

Contents

I. Introduction	15
1. Studies on intercultural business communication: which language, which culture?	15
2. (Mis)communication and (mis)understanding: success or failure in intercultural interactions	17
3. Investigating contributions to successful communication	21
4. The study	24
4.1 The company, distributors, meetings, data	24
4.2 Research focus	28
5. Organization of the volume	29
II. Discourse and Business	31
1. Business in an international context	31
1.1 Culture, communication and management	32
1.2 International business: organizational issues	42
1.3 Business relationships	44
2. Investigating discourse in the business world	48
2.1 From professional discourse to business discourse	49
2.2 Context and culture	52
3. Focusing on the group: the meetings as a 'level of culture'	54
4. Conclusion	58
III. Methodology	61
1. Methodological approach and rationale	62
1.1. A series of analytical approaches	65
2. Methodology and data collection	67
2.1. Room arrangement, seating and recording equipment	68
2.2. Issues in gaining access to businesses and data	68
2.3. Interviews and extended conversations	70
2.4. Speech events.....	72
2.5 Method of recording and transcription	74
3. First stage of analysis	79

IV. Personal Pronouns: Ambiguity, Shifting Identities and Fluid Relationships	85
1. Issues in examining pronoun use	86
2. Literature on pronoun use	87
3. Developing a classification system for the meetings	98
4. Complexity and fluid relationships	100
4.1. Example 1 – Wide ranges of ambiguous referents	101
4.2. Example 2 – Contributing to developments	103
4.3. Example 3 – Vague processes: producing a model	104
4.4. Example 4 – Participants in processes: a distributor's use of <i>we</i>	106
5. Determining reference sets for a classification system	107
5.1. <i>We</i> reference sets	108
5.2. Ambiguity and issues in coding and tracking	110
5.3. <i>You</i> and <i>I</i>	112
5.4. Address and reference terms	113
6. Personal pronoun analysis: shifting identities and fluid relationships	115
6.1. Quantitative analysis – Pronouns	116
6.1.1. General usage, 1997 and 1998	116
6.1.2. E and F in June 1997	118
6.2. Point 1: F's relatively high use of <i>we</i> -exclusive and her higher use of <i>you</i> and lower use of <i>we</i> compared to E	121
6.2.1. Section 1: Units 39-80	122
6.2.2. Section 2: Units 262-272	128
6.2.3. Summary: F's use of <i>we</i> -exclusive and <i>you</i>	129
6.3. Point 2: E's use of <i>we</i> -ambiguous	130
6.3.1. E's use of <i>we</i> -ambiguous in June 1997: Section 1, units 288-333	130
6.3.2. E's use of <i>we</i> -ambiguous in June 1998: Section 2, units 4069-4102	135
6.3.3. E's use of <i>we</i> and <i>I</i> , with first name address and country name address and reference terms	138
6.3.4. Summary: E's use of <i>we</i> -ambiguous.....	140

6.4. Point 3: ‘At-meeting’ referents – June 1997 segment...	140
7. Conclusion	143
V. Specialized Lexis and the Nature of the Group	147
1. Why look at specialized lexis in professional settings?	148
2. Method: what counts as specialized lexis	150
3. Taxonomy – Categories of specialized lexis	151
4. Quantitative results: identifying points of interest and parts of the meeting for analysis	153
5. The use of business lexis by F and E: co-occurrences of lexis from different categories	154
5.1. F’s use of business lexis, 1997	154
5.2. E’s use of business lexis, 1997	157
6. Presuppositions and co-occurrences of lexis from different categories: sports and business as a multifaceted activity	160
7. Lexical items with number of meanings	165
8. Product-related lexis and the group at the meeting	168
8.1. E’s use of specialized lexis in monologues vs. discussions	168
8.2. Apparent confusion: clarifying product model versions	169
8.3. Introducing and using new specialized lexis	170
9. Conclusion	172
VI. Evaluation: Building Consensus for Image and Strategy	175
1. The significance of examining evaluation	175
2. Kinds of evaluation considered in this study	179
3. Functions of evaluation at the meetings	183
4. Function 1 – Image-building	185
4.1. Using explicit and instantial evaluation to create a particular image	186
4.2. Using evaluation instead of directives to build consensus for change	192
4.3. Positive evaluation and the brand name	197
5. Function 2 – Pre-empting possible criticism	200
5.1. Construction of an imaginary dialogue: Extract 33 on pricing levels	201

5.2. Evaluating the past as negative to build consensus for the present or for future strategy	204
6. Function 3 – Connotation-building	208
6.1. An example of connotation-building: <i>Renew and Review</i>	209
6.2. Context-dependent connotations	210
7. Conclusion	212
VII. Evaluation in Interchanges with Distributors:	
Managing Participation and Construing Roles	213
1. Participant roles and speech events at the meetings	214
2. Parameters: dealing with distributor comments	217
3. Analysis and discussion of selected extracts	219
3.1. Modifying the status of a distributor’s comments: acknowledging the technical observation but not the negative evaluation	219
3.2. Changing the object of evaluation and initiating shifts in participant roles	224
3.3. Directness, indirectness and the company speaker’s use of evaluation in deferring to the agenda	229
3.4. Taking up positive evaluation expressing implicit criticism: Version 888 vs. a clear lens	235
3.5. Potential conflict at the meetings: pricing and colors	238
3.6. Managing participation and building consensus: <i>strategic evaluative summaries</i>	243
4. Conclusion	249
VIII. Frames and the Group	253
1. Frames and participation frameworks	253
2. Drawing the series of analytical approaches together: shifts in frames and the positioning of participants	256
3. Categories of frames and the positioning of participants	258
4. Examples of special shifts in frames	262
4.1. Business activities in progress: the prototype	262
4.2. Strategic evaluative summaries	268
5. Conclusion	274

IX. Conclusion	275
1. Discussion of the study	276
1.1. Answering questions: the analysis	277
1.1.1. Fluid roles and flexible relationships	277
1.1.2. Common ground and the values of the group	279
1.2. Recurring themes	281
1.2.1. Business relationships, values and the character of the group	281
1.2.2. Common ground	283
1.2.3. Conflict	284
1.2.4. Features of the meeting possibly facilitating participation	284
2. Methodology	287
2.1. Analytical approach – Assessment	287
2.2. Generalizability of findings	290
2.3. Issues of access and implications	291
2.4. The interdisciplinary aspect of the study	293
3. Implications for teaching and training	294
4. Concluding remarks	298
 References	 301
 Appendices	
Appendix 1 Seating arrangements and room set up, November 1996, Day 2	325
Appendix 2 Seating arrangements and room set up, June 1997	326
Appendix 3 Seating arrangements and room set up, June 1998	327
Appendix 4 Pseudonyms and abbreviations used for participants and address or reference terms	328
Appendix 5 Table, F - Pronouns by speech event, 1997	330
Appendix 6 Table, E - Pronouns by speech event, 1997	331
Appendix 7 Table, E - Pronouns by speech event, 1998	332
 Index	 333

List of Figures

Figure 3.1. Speech events at the meetings	74
Figure 6.1. Interrelationships: four objects of evaluation	190

List of Tables

Table 3.1. Interviews and extended conversations	71
Table 3.2. Speech events identified at the meetings.....	73
Table 3.3. Transcription conventions.....	78
Table 3.4. Sample units from the transcript – Speaker F, June 1997	79
Table 3.5. Sample data display on spreadsheets	82
Table 4.1. Banks' (1988: 191) referential domains for <i>we</i>	88
Table 4.2. Referents for <i>we</i> at personnel-based BAT meetings examined by Bargiela-Chiappini and Harris (1997a: 176)	95
Table 4.3. Referents for <i>we</i> at BIP meetings	96
Table 4.4. <i>We</i> reference sets	109
Table 4.5. <i>You</i> and <i>I</i> classification system	112
Table 4.6. Address and reference terms	114
Table 4.7. Total occurrences of <i>we</i> , <i>you</i> and <i>I</i> , by company speaker in 1997	117
Table 4.8. Total occurrences of <i>we</i> , <i>you</i> and <i>I</i> , by company speaker in 1998	117
Table 4.9. Occurrences of <i>we</i> by referents, speakers E and F in 1997 and E in 1998	119
Table 5.1. The five categories of specialized lexis identified at the meetings	152
Table 5.2. Points for investigation – Specialized lexis	153
Table 6.1. Kinds of evaluation considered by the study	181
Table 6.2. The image-building function: features of extracts.....	186
Table 6.3. Evaluation in Extract 31	187
Table 6.4. Evaluation in Extract 33, F	197
Table 6.5. Pre-empting possible criticism: features of extracts	200
Table 6.6. Question-Answer projection based on units 4195-4203, from Extract 33	201
Table 6.7. Building connotations, E	209
Table 6.8. Context-dependent connotations for lexical items that can be both positive and negative	211

Table 7.1. Speech events and participant roles	216
Table 7.2. Outline of parameters – Dealing with distributors’ evaluations	218
Table 8.1. ‘At-meeting’ frames	259
Table 8.2. ‘Outside-meeting’ frames	260
Table 8.3. ‘Other’ frames – Ongoing and not distinguished by whether inside or outside of the meetings	261
Table 8.4. Example of a strategic evaluative summary	269