lower status would produce more polite expressions. Studies of role differentiation in groups have shown that those individuals of higher status are generally assigned to and carry out a specifically task-oriented role, while those of lower status are normally given a primarily socio-emotive role (James and Drakich 1993).

In light of the literature and my earlier studies, I thought that the initiator of the closing would use more polite expressions than the other party, because it is the former's obligation to protect the face of the addressee. Female initiators would produce more polite expressions than male ones. Dialectologists have found that women in all social classes use more prestige forms than men of the same social class (MaCaulay 1977; 1978 in Coates 1986).

I expected the data to show that women favor a style of communication which disguises the hierarchy and asymmetry. Asymmetry of status creates contest. Women feel most comfortable with symmetry for it is conducive to mutual understanding and a sense of community (Tannen 1990). This is probably because until very recently, they have been excluded from positions of power in institutional hierarchies.

II. CLOSING A CONVERSATION: LITERATURE REVIEW

Discourse Analysis, Pragmatics and Conversation Analysis

Everyday conversation occupies a central position among the speech exchange systems (Sacks, Schegloff and Jefferson 1978). Conversation management is generally studied within conversation analysis, which, in turn, falls within the realm of discourse analysis. Because many of the expressions employed in greetings and partings are formulaic units of language used as traffic signals to regulate the flow of communication, conversation closings also can be considered from a semiotic perspective. Semioticians, like linguists try to characterize the relationships which obtain between form and meaning. While linguistics focuses on language as an autonomous system, semiotics is concerned with anything that systematically signifies meaning, including visual, verbal, tactile and olfactory signs in any type of human enterprise (Tobin 1990, Hervey 1982).

The rules of talk I discuss here pertain to an episode of interaction which the participants view as a naturally bounded unit rather than, say, the intermittent talk which occurs between people engaged in some ongoing activity. The

boundaries consist of openings and closings. The focus of conversation analysts has been on everyday, mundane conversations; in fact there has been a conscious avoidance of talk which contains highly 'intellectual' content or which is deemed particularly 'fateful' for either of the participants (Heritage 1984, Sacks 1992).

As mentioned earlier, routines often mark the boundaries of speech events (Saville-Troike 1982). Laver (1981), for example, found that greetings and partings shared common, predictable features of phatic communion (Malinowski 1923) --- that is, talk which has as its goal the smoothing or consolidating of relations between the participants. Coupland, Coupland and Robinson (1992) refine Malinoski's treatment of phaticity, viewing it as a "multidimensional for talk in many social settings, where speakers' relational goals supersede their commitment to factuality and instrumentality" (p. 207).

Repetitions are likely to occur in openings as well as closings (Montgomery 1994, field notes and recorded data):

(7) (opening)

A (disk jockey): Hey, Jeanne.

B (traffic reporter): Hey, Gabriel.

(8) (closing from a conversation in Spanish between two female classmates)

M: @ @ Hoy es viernes. 'Today is Friday'
Okay, ciao.

Y: Okay, ciao. @

A number of linguists have described conversation in terms of a cooperative enterprise (Dascal 1992), Searle (1992), for example, views all conversations as "forms of collective intentionality" which make allowances for individual intentionality. Having listened to hundreds of conversation closings, I see strong evidence of this intersubjectivity. Again, the vast majority feature a repetition of signals as can be seen in (9) (Montgomery 1994, field notes).

(9)

A: Okay. Catch You tomorrow. Wait. I ain't got class
tomorrow!

B: Okay. Catch you later. Right.

These repetitions signal the addressee's emotional identification with the speaker and help to create the sense that somehow both parties have arrived at the point of wanting to close the conversation at the same time (translated from Cantonese, see Appendix 7):

(10)

+WC= Wai Ching, F, 26, student
 ~J = Jessica, F, 23, student
 Topic= Coming to the United States
 Place= the college

WC: % Do you have a final?
 I don't have anymore time.

J: I have a final too.
 @@

WC: @@@
 We have to end this conversation.

J: We can talk later.

W: Okay.
 Bye bye.

J: Bye bye.

Conversational routines, states Coulmas (1981), are the result of "tacit agreements which the members of a community presume to be shared by every reasonable co-member." These agreed upon rules of conduct impinge on members in two ways (Goffman 1967, p. 49): directly as obligations, establishing how each is to behave, and secondly, as expectations, how others are morally bound to respond to him/her. Thus, there is an interactive dimension to many social rules in that "what is one person's obligation is the other's expectation."

This does not mean, however, that the rules and contexts compel speakers to behave in mechanical or deterministic ways (Harre and Gillet 1994). The formal apparatus posited by Sacks, Schegloff and Jefferson (1978) is both context free and

context sensitive (p. 10). The system of turn taking they propose allows for varying individual and group identities, "particularities of content or context," and role shifts within the interaction itself. And, while we may understand what is acceptable and expected, we may, at times, choose to respond in ways that might be construed as sarcastic, playful or even perverse. But, of course, this would not be possible if the system generating these constraints did not exist in the first place.

In addition, external pressures may cause us to omit the expected rituals, incurring an interactional debt, so to speak. In such situations, we count on the fact that the current relationship allows for occasional lapses and deviations. But usually, when a subsequent meeting occurs, the violator will look for a way to restore the ritual balance.

The structure of conversation is to be found mainly at the pragmatic level (Dascal 1992). Discourse is said to be composed of three separate but interrelated components: the linguistic structure or the sequence of utterances; the intentional structure, made up of the overall intention of the discourse plus the intentions of particular utterances; and the attentional state which is an abstraction of the participants' focus of attention as the discourse unfolds (Grosz and Sidner 1986).

Linguists who take a functionalist approach to language

see the need to study the roles particular features of the context play in speaker or utterance meaning as well as the need to examine the ways in which utterances change the context in which they are occurring (Halliday 1974, Levinson 1983, Mey 1993). This could be done in two (or more) ways: pragmatics might be incorporated via semantics into what would be a single integrated framework for the study of language and its use (Sherzer 1974; Hodge and Kress 1979; Wierzbicka, 1991). Or, it could continue to be a separate but related discipline which would complement the study of the language itself as a formal system (Leech 1983). This study was conducted in the spirit of the former approach.

Discourse analysis is a relatively new and broad interdisciplinary field populated by philosophers, anthropologists, psychologists, sociologists and linguists. In fact, the foci are so numerous and the parameters so ill-defined that it is possible to have two books about discourse analysis with no overlap in content at all (Potter and Wetherell 1987).

As a result of this confusion, a precise, uniform definition of discourse is not readily available. It is sometimes used as an equivalent of de Saussure's parole to refer to ordinary language -- all of the surface realizations of the underlying langue. Here, discourse (parole) includes all of the 'imperfections' such as false starts and incomplete sentences which characterize the spontaneous speech of most

human beings. The term is also be used to refer to any series of utterances which are not merely juxtaposed, but which form part of a higher structure, say a lecture or a conversation, being linked by semantic and structural cohesion as well as logical coherence (Holec 1985).

Thirdly, it is used to refer to the use of language---the social and cultural functions of particular utterances in specific circumstances (Schiffrin 1990). This idea of discourse is the focus of discursive psychology which is concerned with the action orientation of language, or what talking or writing is being used to do (Harre and Gillett 1994). All of these definitions are applicable to the research discussed here, but it is the second two which will be assumed throughout this paper, since it addresses how particular utterances are meant and interpreted in real-life conversations.

The literature reviewed here includes analysts who have contributed to our understanding of the characteristics conversation. Nofsinger (1991) identifies three primary ones. First, conversation is fully interactive; at least two people exchange messages on a real-time basis. Second, it is locally managed. The participants themselves determine, in the course of their interaction, what is accomplished and by whom. Third, it is mundane. The vast majority of conversations are commonplace and practical and are about matters of little importance to non-participants.

The utterance is the concrete realization of spoken language and is generally the basic unit of discourse analysis. It can be both more or less than a sentence. Unlike sentences which are assumed to have invariant meanings, utterances are verbal acts or performances produced by individual speakers to send specific discourse messages (Leech 1983). Utterances are shaped by the particular linguistic and situational contexts in which they occur (Tobin 1990).

Context encompasses the immediate social situation, the broader social milieu and the particular social participants (Volosinov 1985). It therefore includes any background information assumed to be shared by speaker and hearer and which contributes to the latter's interpretation of a given utterance (Leech 1983). In addition, I take it to include the purpose(s) of the conversation.

Sinclair et. al. (1972 in Coulthard 1977) observed that there was a need for a smaller unit of discourse structure to analyze. They dubbed this unit a move, as it is similar to a prepatterned behavior performed in the playing of a game (see also Nofsinger 1991). Moves can be co-extensive with utterances, but it is possible for a single utterance to contain more than one move. The second utterance, below, contains two moves:

(11)

A ...and that's the point I was trying to make.

B I quite agree. (1. response) Well, I've enjoyed chatting with you. (2. preclosing)

Moves are claimed to be both units of production and comprehension. On the production side, they are both cognitive (things known or recognized not to be known) and social units. On the comprehension side, they are units which help the listener remember the gist of past conversations (Weiner and Goodenough 1977). The move, like the utterance, is a structured, stabilized expression which exerts a powerful influence on our inner experience (Voloshinov 1985).

In terms of representing or transcribing features of conversation, Chafe (1993) proposes the word unit and the intonation unit, along with speaker turns, as fundamental units. The intonation unit is a stretch of speech uttered under a single coherent intonation contour. It is usually marked by such cues as an initial pause and a shift upward in overall pitch and a lengthening of its final (stressed) syllable.

The intonation unit coincides closely with what Gumperz and Berenz (1993) call an informational phrase. Boundary markers may consist of either a falling or rising intonation and indicate how a given phrase relates to the preceding material and to that which is to follow.

Chafe (1993) classifies intonation units according to whether they are substantive or regulatory. Substantive intonation units are content-bearing chunks of speech representing ideas, states, objects or people. Regulatory units have the primary function of regulating the flow of information between the interlocutors. Chafe identifies three types: Interpersonal units serve to convey the addressee's conversational involvement and include backchannels such as 'uh-huh', 'yeah' and 'right'. Textual units provide linkage between intonation units (e.g. 'so', 'but', 'anyway'). And cognitive units signal mental activity (e.g. 'Let's see', 'I don't know'). An interpersonal unit produced by an interlocutor who does not add a substantive unit is considered a 'pass' and may prompt the other party to move to close the conversation. Textual and cognitive regulatory intonation units both may be used as preclosing signals.

Kellerman et.al. (1989) conducted a research project on the nature of the cognitive structures hypothesized to guide discourse and the nature of actual discourse structures which could result from those structures. The researchers call the structures Memory Organization Packets (MOPs). The MOP's contain various scenes centered around particular topics. Also, there is a 'universal' conversational scene which enables one to talk on an unfamiliar topic. The linguistic invariance across conversations suggests that each scene includes a limited set of 'scripts'.

The scenes reported by subjects to be in the termination phase of a conversation (between interlocutors meeting for the first time) were the possibility of a future meeting, the evaluation of the present encounter, a plan for a future meeting. a positive evaluation of the partner, exchanges of 'until later's', reasons for terminating the conversation and good-byes (p. 41.) Their research further suggests that discourse structure is both "weakly linear" and hierarchical. Each utterance or move will implicatively constrain the possible responses available to the addressee.

Stubbs (1983) would agree that while natural conversation may be automatic, and, paradoxically, unselfconscious and spontaneous, as a genre of discourse, it is actually highly ordered (see also Schegloff 1988). According to the discursive view of communication, there are a great many constraints on what may be said among persons in particular roles and relationships in a conversation. While one speech act does not cause another, it makes a given type appropriate or 'normatively accountable' (Harre and Gillett 1994). Proof that there are rules lies simply in our ability to engage with others in coherent interaction (Cronen 1995). And it is the existence of such norms and expectations which makes it possible for speakers breach them to give clever or contrary responses should they feel so inclined.

Like most linguistic behavior, the participants are largely unaware of the underlying system. They will notice,

however, those instances when the system malfunctions, causing them to feel their partner has behaved in a "rude" or inappropriate manner. Positing such regularity allows Stubbs to provide a framework for the systematic collection and analysis of conversational data. There is, however, no one, generally accepted overarching theory to provide a set of analytic tools for use in describing system at the discourse level (Holdcroft 1992). The methods and units of analysis are selected according to the goals and hypotheses of the particular study (Verschueren 1987, Hatch 1992). Since the use of a pre-closing signal is a semiotic (communicative) act which may have varying syntactic forms (e.g. It is getting late; It's been so good to see you; I've gotta run), I will be drawing on speech act theory, particularly the work of Austin (1962) and Searle (1979) who viewed utterances as the details of social action.

When we use language, it seems that there are a limited number of basic things we do: "we tell people how things are and desire the addressee to form a like belief, we try to get them to do things, we commit ourselves to doing things, we express our feelings and attitudes or we satisfy a social expectation to express certain feelings (acknowledgments) (Bach and Harnish 1979).

For Austin (1962), an illocutionary act is the performance of an act in saying something as opposed to the performance of the act of saying something (locution). An

illocutionary act might be someone urging or advising a friend to do something. However, by saying something, the speaker may intentionally produce certain consequential effects upon the hearer. Reference to the illocutionary act may be oblique or not there at all. This is a perlocutionary act. Preclosings and closings are interesting for what speakers are doing (e.g. redirecting the flow of conversation), apart from the syntax or the truth value of their propositions.

Searle (1979) formulated a classification system grouping speech acts into five categories according to the purpose of each act. Commissives, such as promises or pledges, commit the speaker to some future act. Directives are designed to get the recipient to do something. Assertives display the speaker's belief in the propositional content of the utterance. Expressives, such as compliments, thanks, or apologies, say something about the speaker's current emotional state. Bach and Harnish (1979) refer to expressions like 'Nice to see you' as acknowledgements. And declarations are official verbal actions which occur in the context of an institution, as in "You're fired." Conversation closings may contain one or more tokens of the first four categories (Montgomery, field notes, 1993):

Commissive: (12) Okay then. I'll see you Tuesday at one.

(13) I'll call you.

Directive: (14) Say hello to your parents.

(15) Take care of yourself.

Assertive: (16) It's getting late.

(17) I have a class.

Expressive: (18) Good to run into you.

(19) It's been a pleasure.

And, in formal contexts, we even find declarations of the type, 'End of discussion.'

Bach and Harnish (1979) provide an account of the use of language to fulfill one's communicative intentions. An illocutionary act is what is directly achieved by the conventional force associated with a certain kind of utterance as part of a conventional procedure and includes all of the effects, intentional or unintentional, that uttering those words in a given situation may have (Levinson 1983). Preclosing moves can be considered illocutionary acts in Searle's (1969) sense in that they are oriented toward securing the listener's understanding and uptake.

Habermas' (1981) framework expands on Searle's classifi-

cations, adding a class of speech acts called communicatives. This is a subclass of regulative speech acts which serve to organize speech--- arranging it into themes and contributions, distributing conversational roles, regulating turn-taking, and the like (p. 236). Habermas sees an advantage in regarding the communicatives as an independent class which should be defined through its relationship to the communication process and which could include a variety of speech acts such as affirming, assuring and confirming (p. 326). Preclosing signals would fall into this category in that they serve a transitional function in the interaction.

When interlocutors communicate, they are motivated by overlapping (albeit sometimes conflicting) performative goals and attitudes. With each speech act, they are simultaneously relating to things in the objective, social and subjective worlds (Habermas p. 330). It's been nice seeing you' conveys more than the propositional content of the utterance. It has a phatic function, that of preserving positive face for the other, and a management function, that of organizing the sequence of the conversation.

The discourse purpose or DP refers to the overarching purpose which underlies the participants' engagement in a particular conversation (Grosz and Sidner 1986). Often this purpose can be more strongly attributed to the participant who initiates the conversation, the ICP, than the other participant, the OCP. Thus it is likely that it will be the

ICP who decides when the objective of the conversation has been met and will make the first move to end the conversation.

Speech acts are generally logically related components of larger speech events such as conversations, lessons, introductions or prayers which must be "societally recognizable and recurring" (J. Fishman 1972, p.33). While preclosings are made up of individual speech acts, they cannot be interpreted as such by their speech act type. It appears that conversations are structured by principles other than those that govern speech act types. Hearers seem to recognize preclosings by their location at the analyzable end of a topic, the accompanying nonverbal cues, and by a 'deeper' fit in terms of additional contextual information.

Bakhtin (1986) emphasizes the orientation of the speaker of to the known characteristics of the addressee and to the anticipated active response of the latter, resulting in a kind of 'double voice'. He points out that our utterances are never entirely our own; our linguistic resources consist of the utterances we have heard from others in our home and community the which we re-voice and reaccent to suit our current needs. As we have seen, conversationalists typically echo parts or all of their partner's utterances when jointly constructing a closing as in the example below (Montgomery 1989):

(20)

+ C= Carlos: M, 19, Spanish/ student
 ~*M= Marc: M, 38, English/ tutor

C: % Okay, Mr. Marc. I'm glad to see you.
 M: Well, it's nice to talk to ^you.
 C: Yes. Thanks very much.
 M: You're very welcome.
 C: Bye.
 M: Bye.

The words in this closing can be seen as the product of the reciprocal relationship between Carlos and Marc (Volosinov 1985). Marc is revoicing Carlos' words and providing preferred second pair parts for each of his utterances.

Grice (1989) formulated maxims which are widely assumed to guide the conduct of conversation---quantity, quality, (truthfulness), manner (clarity) and relevance. Together these maxims comprise the Cooperative Principle (CP). Grice also posited a lesser known Politeness Principle (PP) encompassing the Maxims of Tact, Generosity, Approbation and Modesty. While the CP and the PP interact in speech situations to determine linguistic behavior in relation to communicative function (Leech 1983), it appears that the CP applies mainly to the middle section of a conversation, while the more socially-based PP is observed at the beginning and closing stages (Laver 1981).

Communication makes possible a particular way of life and

is in that sense political (Cronen 1995). The work of Hodge and Kress (1979, 1988,) is useful in looking at conversation as a genre of discourse with "socially ascribed classifications of semiotic form." While it is often said that the relationship of a sign and what it signifies is arbitrary (Saussure 1974), these authors set forth the principles that linguistic codes operate with the underpinnings of the larger social and legal systems and their instantiations, and, while erroneously regarded as rational and impartial, transmit ideological messages of their own. Those who wield power use language to systematically present a particular version of reality. Thus, analyzing linguistic structure can yield a socio-political analysis of the community in which it is spoken. These authors rely on the earlier theories of Volosinov (1985) who believes that the established ideological systems determine---and determine from within---the structure of an utterance and Halliday (1977) who likewise asserted that language is the way it is because of the functions to which it has been put by its users.

The spoken uses of language, of course, antedate all others. Conversation is "the single most important dynamic context of language use" (Levinson 1983, Nofsinger 1991). It is certainly the most common and fundamental organizational unit of speech (Moerman 1988). This unit is a macro-structure of discourse which gives coherence and illocutionary force to utterances at the semantic level (van Dijk 1977), and

it is this basic speech form with its turn-taking system, which may be transformed into other genres such as interviews, debates, wedding ceremonies, or even written text (Sacks, Schegloff and Jefferson 1978; Heritage 1984; Volosinov 1985).

Face-to-face interaction not only reflects but helps to create the social order (Goffman 1967, Hymes 1974, Garfinkel 1976). Social positions are maintained, raised or lowered by means of conversation. Sacks (1978) emphasizes the alternation of speaker-hearer roles as a defining feature of conversation and compares an interaction to an economic system in which turns are goods which must be allocated. In examining the relationship between language and gender, it may become evident that differences between males and females in the use of turns is parallel to the differences between them in our society's economic system (Zimmerman and West 1969).

In conversational analysis (CA), meaning is not viewed as a logical or aesthetic abstraction, but as a local accomplishment derived from utterances in a conversational context (Bilmes 1985). The moment an exchange begins, whatever the first speaker says is a determining factor in any reasonable expectations on the part of the hearer (Firth 1964). The conversational analyst discovers meaning in the way utterances are used by the speaker and the hearings given them by the listener. There is, often by design, a good deal of ambiguity in spoken discourse. To claim that the utterances

are heard in a particular way, it is not necessary for the participants to be able to give explicit commentary; the readings are to be found in the interlocutor's reactions.

If the above is somewhat limiting, Bilmes suggests that it is possible, operating within a CA approach, for the analyst to arrive at a conversationally-grounded interpretation apart from participant hearings using various kinds of contextual relevance together with criteria of internal and external consistency. In effect, the analyst becomes a second addressee (Bendix 1993). I plan to use both kinds of CA approaches in analyzing my data.

Preclosings and Closings

McLaughlin (1984) reviews the current literature examining the organization of talk in terms of acts and sequences. One type of sequence is the preclosing-closing which, according to Laver (1981), is an access ritual in that the interlocutors display to each other whether and to what extent they are available for further interaction. Farewells convey the effects the encounter has had on the relationship and the expectations the interactants have of each other with respect to the next meeting (Goffman 1967).

Wilson (1989) would categorize preclosings as out-modes in that these utterances differ in structure and content from the ongoing speech event. The function of the out-mode is to shift the status of the developing speech event. Wilson distinguishes between two main types of out-modes. One is the institutionalized out-mode, which is defined as being in the imperative mood. Here a power or status differential is recognized by both parties. A teacher might say to a student, "Okay, I have another student coming at four." The other is a conversationally-tied out-mode which, although different from the ongoing conversation, is linked to the first or main topic of the conversation. This type of out-mode is for the vast number of conversations in which speaker rights are distributed equally. One student might say to another, "Well,

I think we've covered the chapter pretty well."

In my data (English, Chinese and Spanish), limited accessibility is often signaled by a reference to time. A pre-closing move of this type might be 'what time is it?' or 'it's getting late'. A particle such as 'okay' can indicate that the interaction has been satisfactorily terminated and can provide for the initiating of another action, namely the closing of the conversation (Jefferson 1972).

Gleason and Weintraub (1976 in Ferguson 1981) claim that routines such as farewells are acquired differently from the rest of language since they are explicitly taught by parents, who prompt their use with the markers Say and later, What do you say?. 'Bye-bye' is said to be the earliest routine taught to small children. It may even be marked by Say when the child is too young to speak and "is only expected to open and close its fist in a primitive motion of waiving." There are non-western examples of this kind of early coaching. Firth (1972) reports observations of Baganda children being drilled in the movements and gestures which accompany greetings and partings at ages before they could actually speak. In the United States, children learn to make closing statements and to cooperate in closings initiated by others at about age five (Bordeaux and Willbrand 1987).

Sacks (1967 in Coulthard 1977) isolated a class of sequences of turns called adjacency pairs which are produced successively by different speakers. They are ordered so that

the first must belong to the class of first pair part, and the second to the class of second pair part. The first pair part selects the next action, thereby setting up a transition relevance---an expectation which the second speaker must fulfill. Adjacency pairs are said to be the basic structural units for both opening closing conversations with one pair needed for the preclosing and another for the terminal exchange as in the following which occurred between two male doctors in a hospital cafeteria (Montgomery, field notes 1993):

(21)

A Gotta go. Another meeting.

B Yeah. Me too.

A See you 'round.

B. Right.

Second parts of adjacency pairs can be categorized as responses which are preferred or those which are dispreferred. The dispreferred response to a question would be a non-answer or an unexpected answer. Speakers can reliably use a short delay as an indicator that the forthcoming response will be a dispreferred second (Potter et. al. 1987, Schegloff 1988). Such lapses are often found before preclosing signals.

Given the principle of sequential relevance (Schegloff and Sacks 1973, 1984), there is a need, toward the end of a

conversation, for a mechanism whereby topics which could not have been previously mentioned can be introduced. Such a mechanism would do the following (Levinson 1983):

- (a) offer each party a turn for such deferred unmentionables
- (b) if such turn is taken up, recycle the opportunity in (a)
- (c) and consequent upon on party taking up the opportunity in (a) make the terminal exchange immediately relevant.

There are limited slots in a conversation---at the boundaries of topics or discourse segments (Grosz et.al 1986) which can felicitously be used for the initiation of a closing. This is a point in which a change of speakers could occur. Schegloff and Sacks are credited with pioneering the pragmatic dimensions of speech and with describing the organizational machinery of conversation (Coulmas 1981). They published a seminal work which dealt specifically with preclosings and closings in 1973 and expanded their analysis in 1984. Inasmuch as conversations are orderly, say the authors, the problem of closing a conversation is that of arriving at such a point wherein one speaker's contribution will not encourage the other to talk, but at the same time, will not create a "state of ritual disequilibrium" (Goffman 1967, p. 19. See Appendix 12).

Politeness and Facework

Anyone who participates in a conversation exposes him/herself to the possibility of losing face (Mey 1993). Goffman (p. 33) warns that we humans are "ritually delicate objects":

During personal contacts ...unique informational conditions prevail and the significance of face becomes especially clear. The human tendency to use signs and symbols means that evidence of social worth and mutual evaluation will be conveyed by very minor things, and these things will be witnessed, as will the fact that they have been witnessed.

I claim that closing a conversation is intrinsically a face-threatening act (FTA) in that the speaker must indicate that he/she does not share the hearer's wants. If this is so, then leave taking involves moral issues as to what can, must or must not be done at this point (Cronen 1995). Because of the high risk to face, partings are generally elaborate and highly conventionalized (Laver 1981). They are characterized by the use of numerous expressions designed to save face for both the speaker and the addressee.

Brown and Levinson (1987) identify three main strategies of politeness used across cultures for 'face' work. 'Positive

face' has to do with satisfying others' need for affiliation and approval. 'Negative face' involves protecting one's own freedom of action and refraining from impeding the actions of others (See also Cupach and Metts (1994)). And a communicative act is done 'off-record' if it is not possible for the hearer to attribute a single communicative intention to that act. It is assumed that in almost every ordinary interaction each person's positive and negative face will be supported and maintained (Goffman 1967). Most people, however, are familiar with the dilemma which results from simultaneously trying to meet both their own agendas and their partner's face needs.

Leave-taking, or the withdrawal of participation, therefore requires the use of various types of redress to maintain face for both participants (Goffman 1967; Scollon and Scollon 1983). It is hard to imagine situations, save extreme anger, in which one person would say to another, "I want to end this conversation now." Rather, we expect certain kinds of redress taking the form of expressions of regret (e.g. 'I hate to leave...'), pleasure (e.g. It's been nice talking to you'), reasons for terminating (e.g. 'I'm late for my appointment'), and reference to future contact (e.g. 'Let's have lunch sometime'). The reasons offered for concluding a conversation fall into the category of accounts. Accounts (e.g. excuses) are explanations of unusual actions and can be thought of as serving to repair a potential fracture (Austin

1961).

Austin (ibid. in Potter and Wetherell 1987) makes a clear distinction between two main types of accounts: justifications and excuses. Austin noticed that when someone behaves in an unacceptable way, that person has two different remedial strategies to draw on, justifications and excuses. Excuses are accounts which allow that the action was bad, but claim that some external agency was the cause (e.g., 'I've gotta go. The babysitter has to be home by twelve'). Justifications, on the other hand, do not deny the responsibility of the speaker, but claim that the action is in fact good, sensible, or acceptable under the circumstances (e.g., 'I don't want to run up your phone bill').

Both types of accounts as well as apologies are found in preclosings. Apologies acknowledge that the speaker's action somehow slighted the hearer and thus express remorse and perhaps imply that the speaker will try to avoid similar actions in the future (Potter and Wetherall 1987).

Preclosings designed to protect negative face of the speaker include expressions of the type, 'Let me get back to my desk.' Expressions like 'I don't want to take any more of your time' are oriented to the negative face of the addressee.

One of my subjects commented that he disliked the preclosing, 'I'll let you go' saying that it was dishonest on the part of the speaker. The expression seems to be oriented to the negative face of the hearer, but the hearer in this case

understood that the speaker was seeking a polite way to act in favor of his own freedom of action. Occasionally, one may invoke the negative face of both speaker and addressee as in, 'We both have things to do.'

Off-the-record preclosings would include, 'What time is it?' or 'So there you have it' See Appendix 13). The latter is a 'bounding' of the topic which has the effect of encouraging the other party to give the preclosing signal.

Laver (1981) categorizes these types of expressions according to their functions; mitigation and consolidation. Mitigation allows the participants to achieve a cooperative parting so that the person being left avoids the feeling of rejection. Consolidation serves to solidify the relationship between the two parties by emphasizing the pleasantness of the encounter, the continuation of the relationship, mutual solidarity and the continuing consensus regarding the details of future encounters.

In closings sequences, this kind of phatic communion is needed because conversation, unlike other speech events such as the interview is characterized by at least the semblance of equal distribution of speaker rights (Wilson 1989). By protecting the other's face and by allowing for the introduction to new topics, talk can be terminated without either individual being seen as controlling the conversation overtly.

Therefore, the OCP or non-initiating party must restrain

her emotional involvement in the conversation so as not to embarrass the ICP (initiating conversational partner) by her own embarrassment (Goffman 1967). Pretending not to notice when one's partner has said or done something face-threatening is a kind of preventive facework (Cupach and Metts 1994).

Grice's implicature theory posits that when the literal interpretation of an utterance seems to be an implausible violation of the CP, an indirect interpretation is made instead. Searle (1979) and Keller (1981) argue that an indirect speech act (or an off-record utterance), sometimes called a gambit, is used to perform a preparatory condition to help the hearer anticipate a level shift in the conversation. Accurate interpretation relies on principles of cooperative interaction, mutually shared background and cultural information, and the ability of the hearer to make inferences.

Davison (1975) claims that indirect speech acts are tied to two relationships --- the relation between the speaker and the hearer and the relation to the proposition or action and the attitudes of the speaker and hearer to it. From the speaker's perspective, a conflict exists between the speaker's intent to say something and the anticipated reaction of the hearer. Rather than say, 'I want this conversation to end', a speaker might ask, 'Is it eleven o'clock already?'

The end of a topic may be signalled with an aphorism or a summary such as, 'Boys will be boys', or '...So it's been a hell or a week". Other features may include making

arrangements for a next meeting, reviewing arrangements already made, referring to the first topic which is designated as the reason for the conversation, or a typing of the conversation as in, 'It's been fun rehashing our moment of glory' (Montgomery 1989). The following is the closing section of a conversation between twin brothers who had been discussing the renovation of their respective apartments (Montgomery: Conversation VII B# 4), Renovation, 1995:

(22)

Steve: Well, I say we were both then doing pretty well.
I-- I think we're both uh we're both seeing some major renovations in the buildings,

Bob: You've made renovation.
I've (xxx) renovation.
We're sort of like survivors.
We-- We face a great (x aggravation x).
We-- we finally-- we're finally seeing the fruits of our

Steve: =sacrifice.

Bob: sacrifice.
% Well, it's getting kind of late.

As a way to closing the conversation, Steve and Bob jointly construct a summary of their talk, stressing their commonalities, especially as they relate to the principles of patience and hard work. Bob's comment, "Well, it's getting kind of late," is an indirect, off-the-record preclosing signal which is easily recognized as such.

Sometimes conversationalists will set the stage for a closing by introducing a topic specifically as the last one, a kind of preventive facework (cupach and Metts 1994). They may invoke their own interests or needs ('Have to get to class') or those of the other party ('I'll let you get back to your studying'). The routine questions asked at the beginning of a conversation ('Where are you headed?') can provide material for a preclosing move ('You'd better get in line before they sell out') (Richards and Schmidt 1983). A preclosing signal may be given even before the first topic is introduced (e.g. 'I've only got minute') in case the speaker has to terminate at a place that is not transitionally relevant later on (Sacks 1992).

The verbal component constitutes only a part of the closing sequence. There are, of course, easily recognizable non-verbal signals which may be used alone or which may accompany verbal preclosing signals. These include paralinguistic cues such as a lowering of pitch, a loss of amplitude, a lengthy pause, and, as we shall see in Chapter VI, laughter. In his early writings, Voloshinov/ Bakhtin observed that the nonverbal behavior of the subjects corresponds to the context of the utterances, and that the context " enters into the utterance as a necessary constitutive element" of its semantic structure (1926 in Todorov 1984, pp. 41-42):

The extraverbal context of the utterance is composed to three aspects: (1) the spacial horizon common to the interlocutors (the unity of the visible: the room, the window, etc.); (2) Knowledge and understanding of the situation, also common to both; (3) Their common evaluation of the situation (p. 42).

C. Goodwin (1981) has described common gestures and movements associated with preclosings such as moving one's chair back from the table or desk, looking at one's watch, and shifting one's gaze away from the interlocutor. However, since I am using audio-taped data, only those behaviors available to me such as pause, intonation will be within the scope of the present study.

Possible preclosing signals are often preceded by a short pause, as well as discourse particles such as well, OK and so with an extension of vowel sounds and a downward intonation at the analyzable end of a topic (See Appendices 5 and 14). Shourup (1983) classifies these particles as evincives, using the term to mean that, at the moment of speaking, the speaker has just been engaged in private thinking, and that, while these thoughts affect the current conversation, he/she does not wish to fully specify their content. The speaker feels the pull of other things in his/her life which need attending to. Or the interactant comes to feel a sense of interior completion with respect to the conversation (Bakhtin 1952-1953

in Todorov 1984).

The sense of completion is determined by three factors, and all of these planes can be noted in the actual material of which closing sequences are constructed (p. 53): (1) the object or topic has been treated exhaustively; (2) The discursive intention of the speakers has been accomplished; and (3) The place for an ending has been reached according to the proto- typical length and form of this particular genre of discourse. Our subject must somehow must reconcile the interlocutor's face needs with these other feelings and/or demands (see also Schifffrin 1987 for a discussion of discourse markers).

Potter et. al. (1987) note that well found at the beginning of turns marks the initiation of a dispreferred second. Schegloff and Sacks (1973) suggest that items such as 'okay' and 'yeah' indicate that the speaker whose turn it now is does not wish to add to the topic at hand, nor does he/she want to nominate a new one. A "free" turn is given to the other party who may now introduce a topic which would have not been relevant earlier.

Researchers have observed that current speakers as well as recipients rely on these gambits, particularly 'okay,' at transition points across a variety of exchange systems, both casual and institutional (Jefferson 1981, Beach 1995). Below the participants collaboratively refrain from continuing the conversation (Schegloff and Sacks (1973, p. 301):

(23)

A: O.K.

B: O.K.

A: Bye bye

B: Bye

Beach notes that this kind of shifting to new orientations to ongoing talk is a universal task of interactants, and I have found that members all of the ethnic groups in my study make use of the functional equivalents of 'okay.'

Merritt (1984) proposes that OK in service encounters is, among other things, used to signal a transition from the exchange to the closure stage. Keller (1981) sees two main functions of such gambits: semantic framing and change of state-of consciousness. Semantic frame signals tell the hearer that the stretch of talk to follow should be taken in a particular manner. State-of-consciousness signals advise the hearer that the speaker is now in a different psychological mode and, for example, may not be receptive to further interaction.

To use an analogy from music, there is, in a concerto, just before the end, there is a cadenza. The piece comes to a stop and the soloist has the opportunity to go off freely into a display of artistic virtuosity before the final coda (Fallek 1994). Below is the closing of an interview between

two Liberians. Tiklo is the interviewer and Matthew is the informant who has been paid by researcher, John Singler (1994) to talk about his experiences:

(24)

Tiklo:

Well, uh, we want to say thanks and appreciation to Mister Matthew Sawson of the Nifu Township, uh, grand Kru County, Liberia, West Africa. We will, if we have another issue coming up, which we will like to, we will like you to tell us more, come up gain and invite you. And of course this will be on a different compensation, the experiences given while you were at Ghana and <some> somewhere else, and, uh, your trip there. We like your story anyway. We like the story, way, so we say thank you, go to your wife. And then, uh, extend our greeting to her and your young baby. And in the meantime you will hear about your compensation. That will go little beyond <what>, uh, what we told you, which is the five dollars because <you> you spend extra time to tell us the story. Thank you very much.

I have noticed something akin to this in my data, a kind of eloquent summation or signature by one or both parties particularly, in conversations which have some of the more formal features of an interview, and particularly in which one or both participants is a speaker of Spanish. After this, the formulaic closing conventions are invoked (Montgomery 1991). In the conversation from which the material below was taken, Sonia, a student from Ecuador, was discussing dating practices

with Jane, a tutor in the ESL lab at her college. Sonia had been surprised to learn that, in the United States, couples often share the cost of entertainment.

(25)

Well, it's been very nice sharing uh sharing thoughts and ideas and uh I'm glad that you're here in America. So it's a lot easier for you to date and everything. But you're gonna have to shell out a little money for the date.

Jane, 28, U.S.

The next conversation, conducted in Spanish, is between two female students from the Dominican Republic, Fanny and Elba. They had been talking about hospitality, comparing social visits in the Dominican Republic with those in the United States. Both had shared anecdotes in which they had gone to visit friends or relatives in the United States only to find that, since they had not advised these individuals of their plans, they were unwelcome (Appendix 9). While both women preferred the "warmer" hospitality of people in their native country, Fanny offers the following caveat:

(26)

Tenemos que atender eso
 <tam-> un también y--
 Debemos tener un poco de --
 Debemos ser un poco flexible
 También con ellos
 Porque quizás
 Si nosotros encontramos que
 Su cultura es un poco diferente a la
 nuestra
 Quizás ellos encuentran que nuestra
 cultura
 También es diferente
 Y no mezclan (.02)
 Y no creo que --
 Somos humanos
 Y el mundo es tan grande
 Yo creo que
 Cada cual tiene su forma diferente de
 actuar
 <De --> Me imagino
 De tratar las personas
 Y creo que por eso
 Será (dos) mundos
 Por eso será una República Dominicana
 Una Nueva York
 Un México
 Un Honduras
 Diferentes países

We have to keep in mind that
 Also --
 We have to have a little --
 We have to be a little bit flexible
 With them too.
 Because perhaps
 If we find that
 Their culture is a little bit different
 Perhaps they likewise find
 Our culture to be different.
 And they don't ^mix (02)
 And I believe that
 We are all human beings
 And the world is so big
 and I think that
 Every creature has its own way
 of being.
 <Of --> I imagine

<Of --> I imagine
 Of treating other people (02)
 I believe that that is why
 There are (two) worlds
 That is why there is a Dominican Republic
 A New York
 A Mexico
 A Honduras
 Different countries

Even though both Fanny and Elba, had voiced some negative impressions of American-style hospitality, they wanted to end their conversation on a positive, if not lofty note. Elba responds to Jenny's treatise with one of her own. She goes on to say that Americans and their culture are not without value, and that they should, in fact, intermingle with North Americans and "enjoy this beautiful city (New York)." After this jointly produced coda, Elba gives the preclosing signal.

Closings, like other politeness formulas, are generally non-referential in meaning. Their importance lies in their presence or absence on the appropriate occasion rather in the exact meaning carried by their constituent parts, so they are subject to special weakening ---aphesis (the omission of one or more sounds at the beginning of a word), contractions, and erosions--- as in 'Bye,' 'later' and ''Night' in English and 'Ciao' in Italian and Spanish (Edmondson 1981). These expression, as well as 'okay', are often code-switched even by monolinguals. They appear frequently in my data in conversations otherwise conducted entirely in another

language.

While various types of routines seem to be employed in conversation closings, endings should not be viewed as scripted routines which participants must follow, but rather as a set of culturally-mediated prospective possible and appropriate acts and countermoves opening up at strategic points in the course of an interaction (Sacks and Schegloff 1984; Searle 1992). Speakers do have choices as to how brief or polite they will be, but those choices are constrained.

Disregarding Preclosing Signals

During the course of conducting this study, many acquaintances described to me the ideosyncratic behavior of interlocutors who had the reputations of disregarding preclosing signals, especially when engaged in telephone conversations. Upon receipt of a preclosing signal, these individuals would continue to develop the current topic or would introduce a series of new ones. This behavior, which constitutes a threat to the negative face of the unsuccessful initiator of the closing, uniformly elicited negative commentary.

The "victims" of these transgressors of the ritual code

reported that their reactions to the problem were to make up false but extreme excuses to terminate, fail to return telephone calls, and to hesitate to initiate contact with such persons in the first place. These reactive behaviors in turn can create strains and distance in a relationship. Clearly, one pays a price for refusing to follow the group's norms with respect to closing conversations.

III. SOCIO-CULTURAL VARIABLES: LITERATURE REVIEW

How do socio-cultural variables such as gender, ethnicity, social distance, and power influence conversation rules and their instantiations? The language-reflection view of language behavior holds that linguistic patterns reflect the social reality of its users. At the same time, the uses to which a language is put help to reinforce or change language patterns to coincide with the changing values and goals of the community (J. Fishman 1972).

Any participants in a conversation are guided by the role relationships that exist between them. Generally speaking, the interactants expect that when the encounter is over, they will stand in the same relationship to each other that existed when the conversation began. If the conversation produced some kind of change in the relationship, then the farewells will acknowledge this change (Goffman 1967).

If the interlocutors belong to the same speech community, there is an implicitly recognized set of rules, rights and obligations that determines the boundaries within which conventional behavior may vary. Particular speech communities allow differing degrees of role change, access and fluidity. Depending on role relationships and purpose, interlocutors may engage in both transactional and personal, purely transactional or purely personal talk (J. Fishman 1972).

Gender

Of the factors which shape our interactional roles, gender is surely one of most pervasive. There appears to be widespread agreement that the dominant gender schemata functions as an important underlying organizing principle in all human societies. The gender systems are part of the larger semiotic systems which constrain what meanings men and women can produce to themselves and others, about themselves and others, in what codes or styles, and in which contexts (Hodge and Kress 1988).

There is, however, not much agreement as to how gender is constructed and how it could be deconstructed (Todd and Fisher 1988; Devor 1989). Two recurring explanations offered for identifiable gender differences in language use are an unequal balance of power in favor of males (Todd and Fisher 1988; Silberstein 1988) and contrasting male and female cultures (Tannen 1990; Chodorow 1989). These two explanations do not seem to be unrelated.

In the vast majority of otherwise diverse cultures, the worlds of men and women are strictly demarcated (Gilmore 1990). These worlds offer differentiated experiences for people categorized as male or female, which, in turn, result in different cognitive schemata with which to make sense of those experiences (Devor 1989). It would not be surprising, therefore, to find gender-specific ways of relating as well as

a division of labor when it comes to conversation.

Of late, there has been a good deal of public interest and research activity in the area of gender differences in communication. Researchers have identified sex-related variations in pronunciation, grammatical form, vocabulary and speech style (Smith 1979). If these differences are recognized as salient markers of sex, what are the societal implications of these markers?

Feminist researchers have succeeded in placing the language issue on the political agenda (Cameron 1990). Three themes which have emerged from their work are the silence and exclusion of women via language from the public discourse; the 'naming' or representation of women in speech and the construction of gender; and the behavioral differences of males and females in language use. Silence, which often precedes a preclosing, has been identified as a sign of opting out of a conversational interaction and hence is often taken as a form of impoliteness (Leech 1983).

Women have long been stereotyped as the more talkative gender (Graddol and Swann 1989); indeed, producing large quantities of talk has been frequently cited as a characteristic of women's speech ((Kramer (who now uses the name Kramarae) 1977 in Graddol and Swann)). There is evidence to the contrary, however. Leet-Pellegrini (1980) studied quantity of talk in relation to two variables: sex and expertise. Her subjects were college students who were asked

to discuss the same topic (the effects of television violence on children). The participants were grouped into dyads, some single sex, some mixed sex. Some subjects were given pertinent material to read beforehand. The researcher found that the amount of talk was associated with both sex and expertise. Men, in general talked more than women. 'Experts' talked more than 'non-experts.' Male experts talked more than female experts particularly when addressing female partners.

Brod (1987), like Tannen 1983), observes that men are often disinclined to talk about their private worries, preferring instead topics of an impersonal nature such as sports or world affairs. Perhaps due to their affinity for team sports, he further notes that men have a need to construct relationships bound by clearly articulated rules. This enables them to establish and maintain an unambiguous positional identity, a base from which they can proceed toward intimacy.

Lakoff (1975: 53-56) was one of the first linguists to identify "women's language" which is characterized by the use of various kinds of hedges (e.g. 'sort of', 'rather'), the yes/no question intonation for statements, hypercorrect grammar and pronunciation and "superpolite" forms. When it comes to flouting Grice's maxims, Rundquist (1992) found that males and females were about equal with regard to correcting children, but that women used more conventionalized forms and men used indirect forms such as humor. Thorne and Henley

(1977) found that female dyads were more affiliative and socially expressive than male dyads.

Tannen (1990) similarly argues that for most women, "the language of conversation is the language of rapport," whereas men are more comfortable engaging in "public speaking" and informational or "report" talk. Brod (1987, p. 5) observes that men's talk so often centers on sports and politics because they are "fleeing" personal topics and "escaping" into public ones. Focusing on these impersonal topics, moreover, satisfies men's need to "achieve a detached collegiality" in relationships with co-workers and others in hierarchical settings.

Sean, below, is a tutor in the Writing center at the college who had been talking to Yi Xing, a female Chinese student about the classroom behavior of Chinese and American students (See Appendix 17 for an additional closing by the same tutor):

(27)

+YX = Yi Xing, F, 26, Ch, student

~*S = Sean. M, 31, Eng, tutor

YX has worked occasionally with S at the Writing Center

YX: Um:
% I think I don't have any more questions.
Um:
Thank you.

S: No problem.

YX: Thank you for helping me to finish my project.

S: No problem.

Maltz and Borker's (1982) findings are relevant to the task of closing conversations. Whereas for men, getting and holding the floor is important, for women, getting the interlocutor engaged and keeping him/her engaged is often problematic. So these are the conversational skills females would need to develop.

In research based on cross-sex conversations using admittedly limited data, West and Zimmerman (1983) found that males more frequently interrupt females than vice versa. P. Fishman (1983) studied the conversational activity of heterosexual intimates and found that the women asked more questions and did more "support work" (backchanneling) while the men were talking. She also found that, while the women raised more topics than the men did, it was generally the topics raised by men which were discussed. She concluded that

"women did much of the necessary work of interaction, starting conversations and then working to maintain them" (p.98), but that it is "men who control what will be produced as reality by the interaction" (p.100).

Other studies have shown, however, that in cross-sex dyads, both genders adopt a linguistic style more like that of their 'out-group' partner than they would use with an 'in-group' partner of the same sex (Mulac et. al. 1988 in Giles and Coupland 1991). Aries (1976 in Smith 1970) studied mixed and same-sex conversation groups and found that the content of their conversations differed along gender lines with the men talking about competition, sports and physical activities. The content of the women's interactions centered around self, family, and affiliation with others. In the mixed groups, the participants compromised in terms of the topics that were introduced and developed.

We would expect this to be the case in settings with low gender salience such as the work place. But in other situations where romantic inclinations may be encouraged, males and females are likely to diverge toward prototypically strong and soft linguistic styles, respectively, especially in communities where traditional sex role ideologies are reinforced (Mulac et. al., *ibid.*).

Although many of the researchers who address gender issues note that women do use more polite expressions, orienting themselves toward the other's negative face (freedom

of action) and positive face (positive self-image) (Coates 1986), others see these differences as largely unsubstantiated and call for new empirical tests which will reveal the specific ways gender manifests itself as one of several parameters in a given social situation (Brown and Levinson 1987).

Power

A major reason for undertaking this research was the assumption that the fragments of conversation in question are far from trivial in that they reveal the grander themes which organize a society (Schegloff 1988). Power differentials, which may determine which party acts to open or close a conversation, may result from gender (Spender 1984), social or occupational or institutional position (Fisher 1984, Nichols 1984) or, in interethnic conversations, language proficiency (Gumperz 1992). Laver (1981) sees an interaction as having a finite amount of linguistic capital so that, in terms of establishing a topic or controlling the floor, there is often the equivalent of a winner or a loser.

As previously noted, in ordinary conversations, there is an expectation of balanced participation. This, though, is not the case in institutional settings. Research on the paradigmatic structures of medical interviews, classroom discussions and therapy sessions has shown the discourse in these contexts to be characterized by asymmetry (Fisher 1984). Patients and students have fewer conversational options than doctors, teachers and therapists.

In Chinese companies, for example, it is usually the subordinate worker who initiates talk by addressing the superior first (Gu 1990). When the superior initiates a

conversation with an underling, the situation is clearly marked . If this is the norm, then we might expect that the person with the lower position would likewise make the first move to close the conversation.

According to Tannen (1993: 519), power governs asymmetrical relationships where one party is subordinate to the other, and it is solidarity which governs symmetrical relationships characterized by social equality and various kinds of demographic commonality. One way to define power is to say that it is the capacity to produce intended and unforeseen effects on others (Kramarae et.al. 1984). This ability is inherent in the institutionalized out-mode (e.g. "I see that it's time for bed, young man.") and it is what the superior who gives the first preclosing signal is able to do, particularly when this person is the OCP.

James and Drakich (1993) situate power in social structure and social context. They use Status Characteristics Theory (SCT) to account for the fact that the amount of talk produced by males as opposed to females is greater in formal situations, but is more often equal or even smaller non-task oriented interactions. The theory holds that conversational participants contribute in accordance with the expectations placed upon them by the relevant social group as to how and how well they will perform in a given type of situation.

Any socially valued, meaningful characteristic (e.g. age, gender, occupation, expertise, or wealth) can confer status or

beliefs concerning someone's ability to perform an interactional task. The important point here is that high-status individuals are expected to perform better and are given more opportunities to speak or perform. After reviewing fifty-six studies of gender differences in amount of talk, James and Drakich concluded that, while, males do not carry sex-related status characteristics in every speech situation, they are likely be awarded higher status in formal situations which take place in order to accomplish specific instrumental goals.

For Foucault (1984 in Kramarae et. al.), among others, power is internal to all relationships, but is not "held" by interlocutors. Rather, it comes from both above and below and shifts back and forth in the course of an interaction. The use of power is not necessarily oppressive, but can be positive and implicit in the constitution of discourse. With regard to conversations, the skillful use of power may allow the interaction to proceed to the next or last phase smoothly violating neither participants' 'face' needs nor their inner timetables.

Ethnicity

The next area of research belongs to what Leech (1983) has called sociopragmatics which focuses on how pragmatic principles operate across different cultures, language communities and social situations. Ethnicity, as noted, has been a difficult concept to define. It has, at various times, been used to denote such variables as ancestry, region, religion, class, race, language or dialect. Giles and Coupland (1991) offer a "social psychological and interpretivist" definition (p. 106):

We take an ethnic unit to be: those individuals who say they belong to ethnic group A rather than ethnic group B, are willing to be treated as A rather than B, allow their behavior to be interpreted and judged as A's and not B's, and have shared systems of symbols and meanings, as well as rules and norms for conduct, normatively associated with community A.

Language and ethnicity, while not interchangeable in meaning, have long been recognized to be very closely intertwined. Giles and Coupland (p. 96) cite the following four reasons that language is a salient factor in ethnic relations: "language is often a critical attribute in group membership, an important cue for ethnic categorization, an emotional dimension of identity, and a means of facilitating

in-group cohesion."

Opening and closing signals are one of eight "system constraints" on human communication which Goffman (1976) claims to be universal (The others are backchannel signals, turnover signals, acoustically adequate and interpretable messages, bracket signals, nonparticipant constraints, preempt signals and Grice's maxims.).

For every system constraint, Goffman proposes a number of ritual or social constraints which ensure predictable, appropriate social interaction. It is the type and importance of the ritual constraints which differ from culture (and subculture) to culture. But every culture has some rituals for ratifying participants, opening a state of talk, allowing accredited participants to withdraw, and terminating the state of talk. And, while there is a wide variation of greeting and parting behavior, most societies around the world use a small set of basic materials for the purpose (Firth 1972).

Such rituals, though, may be abbreviated, downgraded or absent, as in the case of a telephone conversation in which one party hangs up on the other before the latter can contribute to the closing. Every community has rules for interpreting such instances of rule-breaking (Coulthard 1977). In many non-western societies, the single most important duty of a child is to show respect to his/her elders (Goody 1972). Mair (1934 in Firth 1972) reports that the Ganda of Africa rarely strike their children, but may do so for failing to

produce the correct greeting and farewell gestures.

Keenan (1976) studied Grice's conversational maxims as they applied to Malagasy language and ways of speaking. She focused on one particular maxim, 'Be informative', the maxim of quantity which enjoins participants to be as informative as required by the exchange at hand. Keenan's subjects regularly violated this maxim by providing little or no information, even though they in fact possessed the information requested.

In seeking cultural explanations for this apparent lack of cooperation, Keenan found that, in Malagasy villages, new information is rare and highly prized, and therefore closely guarded. Secondly, individuals do not want to be held accountable for the consequences of disclosing information, nor do they want to commit themselves to future events or actions.

Thus, members of this speech community do not generally expect villagers to meet each other's informational needs. How much news is supplied depends on three features of the speech situation: (1) the significance of the information asked for (insignificant items are more freely shared), (2) the interpersonal relationship obtaining between the interlocutors (informational needs are more likely to be met by close kinsmen or neighbors), and (3) the gender of the speaker (women make more informative contributions than men).

In a study of Kiswahili (a language spoken in Zanzibar) openings and closings, Omar (1993) found that the structural

model of conversation closings proposed by Schegloff and Sacks (1973) could only partially be applied to Kiswahili closings. Some of the features noted in English CCs such as the continuation and appreciation features as well as particles the equivalent of 'okay' are also found in Kiswahili CCs, often as adjacency pairs. However, in Kiswahili, these features do not have to occur in a strict order as they do in English. In fact, the same feature can be used to pre-close as well as close a conversation. In addition, in Kiswahili, these features can signal the beginning of a conversation as well as the termination of a conversation (pp. 25-26.)

Matsumoto (1988) maintains that, while the notion of 'face' is probably universal, the constituents of face vary with respect to culture. For the Japanese, acting 'properly' according to one's position or rank with regard to others in the group is a prime motivator of politeness strategies. Nwoye (1992) points out that Brown and Levinson's (1987) concept of negative face would seem very foreign to the Igbo of Nigeria. Very few acts are regarded as impositions in a culture where hospitality and cooperation are stressed. In both the Japanese and the Igbo societies, maintaining 'public face' and not bringing shame to the group take precedence over an individual's own volitions.

The Latin Americans

Dealy (1992), in his book about the spirit and ethos of the Latin Americans, notes that, compared to other cultures, Hispanics place high value of giving and receiving positive face. From a Latin perspective, "nature has ... endowed mankind with a longing for affirmation" (p. 67). Latin Americans are in constant need of praise for their public 'performances'.

According to the author, social ascendancy is based not so much on material advancement as it is on the quality and number of a persons acquaintances. Therefore, neighborhood gathering places such as bars, cafes and corner grocery stores serve an important function in the forming and maintaining one's network of social connections (Hall 1993). These personal connections, in turn, must be continually cultivated and recompensed. Life thus becomes a "cult of friendship" (Dealy, p.73) whereby success is directly correlated with social competency and clout.

In their article, "Intercultural Communication: A Guide to Men of Action," Hall et. al. (1966: 571) caution North Americans that the Latin Americans are not inclined to separate business from non-business dealings. The Latino "runs it all together and wants to make something of a social event out of what you, in your culture, regard as strictly

business." Thus, it would be a mistake for North American businesspeople to place too little importance on small talk and facework in an effort to adhere to a strict time schedule.

This emphasis on social ascendancy might be expected to encourage a conversational style characterized by careful adherence to the norms of social etiquette and "proper speech", oratorical grandeur, and verbal postures designed to enhance the image of both speaker and hearer. For Latin Americans, time equals friendship (Dealy p. 108; see Appendix 9). Therefore, to precipitously depart a conversational activity would signal first, that the person leaving worked for a living and dared not keep the employer waiting, and second, that he/ she lacked esteem for the present company.

The Chinese

Chinese interlocutors have long been reported to be concerned with adhering to norms of propriety and consideration for others (Goffman 1967). For instance, Westerners have noted that a Chinese rarely issues a frank 'no'; when an offer or request is made, a refusal must be softened considerably (Holcombe 1895 in Goffman 1967). Holcombe (pp. 274-275) describes the Chinese as "matchlessly fertile in the invention and development of excuses." Can we then expect that the Chinese subjects will engage in elaborate

rituals when they want to withdraw from conversations?

Gu (1990) notes that, like the Japanese, the Chinese culture has norms which require individuals to use spoken language in ways that are appropriate to their social status. The Chinese word for this notion is zhènmíng. Lǐmào is the closest equivalent to the English 'politeness and embodies the notions of self-denigration, respect for others, kindness and refinement (propriety).

Two cardinal principles for polite behavior (Gu *ibid.*) may account for the brevity of the Chinese closings in my pilot studies---sincerity and balance. Therefore, if a Chinese has a genuine reason for leaving a conversation, he/she sees no need for any other forms of redress other than stating the reason. And, if he/she were to offer the addressee expressions of positive politeness, it could be interpreted as asking for such expressions in return. Thus, in Gu's view, Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness model would need considerable modification to accommodate Chinese conversational data.

In addition to 'zhènmíng' and 'lǐmào,' a third concept which may influence the length and degree of Chinese closings is that of pào or human emotional debt (Chang and Holt 1994). This folk concept, which has roots in the Confusian, Buddhist and Taoist philosophies, can mean 'return,' 'respond,' or 'revenge' (*ibid.* pp. 356-357), depending on the ideogram used.

It has been suggested earlier that reciprocity and

reenvoicing are basic characteristics of openings and closings of verbal interactions of most cultures. Yang (1957) notes that while reciprocity is required in practically every society, "in China, the principle is marked by its long history, the high degree of consciousness of its existence, and its wide application and tremendous influence in social institutions" (p. 291). Pao, as a goal an interpersonal exchange, obliges the participants to return in full any emotional debt incurred. If whatever has been given is not returned, there is a serious threat to the balance of the relationship. This constant give-and-take in Chinese relationships is not without difficulties. Whereas financial or material debt is easy to calculate and, therefore, to repay, human emotions and intangible accounts are difficult to measure. Thus, uncertainty regarding an emotional debt can create tension and distance in a relationship.

Chang and Holt (1994) report that among family members and close friends, "sincere, unhesitating help is the norm." There is no consideration of an emotional debt to be repaid. One informant reported that among family members, the equivalents of 'please,' 'thank-you' and 'excuse me' are never used (Li 1995). It is only with out-group people or those with whom one has a more formal relationship such as employer-employee or teacher-student that emotional debts must be returned.

In closing a conversation, we would expect that if

information or help has been provided, there will be expressions of appreciation provided by the recipient, especially when the giver is an unfamiliar other. It is noteworthy that, in Chinese, when one says the equivalent of 'thank you' or 'excuse me', the unmarked response is 'bu keqi' which in English translates 'Don't be polite.' However, it is also likely that unwarranted expressions of positive face will be avoided, creating no obligation to reciprocate, thereby lessening the distance between the interactants.

Social Proximity

As in Keenan's study, social proximity was shown to be a factor in the compliment-giving patterns in a middle class American speech community. Wolfson (1988) found that the speech behavior of intimates and strangers contrasted qualitatively with that of status-equal friends, acquaintances and coworkers. While compliments are exchanged between intimates and total strangers, the vast majority occur in interactions between persons who are neither.

To account for this phenomenon, Wolfson proposes The Bulge Theory of Social Action which holds that strangers can be brief and intimates need not stand on ceremony; it is friends and other acquaintances who tend to get involved in longer, more elaborate negotiation, for, in this situation, there exists the potential for lessening social distance. However, if the power relationship is asymmetrical, it is expected that, in the closing, social distance will be maintained by not deviating very much from the code (Goffman 1967).

Indeed, it is a sign of intimacy to abbreviate or omit the obligatory politeness routines in both greetings and farewells. Mey (1993) notes that, paradoxically, one of the functions of politeness is to create a distance between conversational partners or to manifest an already existing

distance. Laver (1981, p 300) observes that in Britain, to move from 'Good-day' to 'Bye' represents a large social step, and conversely, to move from 'Bye' to 'Good-day' is "an almost irrevocable act of social distancing."

Maintenance of the addressee's face is clearly not a concern in the following telephone conversation reported by Hopper (1992, p. 210):

(28)

A: Hello?

C: Hello Mister Allen?

(0.6)

A: What can I do for you?

C Okay, this is Tracy from
Carpet Colors.

((A hangs up.))

In China, salespeople are notoriously curt. In fact, in the spirit of capitalism, the Chinese government has mounted a campaign aimed at improving service encounters nationwide. A list of fifty impolite, commonly used expressions was published. Store managers have been told to ban these phrases in all future transactions (Faison 1995). Some of the prevalent preclosings that were listed include:

(28) Are you finished talking yet?

(29) Hurry up and pay.

(30) Time is up. Be quick.

(31) Don't talk so much. Say it quickly.

Western visitors have used adjectives such as "atrocious" and "hostile" to describe sales transactions in China (Faison 1995). Now that a more competitive business climate has come into being, the Chinese government sees economic benefits in promoting politeness in stores. The longstanding tradition of abruptness has been attributed to decades of Communist rule under which workers could not be fired. Nor have Chinese salesclerks received commissions or bonuses for performing well. For them, their own negative face has taken precedence in their dealings with customers whom they regard as true strangers.

In the United States, similar behavior is found at the other (intimate) end of the social distance continuum. An English-speaking colleague of mine reported that she told her "best friend", who was an out-of-state house guest at the time, " I can't talk to you anymore. I have to go to my room now and close the door" (Ellis 1993). Another friend mentioned that her best friend is the only person she can tell to "shut up." A humorous example of 'bald on record' (being unexpectedly direct) comes from a TV sitcom (1995). A

mother and her adult daughter, who are in business together, are working in the latter's kitchen on an important project. The mother begins to gather her things together.

(33)

Mother: Well, that's all I can do.

I have to go honor my obligation to the single retirees of Reyes County.

Daughter: You can't leave NOW.

Mother: Eat my dust.

A close couple, Sue and Doug, who have been married for thirty years report that Doug often exits a conversation with his wife with no preclosing signal whatsoever: "I walk off and she's still talking." While, on the surface, Doug's behavior should elicit a negative reaction from Sue, she seems comfortable with it and claims that she doesn't feel "insulted at all" (Montgomery, field notes, 1994).

The absence of a strong reaction may be attributed to the pressure Sue is under to hide any feelings of rejection which Doug's closing style elicits (Goffman 1967). But the closeness of the relationship also permits Sue to be direct in the instances where it is important for her to finish an utterance. This couple has developed their own intimate, if complementary, style of communicating. To the extent that this kind of closing is typical, it reveals something about

the ideologies of gender which surround their interactions.

The Bulge Theory would account for this sort of directness in both cases by citing the close relationships and the store of shared knowledge which mitigate the need for lengthy considerations of face. In fact, being able to use especially direct expressions that would be considered rude with mere acquaintances seems to be a sign of true intimacy.

Boxer (1993) tested the Bulge Theory with indirect complaints, that is, the expression of dissatisfaction with something or someone not present (i.e. the weather or the long line at the cash register) to an interlocutor. She found that this type of speech act did not follow Wolfson's theory with some types occurring more frequently with strangers and others occurring more often among intimates. Boxer's subjects were all native speakers of American English. Indirect Complaint (IC) moves were classified into three types according to orientation: (1) self; (2) other; and (3) situation. Her analysis of the IC theme distributions for social distance indicated that "intimates always exhibit very disparate behavior, with friends and acquaintances always showing similar behavior to either of these groups, depending on the theme" (p. 114).

It may be that the preclosings data will follow this hypothesis and exhibit a bulge in the middle section of the social distance scale. It may also be the case that the conversation closings of strangers and intimates may be

similarly brief, but may differ in other ways such as content and intonation.

An important hypothesis relevant to the above variables is that 'audience design' informs all levels of a speaker's linguistic choices (Bell 1981:167). The audience roles in Bell's model include speaker, addressee, auditor (a ratified interlocutor in a group), overhearer (not a ratified interlocutor, but his/her presence is known), and eavesdropper (presence unknown). Bell sees a strong co-occurrent interspeaker and intraspeaker variation pattern which predicts that "a sociolinguistic variable which is differentiated by certain speaker characteristics (e.g., by class or gender or age) tends to be differentiated in speech to addressees with those same characteristics." In other words, if an older person uses a given form such as 'good day' more than a young person, the individual will use that form more often when speaking to a contemporary than when speaking to a younger person.

Lakoff's (1972 in Green 1989) three rules for conversational politeness take social proximity into account. Rule 1: Don't Impose, is the most formal and is observed in situations in which there is an acknowledged difference in power and status between participants, particularly when they are communicating in institutionalized such as teacher-student or superior-subordinate. A student conversing with an instructor may make the first pre-closing move by saying

something like, "I don't want to take any more of your time."

Positive politeness is reciprocal only between status equals; it is nonreciprocal between subordinates (Laver 1981). In the closing of a news interview (1994), the female news reporter produced more polite expressions and used a more formal form of address than did the male presidential candidate she interviewed:

(34)

A: Well, Senator, thanks.
 Thanks for being with us.

B: Margaret/

And Margaret's utterance contains far more words and information phrases than her partner's. The senator was male, held institutional power, and had provided time and information to the interviewer.

A more informal level of politeness is represented by Lakoff's Rule 2: Offer Options. This rule is relevant in situations in which the participants have nearly equal status and power, but are not socially close., for example, the relationship between two classmates or two coworkers who do not see each other outside the school or office setting. Here one party may give a signal phrased in a pragmatically ambiguous way such as "I'm glad I ran into you."

Lakoff's Rule 3: Encourage Feelings of Comraderie, is for friendly or intimate politeness. While the Bulge Theory

(Wolfson 1988) holds that for intimates or lovers, there is little need stand on ceremony. Green (1989) maintains that these relationships are indeed governed by polite norms. Once, while vacationing alone, a lover telephoned me a few hours after a prior long distance call. The reason: "I called only because I was so abrupt in ending our conversation." In close relationships initiators of closings address their partners by nicknames or forms of endearment and, in some cases (e.g. siblings) abusive epithets. I overheard a brother, speaking by telephone to his sister, produce the preclosing, "Okay, loser, this call is costing me money."

As already noted, greetings and partings are made up almost entirely of routines and rituals. This kind of behavior is of great interest to ethnographers because it reflects the values and norms of a given speech community. But emphasizing the ceremonial use of language over other functions may make groups of speakers seem more different than they really are. Bloch (1976 in Saville-Troike 1982) suggests that non-ritual communication is much more similar across cultures than is ritual communication which reflects "strange other ways of thinking." Greetings and partings may differ among cultures more than the material that is found in the 'body' of the conversation.

Language learners are said to have a "discourse accent" in that they initially transfer pragmatic rules from their native language to the second language or over-apply the new

politeness rules they have acquired (Scarcella 1983, House and Kasper 1981, Wierzbicka 1991). Conversely, when these same learners return to their native countries and begin to speak their native tongues, their friends and relatives often detect the influence of the second language and culture---a reverse pragmatic transfer (Arias 1993).

It may be, though, that the above are only "superficial diversities" which emerge from underlying universal principles (Brown and Levinson 1987, Pinker 1994). We know that many people can and do function successfully in two or more cultures, implying a common linguistic core inherent in all languages and cultures. Researchers may assume maximal universality, thereby taking their own experience of verbal interaction as maximally relevant to universal behavior. Or, at the other extreme, they may assume minimal universality, focusing their attention on the differences in conceptual and linguistic behavior which result in miscommunication (Verschueren 1987). The universality of discourse phenomena is still being hotly debated.

Cross-Cultural Conversations

When interlocutors do not share the same language and/or the same sociocultural rules of discourse, the possibility for miscommunication is profound (Varonis and Gass 1991).

Following Milroy (1984), Gass and Varonis distinguish between two kinds of potential miscommunication. Misunderstanding occurs when the addressee does not know that the interpretation he/she forms of a message is not the one intended by the speaker. Incomplete understanding refers to the interlocutors' sense that there is a problem and it is this awareness that causes both parties to seek to negotiate meaning before returning to the topic at hand. Thus, sojourners soon realize that it is not enough to learn the grammar and lexis of the language of the host country; they will need to learn how to perform and follow the speech acts which make up common speech events in the target culture as well (Wolfson 1983, Tannen 1978).

Ying and Brown (1983) caution Americans planning a stay in China that whereas:

the American will bring the phone call to an end gradually, with sentences like 'I've got to go now', or 'It's been nice talking to you', or 'Goodbye', 'Thanks', or 'O.K.' depending on the circumstances. The Chinese may finish with zaijian, but very often the signal is nothing more than something like en en or hao hao hao, and the American might think he was cut off.

Appropriate language behavior relies on correct interpretation. Labov and Fanshel (1977) note that the second language learner must be able to understand the propositional content of the utterances and to categorize this content into

"social facts." Recognizing the social acts that are being performed, in turn, involves knowing the specific linguistic devices for indicating the understanding of these facts.

When native speakers converse with non-native speakers, they may, under certain conditions, shift their conversational style in the direction of their partner's (Ferguson 1975). White (1989), for instance, found that when Americans interacted with native speakers of Japanese, they displayed significantly more backchannels than they did in conversations with other Americans. Since the Japanese use backchannels more frequently than Americans to create harmony and mutual understanding, the Americans were accommodating their interlocutors, following Giles' (1980) Accommodation Hypothesis.

Indirect speech acts and idioms will undoubtedly be problems for non-native speakers and new arrivals will have to weigh carefully their first interpretations of utterances in the target language. It is also true that the United States is made up of a wide variety of regional, ethnic and social groups who have their own ways of using the English language. Gumperz (1982, p. 145) points out that it may be "even more of a danger, however, between people who ostensibly speak the same language ... since they assume that they understand each other, they are less likely to question interpretation."

Speech Accommodation Theory

Speech Accommodation Theory (SAT) was first described by Giles (1973) and has been an influential paradigm for much subsequent linguistic research (e.g. Labov 1966, Bell 1984). In this model of communication, the message, in the specific concrete form it is produced, is attributed to the speaker's feelings about the addressee and the group which the latter represents. To simplify the model considerably, if these feelings are favorable, the speaker will adapt his/her style to the other's in terms of a wide range of linguistic range of linguistic/prosodic/non-vocal features including speech rate, pausal phenomena, utterance length phonological variants and so on . This is convergence. Convergence can be either upward or downward.

Conversely, if speakers wish to emphasize ingroup-outgroup distinctions, there will be divergence, whereby they accentuate differences in speech styles (Giles and Coupland 1991). There are many reasons interlocutors use divergent speech styles, including the desire to maintain asymmetrical power relations.

It may also happen what one or both parties may change styles to such a degree that he/she 'overshoots' full convergence and hyperconverges (Giles and Coupland 1991:68). This kind of over-accommodation, if done by the higher-status

party, may be perceived as demeaning or patronizing talk by the lower-status interlocutor.

A complementarity of styles results when participants are "mutually acknowledged to hold subordinate and superordinate positions" (Watzlowick et al. 1967 In Giles et.al. 1991). In complementary relationships there is a consensus that one party occupies a one-down position, ensuring mutual predictability. One-down behavior is characterized by expressions of politeness and deference (Zajdman 1995). Excessive politeness then elicits one-up behavior from the other party which may be characterized by less variable pitch and more directness. In that the speaker's performance is centered on the stereotypical or real features of the addressee's speech, convergence, divergence and complementarity may be called approximation strategies.

Coupland, Coupland, Giles and Henwood (1988) have expanded the range of addressee foci, labelled attuning strategies, to include not only approximation strategies, but interpretability strategies, together with discourse management and control strategies. The first includes a variety of means of modifying complex speech. The second of these is made up of "a diverse set of options whereby a speaker may facilitate a partner's own contribution to ongoing talk -- for example, in offering turns, ... repairing problematical sequences and generally working to redress positive or negative face-threats to a recipient" (Penman

1991). 'Attuned' discourse management will involve supportive reciprocity strategies which may or may not include behavior matching (Giles et. al. 1991). This writer would include expressions of solidarity in this category of discourse management.

Bortfeld and Brennan (1994) found that native speakers of English more often adopted the lexical choices of their non-native speaking partners than vice versa when working together on tasks which required them to exchange information. This asymmetrical convergence is predictable since the native English speakers wanted to be understood and had more flexibility and larger repertoires at their command. Although convergence is most common, studies show that in some cases a speaker will maintain her own style or even shift her style away from the addressee's (divergence) in order to preserve integrity, identity and social distance (Giles and Coupland 1991).

Proficiency in a Second Language

Gumperz (1982) reports on studies of conversations between interlocutors whose control of mainstream American styles and strategies of conversation management is likely to be asymmetrical. He observes that the person who lacks familiarity with the dominant discourse features cannot participate in the negotiation of interpretation and has

little control over the direction a conversation takes. It is sometimes difficult to know whether a speaker's pragmatic errors are due to lack of contact with speakers of the target language/culture or to pragmatic interference from the native language.

House and Kasper (1981) have found that, in an academic setting, native speakers of English often regard the verbal behavior of German learners of English as impolite. They undertook an investigation of politeness markers used for requests and complaints in English and German. The German speakers selected significantly higher levels of directness in making both requests and complaints. They noted further that the German speakers used fewer downgraders ('Would you mind if ...?') and showed the tendency to intensify ('Something is terribly wrong...') the force of their speech acts in actual or potential conflict situations.

Wolfson (1990) observes that native speakers, when interacting with foreigners, are much less tolerant of a speaker who violates pragmatic rules than they are of one who makes errors in pronunciation or syntax. Therefore, understanding and bridging these differences can have important consequences for speakers from diverse linguistic-cultural backgrounds in terms of social and professional mobility.

While culture determines in what domains and to what extent conversational and politeness maxims apply (House and

Kasper 1981, R. Chen 1993), the converse is also true. That is, gender, ethnicity and social relationships are constructed through talk. In his book on manhood ideologies, Gilmore (1990:227) writes, "as an organization of values that supports society, culture is nothing more than work, physical and mental: human effort, constantly reproducing the conditions that give it birth."

IV. RESEARCH DESIGN

Purpose

As stated in Chapter I, the aim of this study is to explore the model of conversation closings formulated by Sacks and Schegloff (1973, 1984) in light of Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness theory (see also Sacks, Schegloff, and Jefferson 1978). On the one hand, Sacks and Schegloff stress the orderliness and structure of naturally occurring conversations. They describe the orientation of conversationalists toward a transition relevance point at which it is possible to consider an utterance complete. The transition point comes at the end of a phraselike unit variously called a breath group, an intonation unit (Chafe 1993), or an information unit (Gumperz and Berenz 1993). This boundary is the place where one party may "legally" issue a preclosing signal.

Such signals may be direct, but they are more often indirect. I will test some of factors which influence the type and number of expressions of solidarity and/or mitigation participants use on a given occasion to construct the closing. In which situations is closing a conversation a greater risk to the addressee's face?

Additionally, I interrelate the gender-differentiated

conversational models to those based on power, ethnicity and social distance. McConnell-Ginet's (1988) critique of many studies of pragmatics was that they oversimplify the role identities that shape individuals' speech behavior. The present study examines a corpus of 142 audio-recorded conversations in order to answer the following research questions:

1. Who initiates the conversation closing?

The party who gives the first signal of the types outlined in the discussion of closings and preclosings is considered the initiator of the closing, the ICC. Possible signals include:

A pause followed by a particle such as 'well', 'okay' or 'so'

- (1) Okay, Pedro, thank you for ...
- (2) So anyway, ...
- (3) Well anyway, ...

An aphorism or summary

- (4) So there you have it.
- (5) So ... that's the way it is.
- (6) Don't forget, Mothers' Day is ^every day,
not just ...

Giving a reason for being unable to continue conversing

- (7) I have to go to work now.
- (8) Okay. I have to break my station now.
- (9) I have a class to go to.

Invoking the other party's interests

- (10) I don't want to take up your time,
- (11) I'll let you go now.
- (12) I don't want to keep you.

Expressions of pleasure in interacting with the other

- (13) So Ana ... nice to see you.
- (14) Ruth, I enjoy our time together.
- (15) It's been nice chatting with you.

Apologies for leaving or expressions of regret in terminating

- (16) Do we <F have F> to go now?
- (17) It's too bad we didn't have enough time.
- (18) Sorry, I have to go now.

Expressions of appreciation

- (19) You really help me in this project.
- (20) Thank-you for taking time out to...
- (21) Gracious por la informacion. (Sp)

Reviewing of continuation or reviewing previously made arrangements

- (22) I'll see you later.
- (23) Later, man.
- (24) Bueno. Nos vemos. 'Okay. We'll see each other.' (Sp)

Expressions relating to health, safety or well-being

- (25) Take care.
- (26) Take it easy.
- (27) Get home safe.

Expressions of solidarity or affection

- (28) I'm happy that ^you're happy.
- (29) So we best friends anyway.
- (30) Querida, hasta luego. 'Honey, until later' (Sp)
- (31) Okay, peace, man.

Expressions relating to God, peace or good fortune

- (32) (above)
- (33) Have a nice weekend.
- (34) Que vayas bien. ' I hope that things go
well for you.' (Sp)
- (35) I wish you lucky at LaGuardia.

Regards to a third party

- (36) And you say hello to Carol
- (37) Love to Alec.
- (38) Le saludes a tu mama. 'Greet your mother'
(Sp)

Mention of future help or favors

- (39) Whenever you need my help,
- (40) Well if you have any ^more questions,
- (41) We'll all do all we can to make you the
^best conversationalist,

Conventional farewells and good-byes

- (42) Bye bye.
- (43) So long.
- (44) Ciao.

I should note here that it is not always clear, even when one participant gives a preclosing signal, that the person doing so is actually initiating the closing. In some cases, a person will 'pass' by not taking his/her conversational turn, producing instead, a pause or verbal filler such as 'hmm.' In this case, the other party provides the signal to avoid a potentially awkward period of silence. In other instances, one party will give a non-verbal signal, and the other will supply the verbal one as in (45):

(45)

J: ((GLANCES AT HER WATCH))

R: Janice, I think that you are watching
your -- your watch. @@ Is it time to
leave?

This example shows that the preclosing should be considered a collaborative act. Since I do not have access to the non-verbal signals, for the present study, I identify the initiator of the closing (the ICC) as the person who used an expression of the type listed above.

If a conversation has two closings, and if both preclosing signals are produced by the same interlocutor, the conversation will be considered to have been closed by either the ICP or the OCP. In cases in which one gives the first signal and the other gives the second, the closing will be designated as "split."

2. In which conversations are the longest closings found?

It has been noted that conversations may be extended if one party brings up a topic which heretofore would not have been relevant. After such an extension, another preclosing signal is issued. The conversation may be extended yet again or there may be additional acknowledgements followed by a terminal exchange. Of course, if elaborate facework is

required, that too will prolong the closing section.

Here, I simply identified the first preclosing signal and count the number of utterances beginning with it and continuing to the end of the conversation. Intonation units, both substantive and regulatory, as defined by Chafe (1993) will count as information phrases. Items like "yeah" and "uh huh" are counted even though they do not count, for the purposes of conversation, as filling a turn and thus precipitate the closing (Zimmerman and West 1975).

Intonation units are rhythmically bounded stretches of speech occurring under a single unified intonation contour (DuBois et. al. 1992, Gumperz and Berenz 1993). Some conversations have more than one preclosing. I will have considered these conversations separately and have timed the conversational material occurring after the first preclosing has been given.

In considering the length of closing sections, I also counted speaker turns. A turn is determined by change of speakers. A one-word utterance is considered a turn if it is produced after rather than during an information phrase.

3. Which participants use the most polite expressions?

Expressions oriented to either the positive or the negative face of the hearer were counted. Expressions oriented to the positive face of the addressee include the

following:

Acknowledgements and expressions of pleasure

- (46) It was interesting talking to -- with you.
- (47) This was absolutely gra::nd.
- (48) Es muy agradable hablar con usted. 'It is very pleasant talking with you.'

Expressions of gratitude

- (49) So thank you for your help.
- (50) Well thank you very much.
- (51) I really appreciate.

Expressions of continuation

- (52) Give me a little call.
- (53) Zai wei. 'We'll meet again,' (Ch, Shanghai dialect)

Expressions of solidarity and affection

- (54) We better be gettin' out of here.
- (55) Lover bo::y, ...
- (56) Yo! Man!

Apologies or expressions of regret in terminating

- (57) Time has just eluded us.
- (58) ((TO THIRD PARTY)) You're always interrupting us.
- (59) It's not like I ^want to go.

Compliments

- (60) Being that you're such a great person,
- (61) And I think you're doing great, Rosie.
- (62) Dinner was delicious.

Expressions of good luck in future endeavors

- (63) I hope that you ... do well in life,
- (64) I hope you get what you want.
- (65) I hope you get a good grade.

Expressions oriented to the negative face of the addressee include the following:

Reference to the addressee's previously stated plans or constraints

- (66) So we won't keep you.
- (67) O::kay, You have to go to your uh restaurant?

Reference to the inferred needs (particularly with respect to time) or future activities of the addressee

- (68) I know you're a very busy person.
- (69) So I'll let you go now.
- (70) I know you're a very hard worker.

Reference to the common needs or future activities of speaker and addressee

- (71) I think we should go in.
- (72) Let's go turn on the T.V.
- (73) Nosotros tenemos que ir a la reunion del departamento. '
We have to go to the department meeting.'
(Sp)

Expressions oriented to the negative face of the speaker

- (74) Okay, I have to lock this up.
- (75) Well, I have to get back to my desk.
- (76) So... think I have to go to the library.

Reference to a future activity of the speaker but which is of benefit to both speaker and addressee

- (77) So...I'm going to put in the laundry, okay?
- (78) So... I guess I better go empty the dishwasher, okay?

I have included (54-56) as polite expressions because they indicate a sense of mutuality and equality. Goffman (1967) points out that in many societies, status equals employ a great many forms of symmetrical deference which typically include expressions of belongingness and affection. The interlocutors are paying deference in this way to the recipient's status as "someone whom others can hold dearly (p. 59)." These we would expect to find in leave-taking talk because this is where participants generally acknowledge the particular qualities of the relationship. And it is here where the subject becomes more conscious of the way in which an audience, real or imagined, might perceive the performance (Bell 1981).

I have formulated the above questions with the hope that the answers would provide data which would illustrate the various ways that social contexts and role relationships influence the strategies utilized by interlocutors to end conversations. Additionally, I wanted to collect data that could be used for further research on other, broader questions related to conversation management.

Method

The Subjects

The subjects for this study were drawn from two groups; the first and largest is made up of students and colleagues at La Guardia Community College, CUNY, in New York City; the second, smaller group consists of residents of my neighborhood, Park Slope, Brooklyn. A positive feature of the present study is that both groups are diverse in terms of age, race, ethnic background and sexual orientation.

The corpus consists of 142 recorded conversations with analyzable beginnings and endings. These have been classified according to the following variables:

Table 4.1: The Variables

ETHNICITY	N
Span/Span	29
Eng/Eng	37
Ch/Ch	15
Span/Eng	36
Ch/Eng	25
GENDER	
F/F	48
M/M	26
M/F	68
SOCIAL PROXIMITY	
Intimates	29
Acquaintances	89
Strangers	24
POWER	
Symmetrical	112
Asymmetrical	31

Power is defined, for the purposes of this study, as having the ability to in some way influence, reward or punish the other participant, based on institutionally assigned roles, in a nonreciprocal manner.

Materials

I examined the closing sections of 142 audio-taped conversations between males, females, and males and females of similar and different ethnicities, with similar or different levels of power, and across varying degrees of social distance.

Most of the conversations recorded in English by students were conducted to fulfill a speech course assignment. The assignment required non-native speakers and record a conversation with a native speaker of English about the topic which they were going to address in their final speeches. Many of the students chose teachers or tutors as partners, and these interactions were generally conducted in faculty offices or language laboratories. This situation creates a complex and unstable relationship between the participants. American ESL teachers and tutors, especially of adults, tend to be democratic and try to create a relaxed, informal learning environment. Thus, the underlying power relationships are often obscured, or even temporarily reversed (Hodge and Kress 1993).

Other conversations have been recorded in response to a request by the researcher. To get a broad range of age, occupation, and education, I prevailed upon colleagues, friends, neighbors, local merchants and, in some cases,

strangers. I told the subjects that I was studying conversation, but did not tell them the feature of interest until they had finished recording. I compiled a list of general, open-ended questions (see Appendix 3) for those participants who wanted ideas for topics. Only a few pairs asked for the list. All were told that the conversation should be about ten to fifteen minutes long.

All of the subjects were aware that they were being recorded. Some made comments directly or indirectly addressed to me such as, "Mrs. Montgomery, I hope you enjoyed this conversation." It has been observed that the presence of an overhearer (the researcher) inevitably elicits a higher level of politeness between conversationalists (Bell 1981, Milroy 1987), and several of my informants commented that they thought this was true in these conversations. However, I noticed that, as the conversations got underway, the interlocutors seemed to relax and ultimately employ whatever strategies they had at their disposal for use in ordinary, spontaneous conversations.

The Variables

The categories, ethnicity, gender and social proximity, unfortunately are neither straightforward nor precise. And they are defined differently on the situation and the cultures and subcultures of the interlocutors.

The category ethnicity could have well been called 'First Language.' The non-native speakers as a group had been living in the New York from less than a year to seven years. But all live in areas where they have daily opportunities to communicate in their native languages.

The Spanish speakers come from Latin American, Central America, as well as the Dominican Republic and Puerto Rico. While there are, of course, many dialects of Spanish spoken in these countries, I am assuming overarching cultural commonalties based on shared social, religious (Catholic), political and linguistic traditions (Dealy 1992).

The Chinese speakers come from the Peoples Republic of China, Taiwan and Hong Kong. Most are native speakers of Mandarin Chinese, but two subject are native speakers of Cantonese. Here too, there exist many dialect differences, but I am again assuming many shared values, beliefs and traditions. As with the Spanish speakers, the Chinese subjects all speak English characterized by grammatical and

discourse features showing developmental errors or interference from their first languages.

Gender has been described as a highly socially-constructed category (Devor 1989; Todd and Fisher 1988). Yet it is perhaps one of the most universal means of creating social divisions (Gilmore 1990). It is of interest that the majority of students, when asked to audiotape an "ordinary" conversation, selected partners of the opposite sex. Obtaining sufficient male data was difficult, partly because I have fewer male students and partly because, as a female, I have a larger network of female acquaintances. It was easier to get female/female conversations since the student population of LaGuardia Community College is 75% female.

Social proximity is perhaps the least stable category of the three. The classifications 'strangers', 'acquaintances' and 'intimates' are not discrete categories but represent points along a social distance continuum. The connotations of these three terms, of course, vary across cultures and subcultures.

The intimate category includes husband/wife, other domestic partners, parent/ adult child, siblings and longtime close friends. There are cultural differences as to what it means to be a close or best friend. Parents may or may not have close relationships with their grown children. Friends who have known each other a short time may feel close to each other if they share cultural backgrounds, values, goals and so

on. My interviews with random subjects suggest that the conversation closings of intimates were more influenced by the presence of the tape recorder than were either friends or strangers.

'Friends' or acquaintances were those interlocutors who had had prior communication with their partners, but the contact was not long-term nor did it extend beyond the academic or professional setting. While in many cultures, there is a distinction between these two labels --- one assumes greater social distance between acquaintances than friends ---, in the present study, they are merged to conform to the Bulge Theory (Wolfson 1988).

The subjects who were identified as 'strangers' had never before had a conversation with one another. However, in the case of students, the persons they approached to help them in this assignment were generally people whom they felt were likely to be cooperative. They asked tutors in the college labs (e.g. speech, math or accounting) whose role it was to assist students. They also asked classmates whom, while there had been no previous contact, they judged to be accessible and with whom there was a potential for friendship to develop. And, in fact, their instincts proved largely correct; the target subjects were in most instances, friendly and helpful.

To supplement this corpus of data, I also collected a corpus of closing segments of naturally-occurring unrecorded

conversations overheard on the street and other public places. These I wrote down as quickly and accurately as I could. But, of course, in this kind of situation, I knew little or nothing about the interlocutors, and I was unable to do such things as measure pauses, note filled pauses or vocalizations, or listen to the closing again. For these reasons, I used these data as examples of phenomena discussed in the literature, but do not include them in my actual study. The conversations in my data include both conversations in which one or both participants had an instrumental or practical purpose and those in which the conversation was an end in itself. In the latter case, the closings were in contexts of action which did not serve a communicative plan, but made communion and harmony between individuals possible (Habermas 1981, p. 327).

Analysis

The initiator of a conversation closing, the ICC, is identified as such if he/she issues the first preclosing signal, regardless of whether the conversation is extended and a second signal is given. The closing section of a conversation includes all of the material beginning with the first preclosing signal and ending with the terminal exchange. The length of a closing section was measured both by counting the number of speaker turns (also referred to here as

utterances), and by counting the number of information phrases (intonation units as defined by Chafe (1993)). The closings sections were also measured in actual time.

I interviewed a representative sampling of my informants to ascertain their interpretations of the conversations. I also interviewed representative native speakers of Spanish and Chinese who did not contribute data in order to check interpretations of speaker utterances and to learn more about the discourse features of those languages.

In most cases, I transcribed the section of the conversation beginning with the initial preclosing signal and ending with the terminal exchange (See Appendices 4-20). In other instances, though, I transcribed randomly selected conversations in their entirety to see how whole conversations are constructed and how the endings fit together with the beginning and middle parts.

Aficionados of spoken discourse have formulated a variety of approaches to capturing and codifying actual conversations on paper. The method of transcription I have used here is based on the one outlined by DuBois, Schuetze-Coburn, Paulino, and Cumming (1992), a system which I find clear and suitable for the purpose and theoretical orientation of my study. These authors have extensive transcribing experience and have drawn on the work of many of the researchers who have influenced the present study, including Sacks, Schegloff, and Jefferson (1978). The reader will find a list of notation

conventions in Appendix 1.

In transcribing the data, I have been careful to note the placement and timing of pauses, because they are a salient feature of everyday spoken language (Ehlich 1993) and convey significant information about the speaker's orientation (or lack thereof) toward the ongoing conversation (Du Bois et. al. 1992). A rather long pause often precedes a verbal preclosing signal. I have also paid attention to backchannel responses and vocalizations such as laughter. The significance of the presence of laugh tokens is discussed in Chapter Nine.

For this study, I take frequent backchannels within intonation contours to indicate an attempt by the listener to encourage to the speaker to continue talking. However, when a particle, backchannel or vocative (e.g. 'man' or 'right') is produced at a transition relevance point by the addressee, and if it comprises a speaker turn in and of itself, it may signal that speaker's decreasing interest in continuing the current conversation.

In analyzing the data, I have looked for both pattern and variability. When features of content or form are shared by certain groups, is this consistent with of conversational norms described in the literature? When differences are found, what functions are they fulfilling? Should they be attributed to differences in culture, subculture, gender, power, context or individual style?

I have made an effort to document the process which

leads from the discursive data to the analytic claims I make.

A representative set of examples is included in the appendices so that the reader may independently assess my conclusions.

Hypotheses

Overall, I predicted that the initiating conversational participant (the ICP) rather than the other party (the OCP) would more often make the first preclosing move (Grosz and Sidner 1986). It is the ICP who has a particular purpose for initiating the interaction, so, intuitively, we would expect him/her to signal that the discourse purpose has been satisfied. This would be the case particularly in the task-oriented conversations of which there are many in the data. It would be of interest to see in which types of conversations it was not the ICP but the OCP who moved to terminate.

Gender

I expected that there would be an effect for gender, regardless of other differences based on ethnicity, social proximity, or power, and that, in the M/F conversations in all categories, more conversation closings would be initiated by males. The findings of my pilot studies, as well as the

naturalistic data I had collected, indicated that in conversation, it is generally the male who decides when to terminate. I did not consider the role of the ICP in either of my pilot studies.

I predicted that the closings of the female-female conversations would be longer and more polite, in part because I thought that the females would use more indirect (and therefore longer) closing signals, and partly because their closings would contain more mitigation owing to women's greater concern for protecting their partners' face.

The men's closings would be different. Since in most, if not all societies, they comprise the dominant category, their closings would reflect a modality of affinity and agreement (Hodge and Kress 1988). If the women's style is characterized by politeness and length, then the men's would be marked by lack of politeness and brevity in order to differentiate themselves from the women. Other male-identifier modal signs were likely to be directness, humor and insults.

However, I hypothesized that, in M/F conversations, males would use as many polite expressions as females, and in so doing, they would use more polite expressions when addressing females than they would with other males. As initiators of the closings, males would need expressions of mitigation. In using more polite expressions to end conversations with females than they would with each other, men would be accommodating to the phatic, affiliative style

associated with women's talk. Since the participants had themselves chosen their interlocutors, accommodation by both groups would undoubtedly occur.

Ethnicity

In moving to close the conversation, I predicted that the native speakers of English, Spanish and Chinese would exhibit both similar and divergent cultural patterns. A preliminary look at the data showed, for instance, that 'bueno' in Spanish and 'hao' in Chinese (both of which can be translated as 'good') seemed to serve the same function as 'okay' in English. These are the evincives described earlier which indicate that the speaker has been engaging in some private thought which has relevance to the present conversation, but which will not be articulated (Schourup 1983).

In my second pilot study, the closing sections of conversations in which one or more participant was Chinese, were significantly shorter than those in which at least one speaker was Hispanic. Thus, I predicted that the Chinese speakers would terminate their conversations with fewer polite expressions and fewer utterances overall than those speakers whose first language was Spanish or English. My earlier work had led me to conclude that, for the Chinese, closing a conversation does not involve the same risk to the

interlocutor's face as it does for English or Spanish speakers. The Chinese would be constrained by the principles of sincerity and balance (Gu 1990). Also, according to Chen (1993), Chinese second-language learners are not risk-takers and rarely say anything they are not sure is correct.

The more elaborate Spanish closings would reflect the previously-discussed Latin American ideal of oratorical nobility which contrasts with the North American Protestant virtue of word efficiency. The Latins' use of embellishment and "outwardly impeccable manners" would contrast with the Puritan-capitalist style marked by appearing factual, "down-to-earth" and sincere. (Dealy 1992). I predicted that, in conversations in which one or both interlocutors were native speakers of Spanish, the closing sections would be longer and would contain more expressions oriented to positive face. I expected that the Spanish-speaking subjects would use as many polite expressions as their female compatriots, since in Latin American society, it is the males whose roles require displays of verbal mastery in public settings (Dealy *ibid.*).

Social Proximity

Here, I predicted that findings for both length and politeness would conform to Wolfson's (1988) Bulge Theory. The most elaborate closings, with the most polite

expressions, would be found in conversations between interlocutors who were acquainted with each other, but not intimately. I expected that the length of the closings and the degree of politeness of conversations between strangers and intimates would be less, but that these pairs of interlocutors would exhibit some differences, however, as there are different constraints and expectations involved.

As noted, between intimates certain liberties may be taken, but they cannot interact in the style appropriate for strangers.

I thought that there would be some effect for ethnicity as well, with the Spanish-speaking strangers using more polite expressions than either of the other groups of strangers. I also predicted that the first-time encounters between females would produce more polite expressions in closings than those between male strangers for reasons having to do with both power and identity.

Following Wolfson (1988), I theorized that the most abbreviated closings would occur in conversations between relatives or close friends who interacted frequently. Married couples or sweethearts were expected to have the briefest closings. Due to physical closeness, contact could resume after a short interval. Moreover, the use of "taken-for-granted" and private codes convey (and reflect) a high degree of intimacy in relationships (Knapp 1983 in Giles and Coupland 1991).

Young male friends, I predicted, would use different, less conventional expressions than their female counterparts in their partings. Their closings would reflect both their maleness and their interpersonal involvement. For men, showing solidarity by using ellipsis and/or marginalized language appears to be a principal strategy for terminating conversations.

Power

Intuitively, we would expect the findings to show that the interlocutor who holds more power in the current communicative situation will more often give the first preclosing signal, regardless of gender, social proximity or language proficiency. In an institutional setting, the superiors' concerns are given priority. Their purposes in conversing with subordinates are likely to be transactional rather than interactional in nature, and they do not need to earn approval by being proper or polite.

I hypothesized, though, that there would be some effects for gender with fewer of the higher-status females giving preclosing signals than higher-status males. The women would, to some degree, disguise their superior status. On the other hand, in some cultures, the lower-status participant may be motivated to initiate a closing out of respect for the

superior's task-oriented goals.

With respect to politeness, I predicted that the partner of lower status would produce more polite expressions. Studies of role differentiation in groups have shown that those individuals of higher status are generally assigned to and carry out a specifically task-oriented role, while those of lower status are normally given a primarily socio-emotive role (which implies politeness) (James and Drakich 1993).

In light of the literature and my earlier studies, I thought that the initiator of the closing would use more polite expressions than the other party, because it is the former's obligation to protect the face of the party being left. Women in all social classes have been shown to use more prestige forms than men of the same social class (MaCaulay 1977; 1978 in Coates 1986).

Asymmetry of status creates contest, and the United States culture emphasizes competition and individualism. Women, however, are said to feel most comfortable with symmetry. (Tannen 1990). Some argue that this is so because it fosters community and mutual understanding. But I think it is also because historically, women have most often occupied the subordinate position in the hierarchy. In the conversation below, one female subject was careful to state for the benefit of the overhearer, that she regarded her interlocutor not only as her employer, but also as her friend and confident (See Appendix 4 for the full closing section):

+ M= Martine: F, 48, Eng., secretary to Karen
~*K=Karen: F, 34, Eng., attorney

(45)

M: As an aside, Karen is my uh therapist, my confident, my friend.
And uh I'm very lucky to have her as part of my life.

K: Oh::
I'm very lucky to have YOU.

M: Oh: thank you.

K: As part of MY life.

M: Well, thank you for doing this with me, Karen.

V. FINDINGS: WHO GIVES THE FIRST PRECLOSING SIGNAL?

At issue here is how often the person who began the conversation, typically with some sort of greeting, gave the first preclosing signal. The interlocutor who produces the first utterance in a conversation is referred to in the present study as the Initiating Conversational Partner (ICP), while the other party is identified as the Other Conversational Partner (OCP) (Grosz and Sidner 1986). The party who moves first to close the conversation is the Initiator of the Conversation Closing or the ICC (Dore 1995). If it is usually the ICP who gives the first signal, then this role is a feature of the basic sequential organization of conversation, and should be incorporated into the model proposed by Schegloff and Sacks (1984).

In the event that, after a preclosing signal is given, the conversation is extended, we are still primarily concerned with which party produced the first preclosing signal. There were nineteen conversations in which a preclosing signal was given, but a "further mentionable" (Schegloff and Sacks *ibid.*, p. 92) introduced. The new topic was addressed until a second preclosing signal was produced and termination ensued. If both preclosing signals are produced by the same party, that is, either the ICP or the OCP, then that person is designated as the initiator of the closing.

Of the total number of conversations, there were five

Of the total number of conversations, there were five that had "split" closings, that is, one party gave a preclosing signal, the conversation was extended, and then the other gave the second preclosing which led to the terminal exchange. In such cases, the person who gives the first preclosing signal is still considered to be the initiator of the closing or the ICC.

Table 5.1 : ICPs and OCPs as ICCs

ICC	N	%
All	142	100%
ICP	106	74.6%
OCP	36	25.4%
Significance: $p = <.0001$, highly significant		

The difference between the figures for the ICP and the OCP is highly significant, affirming that the important role of the ICP in closing conversations. Interestingly, in all of the split closings, it was the ICP who gave the initial preclosing signal, with the OCP giving the second. Therefore, of course, in these cases the ICP is designated as the ICC.

This finding confirms Schegloff and Sacks (1978, 1984) claim that once a preclosing signal is given, even if the

conversation is extended, the first signal stands and must be acknowledged by both parties. As was stated in Chapter II, further evidence for this constraint is that there are often negative social consequences for recipients who do not follow this principle.

Ethnicity

Table 5.2: ICP vs. OCP by Ethnicity

ETHNICITY	N	ICP	OCP	ICP%
Sp/Sp	29	23	4	79.3%
Eng/Eng	37	24	13	64.9%
Ch/Ch	15	10	5	66.7%
Span/Eng	35	26	10	72.2%
Ch/Eng	25	23	2	92.0%
Significance: $p = .104$, not statistically significant				

Although these differences are not statistically significant, we see that in every group, the ICPs were the ICCs at least 65% of the time. The OCPs most frequently gave the first preclosing signals in the conversations between English speakers or between English speakers and Spanish

speakers. The OCP was least likely to close in the conversations between English speakers and Chinese speakers.

Gender

Table 5.3: ICP vs. OCP by Gender

GENDER	N	ICP	OCP	ICP%
F/F	48	38	10	79.2%
M/M	26	25	1	96.1%
M/F	68	43	25	63.2%
Significance: $p = .003$, highly significant				

The findings for gender show a marked difference with respect to the ICP's propensity to give the first preclosing signal. They are consistent with the claim made by Brod (1987) that male/male communication is characterized by well-articulated rules and positional identities. Adhering to the ICP-closes-the-conversation principle so strictly minimizes the potential risk to the OCP's face. The low percentage of ICPs as ICCs for the male-female conversations has to do with the fact that there are more female ICPs than male. This means that there were many conversations in which the female initiated the conversation and the male moved to close it.

Ethnicity and Gender

Table 5.4: ICP vs. OCP by Gender and Ethnicity

ETHNICITY	GENDER MIX	N	ICP	OCP	ICP%
Sp/Sp	F/F	12	10	2	83.3%
Sp/Sp	M/M	8	7	1	87.5%
Sp/Sp	M/F	9	6	3	66.6%
Eng/Eng	F/F	10	7	3	70.0%
Eng/Eng	M/M	8	8	0	100%
Eng/Eng	M/F	19	9	10	47.3%
Ch/Ch	F/F	7	5	2	71.4%
Ch/Ch	M/M	1	1	0	100%
Ch/Ch	M/F	7	4	3	57.1%
Sp/Eng	F/F	10	9	1	90.0%
Sp/Eng	M/M	5	5	0	100%
Sp/Eng	M/F	21	12	9	57.1%
Ch/Eng	F/F	10	9	1	90.0%
Ch/Eng	M/M	2	2	0	100%
Ch/Eng	M/F	13	12	1	92.0%

T-tests were not done for these figures because of the small number of cases for the male/male conversations. The

trend, however, is for the male/male closings to pattern differently from the female/female closings. In all of the groups based on ethnicity, the ICPs in the male-male conversations were most likely to be the ICCs. Apparently, for males, the strong propensity for the ICP to give the first preclosing signal avoids uncertainty and reduces the vulnerability of the addressee. Following a rigid order of organization enables males to be decisive and in control, and this decisiveness, I would argue, is one aspect of males' social identity.

Similarly, in Chinese/English conversations the ICP made the first preclosing move at least 90% of the time, regardless of gendermix. This diverges from the lower figures for the Chinese/Chinese conversations, and I will argue later that this difference is due to the Chinese' regard for the negative face of their partners. Wardhaugh (1992) observes that, in most situations, the Chinese are more polite to strangers than acquaintances. In terminating the conversations, the Chinese interlocutors were demonstrating that, while they might have liked continue, they were respectful of their partner's time.

In contrast to the aforementioned groups, in all of the other groups based on ethnicity, the male-female conversations patterned together, with the OCP showing a greater tendency to act as the ICC. Note that in the English/English M/F conversations, the OCP actually moved to close in more cases

than the ICP. This is due in part to the fact that this cell includes a ten conversations between intimates. These were husbands and wives, who are able read each other's subtle hints and have less need to "properly" initiate closings (Schelgoff and Sacks 1984). In six of these ten interactions, the OCPs were also the ICCs.

But this imbalance is also due to differences in gender roles. In the nine cases where the OCP made the first preclosing move, seven of the OCP-ICCs were male and two of OCPs were female, a result attributable to the power relations that obtain between men and women. Men, according to Pamela Fishman (1983, p. 100), are controlling "what will be produced as reality by the interaction." These findings can be seen as supporting Fishman's assertion that women generally do more of the active maintenance and continuation work in conversations and that men are more likely do discourage interactions initiated by women.

While this undoubtedly a real phenomenon, and while it feels to female interlocutors that their voices are often silenced by men, I agree with Tannen (1990) who would say that, for men, when the discourse purpose has been fulfilled, it is time to move on. In conjoint actions, it is entirely possible that, for each interlocutor, this recognition comes at a different point in the conversation. Further, from the males' point of view, their female partners should, if need be, be honest and direct about having anything further to add.

Social Proximity

Table 5.5: ICPvs. OCP by Social Proximity

SOC PROX	N	ICP	OCP	ICP%
Int	29	21	8	72.4%
Acq	89	63	26	70.8%
Str	24	22	2	92.2%
Significance: $p = .069$, approaches, but does not attain significance				

The findings show that it is most likely that the ICP will move to close in conversations among:

Chinese/English

Male/male

Strangers

And it is less likely that the ICP will move to close in conversations among:

English/English

Chinese/Chinese

Male/female

Especially English/English and Spanish/English

The findings for Question One indicate that in a conversation, the person who initiates it, or the ICP, assumes a dominant role in controlling the direction and length of the exchange. Grosz and Sidners's (1986) account of discourse structure stipulates it is the ICP who is associated with the discourse purpose. This being the case, the ICP's role is that of indicating and the OCP'S that of recognizing the beginning and end of a discourse segment (p. 188). It is for the ICP to decide when the discourse purpose has been fulfilled.

That the ICP is the ICC about only 75 percent of the time shows that there are a number of factors which can inhibit this tendency. The findings indicate that they have to do with all three variables --- gender, ethnicity and culture, social distance, and to a lesser extent, power. In addition, of course, there are various types of external forces which not only serve as welcome excuses for closing, but may cause us to close before we feel the sense of completion that generally precipitates termination.

If moving to close the conversation creates a risk to the addressee's face, then it should be even more threatening to do so if the closer is the non-initiating party (OCP). Thus, the ICP can avoid potential awkwardness by taking the responsibility of signalling the intent to close at an appropriate transition relevance place. Upon recognition of

the signal, the OCP then has the option of extending the conversation or contributing to the closing.

Cronen (1995) posits that all cultures make some differentiation concerning the responsibility of certain classes of actors (e.g. in telephone conversations, called and caller) for the actions or events that transpire. However, he notes that the ways these distinctions are played out vary greatly across cultures. I have identified here only some of the variables which, on a given occasion, increase or decrease the likelihood that the principle(s) governing ICP/OCP roles in conversation closings will be followed.

With respect to ethnicity, the role of the ICP appears to be strongest among the Spanish speakers. Although the number of Chinese/Chinese conversations is quite small, we see that for them and the English/English conversations, the ICPs gave about twice the number of preclosing signals as the OCPs. The highest figure for the ICP as ICC was for conversations between speakers of Chinese and English. I suggest that this is due to the participants' perceptions of wide cultural differences which create feelings of distance and uncertainty. This, in turn, is reflected in the Chinese students' concern for the negative face of their English-speaking interlocutors, generally tutors or teachers, who were "on duty" at the time to the interaction.

The findings show that gender was a significant factor in determining which party gave the first preclosing signal. We

see that the males seem to be bound by the principle regulating the ICP/OCP roles to a greater degree than the females. Perhaps, if there is greater certainty that the ICP will be the ICC, the risk to face is lessened, decreasing the need for expressions of politeness. This allows for a more direct, shorter closing. If, as in the mixed conversations, there is more flexibility in terms of role, more accounts and expressions oriented to positive face will be necessary. We will explore this possibility in Questions Two and Three.

With respect to social distance, the figures for intimates and acquaintances show that the ICP gave the first preclosing signal about three times more often than the OCP. However, in the conversations between strangers, the ICP initiated the closing eleven times more than the OCP. It appears that the role of the ICP becomes stronger in situations when social distance and uncertainty with respect to status are greater. Strangers, especially those who anticipate future contact, take fewer risks.

Power

Table 5.6: ICP vs. OCP by Power Relations

POWER RELATIONS	N	ICP	OCP	ICP%
Symm	111	80	31	72.1%
Asymm	31	26	5	83.9%
Significance: $p = .18$, ns				

The literature would predict that the OCP would be more likely to initiate the closing when there exists a differential in power and status (Grosz and Sidner 1986). For a superior, one's own agenda, apart from the discourse purpose, takes precedence. And politeness should be less of a concern for people who occupy positions of power than for those seeking to negotiate their way to ascendance (Brown and Levinson 1987 in Zajdman 1995).

Table 5.7: ICP as ICC by Power Symmetry

INITIATOR OF CLOSING	SYMMETRICAL	ASYMMETRICAL	ROW TOTAL
ICP	80	26	106 74.6%
OCP	31	5	36 25.4%
Column	111	31	142
Total	78.2%	21.8%	100%
Significance: $p = .181$, ns			

We see above that this prediction was not confirmed in my study. The subordinates here were generally the ICPs, and they gave the first preclosings over 80% of the time. Most of the ICPs were students speaking to their tutors, teachers or employers. It appears that in these interactions, the superiors purposely relaxed the power differential in an attempt to create a conversational context (Wilson 1989). And, I suspect that they expected this stance to be viewed favorably by me, the auditor, the students' teacher.

VI. FINDINGS: IN WHICH CONVERSATIONS WERE
THE LONGEST CLOSING SECTIONS FOUND?

Length in Real time

The closings sections of each conversation were measured in terms of real time (number of seconds, number of speaker turns or utterances and information phrases. The closing section of a conversation roughly ten minutes long is about 24 seconds in length. In my data, the shortest closings lasted only five or six seconds and the longest nearly two minutes.

Gender

Table 6.A.1: Gender and Length in Real Time

GENDER	NUMBER	MEAN LENGTH IN SECONDS
Total	142	23.79
Gendermix		
M/M	26	21.23
F/F	48	29.02
M/F	68	20.40
Significance: $p = .130$, ns		

The probability level was .13 which does not reach the significance level. However, if we exclude the male/female conversations and compare only the female/female conversations with the male/male conversations, p now becomes .045, which is significant.

The closing sections of the female/female conversations were the longest. If this added length is a result of the phatic communion said to constitute closings (Laver 1981), it confirms that women's conversation style is more interactional and affiliative than men's (Thorne and Henley 1975). The mean length for the male/male and the male/female closings were roughly the same. This could indicate that the women are accommodating to men's conversational style to a greater degree than the reverse. But it can also mean that the women were blocked from their preferred schemata because their male partners were not contributing the necessary response types.

Ethnicity

Table 6.A.2: Length of Closing in Seconds by Ethnic Mix

ETHNICITY	N	MEAN NUMBER SECONDS
Total	142	23.13
Sp/Sp	29	26.03
Eng/Eng	37	22.51
Ch/Ch	15	16.27
Sp/Eng	36	31.81
Ch/Eng	36	12.28
Significance: .003, highly significant		

The findings shown in Table 6.A.2 indicate that ethnicity or first language is a very significant predictor of the length of a conversation closing measured in actual time. The contrast between the Chinese and Spanish speakers is particularly dramatic. We look next at each ethnic group with respect to gendermix.

Table 6.A.3: Ethnicity and Length in Real Time

ETHNICITY			
	GENDERMIX	N	MEAN LENGTH IN SECONDS
Total Population		142	23.79
Span/Span		29	26.03
	F/F	12	28.25
	M/M	8	30.75
	M/F	9	18.89
Significance: $p = .55$, ns			
Eng/Eng		37	22.51
	F/F	9	38.00
	M/M	10	14.00
	M/F	18	10.50
Significance: $p = .015$, significant			
Ch/Ch		15	16.27
	F/F	7	16.27
	M/M	1	8.00
	M/F	7	20.20
Significance: $p = .42$, ns			
Span/Eng		36	31.80
	F/F	10	47.50
	M/M	5	26.20
	M/F	21	25.67
Significance: $p = .066$, ns			

The findings for length measured in real time show that ethnicity is a determining factor in the amount of talk in conversation closings. In addition, Table 6.A.3 indicates that, in the English/English conversations, gender is an important factor. The longest closing sections were found in the Spanish/English and Spanish/Spanish conversations, and the shortest ones occurred in the Chinese/English conversations, followed by the Chinese/Chinese, findings which confirm the hypotheses.

Interestingly, the closing section of the two Chinese women who met at a party and discovered that they were from the same hometown was almost two minutes or 118 seconds long. This conversation was not included in the corpus because it was over twenty minutes long. The mean length for Chinese closings in the study was only 16.3 seconds in length, well below the overall mean of about 24 seconds.

What is striking here is that the Spanish/English closings are longer than the Spanish/Spanish closings and that the Chinese/English closings are shorter than the Chinese/Chinese closings. It may be that both the Spanish speakers and the Chinese speakers are being more polite with out-group members than they would be with interlocutors with shared cultural backgrounds. But the findings indicate that different kinds of politeness are involved. For the Latinos, politeness implies a higher number of expressions oriented to the positive face of the other party. For the Chinese, the other person's

negative face, or freedom to exit the conversation efficiently equals politeness.

If we consider the native speakers of English who, after all, have a larger repertoire of management strategies at their disposal, we conclude that they are accommodating to both groups of students. In fact, they may be said to be hyperconverging (Giles and Coupland 1991) in that they are going beyond the Spanish and Chinese norms.

Social Proximity

Table 6.A.4: Social Proximity and Length in Real Time

SOCIAL PROXIMITY	ETHNICITY	N	Seconds (Mean)
Total		142	23.79
Intimates		29	27.76
	Sp/Sp	7	11.43
	Eng/Eng	15	22.33
	Ch/Ch	3	17.00
	Sp/Eng	5	37.40
	Ch/Eng	0	.00
Acquaintances		89	24.09
	Sp/Sp	21	17.05
	Eng/Eng	20	23.70
	Ch/Ch	2	16.15
	Sp/Eng	23	35.78
	Ch/Eng	12	12.75
SOCIAL PROXIMITY	ETHNICITY	N	Seconds (Mean)
Strangers		24	13.96
	Sp/Sp	1	16.00
	Eng/Eng	2	12.00
	Ch/Ch	0	.00
	Sp/Eng	8	16.88
	Ch/Eng	13	11.85
Significance (social proximity)		p = .042, significant	

Significance for Sp/Sp: p= .58

Significance for Eng/Eng: p= .73

Significance for Ch/Ch: p= .93

Significance for Sp/Eng: p= .167

Significance for Ch/Eng: p= .727

None of these are statistically significant.

The greatest difference here, of course, is the difference between the mean length of the closing sections of conversations between strangers and the length of the closings of conversations between both intimates and acquaintances. Recall that Boxer (1993) found that, with indirect complaints, the conversational behavior of friends and acquaintances did not locate itself in a bulge in the middle of the social distance continuum (p. 103). Rather, it tended to be skewed toward one end of the continuum (strangers), or as in this case, the other (intimates).

Thus, these findings are not consistent with the Bulge Theory because the closings of conversations between intimates were longer than those of conversations between acquaintances. A possible explanation of this phenomenon is the presence of the tape recorder. It may be that the conversations between intimates were the most affected (in the direction of being more polite) of the three groups based on social distance. People who are intimately related have more latitude with respect to speech behavior and are generally unaccustomed to having their conversations overheard by others. That close personal friends have a naturally greater expectation of privacy than strangers when they interact is a point made by Larmouth, Murray and Murray (1992) in a discussion of the ethical issues in surreptitious recording in dialect research.

Power

Table 6.A.5: Power and Length of Closing in Real Time

POWER	N	Mean Seconds	
Total	142	23.79	
Symm	111	23.44	
Asymm	31	22.00	
Significance: p= .735, ns			
In Ethnically Mixed Conversations			
Sample	62	23.80	
Symm	34	27.03	
Asymm	27	19.74	
Significance:p= .65,ns			
Symm	F/F	14	27.43
Asymm	F/F	6	31.00
Symm	M/M	3	24.33
Asymm	M/M	4	31.25
Symm	M/F	17	27.18
Asymm	M/F	17	15.41
Significance: p= .481, ns			

There were no significant differences in the length of conversation closings with respect to power. We see that, in most of these conversations, which were assigned as part of a speech course, the interlocutors who had greater institutional power sought to minimize the asymmetry. Having less need to consider the positive face of their subordinates, they would, under more natural circumstances, undoubtedly be more attenuated.

The longest average closing sections, in terms of real time, are found in conversations between:

Spanish speakers

Spanish and English speakers

Females

Especially English-speaking

Intimates

The shortest average closing sections are found in conversations between:

Chinese and English speakers

Strangers

Chinese speakers

Length in Number of Speaker Turns

Number of conversations analyzed: 142

Mean for total population: 6.70

The number of utterances ranged from a minimum of one to a maximum of 16.

Gender

Table 6.B.1: Gender and
Number of Speaker Turns

GENDERMIX	N	MEAN NUMBER OF TURNS
F/F	48	6.79
M/M	26	4.96
M/F	68	7.29
Significance: p= .106; ns		

While these differences are not statistically significant, the male/male conversations, as expected, averaged fewer turns (just under five) in the closings than either the female/female or the male/female. Gender was not a significant factor in number of utterances.

The average number of speaker turns for female/ female conversations and male/female conversations similar, 6.79 and

7.29 respectively. This is consistent with the findings which indicated that the male/male conversations were shorter when measured in real time. We saw that in the male/male conversations, the ICP was in most cases the ICC. It is likely that this fact allowed the interlocutors to close their conversations with minimal negotiation, but there are probably other factors involved too, some of which will be discussed later.

Ethnicity

Table 6.B.2: Ethnicity and Number of Speaker Turns

ETHNICITY	n	MEAN NUMBER OF TURNS
Sp/Sp	29	6.34
Eng/Eng	37	8.22
Ch/Ch	15	4.33
Sp/Eng	36	7.58
Ch/Eng	25	5.00
Significance: $p = .016$ highly significant		

Ethnicity is a significant factor in the number of speaker turns in conversation closings. While the Spanish/Spanish and Spanish/English closings were longer in terms of real time, they contained fewer utterances than the English conversations. The Chinese/Chinese and the Chinese/English conformed to the patterns for real time in that they had fewer turns, with the Chinese/Chinese averaging a mere four turns in their closings.

Ethnicity and Gender

Table 6.B.3: Gendermix by Ethnicity and Number of Speaker Turns

ETHNICITY	GENDERMIX	n	MEAN TURNS
Sp/Sp		29	6.34
	F/F	12	6.08
	M/M	8	6.38
	M/F	9	6.67
Significance: $p = .93$, ns			
Eng/Eng		37	8.22
	F/F	9	9.44
	M/M	10	5.40
	M/F	18	9.17
Significance: $p = .29$ ns			
Ch/Ch		15	4.33
	F/F	7	4.00
	M/M	1	3.00
	M/F	7	4.96
Significance: $p = .52$, ns			

Table 6.B.3 (cont.)

ETHNICITY	GENDER	N	MEAN TURNS
Sp/Eng		36	7.48
	F/F	10	9.50
	M/M	5	3.20
	M/F	21	7.71
Significance: $p = .070$, approaches, but does not attain significance			
Ch/Eng		25	5.00
	F/F	10	4.50
	M/M	2	2.50
	M/F	13	5.77
Significance: $p = .186$, ns			

The numbers for gendermix within the groups based on ethnicity were too small to achieve statistical significance. But we see that in each group the male/male closings contained the fewest speaker turns regardless of ethnicity. Gender differences were most pronounced in the English/English conversation, with the females averaging four more turns in their closings than their male counterparts. Gender differences were least apparent in the Spanish/Spanish closings. But I will argue later that this finding should not be interpreted as counter evidence for the sexual segregation which has been observed in the Spanish-speaking cultures of the world (Gilmore 1990).

Social Proximity

Table 6. B. 4: Social Proximity, Ethnicity and Number of Speaker Turns

SOC PROX	ETHNICITY	N	UTTERANCES
Int		29	7.83
Acq		89	6.60
Str		24	5.71
Significance: p= .380 ns			
	Span/Span	29	6.34
Int	Span/Span	7	6.00
Acq	Span/Span	21	6.48
Str	Span/Span	1	6.00
Significance: p= .947 ns			
	Eng/Eng	37	8.22
Int	Eng/Eng	15	9.33
Acq	Eng/Eng	20	7.30
Str	Eng/Eng	2	9.00
Significance: p= .667 ns			

Table 6.B.4: Social Proximity, Ethnicity and Number of Speaker Turns (cont.)

SOC PROX	ETHNICITY	N	UTTERANCES
All	Ch/Ch	15	4.33
Int	Ch/Ch	2	4.00
Acq	Ch/Ch	13	4.38
Str	Ch/Ch	0	
Significance: $p = .785$, ns			
All	Sp/Eng	36	7.38
Int	Sp/Eng	5	7.40
Acq	Sp/Eng	23	8.09
Str	Sp/Eng	8	6.25
Significance: $p = .686$, ns			
All	Ch/Eng	25	5.00
Int	Ch/Eng	0	.00
Acq	Ch/Eng	23	8.09
Str	Ch/Eng	2	6.25
Significance: $p = .764$, ns			

The average numbers of speaker turns in the closing sections of conversations between strangers, friends and intimates, according to ethnicity, were not statistically different, further evidence for a basic turn-taking mechanism. Nevertheless, taken together with the figures for real time, we see that, while the number of utterances is fairly constant, the length measured in real time is far greater for intimates and friends than for strangers. It may be the case that closing a conversation is a speech act for which the behavior of friends is more like that of intimates than strangers (Boxer 1993). As mentioned earlier, it is possible that this conflation is due to the presence of the tape recorder.

If it is the case that conversation closings between intimates are normally abrupt and unconventional, we can expect that the presence of the tape recorder would inhibit this sort of behavior, whereas with strangers, their use of conventional rituals would be less susceptible to change in the presence of a third party. In the conversations between strangers, the average was lower -- 5.71. This figure is consistent with the Bulge Theory (Wolfson 1988), assuming that there is a correlation between length and degree of politeness.

The only variable under consideration that achieves significance in terms of number of utterances is ethnicity.

This finding is due to the low number of utterances in the Chinese/Chinese closings. That the other differences are not statistically significant indicates that the number of speaker turns is relatively stable across the continuum of social proximity. Sacks, Schegloff, and Jefferson's (1978) claim that conversational transitions are finely coordinated is borne out. The turn taking model they propose applies quite uniformly to conversation closings even if the length of the turns and the number of polite expressions varies. We see that this is also true in conversations where there exists a power differential:

Power

Table 6.B.5: Power and Number of Speaker Turns

POWER	N	MEAN TURNS
Total	142	6.70
Symmetrical	111	6.84
Asymmetrical	31	6.19
Significance:	p= .51	ns

Regardless of whether or not participant roles are characterized by a power differential, terminating a conversation involves a fairly stable number of speaker turns. The findings for number of utterances indicate that the mechanism for closing a conversation functions in a uniform manner across a wide span of contextual variables. Ethnicity was the only important variable, with the English/English closing sections containing an average of eight utterances, and the Chinese/Chinese employing the fewest, about four.

In the next section, the number of information phrases in each turn, will reveal the extent to which the length of the turns themselves varies. The overall average number of speaker turns in the closing sections was 6.70. That the figures for strangers and asymmetry are exactly the same is not surprising because most of the conversations between strangers were characterized by a power differential. These were, in fact, the same conversations.

The lowest average number of speaker turns was for conversations between Chinese speakers, followed by those between Chinese and English participants. The highest average was for English/English. The Spanish/Spanish and Spanish/English conversations were closer to the overall average at 6.34 and 7.58 respectively.

While there were more speaker turns in the English conversations, the real-time figures tell us that the closings

were actually shorter than the Spanish/Spanish conversations and the Spanish/English conversations. Therefore, the Latinos produced more talk in fewer turns than the Anglos.

The Chinese/Chinese conversation closings had the fewest utterances, with the Chinese/English containing a few more. In the conversations between speakers of different ethnicities, the number of utterances in the closings reflects an accommodation between the two styles involved. I would argue, too, that a cross-cultural context creates increased social distance between the interlocutors and encourages conventional, polite parting behavior.

Length in Number of Information Phrases

Total Number of Conversations Analyzed: 142

Mean for total population= 13.36

Mode= 7.0

The minimum was one and the maximum was 70.0, with a range of 69.

Gender

Table 6. C.1. Gender and Number of Information Phrases

GENDERMIX	N	MEAN NUMBER OF INFORMATION PHRASES
Total	142	13.36
F/F	48	14.25
M/M	26	11.88
M/F	68	13.29
Significance: $p = .651$		ns

The differences for gender in terms of the number of information phrases contained in the closings were not statistically significant. However, the general trend showing male/male closings to be shorter continues. The average number

of information phrases in the male/female closings is located between the figures for female/female and male/male conversations, further evidence supporting accommodation.

While the differences are not statistically significant with respect to gender, the general trend is consistent with the figures for length measured both in number of seconds and number of utterances. The female/female conversations contain the highest average number of information phrases, perhaps as a result the well-documented polite style of female speech (Thorne, Kramarae and Henley 1983). We can now say that in all of the ways length was measured, the closings of female/female conversations are longer than male-male closings.

Women are said to be more concerned with potential risk to their partner's face than their male counterparts (Coates 1986). I hypothesize that the fact that females said more in closing sections of the conversations indicates that there was more phatic communion, or more attending to the relationship between the interlocutors than in the male/male conversations (Tannen 1990).

The male/male closings, as noted before, contained the fewest information phrases. This figure may be partially explained by the fact that almost all of the male-male conversations were closed by the ICP, implying a lesser risk of face to the addressee. An alternate view is that saying less is men's way of "hanging tough," appearing rational and

keeping the upper hand (Sattel 1983, p. 120. See Appendices 5 and 12). In this view, males use their inexpressiveness to guard their positions and signal the limits of the discussion at hand.

However, there is another explanation which seems equally likely. Employing a kind of verbal shorthand seems to be males' way of expressing solidarity and closeness with each other. Goffman (1963) points out that "identity norms breed deviations as well as conformance." Males, more often than females, are inclined to use humor to preserve positive face and strengthen personal ties (See Appendix 20). Therefore, for male friends the absence of polite expressions is way of expressing solidarity and intimacy. This claim will be discussed further in Question Three which deals with politeness.

As one would expect, the average number of information phrases in the closings of male/female conversations falls in between the two figures for single-sex conversations. Both males and females seem to be attuning their speech to their partners' discourse styles (Giles 1980; Giles et al. 1991; Mulac et. al. 1988). In terms of length at least, it does not appear that either men or women are doing more to change their styles in the direction of the other. Measured in seconds, the male/female conversation closings are about the same length as the male/male (21.23 and 20.40 seconds), while the

number of utterances of the male/female and female/female closings are closer together (7.29 and 6.79 seconds).

On the other hand, I had predicted that the closing sections of the conversations with interlocutors of the opposite sex would be longer than those of same-sex interactions. I believe that in mixed-sex conversations, there is a higher degree of uncertainty present with respect to speaker roles and that there are more possible permutations of male-female relationships than there are of same-sex relationships. This hypothesis was not confirmed. The explanation appears to be found in accommodation theory which predicts that when two groups have high regard for each other, their conversational styles will converge. The figures for length in terms of information phrases show that both men and women adapt their speech behaviors in mixed conversations.

Ethnicity

Table 6.C.2: Ethnicity and Number of Information Phrases

ETHNICITY	N	MEAN INFORMATION PHRASES
Total	142	13.36
Sp/Sp	29	15.66
Eng/Eng	37	12.76
Ch/Ch	15	8.67
Span/Eng	36	17.50
Ch/Eng	25	8.44
Significance: $p = .003$, highly significant		

These figures show that ethnicity is a significant variable in determining the number of information phrases employed in conversation closings. The closings in which at least one participant was a speaker of Spanish contained the highest number of information phrases, and those in which at least one interlocutor was a speaker of Chinese had the fewest.

Because gender ideologies are strong role determinants in most of the world's cultures, we look now at the number of information phrases by gendermix across ethnicities.

Ethnicity and Gender

Table 6.C.3: Gender by Ethnicity and Number of Information Phrases

ETHNICITY	GENDERMIX	N	INFORMATION PHRASES
Span/Span	total sample	29	
	F/F	12	13.92
	M/M	8	20.38
	F/M	9	13.78
Significance p= .445 ns			
Eng/Eng		37	12.76
	F/F	9	16.57
	M/M	10	7.60
	M/F	18	13.67
Significance: p= .064, almost significant			
Ch/Ch		15	8.67
	F/F	7	7.86
	M/M	1	5.00
	M/F	7	10.00
Significance: p= .596, ns			

Table 6.C.3: Gender by Ethnicity and Number of Information Phrases (cont.)

ETHNICITY	GENDER	N	INFORMATION PHRASES
Span/Eng	total	36	17.50
	F/F	10	24.50
	M/M	5	11.00
	M/F	21	15.71
Significance: $p = .106$, ns			
Ch/Eng	total	25	8.44
	F/F	10	6.70
	M/M	2	5.00
	M/F	13	10.31
Significance: $p = .058$, close to statistical significance			

Unlike the English or the Chinese speakers, the Spanish speaking males produced more information phrases in their closings than did the females. In the English/English and Spanish/English closings, the males produced only about half as many information phrases as did the females. Significantly, in the Chinese/English conversations the male/female conversation closings contained an average of

twice as many information phrases as the male/male closings and about four more than the female/female.

The most significant independent variable for number of information phrases in the closing is ethnicity ($p=.003$). If we take the Spanish/Spanish and Spanish/English conversations together, we can say that the conversations in which at least one interlocutor was a native speaker of Spanish contained more talk in the closings than those which did not involve Latino participants. This finding is in keeping with Dealy's (1992) description of Latin Americans' psychological affinity for displays of verbal mastery. The figures for the English/Spanish conversations show that the Anglo-American interlocutors accommodated to the speech patterns of their partners, in constructing longer closings (Giles 1980). I claim that this accommodation indicates that the Anglo-Americans responded positively to the Latin conversation style, associating it with such valued qualities as politeness and warmth, and, in the case of the English-speaking males, "traditional" gender ideologies.

The figures for the male/male Spanish/Spanish conversations stand in contrast to the male/male conversations in the other two ethnic groups. The Latin male closings contained an average of 20.32 information phrases, almost six more than the female/female conversations. Dealy (1992) and Gilmore (1990) would account for this length by noting that the public image of the Latin male is dependent on interactional rituals and

displays and, that attention to face (their own, as well as their partner's) is extremely important in attaining a "following". Spanish-speaking women are more likely to be relegated to the private domain and thus, historically, have not had the same opportunity or the same impetus to exhibit their discursive skills.

We see that the conversations involving at least one native speaker of Chinese contained about eight or nine information phrases, significantly less the mean for the total population, 13.36. This low figure is consistent with the descriptions found in the literature (Yang 1957, Ying 1983) which suggest that for the Chinese, closing a conversation does not constitute the same degree of risk to face that it does in the other cultures represented in this study.

The figures for the Chinese/Chinese and Chinese/English conversations show that the native speakers of English conversing with Chinese interlocutors accommodated to the more abbreviated closing style as well. I believe that these English-speaking partners, likewise, responded favorably to the Chinese interlocutors, and that their positive feelings are reflected in the degree to which convergence was achieved (Giles *ibid.*).

Social Proximity

Table 6.C.4: Social Proximity and Number of Information Phrases

SOC PROX		N	INFOPHRASES
Total		142	13.36
Int		29	13.45
Acq		89	14.29
Str		24	9.79
Significance: p= .174, ns			
ETHNICITY	SOC PROX		
Span/Span	Total	29	15.66
	Int	7	11.42
	Acq	21	17.05
	Str	1	16.00
Significance: p= .947 ns			
Eng/Eng		37	12.76
	Int	15	13.57
	Acq	20	12.10
	Str	2	12.50
Significance: p= .879 ns			

Table 6.C.4.: Social Proximity and Number of Information Phrases (cont.)

ETHNICITY	SOCIAL PROXIMITY	N	MEAN INFORMATION PHRASES
Ch/Ch	total	15	8.67
	Int	2	6.00
	Acq	13	9.08
	Str	0	.00
Significance: $p = .451$, ns			
Span/Eng	total	36	17.50
	Int	5	18.60
	Acq	23	19.65
	Str	8	10.63
Significance: $p = .247$, ns			
Ch/Eng	total	15	8.44
	Int	0	.00
	Acq	12	8.50
	Str	13	8.13
Significance: $p = .948$, ns			

Although the differences for social proximity by ethnicity are not statistically significant, the conversations between acquaintances did contain a slightly higher average number of information phrases -- 14.29 than the closings of intimates -- 13.45 supporting, if minimally, the Bulge Theory (Wolfson 1988). The number of information phrases in the closings produced by interlocutors who are strangers is much lower --

9.79. If we compare intimates and acquaintances with strangers we see that the difference in number of information phrases approaches statistical significance:

Table 6.C.5: Intimates and Friends versus Strangers in Number of Information Phrases

SOCIAL PROXIMITY	N	INFORMATION PHRASES
Total	142	13.36
Intimates and Friends	118	14.08
Strangers	24	9.79
Significance: $p = .067$, approaching statistical significance		

For number of information phrases, the bulge for length of closings is located at the intimacy end of the social distance continuum, a finding in line with Boxer's (1993) observation that there may be more behavioral commonalities between friends and strangers or between friends and intimates for particular speech behaviors.

Interestingly, the group most responsible for the location of the bulge at the intimacy end of the distance scale is the Spanish/English one, which is largely male/female. The other group contributing to this phenomenon was the English/English, whose closings did not show any real differences in length

based on social proximity. Possible reasons for these behaviors will be discussed in the next chapter where the number of polite expressions will be addressed.

The number of information phrases in the closings of conversations between partners who are intimately related is somewhat higher than the theory would predict -- 13.45. Recall that the closings of the conversations between intimates had the highest number of speaker turns. It appears that, while partners in a close relationship may take certain liberties with one another, the initiator of a closing must nevertheless remain sensitive to risks to the addressee's face. In fact, Cupach and Metts (1994) go so far as to say that in such relationships, ignoring the other's face needs amounts to virtually threatening the relationship itself. We will see if the relatively high number of turns and information phrases corresponds to the number of polite expressions in the discussion of Question Three.

Strangers have less latitude than friends in terms of following leave-taking conventions. On the other hand, they have less need to acknowledge the relationship, if indeed there is one. And, in most cases, strangers usually do not make arrangements for the next contact (see Appendix 22). For most pairs of strangers, terminating conversations must be closed done appropriately, but this can be accomplished with a minimum of negotiation.

All of the subjects were aware that they were being recorded. I would argue that this knowledge influenced the length and content of conversation closings for intimates most of all. I believe that it was the strangers and acquaintances who were least inclined to modify their conversation styles as a result of being audio-taped, while the mean figures for the intimates (13.45 information phrases) are probably unnaturally high.

Among the language groups in which the interlocutors were friends, it is the Chinese who produced the fewest information phrases --- an average of 8.67. And the closings of conversations between Chinese intimates contained an average of only six. This brevity may be explained by the claim that, in China, intimates are not bound by the debt-repaying mechanism, pao (Chang and Holt 1994).

However, after the above analyses were made, I received a tape of a Chinese conversation between two Chinese women who met at a party here in New York. The closing section of this conversation was almost two minutes long (1:58) and contained some 35 information phrases. While these women were strangers prior to the day of the party, by the time they had the audiotaped conversation, they had learned that they were both from the same city in China and that both had arrived in the U.S. within the last year. They were currently in the position of having to communicate in their second language

most of the time, inhibiting their ability to realize their "true selves" through conversation (Shotter 1993).

They were therefore delighted to be able to speak their first language with someone from their hometown. The very long closing of their conversation reflects their pleasure in having been able to express their unique realities as well as the change in the status of their relationship from 'stranger' to 'friend'.

I encountered a similar phenomenon in a conversation between two female students in my class who had never had a prior interaction. These two women constructed a minute-long closing in spite of the fact that the conversation took place during a fifteen-minute break in the class. These two women were both working mothers and had decided to begin college in their mid-thirties. This kind of shift in status is accomplished through negotiation and the use of elaborate politeness strategies.

Power and Gender

Table 6.C.6: Power, Gender and Number of Information Phrases

POWER	GENDER	N	INFORMATION PHRASES
Symm		112	14.08
Asymm		31	9.79
Significance p= .067, approaching significance			
Symm	F/F	14	16.07
Asymm	F/F	6	14.50
Symm	M/M	3	10.00
Asymm	M/M	4	8.75
Symm	M/F	17	15.83
Asymm	M/F	17	11.47
Significance: p= .453, ns			
In ethnically mixed conversations:			13.79
Symm		34	15.41
Asymm		27	11.74
Significance: p= .211 ns			

The differences in the closings of the conversations between status-equal participants and those occurring in conversations between subordinate and superior were not statistically significant. But the general trend holds in the sense that there were more information phrases in closings of the symmetrical conversations (mean: 13.95) than the asymmetrical conversations (mean: 11.94). This pattern is consistent with the longer closings measured in both real time and number of utterances of the asymmetrical conversations. It seems intuitively correct to argue that when there exists a power differential between interlocutors, the party with more power has less need to consider the positive face of the subordinate. On the other hand, the latter does need to protect the negative face of the superior. This imbalance means that the subordinate is expected to assume a socio-emotive role, while at the same time, respecting the time constraints of the superior.

The male/male asymmetrical conversations contained the fewest and the female/female the most information phrases, but both groups followed the general tendency to have more talk in closings between equals. Interlocutors who are status equals will generally use the closing to capitalize on the potential for lessening the social distance in the relationship (Wolfson 1988). With status unequals, roles are more fixed.

I expected the data to show that women favor a style of communication which disguises the hierarchy and asymmetry.

Women are said to feel most comfortable with symmetry with its balanced distribution of rights and sense of community (Tannen 1990). In addition, women historically have been assigned the role of subordinate and are familiar with the constraints inherent in it. They are, therefore, reluctant to reproduce those traditional ways of relating if alternatives are available.

In the conversation below, one female subject was careful to state for the benefit of the overhearer (me), that she regarded her interlocutor not only as her employer; but also as her friend and confident:

IX A #1, Weekend, 1995

M+ = Martine: F, 48, Eng., secretary to Karen

K* = Karen: F, 34, Eng., attorney

M: As an aside, Karen is my uh therapist, my confident, my friend.
And uh I'm very lucky to have her as part of my life.

K: Oh::
I'm very lucky to have YOU.

M: Oh: thank you.

K: As part of MY life.

M: Well, thank you for doing this with me, Karen.

The content of this conversation suggested that, in spite of Karen's higher position in the office, she interacted with Martine as an equal, disclosing personal information and

sharing weekend activities with her. Both Karen and Martine undoubtedly recognized the latter's authority. But at the same time their common philosophies and interests, as well as Martine's professional competence, allowed them to develop a close, multi-dimensional relationship.

In general, though, the length of the closings of the asymmetrical conversations did support the notion that less facework is required in these relationships. With respect to the English-speaking friends, we see that the males behave differently from the females, and that they behave differently when they are interacting with females than they do when they are conversing with each other. It appears that Gilmore (1990) and Coates (1986) are correct when they assert that in most of the world's cultures the spheres of males and females are strictly demarcated. These boundaries not only reflect gender-based differences in identity, position, and power, but construct and perpetuate the distinctions as well. In Latin cultures, they cause male interlocutors to say more in closing a conversation, while in the U.S. it they are reflected in men's tendency to say less.

The fact that the male English speakers produced more talk in closing conversations with females may be explained by Giles (1979) Accommodation Theory. The men's more disciplined speech style shifted in the direction of their partners'. The women accommodated to a more abbreviated style, too. We see that, while in these situations there is uncertainty, and

there is usually something positive at stake socially. The "proper" closing procedures must be followed so that favorable evaluations of the interlocutors will ensue.

VII. FINDINGS: NUMBER OF POLITE EXPRESSIONS

The ICP and the OCP

In the 142 conversations analyzed, there was a mean of 3.85 and a mode of 3.00 polite expressions of the types listed under "Methodology". The number of such expressions ranged from 0 to 16. The ICPs produced more polite expressions than the OCPs.

Table 7.A.1: ICP vs. OCP in Polite Expressions

INTERLOCUTOR	N AS ICC	MEAN POLITE EXPRESSIONS
ICP	106	2.35
OCP	36	1.48
Significance: $p = .038$, significant		

The initiators of the conversations produced an average of 2.36 polite expressions while their partners, the OCPs, used an average of 1.48. When we consider the fact that in approximately 75 percent of the conversations, the first preclosing signal was given by the ICP, it becomes clear that the ICPs produced more polite expressions to mitigate the

closing signals. This finding supports to the basic notion that moving to close a conversation does involve a risk to the addressee's face. However, it also shows that there is an expectation that the ICPs polite expressions will be reciprocated, albeit to a lesser degree.

Gender

My prediction, in light of my pilot studies and the gender-related claims in the literature was that the female/female conversations would contain the highest number of polite expressions in the closings:

Table 7.A.2: Gender and Number of Polite Expressions

GENDERMIX	N	MEAN POLITE EXPRESSIONS
Total	142	3.85
F/F	48	4.25
M/F	26	2.69
M/F	68	4.01
Significance: $p = .061$, close to statistical significance		
F/F & M/F	116	4.11
M/M	26	2.69
Significance: $p = .020$, significant		

The above figures indicate that there is a difference in the number of polite expressions in closings based on gender, although they fall slightly short of statistical significance. If the female/female closings are recoded with the male/female closings, then the distance between them and the male/male closings does achieve significance, confirming that the male patterns are dissimilar.

In the 68 male-female conversations:

Mean for males	1.82
Mean for females	2.18

(The significance could not be obtained since at least one independent variable was a constant.)

While the female/female conversations contained more polite expressions in the closings than the male/male conversations, the females did not produce significantly more than their male partners in mixed conversations. And, while the female ICPs produced more polite expressions than the male ICPs, the differences were not statistically significant:

Table 7.A.3: ICP and OCP by Gender and Polite Expressions

INTERLOCUTOR ROLE	GENDERMIX	N	MEAN POLITE EXPRESSIONS
ICP	All	142	2.36
	F/F	48	2.65
	M/M	26	1.77
	M/F	68	2.27
Significance: $p = .206$, ns			
OCP	All	142	1.48
	F/F	48	1.71
	M/M	26	.92
	M/F	68	1.54
Significance: $p = .183$, ns			

While the figures for gender and number of polite expressions do not attain statistical significance, the patterns are consistent with the higher number of polite expressions by both ICP and OCP found in the female/female conversation closings. These findings are not surprising given the large body of research which has shown that females

cross cultures use more prestige and polite forms in their speech than males do (Coates 1986, Lakoff 1975).

Brown (1980) examined particle usage in Tzeltal, a Mayan language in order to determine the full range of expression available to the members of this Mexican community. She concluded that the particle usage of men and women differed systematically, with the women appearing to be more concerned by the possibility of a threat to the face of another. Brown found that the Mayan women, unlike the men, used extremes of positive and negative face. She links this difference in politeness to women's historical social inferiority and therefore, linguistic insecurity (p. 112).

I do not disagree with the correlation Brown draws between power and politeness. I claim, though, that the women's greater phaticity reflects the degree to which their relational goals supersede other instrumental or factual purposes which may be stronger determinants of the males' closings (Lakoff 1975, Tannen 1990; see also Coupland, Coupland and Robinson 1992 for a discussion of phatic communion).

The male/male closings averaged fewer polite expressions, confirming Tannen's (1991) characterization of male conversations as "impersonal, factual, and task-focused" in content (p. 103). Manhood ideologies, according to Gilmore (1990) require male interlocutors to overcome their true natures and to display efficiency, hardness and self-

discipline. This display must take place, above all, in face-to-face conversation.

Listening to the conversation closings English-speaking males, I was struck by the connection between politeness and solidarity. Violations of the polite norms are often used to negotiate a greater solidarity between interlocutors (Laver 1981). As Hodge and Kress (1988, 1979) note, "any group of any size needs markers of group membership to give it identity and cohesion, and to differentiate it from other groups." I would argue that, for males, intimacy and belonging are signaled by lack of polite expressions. While polite expressions have the function of protecting the addressee's positive or negative face, they are also used to create or maintain distance between interlocutors (Mey 1993).

Therefore, I claim that risk to face can be addressed by expressions of politeness or solidarity. It appears to be the case that, while American females use more polite expressions to mitigate face threatening acts, American males favor the use of expressions or implications of solidarity for this purpose. Solidarity is implied by showing that the relationship is secure enough for the participants to dispense with the formalities otherwise appropriate to the situation. Graddol and Swann (1989) caution that a given linguistic feature, such as politeness, may be performing, simultaneously, a variety of functions. Conversely, a given function, such as expressing solidarity, may be served by

several different strategies, including the absence of politeness.

We see, however, that in the mixed conversation closings, males and females produce about the same number of polite expressions. In addition, the mean number of polite expressions in the M/F closings falls between the averages for F/F and M/F, but is closer to the F/F. Both men and women seem to be adapting to each other's leave-taking behaviors, but the men seem to be making the more dramatic style changes. This disconfirms Tannen's (1991) claim that women make more adjustments in conversation than men.

But accommodation does not account for all of the similarities in politeness. I want to argue here that the men and women are exhibiting similar behaviors, but for quite different reasons. For the women, the polite expressions they use with their male partners reflect their general tendency to engage in relationship-oriented talk. By employing positive politeness, the women in the mixed conversations are simply reproducing their subordinate roles in the social order (de Laurentis 1987).

The relatively high number of polite expressions for men, on the other hand, means that, for them, talking to women creates a sense of increased formality and a need to be on 'good behavior.' The M/M data taken together with the M/F data indicate that males support the societal norm which requires politeness in conversation closings, but define themselves

(when talking to each other) as being outside the category of persons needing to put it into practice (Goffman 1963).

In accommodating to the women's more polite speech style, males, I suggest, show that they are aware of gender differences in conversation. In engaging in the conventional rituals of parting, they are acknowledging the system which perpetuates disparate gender roles as well as their own superior positions in it.

In addition, by being polite, they are making themselves more vulnerable to the women than they would with each other. The longer, more phatic closings in the mixed conversations indicates that conversing with females may provide men with a respite from the pressured confines of their masculine roles. With women, men can be more personal and emotive.

The women are being a bit less elaborate with their male partners, but only slightly. If they produce fewer polite expressions, it is probably an attempt to avoid a conversational imbalance (something akin to the strategies of the Chinese interlocutors). They are being less expressive and more disciplined with men than they might prefer.

Giles et.al. (1973 in Giles and Coupland 1991, p. 63) found that "the more effort in convergence a speaker was perceived to have made, ... the more favorable the speaker was evaluated, and the more the listener would converge in return." The findings for politeness show both males and

females actively seeking to minimize gender differences in order to achieve symmetry and harmony.

Ethnicity

The findings for length of closings measured in real time showed that the Spanish/English and the Spanish/Spanish closings to be longest. Does the length correlate with the number of polite expressions contained in the closings?

Table 7.C.1: Ethnicity and Number of Polite Expressions

ETHNICITY	N	MEAN POLITE EXPRESSIONS
All	142	3.85
Sp/Sp	29	4.07
Eng/Eng	37	2.86
Ch/Ch	15	2.13
Sp/Eng	36	5.50
Ch/Eng	26	3.72
Significance: $p = <.001$, highly significant		

Table 7.C.2: ICP and OCP by Ethnicity
and Number of Polite Expressions

INTERLOCUTOR ROLE	ETHNICITY	N	MEAN POLITE EXPRESSIONS
ICP	All	142	3.85
	Sp/Sp	29	4.07
	Eng/Eng	37	2.86
	Ch/Ch	15	2.13
	Sp/Eng	36	5.50
	Ch/Eng	26	3.72
Significance: $p = <.001$, highly significant			
OCP	All	142	1.48
	Sp/Sp	29	1.66
	Eng/Eng	37	1.30
	Ch/Ch	15	1.07
	Sp/Eng	36	2.14
	Ch/Eng	25	.88
Significance: $p = .054$, close to statistical significance			

In terms of politeness, it appears that ethnicity is a highly significant variable. We see that ethnic or first-language differences are most marked for the number of polite expressions required of the ICP (who was most often the ICC). The conversations in which participants used the highest number of polite expressions were those between speakers whose native languages were English and Spanish (conducted in English), followed by those between Spanish speakers. Thus, the longer closings of the Latino speakers correlates with the number of polite expressions they employ. This result affirms that the Spanish-speaking world has developed an elaborate system of politeness strategies, and that, for its members, honor and respect demand that potential face threats be minimized.

As in the discussion on length, I claim that Spanish speakers' use of polite expressions stems from the Latin value of fluent and noble speech. Moreover, with these particular interlocutors, native-speakers of English who are mainly teachers and tutors, the Latin American students were eager to demonstrate their social worth. Aronson and Linder's (1965 in Giles and Coupland 1991) gain-loss theory of attraction proposes that we feel a stronger liking for those persons whose respect we are in the process of acquiring than for those whose admiration we already have. In the case of the ESL students, a one-to-one conversation with the instructor

provided a welcome alternative to their classroom performance as a basis for evaluation.

The data indicate the Anglo-Americans were generally receptive to this style and reciprocated by modifying their own closing styles to the extent that they, at times, hyperconverged with their partners (Giles and Coupland 1991). It should be noted that, in the male-female conversations, the majority of Spanish speakers were female and the majority of English speakers were male.

The American males may have responded positively to such attractive qualities of Latin American female students as their role of nurturer, their ambition, and their indirect, traditionally feminine ways of interacting developed in a patriarchal society. In this country, they have also, as a group demonstrated resourcefulness in overcoming economic, linguistic, class and racial barriers (Benmayor et. al. 1987)

The conversations in which the fewest polite expressions were produced were those between Chinese-speaking interlocutors, a finding consistent with the figures for Question Two indicating that the Chinese/Chinese closings were shorter in length. Gudykunst et. al. (1987 in Giles and Coupland 1991, p. 64) observed that members of collectivistic cultures such as Japan, China and Korea "perceive their ingroup relationships to be more synchronized than individualized cultures." We may theorize that the more

synchronized a group's members perceive themselves to be, the less need there will be for facework in conversation.

It is interesting that the number of polite expressions for the ICPs in the Chinese/English conversations is quite high. The majority of the ICPs were Chinese, so we can see that these Chinese speakers were much more polite when speaking to an English-speaking interlocutor than they were when speaking to another Chinese. If we accept that, for the Chinese, closing a conversation does not ordinarily constitute a risk to the addressee's face, then it appears that there is a sharp distinction being made between in-group and out-group conversational partners (Giles and Coupland 1991).

Lisa Li (1995), the informant who stated that close friends and relatives seldom use the equivalents of 'please' and 'thank you' with each other, reported that when she speaks English, she finds herself using 'thank you' and 'excuse me' with shopkeepers and service people "twenty times more often" than she would when speaking her native Mandarin in China.

The figures for the OCPs in the Chinese/Chinese and Chinese/English conversations are also interesting. In the Chinese/English conversations the OCPs gave, on the average, fewer than one polite expression. This very low figure can be explained by a conflation of ethnic and gender differences. In these conversations most of the Chinese interlocutors were female and most of the English speakers were male. Since the OCP does not have the same pressure to be polite as the ICP to

begin with, the OCPs in this situation produced very few polite expressions.

Finally, another explanation for the finding that the mean number of polite expressions in the Chinese/English conversation closings is higher than for the English/English closings is the claim that communication in East Asia is more receiver-centered than the more sender-oriented West (Yum 1988 in Giles and Coupland 1991). According to this theory, the Chinese were aware of the difference in politeness and sought to approximate the closing styles of their English-speaking partners. And, because these were assigned, required conversations, the students had incurred a kind of emotional debt ('pao') to them.

The Spanish/English conversations contained the highest number of polite expressions of any ethnicity-based group. This finding seems to be based on three factors: 1) the more polite style of Latin Americans in general, 2) the fact that the Spanish speakers were recipients of a favor performed by the English speakers, and 3) the English speakers' favorable evaluations of their Latin partners, resulting in a kind of asymmetrical accommodation.

It is now possible to say that the shorter length of the male/male closings is, in fact, due to a lower number of polite expressions. This is evidence that men do have different strategies for closing conversations than women, and their strategies are characterized by ellipsis and brevity.

We will look now at in the number of polite expressions produced by males and females across ethnicity in mixed conversations.

Gender and Ethnicity, Mixed Conversations

Table 7.c.3.: Gender by Ethnicity Ethnicity and
Number of Polite Expressions

FEMALES		
ETHNICITY	N	MEAN POLITE EXPRESSIONS
Sp/Sp	9	1.78
Eng/Eng	18	1.78
Ch/Ch	7	1.43
Sp/Eng	21	2.38
Ch/Eng	13	3.08
Significance: $p = .188$, ns		
MALES		
ETHNICITY	N	MEAN POLITE EXPRESSIONS
Sp/Sp	9	2.00
Eng/Eng	18	.94
Ch/Ch	7	1.14
Sp/Eng	21	3.19
Ch/Eng	13	1.08
Significance: $p = .004$, highly significant		

The findings for the mixed conversations indicate that the number of polite expressions employed by females did not differ significantly across ethnicity. However, the males did show a pronounced effect for first language. They produced a mean of only one in the English/English conversations, the Chinese/Chinese, and the Chinese/English conversations. The highest number of polite expressions by males were found in the Spanish/English conversations. In these conversations, the male was most often English-speaking, the female, Spanish-speaking. The most striking contrast to be seen here is the difference between the English-speaking males' use of polite expressions in closings with English-speaking or Chinese-speaking females and in those with Spanish-speaking females.

In the Chinese data, the figures for the number of polite expressions produced by the males and females are very close together. The similarity probably reflects the minimal risk to face the Chinese see in closing a conversation, rather than a higher social status accorded Chinese women. This claim is supported both by the literature and the findings showing the shorter length of Chinese closings in general.

In most aspects of Chinese life, face is a very important behavior-shaping factor in social relationships, "an outgrowth of the extreme sensitivity Chinese have about personal dignity" (Butterfield 1982, p. 60). Since East Asian communication is said to be more listener-centered than the more speaker-oriented West (Yum 1988 in Giles et. al. al.

1991), the use of "excessive" emotive language in closings would actually constitute more of a risk to face in the Chinese sense, than would a brief, direct statement of the reason for terminating (see Appendices 17, 18 and 19).

In the Spanish/Spanish conversations, as well, the males and females produced about the same number of polite expressions. What I believe to be the case here, though, is that male and female Spanish speakers used similar numbers of polite expressions, but for different reasons. The males are displaying their verbal virtuosity, as a way of seeking admiration and success.

On the other hand, the females' use of expressions oriented to positive face is a result of the Latin traditional sex-role ideology. The Latin gender code requires women to express emotion and to attract and hold the listener's attention (McConnell-Ginet 1983). With both Spanish and English-speaking male partners, the females are diverging toward prototypically feminine patterns (Giles and Coupland 1991).

The closings of the English/English conversations show a marked effect for gender, with the females producing more polite expressions. This figure is interesting because the English/English conversations were least often closed by the ICP, so that a higher number of polite expressions by the OCPs could be expected. But this was not the case. The ICPs still produced more than twice as many polite expressions as the OCPs.

In the case of the Chinese and their English-speaking partners, the females used more polite expressions than the males because they were also the ICP-ICCs. The males were more often the cooperating OCPs. However, I have claimed that, for the Chinese, linguistic and cultural differences increase social distance to a greater extent than they do for the Spanish speakers. The greater distance has an affect on the degree of formality perceived in the relationship and the corresponding formal procedures required to close a conversation.

I had predicted that more polite expressions would occur in the closings of conversations between males and females than same sex conversations owing to differences in power and discourse experience which create a context of uncertainty and tension. This hypothesis was not confirmed in cases where the interlocutors shared the same ethnic background.

However, where the participants were of the opposite sex and of different linguistic backgrounds, significantly more polite expressions were produced. This increase reflects an interaction between gender and cultural differences. Compound differences are producing the high or more polite styles associated with a certain sense of strain between interlocutors (Hodge and Kress 1988).

In the case of the Spanish and Chinese speakers, the experience of speaking Spanish or Chinese in an English-dominant environment heightened in-group feelings, obviating

the need for politeness (Chang and Holt 1994). Conversely, speaking a one's second language with a native speaker of that language undoubtedly causes the non-native to use polite expressions as a way of compensating for a lack of proficiency in fluency, grammar or pronunciation.

It is also noteworthy that the average number of polite expressions occurring in the male-female conversations shows the least variation across ethnicity when compared with the same-sex conversations. This supports the notion that there is a basic male/female dynamic at work which manifests itself in conversation management practices in many otherwise diverse cultures.

Table 7.C.4: Number of Polite Expressions by Native Speakers and Non-Native Speakers of English by Gender

ENGLISH	GENDER	N	MEAN POLITE EXPRESSIONS
NATIVE	Sample	61	1.52
	F/F	20	1.55
	M/M	7	.43
	M/F	34	1.74
Significance: $p = .307$, ns			
NON-NATIVE	Sample	61	3.23
	F/F	20	4.45
	M/M	7	2.29
	M/F	34	3.29
Significance: $p = .357$, ns			
Significance for NS vs NNS: $p = .000$, highly significant			

The significant difference between the number of polite expressions in the conversation closings produced by the native and nonnative speakers of English is also due to the fact that, in the conversations between the native and

nonnative speakers, it was generally the nonnative speakers who were the ICPs. In addition, it was the nonnative speakers, or the students, who had asked for and received assistance from the native speakers. The figures for the native-nonnative conversations show that both groups of nonnative speakers were acknowledging the cooperation provided by their native speaking partners.

Social Proximity

We turn now to social distance as a variable in the number of polite expressions occurring in conversation closings:

Table 7.D.1: Social Distance and Number of Polite Expressions

SOCIAL PROXIMITY	N	MEAN POLITE EXPRESSIONS
Total	142	3.85
Intimates	29	2.41
Friends	89	4.29
Strangers	25	3.96
Significance: $p = .007$, highly significant		

The participants who were intimately related were most responsible for the significance of social distance as a variable for politeness. The utterances they produced in their closings were not as likely to fall into the category, "Polite Expressions" as those employed by the other interlocutors. We look now to see how these differences hold up in terms of the ICP and OCP roles:

Table 7.D.2: Polite Expressions by ICP
and OCP and Social Proximity

ROLE	DISTANCE	N	MEAN POLITE
ICP	All	142	2.37
	Int	29	2.41
	Acq	89	4.29
	Str	25	3.96
Significance: $p = .004$, highly significant			
OCP	All	142	1.49
	Int	29	1.03
	Acq	89	1.78
	Str	24	.96
Significance: $p = .042$, significant			

The above results indicate that the number of polite expressions produced by both the ICP and the OCP is influenced by the pair's social proximity. For the ICPs, the politeness of strangers and acquaintances patterned together, with the ICPs who were strangers actually using the highest number of polite expressions. This pattern correlates with the findings

for native speakers and non-native speakers, indicating that the non-native speakers used many more polite expressions than their native-speaking partners. Most of these ICPs were native speakers of either Spanish or Chinese.

The high number of polite expressions occurring in closings of conversations between acquaintances supports the Bulge Theory (Wolfson 1988) that friends and acquaintances are most likely to get involved in lengthy negotiation due to their concern for the status of the relationship. And, for the OCPs, at least, the bulge for polite expressions is indeed located in the middle of the continuum.

Intimates tend to know where they stand with one another so they feel freer to deviate from conversational norms. Recall, though, that the closings of conversations between intimates were relatively long, containing an average of 13.34 information phrases. This inconsistency indicates that the interlocutors who are intimately related are using other kinds of expressions such as humor, irony and ritual insults to construct closings.

Lakoff's (1972) Rule #3 for friendly or intimate politeness obliges conversational participants to produce language which encourages feelings of comraderie. Such language must be recognized as less formal than that reserved for use with acquaintances or strangers. I claim that intimacy is signaled by brevity, ellipsis or humor, as well as by free flowing terms of endearment. Boxer (1993) noted that some

rapport-building behaviors occur almost as frequently among strangers as they do among friends and acquaintances. Unlike Wolfson's (1988) study of compliments, Boxer's study of indirect complaints showed the characteristic Bulge was located, not in the middle of the social distance continuum, but was always found somewhere near one end or the other. We see then that, for the ICPs, the bulge representing the number of polite expressions in conversation closings is located at the high-distance end of the social continuum.

We are less polite with our closest friends and intimates, because, with them, we have considerably more latitude in speech behavior (Laver 1981), and we are expected to make use of it. With strangers, we can take very little for granted. It is also the case for these subjects, that by making themselves available for interaction with students, the strangers were providing valuable help. The intimates, on the other hand, were simply fulfilling their expected roles.

It should be noted here that the conversations between strangers tended to be between students and fellow students or students and teachers or tutors at the college whose role it is to offer help and encouragement to them. As was noted, these strangers had all performed a service for the students. That fact was always acknowledged in the form of polite expressions.

If we look at the figure for the OCPs, we see that they produced an average of barely one polite expression, demon-

strating the differentiation between the ICP and the OCP all along the social distance scale. Witness the closing below:

(1)

+ SJ = Su Jing: F/Ch/31/stud
 *~G = Gail: F/ Eng/ 30/tutor
 Place : The ESL language lab at the college

Topic: Colors of clothing in China and the U.S.

G: Red is very saying 'Oh here I am her I am', you know,
 It's a lot of attention
 so I think red's a very much of an attention kind of
 thing
 & in the United States.

SJ:% Okay.
 Today I learned a lot from you.
 Thank-you so...

G: Good.
 Good.
 You're welcome.

SJ: Welcome.

The strangers who were the subjects in this study had all been selected by their partners precisely because they had, for one reason or another, been perceived to be friendly and open to friendly relationships with students who were not native speakers of English. So, as the Bulge Theory would predict, there were more polite expressions in these closings because there was a potential for lessening the social distance.

My view with respect to the way we interact with strangers is that, with such interlocutors, we make a number of distinctions. One has to do with who approaches whom. We are more polite with strangers we approach in order to initiate a transaction such as asking for directions or, say, change for a dollar than we are with those who ask us for something.

Sacks (1992:406) points out that not everyone who is a candidate for being called a stranger will in fact be regarded as one. Among those who help us in some way are people such as doctors or dentists, doing what their professional roles require of them. The policeman or counselor who helps an unknown person is, for that encounter, the policeman or the counselor, not a true stranger.

Another important factor seems to be whether or not there exist commonalities of interest or experience. If, for example, we are traveling far from home and encounter another traveler who is from our own country, or better yet our home state or town, we experience feelings of solidarity and affinity that encourage an informal, in-group style of conversation.

In Mary Gordon's (1990) novel, The Other Side, one of the characters describes how, at Disneyworld, comraderie develops among men from disparate walks of life who would normally have little to do with each other. But, in spending a few days at this place away from home, these non-custodial, divorced fathers share the goal of orchestrating a pleasurable experi-

ence for their children who may or may not be appreciative. We do not treat such people in these settings as a real strangers. The closings of conversations with these comrades-in-arms will contain a good deal of phatic communion with numerous expressions oriented to solidarity and positive face. With these interlocutors, a new relationship has come into being --- even if a temporary one --- and it must be nurtured (Laver 1981).

Power Relations

The hypothesis with respect to power and was politeness was that there would be more polite expressions in the closings of conversations between persons whose relationship was characterized by symmetrical power relations. With asymmetrical relationships, roles are well defined and there is less room within which social proximity can be negotiated.

Table 7.E.1: Power Relations and Number of Polite Expressions

POWER RELATIONS	N	MEAN POLITE EXPRESSIONS
Total	142	3.85
Symm	111	3.59
Asymm	31	4.77
Significance: $p = .040$, significant		

Table 7. E.2: Polite Expressions by ICP and OCP and Power Relations

ROLE	POWER	N	MEAN POLITE EXPRESSIONS
ICP	All	142	2.37
	Symm	111	2.08
	Asymm	31	3.39
Significance: $p = .001$, highly significant			
OCP	All		1.49
	Symm	111	1.51
	Asymm	31	1.39
Significance: $p = .73$, ns			

My hypothesis with respect to power was not confirmed because the conversations characterized by a power differential contained an average number of polite expressions in the closing significantly higher than in the conversations between status equals. This result is due to the politeness of the ICPs. Most of the polite expressions in the asymmetrical conversations were produced by the ICP-subordinates who were initiating closings with their superiors. The students had all requested and received assistance from their (superior) partners.

In the closings, they expressed pleasure and gratitude to their superiors, with their partners supplying the second pair parts of adjacency pairs such as "you're welcome" or "no problem" (Schegloff 1988). By offering a preclosing signal and not prolonging the interaction, the students were according their tutors, teachers or employers the deference expected toward persons of high status. The subordinates were respecting the addressees' privacy and authority and showing that, while they are appreciative, they will not carry things too far.

We can see that, unlike the those for the ICPs, the figures for the OCPs show little difference in politeness based on power relations. This, I believe, is because it is the ICP-ICC who must be concerned with mitigating risk to face, especially when it is the superior's face. The OCP is the one

being left, so to speak, and the main concern for this party is to cooperate and hide any feelings of rejection engendered by the preclosing signal (Goffman 1967).

Next we consider gender and power. Do men and women approach asymmetrical power relations differently? The findings below compare the number of polite expressions for the superior and the subordinate across gender categories:

Table 7.E.3: Polite Expressions by Superior and Subordinate by Gendermix

GENDERMIX	N	MEAN POLITE EXPRESSIONS BY SUPERIOR
Sample	30	1.37
F/F	8	1.38
M/M	5	.60
M/F	17	1.59
Significance: $p = .700$, ns		
		MEAN POLITE EXPRESSIONS BY SUBORDINATE
F/F	8	4.25
M/M	5	1.80
M/F	17	3.35
Significance: $p = .057$, close to statistical significance		

The figures for power and gender indicate that men and women do not treat power differences alike in conversation. It has been noted elsewhere in this study that women favor a speech style which disguises asymmetry. However, these findings show that it is the female subordinates, rather than the female superiors, who are producing the high number of polite expressions. They affirm Labov's (1978 in Hodge and Kress 1988) claim that "covert prestige forms" are most frequently employed by low-status groups. Polite behavior in closings serves the dual functions of strengthening solidarity bonds and communicating counter-ideological messages.

Men are said to be more comfortable with hierarchy (M. Goodwin 1990), perhaps because it is compatible with the global archetype of manliness which stresses competition and efficiency (Gilmore 1990). Another reason is that the hierarchical structure of most societies provide greater "developmental opportunities" for males than females (Shotter 1994).

Since men associate conversation with public speaking and self display (Tannen 1992), they must protect their social identities by presenting an image of dignity and self control even when there is an acknowledged power differential. To understand the figure for the male/female closings, it must be remembered that most of the subordinates in these conversa-

tions were women. One could argue that they were subordinates by virtue of both their gender and their position in the institutional structure.

West and Zimmerman (1979 in Brown and Levinson 1987 pp. 30-31) found not only that men tended to interrupt women, but that high status men interrupted low status men. But in taking leave of males, these subordinates produced fewer polite expressions than did their female counterparts, indicating that they, like the women, felt less social distance in the male/male relationships. In other words, in asymmetrical power relationships, gender differences increase the social distance perceived to exist between the interlocutors. However, it is the subordinate, assigned to the socio-emotive role in the interaction, whose polite behavior is most affected by the interplay between power and gender differences.

VIII. OTHER PHENOMENA

Laughter

Laughter was not something I had considered in formulating my research questions. But as I worked with the data, I found that when interlocutors begin to construct the closing, it often occurred either by itself (constituting a turn), or together with expressions of parting. There were laugh tokens in the closings of 38% of the conversations studied.

It has been observed that the placement of laughter can have important consequences for conversational interaction (Jefferson 1972, Dubois, et. al. 1992). Laughter is often used to mitigate negativity, particularly the negative face threat (Coupland, Coupland and Robinson 1992). And, in fact, Jefferson (1984) observed that laugh tokens are generally found just before the termination of talk. The laughter in my data seems to be serving a number of functions in with respect to conversation closings.

I am arguing that laughter, like 'okay,' can be used to demonstrate recipients' orientation to the topic and conversation activities at hand (Beach 1995: 130-131). Freestanding laugh tokens and 'okays' in the third turn position are used to receipt and bring current activities to a close. Both types of responses, especially when they are produced by both

parties, are acknowledgement tokens which accompany a shift to the next-positioned activity (See Appendices 13 and 16).

A common situation wherein it occurs is when a speaker is expected to take a turn, but does not really want to continue the interaction, creating uncertainty or possible embarrassment. This laughter, I argue, displays the self sufficiency of the other's utterance(s) and mitigates an otherwise abrupt closing. It has often been remarked on that laughter allows the release of nervous tension and signals to the listener that the problematic or face-threatening act to come need not be taken as a slight (Cupach and Metts 1994). I believe that this is the kind of laughter occurring in the conversation below:

(1)

(Montgomery 1995, Conversation VIII C#8, "Basketball")

~G = Gerald: M, 19, student

+T = Tina: F, 20, student

Gerald and Tina are neighbors as well as classmates.

T: % I think we got to be ready to wrap this up now.
You know, so I got to go:,
Or you got to go.

G: Yeah.

T: One of us got to go.

G: Uh.. I'm (xx) away.

T: It's going to be you?

G: Yeah. I think <I'm> I'm going to play. @

T: @@ You have to go. @@
 It's been all real
 <and> and you know,
 Next time
 If it comes up again,
 I'll check you out.

G: And you ^know it.

T: @@

G: @@

In this conversation, the uncertainty has to do with which party would take responsibility for initiating the closing. Tina, the female, actually made the first move, but then, by asking, "Is it going to be you?," gave her male partner the opportunity to assume the role of official closer. She can be seen here as protecting the face of her male partner, supporting the claims found in the literature that women's conversational style is relationship-oriented (Tannen 1990). The laugh tokens in the closing are manifestations of Tina's conflicting goals to consolidate her relationship with Gerald, increasing the likelihood of future encounters, and to end the current conversation.

In a cross-cultural conversation (See Appendix 6), Yu Sheng, a Chinese male, is conversing with Marjorie, an English-speaking female. Both are middle-aged. Yu Sheng's limited proficiency in English, together with his unfamiliarity with the discourse rules governing this situation, render him unable to cooperate in the closing

sequence initiated by his partner. His laughter, I claim, reflects his embarrassment at being unable to fulfill his ritual obligations, causing his partner to do more than her share of the necessary facework.

It was noted in Chapter III that the Chinese place great value on balance and harmony in human interaction. Considering the number of expressions oriented to positive face Marjorie directs to him in the closing, Yu Sheng's laugh tokens must surely indicate his discomfort caused by this imbalance.

In another conversation between a Chinese male and an English-speaking female (see Appendix 10), the main topic had been food --- specifically rituals concerning dinner in the United States versus those associated practiced in China. In the closing section of the conversation, Stephanie playfully asked Ming, "So when are you going to invite me to your home?" Ming became confused, not knowing whether this was a real or pseudo request for a dinner invitation.

Since his relationship with Stephanie did not warrant an actual invitation to his home, Ming did not answer by suggesting a date. Rather, he responded with vagueness: "That's a good question." The laughter produced by both parties is a result of the awkwardness created by his not wanting to offend someone who had proven to be a cooperative, friendly partner while at the same time having to protect his own negative face. Stephanie, in turn laughed to cover her embarrassment

caused by the misinterpretation of her attempt at humor as well as feelings of rejection.

The laughter occurring in these conversations provides additional evidence that closing a conversation does involve a high degree of risk to face. In at least some situations represented in my data, laughter occurs when the face of one or both participants is compromised. Closings, therefore, require great delicacy, not only on the part of the leave taker, but on the part of the one being left as well. The presence of laughter related to uncertainty and embarrassment indicates that the numerous and varied forms of redress associated with leave-taking enumerated in Chapter III are truly necessary.

A somewhat different type of laughter was found in conversations between two intimates or very close friends who, perhaps owing to the presence of the tape recorder, are employing polite expressions which, given their close relationship, seem unwarranted. Goffman (1967, pp. 86-87) describes this as "playful profanation" whereby the participants poke fun at outsiders who, unlike themselves, are bound by the ritual code (See Appendix 20). In this case, the participants find humor in using polite forms which for them are novel.

This playful profanation is often tied to power relationships artificial expressions of positive face and/or honorifics may be directed to the recipient as a kind of teasing.

Goffman (ibid.) notes that these kinds of closings are frequently produced by adults addressing "those of lesser ceremonial breed" such as children, servants, mental patients and older people (p. 87; See Appendix 13).

Finally, I believe that some laughter, both within, and at the boundaries of conversations conveys another emotion --- pleasure. If we look at Appendix 9, we see that this was a conversation between two young women who had a great deal in common. They are both from the Dominican Republic and both are serious, successful students of English. Moreover, in this conversation, the two had expressed very similar reactions to American values and customs:

~F= Fanny, F, 19

+E= Elba, F, 25

F: @ Y seguir adelante
And continue moving forward

E: % Okay, Fanny

Ha sido un placer haber hablado contigo.
It has been a pleasure talking with you.

F: @@ Gracias.
Thank you.

E: Acerca hospitalidad.
About hospitality.

Fue muy bueno este tema. @@
This was a very good topic.

F: <@ Gracias gracias @>
<@ Thank you thank you @>

Espero que sigamos haciendo muchos trabajos
similares. @ @
I hope that we continue to do a lot of projects like
this. @ @

E: Okay, Fanny
 Te veo.
 I'll see you.

F: Okay.
 Gracias.
 Bye.

The laughter in this closing section reflects the women's mutual satisfaction in having had their membership in the Dominican culture and their experiences in the American culture validated (as per Bakhtin's description of the extraverbal context of the utterance presented in chapter II). According to the discursive theory proposed by Harre and Gillett (1994; pp. 146, 154-155), emotion displays (which is what I claim this laughter to be) have the dual functions of expressing an evaluative judgment and of performing certain social acts. The judgment here is an aesthetic one --they both assessed their development of the topic --- hospitality --- as eloquent and meaningful. As an aside, I think that this was conversation was particularly satisfying for Fanny and Elba, because their contact with me had always been in their second language, English, and in this interaction, they were able to draw the full resources of their native Spanish. The social act accomplished by displaying these positive feelings was that of reinforcing the relationship and conveying mutual availability for further contact.

Thus, the laughter present in the closings is a multi-functional marker. It mitigates the preclosing signals, marks

solidarity, expresses pleasure, and signifies the existence of competing social forces to be polite or succinct. These contradictory interests make the selection of metasigns to use in closing a conversation an intrinsically sensitive matter.

Humor

Banter and jokes are among the conversationally tied out-modes mentioned by Wilson (1995). This kind of transitional use of humor has been commented on by Jefferson (1984) who found that, in conversations about "troubles," laughter by both parties signalled a 'time out for pleasantries' (p. 351).

Brown and Levinson (1978 in Zjadman 1995) view joking as a positive politeness strategy, especially when it is directed at the speaker. It can be a strategy for promoting solidarity when it is directed at the addressee (Laver 1981), -- an intentional flouting of social norms. Friendly joking is described by Wilson (1995) as banter. The term refers to the use of an utterance, or series of utterances for the purpose of creating amusement by "downgrading the 'face' of some other participant." Since the prosodic features of the utterance show that it is not to be taken seriously, banter serves to foster informality, minimize social distance and reinforce intragroup cohesiveness (Zajdman 1995).

Humor has a liberating character in the sense that local rules are temporarily transgressed. Because it is less dangerous to violate norms when one holds some type of power, it is a strategy most often utilized by males and/or persons with elevated status (See Appendix 20). It has become a strategy which marks males as a gendered category, a metasign used to preserve difference and identity (Hodge and Kress 1988).

IX. LIMITATIONS, CONCLUSIONS, AND IMPLICATIONS

Limitations

Interrelating so many variables is, of course, tricky business. The discrete variables themselves are not necessarily constant. As Devor (1989) points out, there are competing social and cultural forces that continually challenge current gender prescriptions. She notes further that, in any given speech community, individuals have their own versions of gender schemata which themselves contain confusions and contradictions.

Voloshinov (1973 in Hodge and Kress 1988) points to the "multi-accentuality" of the sign. Tannen (1993) warns that conversational features, such as overlap or use of silence, which may give an impression of dominance may simply result from differences in style. Verbal epithets may signal either hostility or intimacy. The author notes that both power and solidarity are created from the same currency. Dialogic and pluralist codes create ambiguity, making it dangerous to set forth precise correlations between linguistic forms and conversational intentions.

I am aware that there are variables such as occasion, age and social class which were not part of this study, but which nevertheless influenced the speech behavior of my subjects.

I also recognize that spoken language produced in face-to-face conversation, is but one channel in a complex of verbal and non-verbal signals, and that isolating it necessarily distorts the communication process (Tannen 1983).

Comparing speech acts across cultures is problematic; it is difficult for even trained linguists to be objective about their own speech behavior or that of others (Wolfson, Marmor and Jones 1989), and it is not easy for me as a woman to distance myself from some of the gender issues raised here. Language behaviors have diverse, subtle and complex meanings (Giles and Coupland 1991) some of which may be inaccessible to someone outside a given speech community.

In addition, it was not possible to entirely resolve the problem of the 'observer's paradox. The tape recorder, which added the presence of an overhearer, inevitably increased, to some extent, the subjects' use of polite and, perhaps, conventionalized language. The overhearer, as we have seen, was to varying degrees, present in the social setting. This limitation was partially overcome by the fact that all subjects were aware that they were being recorded. And I claim, that while some differentiation may be lost, the speech patterns learned in infancy and reinforced throughout one's life in society are not so easily masked. Each of the subjects had only his/her own repertoire to draw on.

Harre et. al. (1994:21) do not draw such a sharp distinction between observer and subjects. If we share their

view that subjects and observer are "co-participants in the project of making sense of the world and our experience of it," then perhaps the recording process can be considered one influence among many on a nevertheless natural interaction.

Coulmas (1981) cautions against treating speech functions as "invariable abstract categories" differing only in linguistic code. Verschuren (1987) notes that most studies of cross-cultural communication focus on culture-specific attitudes toward the objects of communication, rather than on culture-specific or language-specific differences in the conceptualization of communication. Therefore, in thinking about conversation closings, one must be mindful that the act may be viewed differently in different cultures and may have a higher or lower status in the overall interactional framework.

The conclusions I have drawn about the preclosings of the Chinese or the South Americans required validation from native members of those speech communities, but I realize that all of my informants have, over time, been orienting themselves to living and interacting here in the United States.

This was made apparent to me in a conversation about closings I had with a Korean informant. I asked him whether he ever used expressions of the type, 'It was nice talking to you' or 'Have a nice day' when speaking Korean. Without hesitation he answered, "No. Never." Then he thought for a moment and amended his answer, saying that some Korean

bilinguals who have frequent contact with English speakers have grown to like this kind of politeness and have incorporated these parting rituals into their Korean discourse patterns.

For research purposes, I have treated these first-language groups as undoubtedly more monolithic than they actually are. Certainly, the native speakers of Spanish in this study would be able to identify differences in conversations routines among their native countries. Finally, there exists a good deal of individual variation in estimating the social distance and degree of risk to face used to determine how much politeness is called for in a given closing. As Stubbs (1983) points out, all speakers are multidialectal or multistylistic in that they constantly adapt to new social situations.

Many professional and social relationships overlap. In the United States, we like to think that we can have multi-dimensional relationships such as the one that exists between Martine and her employer, Karen (See Appendix 4). The two women characterize their relationship as that of employee-employer, mentor-"mentee" and good friends. Voloshinov (1973 in Hodge and Kress 1988) would argue that their warm, friendly style involves an active effort on their parts to suppress the contradictions inherent in their relationship.

The same pair of speakers may be more or less polite when one or another aspect of the relationship obtains. Their behavior may vary even in similar situations depending on such

factors as time available, environmental distractions (including overhearers) and physical well being.

Conclusions

This study has shown that conversation closings are indeed orderly and finely coordinated, and that participants continually orient themselves to this orderliness (Schegloff and Sacks 1973, 1984). It adds to this theory the claim that the roles of the Initiating conversational Partner (ICP) and the Other conversational Partner (OCP) (Grosz and Sidner 1986) are basic features of the mechanics of termination. The ICP assumes responsibility not only for initiating the conversation, but for making the first preclosing move at an appropriate transition relevance place (TRP).

Additionally, it has affirmed the function of patterned routines in closings which is to establish, maintain, strengthen social relationships (Firth 1972, Laver 1981). Herein lies the problem: the speech behaviors found in closings confirm that, while there is a need to terminate efficiently, producing the first preclosing signal implies a risk to the addressee's face (Goffman 1967, Brown and Levinson 1987). Therefore, we see in the closing sections, numerous expressions oriented to positive and negative face (Brown and Levinson 1987, Laver 1981), as well as laughter.

The findings here indicate that the degree of risk involved and the type of mitigated expected vary with respect to gender, ethnicity and social proximity (Gumperz 1978, Chen 1993).

Gender

A major finding of this study is that, in conversation closings, men and women do manage conversation differently (Tannen 1990), a reflection of the gendered nature of most societies (Gilemore 1990, Graddol and Swann 1989). In the male/male conversations, the ICP's propensity to make the first closing move is extremely strong.

In general, the women used more information phrases and more polite expressions to terminate than did the men. This effect was especially pronounced in the English/English conversations. I suggest that this is due both to females' tendency to give confirmation and support (Tannen *ibid.*) and their inferior position relative to men's in the social order (P. Fishman 1983, James and Drakich 1993).

However tempting, it would be a mistake to take an evaluative view of the closing patterns characteristic of either men or women. Goffman (1967) points out that someone who produces a long, tactful farewell may not necessarily have been spontaneously involved in the conversation heretofore. He

notes that when an individual has been bored by a conversation, he/she feels a strong compunction to conceal signs of alienation with avowals to affection during leave-taking.

Such nonverbal behaviors as laughter and pauses support the claim that closing a conversation is a face-threatening act (Jefferson 1984) in many societies. I have argued, though, that there are alternative ways of addressing threats to face. Rather than expressions oriented to positive face, signalling closeness through the absence of polite expressions is a strategy favored by English-speaking males (See Appendices 19 and 21). Humor also serves the function in closings of mitigating face threats (Zjadman, 1995, Brown and Levinson 1987), especially in male/male conversations.

The English-speaking men often show solidarity in closings by employing abbreviated closings, indicating to their partners that the social relationship is such that it allows for shortcuts and directness. The brevity and ellipsis, I claim, signifies both solidarity and power.

The strategies used by the English-speaking males, interestingly, are akin to those used by the Chinese participants of both sexes, but are dramatically different from those typical of Latin American males. For the former groups, elaborate closings are reserved for certain types of strangers, acquaintances and superiors. For Latin men, however, a considerable amount of summation and ritual

appeasement must be rendered in order to exit most conversations.

In general, the closings of the conversations between women were longer in every way measured, and this length was due to the high number of polite expressions they produced. This is evidence of the gender systems which characterize all human societies (Hodge and Kress 1988). These systems have historically accorded women a lower status and have used language as a way of socializing women into the communal discourse. The systems constrain the social meanings women may create, and politeness has been a main marker of femininity. That women subordinates use significantly more polite expressions than male ones shows that the overall system has an overriding male orientation. As with American blacks, the patterns developed by women under constraining conditions, have become ambiguous, taking on other, positive meanings such as affinity and social identity.

In spite of these gender-based differences, the results show that, for the most part, men and women attune and accommodate (Giles 1980, Giles and Coupland 1991) their speech styles when conversing with each other. The men did as much, if not more, adapting as did the women. Their variability is a virtue of the fact that they, as social agents, are bound by fewer constraints (e.g. rules of etiquette).

However, the ambiguities created by struggle and renegotiation do sometimes cause tension and confusion (See Appendices

6, 8 and 10). Closings are one site where interlocutors must deal with the issue of how to address each other. Signs of hesitation and awkwardness were present in the data.

Gleason and Greif (1983) studied men and women interacting with young children. They found that mothers and fathers do not provide the same kind of cognitive or linguistic input to their children. For example, fathers use more directives, whereas mothers use more indirect requests. The authors concluded that both styles provide positive models for children communicating in the outside world, probably because they must interact with both male and female gatekeepers.

According to Tannen, though, the "best" style is a flexible one. She suggests that both men and women could benefit from learning each other's styles. "Many women could learn from men to accept some conflict and difference without seeing it as threat to intimacy" and conversely, "many men could learn from women to accept interdependence without seeing it as a threat to freedom" (1990: 294).

As a woman, there are times when it would be reassuring to know that I could exit quickly and simply without having to worry about offending my partner. On the other hand, men may find it helpful to know that, when taking leave of female friends and intimates, doing some additional facework may save them lengthier, costlier corrective facework (Cupach and Metts 1994) later on.

Tannen's (1990) claim that gender-related pragmatic differences in style cause misunderstanding has resonated with a large segment of the general public. The differences may, especially if one style is a less polite one, cause us to form a negative impression of the speaker. They also reflect the lesser, more dependent positions of those with the more polite members of society.

The data presented here indicate that speakers of both sexes are able to adjust their closing signals to the styles of their partners, but that men have the greater flexibility. According to Hodge and Kress (1988:111), "transformational facility is a transparent signifier of freedom and power, and transformational constraints in the logonomic system signify the opposite." An equality of access to the social arena will be a rhetorical achievement (Shotter 1993); therefore language use as it relates to gender will continue to reflect ideological struggles and contradictions.

Ethnicity

The American English, Chinese, and the Latin American Spanish data provide a clear view of the varying standards and conventions associated with conversation management. For American interlocutors, ending a conversation inherently involves a risk to face and must therefore be done carefully. Nevertheless, English-speakers abide by Grice's (1989) maxim of quantity in that they are not more extravagant with expressions of positive face than the situation requires. The ritual code requires that participants not appear to be too eager or over-involved in the interaction (Goffman 1967).

The Latin American speakers of Spanish, as expected, produced the longest and most polite closings. Both the men and women used a profusion of expressions oriented to positive and negative face (e.g. as when the speaker apologizes for taking too much of the hearer's time). They also constructed detailed summaries of the topics they had discussed. For Latinos, closing a conversation not only involves a risk to the addressee's face, but it provides the speakers a last opportunity to demonstrate their verbal virtuosity and their self-identification with high-status groups they perceive to be bound by ritual propriety (Dealy 1992).

While the Chinese are generally concerned with maintaining harmony and protecting face (Goffman *ibid.*), other factors

such as the concept of pao or emotional debt (Chang and Holt 1994) come into play so that their closings seem to other groups quite abbreviated. When speaking to non-Chinese, the Chinese speakers showed that they were concerned for the negative face of their partners. They also indicated that, in terms of politeness, they were aware that the pragmatics of their first and second languages were different and thus collaborated with their partners to produce more polite closings.

I suggest, though that, underlyingly, most speakers throughout the world are not so different from the Latin Americans (See Appendix 9). We all use conversation openings and closings to present ourselves as a unique but social persons (Harre and Gillett 1994). Through interactions with others, one forges a personal identity and situates oneself in the world. In attuning the closing material to the anticipated reactions of the listener (Bell 1984) a speaker demonstrates his/her sense of responsibility as an agent and his/her location in a network of mutual obligations.

We see that the American, Latin and Chinese and North American cultures have different ritual standards (Goffman 1967) or discursive validations (Harre and Gillett 1994) which define these responsibilities and constrain individuals' disposition to take leave of their partners expediently. These differences are reflected in the varying lengths of the closings and the number of polite expressions employed. As

with gender, it is not difficult to see how these conversational differences could cause intercultural misunderstandings.

But it is also true that there are limits to this variety (Firth 1972). The mechanism for closing a conversation functions in much the same way across cultures, and involves about five to eight speaker turns. The minimum requirement seems to be a closing down of the topic, a preclosing signal, an agreement to close, followed by the actual terminal exchange.

Social Proximity

The ways that we think and talk about the world are social and interpersonal (Harre and Gillet 1994). This study confirmed that the ways we manage conversations and conversation closings are strongly influenced by the closeness or distance we feel to exist in the relationship at hand. The Bulge Theory (Wolfson 1988) accurately predicted that the conversations between acquaintances would contain the highest number of information phrases. It was correct only with respect to the number of polite expressions produced by the OCPs. But the theory did not prove to be adequate to explain all of the findings presented here.

The closings for intimates and acquaintances were alike in terms of length, measured in real time. The findings for politeness showed that the number of polite expressions in the conversations between strangers was as high, and in some cases higher than it was for the conversations between acquaintances. Therefore, Boxer's (1992) theory is needed to explain the results in this study wherein the bulges were found at one or the other end of the social distance continuum.

The findings for polite expressions by the ICPs paralleled Boxer's findings on indirect complaints which showed that the speech behavior of friends and intimates are more alike for some types of complaints whereas the frequencies of friends

and strangers pattern closer together for others. The ICPs used slightly more polite expressions when closing conversations with strangers than they did with friends. The employed significantly fewer taking leave of intimates.

When people have entered into a social relationship, there is the presumption of an agreement that they will protect the social identities of each other (Cupach and Metts 1994). At the same time, the norms of a community would seem to apply more stringently to friends and strangers than they do to intimates who feel freer to create their own private codes and understandings.

The terms 'stranger,' 'friend' and 'intimate' are, of course, imprecise. I have come to see the category, 'friend' as an extremely large one so that someone whom we might, for example, know by sight, will be labeled as an acquaintance, but, may on occasion, be treated as a stranger. Likewise, a friend with whom one shares many characteristics and values in common, even when there is infrequent contact, will be spoken to in a style usually reserved for intimates.

These results lead me to conclude that in closings, we distinguish between different classes of strangers. We easily dismiss those who are intrusive or whom we are not likely to see again. But we are polite with those with who we share certain commonalities, those who render us a service, and those with whom there is the potential to develop a social relationship.

Wolfson's (1988) theory is that differences in power and status are usually fixed and therefore discourage negotiation. These results show, however, that, in terms of length, there were no significant differences in the figures for the symmetrical and asymmetrical conversations. This was because there are institutional role relationships such as teacher-student which encompass not only a power differential, but a supportive role of enabler as well. The teachers in the study temporarily relaxed the boundaries of control to create a conversational atmosphere for the students.

The figures for politeness, though, do confirm the Bulge Theory with Boxer's modifications. There were somewhat, though not significantly, more polite expressions produced in the conversations between equals. The high number of polite expressions is due to the students' cultural backgrounds (both Latin and Chinese) which emphasize respect for teachers. Respect involves primarily negative face. The students appreciated the accessibility of their instructors, but recognized the difference in status by using not only expressions oriented to positive face, but also by invoking the interests of the addressee.

Implications

By illuminating a common (if not universal) conversational signal with respect to three important variables, I hope I have contributed to our understanding of the organization and structure of conversation as a genre of human interaction. These findings show how the ordinary use of language in everyday situations transmits and changes the culture. They confirm that the specific functions for which we employ language, in turn, shape the linguistic system. They also answer the frequently heard call for empirical evidence to confirm, refine or disconfirm various claims voiced about the speech behavior of persons belonging to particular groups.

The study underscores the importance of teaching second language learners conversational strategies. Assuming the desirability and possibility of this endeavor, it adds to the current body of authentic native-speaker/native speaker and non-native speaker/native speaker discourse. But there is a need to collect still more real-life data on which to base classroom models of spoken language (Cathcart 1989).

Since a major objective of second language learners is that of mastering the appropriate use of the target language in everyday situations, increased knowledge of the most common and most useful linguistic items together with the social rules which govern American English speakers' talk will

benefit both ESL teachers and their students. Familiarity with rules of American English discourse should give nonnative speakers confidence to create their own opportunities to interact meaningfully with native speakers. This creates a kind of homology in that these interactions, in turn, will further advance the language learning process.

This study of conversation closings underscores the dialogical relations between the utterances we produce in verbal communication. While I have, for the purposes of this study, designated one party as the initiator of the closing, I now realize that it is only when we sense that the topic is more or less complete, that our partner has had her say, that a preclosing signal will be offered. Conversation closings are collaborative. Both parties work at minimizing potential risk to one's own and the other's face. Successful closings, are collaboratively co-constructed by the interlocutors participating in the internal and external speech of one another (Bakhtin in Todorov 1988).

I agree with Hodge and Kress (1979, 1988) that the most interesting way to view language is as a dynamic, living process. The utterances found in conversation closings tell us about the social organization of the participants and about the immediate conditions of their interactions.

Discursive skills enable us to participate in symbolic interactions and thus to make sense of, and indeed create our social environment. One such basic skill has to do with

beginning and ending conversations smoothly and harmoniously, so that our intentions will not be misunderstood and so that our partners will be amenable to future interactions.

Finally, it is important to emphasize here that, with one or two possible exceptions, all of the conversations in my corpus of data were closed cooperatively and harmoniously. I found little evidence of genuine misunderstanding or ill will. Granted that I was not working with naturalistic data; these subjects were, in a sense, performing. Interlocutors can and do close conversations in ways that disregard the positive and negative face of their partners. Still, it would be a mistake to exaggerate gender or ethnic differences, thereby ignoring the many similarities which were present.

I have not strongly endorsed any single explanation for differences which I have found. Gender was a powerful factor, especially with respect to the role of the length and in determining length. Overall, the male/male conversation closings were contained fewer utterances and fewer polite expressions than the other gender-based groups. Ethnicity was important determinant of both length and level of politeness. The interlocutors' social distance also a determinant in level of politeness, but with acquaintances tending to pattern either with strangers or intimates. Intimates were more likely than others to use anomalous signals such as ellipsis and humor in their closings.

Thus, I am left with the untidy conclusion that all of the variables investigated here, and possibly others, influence the length and politeness of conversation closings. The style differences found are adaptive in nature, stemming from the organization of the societies in which Spanish, English and Chinese are spoken. These systems, in turn, create different choices and constraints for members based on gender, status and power.

It would be a mistake to claim that any group's closing style is either normative or deviant, though the subjects themselves probably see certain styles as preferable to others. Politeness in conversation is widely considered to be a positive attribute. But high styles also reveal a sense of strain and distance between interactants (Hodge and Kress 1988), and direct styles are associated with power.

Other researchers may, in the future, wish to focus on the contexts in which make communication across genders, ethnic groups and social distance more effective or problematic. The debate as to whether the gender gap (with its accompanying categories and markers) should be narrowed shows no signs of subsiding. The work of researchers such as Gumperz (1978, 1982a, 1982b) and Wierzbicka (1991) provide the explanatory frameworks needed to inform the discussion.

I like to think that studies such as this one will add to the dialogue which is now taking place between researchers working in a variety of related fields as linguistics,

ethnomethodology and cognitive psychology. All examine the ways that our minds and worlds are organized via discourse. It is a dialogue which I shall continue to follow and in which I shall continue to take part.

Well, it's been a pleasure sharing my findings with you. But now I really must go.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Discourse Transcription Symbols

Following Dubois, Cumming, Schuetze-Coburn and Paolino

UNITS	
Intonation unit	{carriage return}
Intonation unit above continued	&
Truncated intonation unit	- -
SPEAKERS	
Speech overlap	[]
Initiating conversational partner	+
Other conversational partner	~
Partner with institutional power	*
TRANSITIONAL CONTINUITY	
Final	.
Continuing	,
Appeal	?
TERMINAL PITCH DIRECTION	
Fall	\
Rise	/
ACCENT AND LENGTHENING	
Primary accent	^
Booster	!
Lengthening	:

Appendix 2: Transcription Symbols (cont.)

PAUSE	
Long	. . . (N)
Medium	. . .
Short	. .
Latching	(0)
VOCAL NOISES	
Vocal noises	()
Syllable of laughter	@
QUALITY	
Forte, loud	<F F>
Piano, soft	<P P>
Higher pitch level	<HI HI>
Allegro, rapid speech	<A A>
Lento, slow speech	<L L>
Whispered	<WH WH>
Quotation quality	<Q Q>
Multiple quality features	<Y<Z Z>Y>
PHONETICS	
Phonetic/ phonemic transcription	(/ /)
TRANSCRIBER'S PERSPECTIVE	
Researcher's comment	(())
Uncertain hearing	<X X>
Indecipherable syllable	X

Appendix 2: Transcription Symbols (cont.)

OTHER NOTATIONS	
Duration	(N)
False start	< >
Code switching	<L2 L2>
First preclosing signal	%
Subsequent preclosing signal	#
Interruption (e.g. tape recorder turned off)	((//))
NON-TRANSCRIPTION LINES	
Non-transcription line	\$
Interlinear gloss	\$G

Appendix 2: Demographic Information

You

Name _____

Recording date _____

Sex _____

Age _____

Native language _____

Native country _____

Length of time in the U.S. _____

Other languages spoken _____

Where did this conversation take place? _____ -

Your Partner

Sex _____

Age _____

Native language _____

Native country _____

Length of time in the U.S. _____

Other languages spoken _____

I would describe this person as a:

_____ close friend

_____ friend

_____ acquaintance

_____ stranger

_____ relative If so, what is the relationship

_____ co-worker If so, who has the higher position?

_____ you

_____ your partner

_____ You have the same level position.

Appendix 3: Suggested Conversation Topics

Thank-you for agreeing to participate in my dissertation study on conversational patterns. Your contribution is sincerely appreciated.

This conversation can be any length, but it need only take about ten to fifteen minutes. The recording you make should contain the whole conversation, however, from the very beginning to the very end.

In spite of the presence of the tape recorder, try to be as spontaneous and natural as possible. Remember, there is no "right" way to have a conversation!

You can talk about any topic(s) you wish, but if you would like some suggestions, I've listed a few below:

1. What advice would you give Mayor Giuliani in terms of setting priorities for the city?
2. If you have/had a son or a daughter, would you encourage him/her to participate in team sports?
3. If you had the opportunity to move out of New York City, would you take it? Why or why not?
4. What advice would you give to someone planning to move to the New York area from another part of the country?
5. What part of your education now seems most useful to you?
6. What do you think about the complaints being voiced about the violence in TV programs? If you agree with them, what should be done?
7. What do you think about network TV news programming? Is it accurate? Is it balanced?
8. Are you registered to vote? Do you generally know something about the candidates running for office? What influences your decisions to vote or not vote?
9. Do you often shop in the stores in your neighborhood? Why or why not? Are your main considerations price, quality, location, variety, service or something else?

Appendix 2: Suggested topics (cont.)

10. Do you think it is still possible to realize the American dream in the United States?
11. What are the most pleasurable and the most disagreeable aspects of being the age you are now?

Carol Montgomery

Appendix 4: Weekend Plans
XX A #1: 1995

M=+ Martine: F, 48, Eng., Karen's secretary
K=* Karen: F, 34, Eng., attorney
Place: Law office where they both work
Time: Friday, early afternoon

M: So what you doing this weekend?

*
*
*

M: But uh..

% I think we've reach our time limit .. unless ..

K: Really?

M: Well . uh..

K: You didn't finish telling me what else you're doing this weekend.

M: Oh this week- ..

All right.

Let's wrap it up.

This weekend?

We're gonna go to the balloonathon in the morning,

K: =on Sunday,

M: =Sunday too I'll do my religious thing

K: Uh huh,

M: & in the morning.

And we'll have brunch with some friends,

<and then> as usual, and then uh

Go to the balloonathon.

Maybe we'll take Carlos, my son,

And his girlfriend Robin with us,

Perhaps

K: @

M: & And then part ways.

K: @

M: And then I go to my friend's house and ..

K: Ah:

M: The weekend will continue,

K: Ah:

M: Oh: & As yours will, @@@

K: @@

M: As an aside, Karen is <my>
uh my therapist,
My friend,
And uh..
I'm very lucky to have her as part of my life.

K: Oh::
I'm very lucky to have ^you.

M: Oh, thank you.

K: & As part of ^my life.

M:# Well thank you for doing this with me, Karen.

K: My pleasure.
I hope we didn't bore --
What's your teacher's --

M: Carol.

K: I hope we didn't bore you, Carol.

M: @@
I'm sure this is quite different than most of the
other tapes.
But then again, maybe not.
And don't forget to give me that point, Carol,
Okay?

K: @@

M: I need every single one @
Thank you.

K: Thanks, Carol.

M: Okay.

K: Bye.

M: Bye.

Appendix 5

(Montgomery: field notes 1994):

Place: a sidewalk on a street in Park Slope, Brooklyn

Time: Saturday afternoon

Participants: Two white males who appear to be in their thirties

B is pushing a baby stroller.

A: % Okay.

We're gonna have lunch at Hal's tomorrow.

B: Okay.

I may not --

I may have to take Jackie to Jersey City to a job
& interview tomorrow.

A: We'll talk.

B: We'll see.

Appendix 6: Desk
IV C # 2, 1994

Margaret= F Secretary, LaGuardia Community College, age 60,
L1=ENG
Yu Sheng= M ESL student, LaGuardia Community, age 52, L1=CH,
3 mos. in US

M: % Well, I have to get back to my desk.

YS: Yeah, yeah,

M: But I'm so glad that we met.

YS: Yeah.

M: And we talked and [uh] --

YS: [Yeah].

M: Please come and see me,

YS: Yeah, yeah.

M: Whenever you have time,

YS: Yeah.

M: .. And tell me how you are.

YS: Yeah.

M: Come and say ^hello to me.

YS: Yeah.
Thank-you thank-you (XX).

M: So nice to meet you.

YS: Thank-you thank you.

M: ^Very nice to meet you.

YS: (@@@) Thank-you.

M: Good luck.

YS: Thank-you.

M: Take care,

YS: Thank-you.

M: Bye bye.

YS: Bye bye.

Appendix 7: Color
XI C #4: 1994

+E =Eva: Sp/F/ 22/stud
~A =Alex: Eng/M/24/stud

- A: As you said, you know,
It's a sad thing that we have to fight with each other.
We have to hate other people
simply because they are a different color you know.
But uh- it's just something we have to learn to live
with.
- E: Yeah.
- A: % But uh- listen.
You know I have to run.
I have a class to go to.
But uh- when you're free.
Maybe we can talk about this a little more you know,
- E: Yeah well.
I'm free on Saturdays night.
If you want I can call you.
- A: Yeah. <Tha-> That sounds good.
Uh- because you know <I-> I'm doing some kind of research
on this also.
And uh- you know since you are interested in this topic,
Maybe we can talk about it.
Why don't I give you a call and we'll see what happens.
- E: All right,
- A: =All right.
- E: Okay.
- A: Okay then.
Nice seeing you.
- E: Take care.
- A: Okay.
Bye.

Appendix 8: High School

XI C #9: 1994

Jose: M/ 19/ Span./ Col./ student

Samantha: F/19/ Eng./ U.S./ Afr.Amer./ student

P=S

I=J

Topic: Differences between high school in Colombia and high school in the U.S.

J: I mean parents and teachers care more about education.

% But anyway

Uh just I want you to remember

That the difference in-- you know

In getting an education

Is not about differences.

It's just about getting one.

It doesn't matter-- you know

How the teachers are

Or how we behave

Or how we get the grades.

Just make sure that we get one which--

I mean like uh

S: pass.

J: Yeah.

Pass.

Like I did.

I got my education, my diploma

And now I'm ^here.

And I thank God and my teachers

Back in high school.

Thank-you lady ... young lady.

S: Bye.

Appendix 9
II A # 2

Visits: June 1995

+F = Fanny, F, 19, Dominican Republic, student
~E = Elba, F, 25, Dominican Republic
Place = the college
Fanny and Elba are classmates.
Topic = hospitality in the Dominican Republic versus
hospitality in the United States

F: Elba, me gustaría saber
Elba, I would like to know

Si tú has notado algunas diferencias
If you have noticed some differences

Sobre hospitalidad en Santo Domingo
Between hospitality in Santo Domingo

O sea la República Dominicana
Or rather the Dominican Republic

Y (lo) que ofrecen en Los Estados Unidos.
And that offered in the United States.

E: Bueno, Fanny,
Well, Fanny

Yo puedo notar que es totalmente diferente.
I can see that it is totally different.

Y la gente en los Estados Unidos (02)
And the people in the United States (02)

En la República Dominicana
In the Dominican Republic

La gente te reciben con más calor
The people welcome you more warmly

A cualquier hora
At any time

Tú no tienes que avisarles que tu vás.
You don't have to tell them that you're coming.

Tu eres bien venida dondequiera que vas.
You are welcome whenever you go.

A cualquiera hora
At any time

Y no importa
And it doesn't matter

Que tenga yo haciendo.
What I may be doing.

Siempre tengo tiempo para tí.
I always have time for you.

*
*
*
*

F: Tenemos que atender eso.
We have to keep that in mind.

<Tam-> uh también
Also

Y debemos tener un poco de --
And we should have a little bit of --

Debemos ser un poco flexible
We should be somewhat flexible

También con ellos.
With them too.

Porque quizás si nosotros encontramos
Because perhaps if we find

Que su cultura es un poco diferente
a la nuestra,
That their culture is a little bit different
from ours,

Quizás ellos encuentran que nuestra cultura
Perhaps they find that our culture

También es diferente.
Is likewise different.

Y no mezclan. (02)
And they don't mix.

Y yo creo que
And I think that

Como somos humanos,
In that we are all human beings,

Y el mundo es tan grande,
And the world is so big,

Yo creo que cada cual
I believe that every creature

Tiene su forma diferente de actuar
Has its own way of being

<De --> me imagino,
<Of --> I imagine,

Tratar las personas
Treating other people

Y (02) yo creo por eso
And I believe that that is why

Sera (dos) mundos
There are (two) worlds

Por eso sera una República Dominicana
That's why there is a Dominican Republic

Una Nueva York, un México, un Honduras
A New York, a Mexico, a Honduras

Diferentes paises.
Different countries.

E: (Tu sabes, Fanny?
You know what, Fanny?

Yo estoy de acuerdo contigo.
I agree with you.

Yo creo que debemos respetar cada cultura
I think that we should respect every culture

F: =Sí.
=Yes.

- E: Y costumbre.
And custom.
- Y tomar lo mejor de cada una.
And take the best from each one.
- F: Muy bien.
Very well.
- E: Si estamos aquí en America
If we are here in America
- Vamos a respetar las costumbres Americanas
Let's respect the American customs
- F: Si.
Yes.
- E: Porque estamos-- somos inmigrantes de un país
Because we are-- are immigrants from one country
- Y tenemos que saber
And we have to realize
- Que los Americanos también tienen sus valores
That the Americans also have their good points
- Y su cultura tiene sus valores también.
And their culture has its good points too.
- F: Si.
Yes.
- E: Yes bonita también.
And it's nice too.
- Ellos sabrá porque ellos son así.
They know why they are like that.
- <Porque no se puede --> Porque no se puede--
<Because one can't -->
- F: No se puede--
One cannot --
- No podemos culpar ni criticarlos
We can't blame or criticize them.
- Simplemente estamos haciendo una observación.
We are simply making an observation.

E: Um:

F: De algunas diferencias
Of some differences

Y algo que quizás no <X tu X> gustes
And something that you might not like

<No gustes --> also que quizás nos guste
and maybe something we like

E: Claro/
Of course/

Vamos a tomar lo mejor de cada cosa.
Let's take the best from each thing.

F: Exacto.
Exactly.

E: A disfrutar de está linda ciudad
To enjoy this beautiful city

Y vamos a compartir con los Americanos
And let's share with the Americans

(XX) @@

F: @ Y seguir adelante
And continue moving forward

E: % Okay, Fanny ((in English))

Ha sido un placer haber hablado contigo.
It has been a pleasure talking with you.

E: @@ Gracias.
Thank you.

E: Acerca hospitalidad.
About hospitality.

Fue muy bueno este tema. @@
This was a very good topic.

F: <@ Gracias, gracias @>
<@ Thank you, thank you @>

Espero que sigamos haciendo muchos trabajos
similares. @ @
I hope that we continue to do a lot of projects
like this. @ @

E: Okay, Fanny ((in English))
Te veo.
I'll see you.

F: Okay.
Gracias. Bye.

Appendix 10: Dinner
IV C #5: 1994

+M= Ming: M/Ch/30s/stud

~S= Stephanie: F/Eng/20s/stud/classmate of Ming

Place: The college student lounge

Topic: Dinner in the U.S. and China

S: So when are you going to invite me to your home?

((both laugh))

M: That's a good question.

S: (((@)))

M: % Okay.

<I> I hope this date come pretty soon.

((both laugh))

S: Okay?

M: All right.

I think the time...

Okay.

Thanks for your time,

And uh..

S: You're welcome.

Appendix 11

Field Notes
Joint Venture: April, 1994

M/F Eng/Eng

Pl: Graduate Center cafeteria

Topic: joint business venture

+*Paul= M, white, 30s, position senior to S's

~ Sharon= F, white, 30s, position junior to P's

P: % I got things I gotta be doing.
I feel guilty about it.

S: I appreciate ^doing this with you.

P: No, no,
I hope that we can get something off the ground.
... So what did we talk about?
((begins to write)) ...
Private label... (XXXX)
And we'll both think of more.

S: How do you want to deal with that?

P: (XXX) and we'll call 'em up.
I just heard about an environmental channel
... And the home shopping channel.

S: All right.

P: But that's just a phone call.
No time spent.

S: # Okay.
..Okay.

P: What else did we talk about?
((lists several topics))

S: I'd be happy to put it together in such a way
That we'd be promoting a joint venture between the two
of us.

P: So if you get it together as a joint partnership
... Whatever you want
<It> it's appropriate.
You're the expert.

S: Uh huh.

P: Think about it.

S: Thank-you.
I appreciate it.
I ^definitely appreciate it.

P: We talked about eco groups
...Natural foods.
We'll both think about that some more
... Gift merchandising
.. Product centers
... what do you think?
I feel guilty.
I wish I had more time.

S: I'm glad you ^don't.
Then you wouldn't have a business to run.

P: You're very relaxed about that,

S: So you're off to Duval and Company.
Where are they?

P: Right here.
Next door.
My clients are very nice people.
.. We're getting snow.

S: Really?
((looks out of the window))
We're certainly getting a lot of that.

P: I'm sick of shoveling.

S: Yeah.
Me too.

((Both get up to leave))

P: Do you have a coat?

S: Yeah.
I'm going to the bathroom.
Then I'm gonna get going.

P: Okay.
Great to see you.

S: You too.

P: I'll walk you over there.

((P gets up from his seat first))
((P and S leave together))

Appendix 12: Hiphop
VII C # 10, May 1995

+G= Germaine= 26, Eng, student
~D= Dean= 29, Eng, Germaine's boyfriend
Dean and Germaine have daily contact.
Topic: music
Place: Germaine's home

D: *
 *
 Tell the story of a lifetime.
 You know write it into rock.

G: % Okay.
 Well this is all interesting,
 And we could probably go on for hours and hours,

D: no: doubt

G: But you know as it is,
 I got to go home/

D: uh huh

G: So I'll speak to you tomorrow/

D: O:kay,

G: Nice having this chat with you/

D: Okay,

G: And you have a good night.

D: And you too.

G: Bye.

D: Bye.

Appendix 13: Distance
XIX C #8 May 1995

+ Annie= F, 23, Sp, Student
*Glen= M, 44, Eng, High School guidance counselor at the
school Annie attended
Place= Glen's office
Topic= Hospitality in the Dominican Republic and New York
city

G: % Well, Annie,
One of the things I ^always liked about you
was uh your openness and your honesty
Even when we disagree.

A: @@

G: Really.
It's one of the things
<that--> that I always <respect that> respected about
& you.

A: Thank you.

G: And uh I think that's probably the desire to have
people & share your life,
Come into your house,
Comes from that you're a good person
<And you uh are>
And you have a feeling to be open,
And you ^want to be open with people,
And be comfortable,
And they like ^you too.

A: % Well,

G: <F Good.F>

A: O:kay,

G: Good.

A: So:

G: Good.

A: I really appreciate your cooperation.

G: And I look forward to visiting the Dominican Republic,
Going into everybody's house,
And eating their food.

A: Oh: then you will have to go,
And you will see.

G: @@ I will give you a (XX).
I'll go with you.

A: # Okay.
I ^really appreciate it Mr. Glen,
Thank you very much.

G: Thank you Annie.
As always.

Appendix 14: Funerals
XIX C # 9 May 1995

+ Dolly =F, Sp, 20, student
~*Craig = M, Eng, 28, counselor
Topic: Funerals in Ecuador and the U.S.

D: Uh huh. That's true

C: But uh yeah.
That's what it is.

D: Uh,

C: % Anything else?

D: N::o,

C: Okay,

D: @@

C: All right.

D: @@
Okay. ^Thank you.

C: No problem.

Appendix 15: Atlantic City
V A #5 May 1995

This conversation and the following two were all conducted by the same pair of interlocutors who were classmates.

+J=Jennifer, F, 23, student, native speaker of Chinese (Cantonese)

~YX=Yi Xing, F, 26, student, native speaker of Chinese (Cantonese)

Place: LaGuardia Community College

Topic: Places to go on weekends

J and Y are classmates who socialize at the college, but not outside it.

(translated from Cantonese)

J: How are you Yi Xing?

*
*
*
*

J: Maybe one day we can buy a ticket and go ((to Atlantic City)) together.

YX: Do you gamble?

J: Anyway we can go there just to see how it is.
@@@

XY: @@@

J: % We both have something to do.

XY: I don't want to keep you.

J: Bye bye ((in English))

XY: Bye bye ((in English))

Appendix 16: Transition
V A # 6, May 1995

~J=Jennifer
+YX= Yi Xing

Topic(s): The difficulties of coming to a new country and
learning a new language

Translated from Cantonese

YX: Hi Jennifer.

*
*
*
*

YX: % Do you have a final?
I don't have anymore time.
I have a final myself.

J: @@@
We have to end this conversation.

XY: Okay.
Bye bye. ((in English))

J: Bye bye. ((in English))

Appendix 17: LaGuardia Community College
V A #7 June 1995

~J =Jennifer
+YX= Yi Xing

Translated from Cantonese

YX: Hi Jennifer.

*
*
*
*

YX % Unfortunately we can't keep talking.
We don't have any more time to talk.
Thank you.

J: We have to end this conversation.
Bye bye. ((in English))

YX: Bye bye. ((in English))

Appendix 18: Affection
XXI C #2, May 1995

+ J= Jennifer, F, 23, Ch, student
~*S = Sean, M, 31, Eng, tutor
S has occasionally worked with J at the writing center
Topic: How people in China and the U.S. show affection

J: % Um Sean I know <you got) you got to go,
And <so> um:
So I --
It's nice to talk to you.
Okay.
And thank you for your time.

S: No problem.
And I hope this works out.
Have a good one.

J: Oh you too.

Appendix 19: Weddings

XIII A # 8, May 1995

+ L = Lily, F, Ch, 40, Student

~*J = Joanne, F, Eng, 31, Tutor

L and J were strangers prior to this conversation.

Place = Language lab at LaGuardia

Topic = Weddings in China versus weddings in the United States

L: Hi Joanne.

J: Hi @

L: Hi @

J: Nice to meet you.

*
*
*
*

J: ... So there is one color that is chosen.

L: % I learned a lot of things from you @
about @ American wedding.

J: Good,

L: Thank you a lot.

J: You're welcome.

L: It's time I have to go to work.

J: Oh. @
<@ okay @>L: See you.
@@

Appendix 20: Salsa
II B # 4, November 1994

~N = Napoleon, M, 20, Spanish, student
+J = Jose, M, 19, Spanish, student

J: % Anyway
 You..uh

N: You also up for lunch as well?

J: Um: Yeah.
 Let's <X go X> out there.
 We got two girls waiting for us=

N: =Blimpies.

J: Yeah. I <'ll X> set it up,
 These two beautiful Italian girls

N: {so let--}

J: & who want to meet you.

N: <X Let X> me go make a phone call.
 Then I'll see you later.

J: # All right man,
 I'll catch up to you.

N: All right,
 So.. cool.

J: Take care man.
 Bye Montgomery.

Appendix 21: Trains
Field Notes, 1993

Subjects: two Black males, both appear to be in their early twenties.

Place: Brooklyn, in a the subway station.

((A slaps B on the arm))

A: Yo man!

B: Go on.

A: Later man.

B: Later.

((A and B part ways, apparently heading for different trains))

Appendix 22: Sleep
Field Notes, 1883

Subjects: two graduate students, one male and the other female, appearing to be in their mid- to late twenties

+R= Robert, M

~J= Julia, F

Place: a croissant shop near the CUNY Graduate School
Robert and Julia are in line to buy food

R: You look familiar.
Aren't you in Latin or Greek?

J: Greek.
.. Thank God the weekend is coming.

R: Yeah.
But I'm just gonna study all weekend.

J: So am I.
But at least you get to catch up on stuff.

R: Yeah.
I'm gonna do that,
And get eight hours of sleep,

J: [sleep]

R: Sleep.

J: Yeah.

R: Yeah.

((Julia places her order.))

Appendix 23

CONSENT FORM

LaGuardia Community College, CUNY

Date _____

This is to indicate that I am aware that I am taking part in linguistic research conducted by Prof. Carol Montgomery. My participation will consist of audio-taping a ten-minute conversation with a partner and later discussing it with Prof. Montgomery.

I know that my participation is voluntary and that it will not affect my grade in any way. I also know that I can stop at any point in the research.

Prof. Montgomery will answer any questions that I might have and will share the results of her study with all informants who are interested. She will not violate my privacy not use my name without permission.

Name _____ Signature _____

Prof. Carol Montgomery

Office: E202

Home: (718) 832-2621

Office: (718) 482-2621

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