PLAYING THEIR GAME: BANQUETING IN SHANDONG

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This thesis is a preliminary study that attempts to address Chinese language study from a performance-oriented perspective, raising issues that are involved in becoming an accepted participant in a second culture: more specifically, for American learners of Chinese to participate successfully in the official culture of Shandong Province. An attempt is made to show that in order to become a competent participant, one must perform culture to be recognized by the target culture. Furthermore, an individual's cognitive framework is formed by negotiation with the group which requires the successful establishment and interpretation of intentions. Moreover, individuals make adjustments to fit into the group providing the arena in which the negotiation of meaning can be found. Finally, the learner must actively participate in this negotiation in cultural groups of manageable size.

This thesis also builds on the notion of performed culture as chunks of observable behavior that can be presented as models of behavior in the target group. One type of cultural performance is a game, a performance that involves a commonly recognized scoring system. Becoming a competent player in such games would be equivalent to becoming an accepted participant in a culture that recognizes each game. Additionally, by viewing performances as learnable and repeatable segments of larger cultural events, we are armed with a means to go beyond a single performance. If we equate learning to compiling a memory of an experience, memory then becomes the medium through which
the one-time experience of a game is transformed into the long-term experience of sagas which are viewed as on-going systems of games. Because cultures are made up of a number of games, participating in games can be viewed as the means through which we become individuals in a society. Thus, when developing language teaching materials and activities, pedagogues should focus on culture games.
To My Grandfather:
Forrest E. Beeler
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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

During the course of four years of language study and interaction with Chinese culture, the vital role that culture plays in meaning-making and the intertwined nature of language and culture in the context of language learning have become obvious to me. During my first stint in Chinese culture, while teaching English at Yantai University, I was able to observe a number of students of the English language that had mastered the fundamentals of the linguistic code, but, nonetheless, were what I would consider unsuccessful in communicative interactions with native English speakers because they could not accurately interpret or establish intentions.¹

Conversely, while serving as the Program Officer for the US/China Links internship program, I had the opportunity to observe American learners of Chinese who had mastered the fundamentals of the Chinese language, but who were repeatedly unable to perceive their interlocutors' intentions. This experience has raised an important question in my mind. How does a language learner approach learning a second culture so that he has the ability to decipher the intentions of members of the culture of study?

Furthermore, in interacting with Chinese in America and Americans in China, it has become clear to me that because they can not accurately establish and interpret intentions in their second culture, a large number of people find it difficult to become recognized participants in those cultures. This raises the question of how to become an
accepted and recognized participant in a second culture. This thesis is an attempt to answer these questions and to create a practical guide to becoming an accepted participant in a second culture, more specifically, for American learners of Chinese to participate in the official banquet culture of China’s Shandong Province.

The highly-structured nature of Shandong banquet culture necessitates that culture players regularly perform roles determined by the group in a game-like setting in order to establish intentions that allow them to be recognized as individuals. Because of the abundance of ritual performance in such banquets, they also provide an ideal practical example of a "real-life" game complete with rules of the game, winners, and losers.

In order to accurately assess and establish intentions, an individual must become an acute observer of culture. This means he learns the rules of the game, both acknowledged and unspoken. Equipped with a sufficient amount of the rules of the game, he can begin to apply that knowledge while in a series of games in order to develop an increasingly deeper understanding of each game until he becomes a veteran that can perform in culturally appropriate ways without first thinking about his actions. This involves creating an interpretive framework that can then be used to make educated guesses when new games are encountered.

Such a hypothesis is based on the ideas of a number of scholars working in different academic arenas. First, the notion of performance as a mode of understanding based on the ideas of Richard Bauman and Dell Hymes provides the basis for approaching learning by way of performance.² Both assert that elements of performance exist in all human activities because of their social nature. In addition, Michael Cole, a specialist in communication and psychology, contributes the notion of the teleological being, which purports that all actors are intentional agents and that the establishment of their
intentions is the key to interaction within a group.³

Working in a discipline he coins cultural psychology, Cole advances the notion that an individual’s cognitive framework is formed by group culture through adjustment to the group. This would insinuate that in order to successfully interact with a group, one must master the interpretation and establishment of intentions in ways recognized by the group. In tune with Cole’s notion of culture as a framework for interactions, Jerome Bruner, a cognitive psychologist, purports, in his concept of folk psychology, that culture is social in nature and that culture creates meaning for group members through a process of negotiation with the group.⁴ Bruner further argues that human action and experience are shaped by our intentional states and that culture, as a framework of basic default notions that constitute individuals’ world views, provides contexts within which meaning is generated. This notion of culturally determined frameworks of meaning are key when attempting to establish intentions in an alien culture. Such a view suggests that in order to accurately establish one’s intentions in a culture, an individual must negotiate meanings that fit into that culture’s framework of meaning.

If we assume that each group has its own unique set of meanings, the importance of adjusting one’s way of interpreting information when interacting with members of a different cultural group comes to the forefront. Additionally, Edward Hall forwards the idea that individuals within a group make adjustments to “sync” with each other, a notion that provides hints as to a potential strategy for becoming a member of a group.⁵ If individuals native to a group sync with the group in order to be recognized by the group, this process should also be a focal point of non-native individuals attempting to become a member of the group. It is in this realm where individuals can find the negotiation of
meaning pointed out by Bruner.

Such an approach requires that individuals must be willing to view language and culture learning as attempting to organize information in new ways. In other words, language learners should not just be learning the linguistic code employed by a group, but they should also be attempting to, first, build a new world view that incorporates the frameworks of meaning pointed out by Bruner and Cole. Then they are able to begin adjusting behaviors to fit the patterns and rules dictated by that framework.

In order to determine how to select a focus group, we need to turn to Cole’s notion that cultures are made up of various sub-units, or microcultures, which provide the setting in which individuals obtain culture through the combined processes of enculturation and acculturation. The notion of microculture is extremely important to language learners because the complexity of a cultural unit as large and diverse as Chinese culture or American culture necessitates the study of smaller, more manageable units. Because microcultures provide the smallest and most frequently encountered groups that individuals face, language learners should focus their attention on becoming competent in interacting in as many of these microcultures as possible.

However, simply encountering these microcultures is not tantamount to learning the information necessary to become a competent participant in the interactions of the group. An individual must actively participate in the negotiation of meaning that occurs within a group. This requires that the individual perform in order to be recognized by the group. Otherwise, the group will not attempt to incorporate the individual. In other words, the group, or individuals in the group, must first see value in interpreting an individual’s intentions.

Working in the area of Chinese language pedagogy and building on the ideas of Bauman, Cole, and Bruner, Galal Walker envisions cultural performance as completing a
more or less involved process rather than to do a single deed or act and as a conscious repetition of staged events. This view allows performed culture to be viewed as observable behavior that can be models of actual behavior in the target group. Walker also espouses the notion that there are varying types of cultural performances, including games, or those performances that involve a scoring system that provides a means for recognition of winners and losers. This would imply that by participating in games and becoming a competent player in such games would allow the learner to expand the number of tasks he can accomplish in a culture. Thus, language learners must understand the rules of the game which include a scoring system. Upon realization of the scoring system, learners then must be willing to take the risk and responsibility required to play the game. In other words, learners must be willing to fail to learn.

Additionally, by viewing performances as learnable segments of larger cultural events, we are armed with a means to go beyond a single performance. If we equate learning to compiling a memory of an experience and we view memory as being recorded in narrative form, memory then becomes the medium through which the one-time or short-term experience of a game is transformed into the long-term experience of sagas which are viewed as on-going systems of games involving multiple microcultures. Because cultures are made up of a number of games, participating in games can be viewed as the means through which we become individuals in a society. Thus, becoming a competent player in the games of a culture entails compiling a memory of the knowledge involved in those games to be used for reference in future games.

Chapter two of this work involves a detailed discussion of the concept of performance in order to furnish a working definition of that concept to serve as the theoretical basis for the subsequent chapters. Additionally, using ideas put forth by Cole,
Bruner, and Walker, the concept of culture as a framework of meaning within a group is shown to be the basis for dealing with new pieces of knowledge. New information is interpreted through the appropriate cultural framework in order to accurately assess intentions or to establish intentions within the target culture.

In order to establish the importance of correctly establishing one's intentions within a target culture and the importance of ensuring that all players are working in the same framework for meaning, chapter three addresses the relationship between language and communication. Many practical examples taken from personal experience are provided to point out some of the problems that are encountered when communicating in a foreign culture as well as to highlight the difficulties inherent in such interactions. However, because it is impossible to obtain all of the information involved in a game in a single experience and learning one game is insufficient to enable an individual to become a player in all of the games of a culture, chapter four confronts the notions of learning and memory. The works of Bruner, Cole, and Walker provide support for the view that memory is constructed over time by repeated engagements with games followed by rearrangements of world views to incorporate the new knowledge encountered in those games.

Following the groundwork of these chapters, chapters five, six and seven attempt to analyze a specific game involved in gaining social status in Shandong through a detailed account of official banqueting in Shandong Province, including analysis of the rituals of introduction, seating, toasting, drinking, speaking, eating and smoking. The works of three scholars in different fields are heavily cited for comparison and explication purposes. Michael Harris Bond, a psychologist who has done extensive work on Chinese personalities, provides insights about the behaviors of the players noted in the game of gaining status in Shandong banquets.\textsuperscript{10} Anthropologist Mayfair Yang has conducted work
on social relationships and banqueting in Chinese culture which is used here for comparative purposes in order to determine what is unique to Shandong cultures.\textsuperscript{11} Finally, Andrew Kipnis, an anthropologist who has conducted research on banquets in western Shandong, is discussed as the only work in this specific area.\textsuperscript{12}

These chapters should provide language learners with a practical example of an individual game and give a concrete example of a compiled narrative of a game. This particular game has been selected for its relevance to US/China Links participants whose goals are to become successful players in Chinese corporate culture. The frequency with which foreign actors are faced with this and closely related games while conducting business in China renders an understanding of the knowledge involved in such games a prerequisite to successful interaction in Chinese corporate culture. Second, in the game of Shandong banqueting, all participants are forced to participate on some level. Thus, if an American is going to conduct business in Shandong, he will not only frequently encounter this game, but he will also be required to participate to some extent. Finally, because of the emphasis on the correct performance of rituals of etiquette in Shandong games, the rules of the game are more strictly enforced. Thus, knowing how to play the game in such an environment facilitates interactions in similar games found elsewhere in China in which much less emphasis is placed on adherence to ritual etiquette.\textsuperscript{13}

Chapter eight attempts to explain how to become a player in a culture game by delineating a plan of approach for learners. Although each individual microculture is unique and every game has its own set of rules, some of the same strategies suggested here may be applicable in other microcultures and games. Finally, it is also hoped that this work will provide the ancillary benefit of shedding light on social phenomenon and
modes of thought in Shandong, as well as serve as a source of data for cultural and linguistic analysis.
CHAPTER 2

PERFORMING CULTURE

2.1 Performance As Social Acts

In order to assert that it is possible to demonstrate knowledge of a culture through performance, what is meant by performance needs to be clarified. Performance as a concept is contested and there are three interrelated notions of performance generally recognized in scholarship on the subject. First, performance can be viewed as a display of skills. Second, performance can be seen as success of activity in light of some standard of achievement. Third, performance can be a display of a recognized and culturally coded pattern of behavior. These characteristics of performance exist in all human activities because of their social nature. Dell Hymes’s hierarchy of subsets, with behavior encompassing “anything and everything that happens;” conduct including “social norms, cultural rules, and shared principles of interpretability;” and performance being “cultural behavior for which a person assumes responsibility of performance,” maps out the place of performance in human social interaction. Furthermore, as much of the work on performance done in psychology and sociology points out, all social behavior is performed and social relationships are often viewed as roles in a performance.
2.1.1 Audience

It is certain that no performance, in the sense of the notion employed here, can occur without an audience acting as critic for the performer.⁴ Richard Bauman advocates the notion that performance is always ‘for’ some audience that validates it as performance.⁵ Moreover, for performance to occur, it not only requires one isolated actor related in no other way to his audience than by their observations, but also requires active engagement between the two. Erving Goffman points out this dialogic nature of performance by asserting that the essential quality of performance is that it is "based on the relationship between the performer and the audience."⁶

2.1.2 Teleological Agents

Realization of this point leads to the next characteristic of performance as seen here, intentionality. For performance to occur, both performer and audience need to be viewed as teleological agents.⁷ In any performance in which performers share the same background, actors and audience interact based on shared interpretive frameworks to make meaning. Both performers and audiences alike have intentions that affect the outcome of the performance itself.

Additionally, players in first-culture performances are generally aware of the participants involved in that performance and actively attempt to fulfill their obligations in a particular role, whether it be performer or audience. Also, culture performances present intentions for group for recognition. Therefore, culture performances are not linked to artistic performances conducted for aesthetic value, but are also a common means for participating within a group. In this way, performance is a recognized and culturally coded pattern of behavior.
2.1.3 Performance as a Process

Now, we need to turn to Walker's appropriation of performance for foreign language pedagogy: Drawing from Victor Turner, Walker advocates that to perform is to complete an involved process rather than to do a single deed or act. Viewing performance from this perspective permits us to consider both the local and global aspects of individual agents' intentions. Tuen Van Dijk phrases it: an immediate speech act can be best understood as a single operation in a whole series of actions directed toward a general goal. Actors' intentions are not bound to the narrow confines of a single performance, but rather encompass a much broader spectrum. Motivations for actions in an isolated performance may not be fully understood without analyzing them in terms of other related performances.

2.1.4 Performance as Repetition

Marvin Carlson sees performance as a mode of understanding claiming that performance refers to "doing, re-doing, and self-consciousness about doing and re-doing on the part of both the performers and spectators." Likewise, Walker indicates that "repetition" is an element of performance. If this is the case, it would hint at the potential for recreating and remembering performances or, at minimum, segments of performances. This view enables a foreign language/culture learner to focus on these segments as the source for stored cultural praxes. It also provides a means of grouping information for later storage in memory. Additionally, performance sets up, or represents, an interpretive framework within which the messages being communicated are to be understood. In other words, cultural performances inform actors and audiences what type of situated event they are engaged in, which allows them to adopt behaviors appropriate to that category of performance. Thus, a performance can be
viewed as an event in a process which involves teleological agents, a performer and a
symbiotically linked audience, accomplishing the repetition of dialogic segments of
culture.

2.2 Performance as a Game

One question that arises concerns how to segment these performances. Eric Berne
views games as simple social interactions while, according to Walker, games are
activities that are recognized as being appropriate for the venue or field of play. In
other words, games are situated performances that involve actors with recognized roles
interacting with audiences based on culturally pre-established praxes that entail
commonly recognized reward and punishment systems. A game therefore is a very
specific kind of performance that involves a set of rules and a scoring system that
produces winners and losers. The set of rules involves the established norms of a given
game as determined by the culture. What is meant by a scoring system is that there is an
established mechanism for rewarding successful performances.

2.2.1 Levels of Participation

A game analogy implies participation on varying levels on the part of actors. As
the level of participation becomes more involved, higher levels of competency are
required for success. This supports the idea of increasingly complex levels of
participation that culminate in a sophisticated level of participation in which the group
does not accommodate the foreign player. Furthermore, game can be extended to a
sports analogy to discuss these levels of participation in more detail.
2.2.1.1 Participation as "Spectators"

The first stage of participation to be addressed here is the spectator stage which involves an individual knowing that a cultural event exists. A person at this level of competency is capable of observing cultural phenomena and cultural performances, but does not know the intricacies of what he is witness to. Any interpretation done at this stage involves using previously stored information to assess the situation.

2.2.1.2 Participation as "Fans"

By repeating participation in a culture game, the individual moves into the second stage of participation. This stage, analogous to the sports fan, involves individuals who frequently engage the same game in some capacity, usually as an observer. Fans develop a level of understanding of the game culture without actively participating in the game as recognized players. As a result, fans often make quick generalizations based on their pre-existing knowledge of other games, not fully understanding all of the intricacies of the new game. Fans engage games, but are not willing or able to put themselves in a situation where they may ultimately be declared a loser. Thus, their world view is not called into question. Because their values do not need to be re-evaluated in terms of the new culture, fans are unable to access as deep of a level of knowledge as can be reached through playing the game.

2.2.1.3 Participation as "Analysts"

Once fans become familiar enough with the knowledge of a particular game so that they are able to comment on and manipulate that knowledge, they can be seen as having moved to the level of analyst. The analyst is often familiar with reified, or public, aspects of a culture and has participated in numerous games. They are distinguished from the fan in that they attempt to analyze and comment on games. However, although analysts generally have participated in games, they are often times still removed from
the heart of the action in that they do not place themselves in scored, game situations in which they must perform their knowledge of the game. Therefore, it is possible to be an analyst without possessing the skills necessary to be a player.

2.2.1.4 Participation as "Players"

Players are those individuals who put themselves directly on the line in scored situations and are recognized as players by other players. They are subject to the game's scoring system which allows them to experience winning and losing. Players differ from fans and analysts in that they take the field of play. In other words, they place their skills and knowledge of the game on display while interacting with players. Thus, it can be stated that a player is an individual who has attained a sufficient level of understanding of the knowledge necessary for him to successfully negotiate at least one game according to a group's set of rules and who also has the ability to perform that knowledge in appropriate ways at game time.

2.2.2 Competence

It should be noted that the player category involves a continuum of experience beginning with rookies, who find themselves in game situations, but have not refined their skills or stored enough game knowledge to perform successfully on a consistent basis. It is unlikely that a rookie can step into a game and immediately perform at a high level of effectiveness. It is more likely that as he participates in a game more often, he will compile information that can be used to increase his ability to perform in that game should he encounter it again. In the initial stages, players may be able to perform on the player level, but not consistently. Veterans, on other the other hand, are those players who have developed a feel for the game. They have compiled sufficient information through repeated participation so that they do not have to think before performing in many situations.
The notion of player should also include ideas of good and bad players. There are people in every culture who understand the rules of individual games, but are not competent at playing by those rules. Coie defines cultural competency as the ability to function in and be accepted by a cultural group. A player operating at a low level of competence forces other players to either accommodate or reject him. As an individual moves up on the scale of competency, the amount of accommodation on the part of other players decreases and the level of play gradually becomes more sophisticated and more natural. However, because of the complexity of culture, the number of games that can be found in any given culture is too large to allow for an individual to reach competency in all of them. Thus, if competence in a culture is viewed as being rated by the number of games one can participate in, it is conceivable for an individual to be a competent veteran in one game, while, at the same time, an incompetent rookie in another.

2.3 Cross-cultural Performance

Thus far, the discussion has been primarily focused on performance within a single culture. When actors in a performance come from different cultures, a host of other factors come into play, most obvious and frequently cited of which is the contrast in praxis. In other words, when two individuals come from different cultural backgrounds, their fundamental frameworks of meaning may differ. However, before addressing that issue, the concept of culture should be addressed.

2.3.1 Culture

The concept of culture in scholarly discourse has a history of disputed meanings. Throughout this work, the concept of culture is similar to those espoused by scholars such as Bruner and Cole which are founded on the framework developed by Lev Vygotsky. As Cole notes, Vygotsky's "general law of cultural development" states that all means of
cultural behavior are social in their essence, origin, and change. Such theoretical underpinnings allow for Cole’s teleological beings. They also allow for Bruner’s argument that the emergence and functioning of psychological processes occur within the social-symbolically mediated everyday encounters of people in the lived events of their everyday lives. That, as will become clear later, is a key precept if the learning of a culture is to be approached from a performance-oriented perspective.

Building on these notions, Bruner, in what he coins “folk psychology,” has asserted that all human action and experience are shaped by our intentional states. What we do is dictated by those who surround us and their reaction to what we do. Furthermore, what we do dictates what those around us do, thus forming a hermeneutic cycle. Bruner also holds that culture is not just a uniform set of characteristics that describes a group. Culture creates meaning for members of a group through a process of negotiating meaning.

Culture, as the term is applied here, can be explained as a set of learned default values, created by interaction within a group, that are used by individuals for interpreting information. This mental framework for processing information continuously adapts over time while maintaining a relevance within a particular communal group. The members of this group, whether as diverse a group as an ethnic group, or as limited as a nuclear family, are any combination of actors in which information and meaning are exchanged over time.

It may aid in clarifying such a definition to note that this set of mutual meanings, or the rules for the game, function as behavioral defaults and are worked through trial and error experience within the group. Group reaction tells a member what is accepted and valued and what is not. Information then is categorized and stored forming an
interpretive framework. Through creating mutual concepts and shared meaning, culture is an indispensable factor in the formation of individual minds, providing the rules of the game by spelling out what members do and do not do. What is accepted as the norm and what is considered abnormal forms of group behavior are determined by what behaviors and knowledge are collectively chosen to be valued and which ones are labeled as taboo.\textsuperscript{23}

Unconsciously, members learn group culture by observing others and by accepting as truths or facts meanings as presented to them by the group. Choices are made to accept or reject notions as presented by a group. Members exhibit consciously or unconsciously absorbed collective culture when mimicking successful behaviors performed by other group members. A combination of conscious and unconscious compilation constructs a framework that individual members apply to understand and interpret all other information that they encounter.

F.C. Bartlett describes the cultural influence of mental organization by asserting that culture tells you how you should organize information.\textsuperscript{24} Similarly, John Gumperz, in discussing problems in cross-cultural communication, delineates a number of characteristics of culture including viewing culture as a shared system of cues or contextualization conventions based on different assumptions and with distinct ways of structuring information.\textsuperscript{25} Both views support the notion of a set of cultural default values serving as a framework for meaning. Culture as the source for a framework for interactions provides the contexts within which meaning is negotiated by individuals. Meanings then arm an individual with intentions which, in turn, provide the requisite tools for an individual to communicate.

Thus, if we assume the teleological individual, communication can be seen as the establishment and acceptance of meaningful intentions, negotiated with and from the
group, within a given context. The dialogic and collaborative nature of communication can then be accounted for. If communication is a social interaction among two or more intentional agents in which meaningful intentions are established and accepted, language learners and pedagogues alike should focus their efforts on the study of how to become an intentional agent in the culture that is the target of their study.

As asserted above, the domain of cultural groups varies with overlap and interaction among various subgroups providing a vehicle for information exchange as well as innovation. According to Cole, a culture comes into being wherever people engage in joint activity over a period of time. Cole's discussion of microcultures, a term which he employs to refer to the "myriad of subcultures that exist in such places as gymnasiums, schools, hospitals, government agencies, markets, companies, circles of friends, and teams alludes to this diversity that is present in the size and nature of cultural groups." Microcultures provide the setting for the everyday events in which the negotiation of meaning occurs.

2.3.2 Enculturation

In any cultural group, members of the group learn group culture both consciously and unconsciously. Members consciously intake group culture when they are taught traditions, the way to do something, and accepted behavior. Cross-cultural investigators also need to understand that culture is obtained through a process of socialization or enculturation by the group. Children in China, or in any culture, are the focal point of a barrage of institutional pressures that operate to ensure their absorption into society, as Margery Wolf points out in her study of sexism in China. This socialization continues through adulthood in the form of continuous resocialization. Thus, Chinese values such as filial piety are not a random phenomenon, but rather are
attributes of those available in the society considered to be desirable characteristics which have been socialized through education and discipline.\textsuperscript{30} If we are to fully understand a society, it therefore is vital to understand how these attributes are established and what factors go into the decision making process. What makes a group decide that a particular quality is appealing becomes equally as important as what that actual characteristic is.\textsuperscript{31}

An example of the types of information valued by a society can be seen in Chinese students' general ability to memorize extended excerpts of texts, a skill that stems from a societal emphasis on the ability to quote classics or works of authority. Traditionally, scholars who could memorize lengthy passages were deemed erudite and generally performed well on the official examinations. During the Cultural Revolution, awards were given to those persons who could recite the most passages from \textit{A Collection of Chairman Mao's Quotations, mao zhuxi yulu} (毛主席语录). Those who proved to have the best ability in this area were tasked as party secretaries to do propaganda work which entailed the most prestigious and influential positions. Upon realization of what form of knowledge is valued by the culture, group members actively seek to obtain mastery of that information through practice which leads to the development of a high level of proficiency in particular skills.\textsuperscript{32} Furthermore, group members seek out ways and opportunities to display their competence in these skills to the group for recognition.

2.3.3 Hidden Culture

Culture proceeds by a selection of specific practices from a large array of those available.\textsuperscript{33} Although group members are cognizant of some attributes of their culture, some aspects of the culture are totally unknown to their conscious mind. These essential
cultural characteristics underlie the basic precepts of group members' thoughts and beliefs, thus, limiting them with the yoke of default notions that constitute the meaning in their world or their world view. These notions can serve as the root of biases and preconceptions that may alter the way members understand and give meaning to new experiences. This notion of unseen culture, referred to by Edward Hall as hidden culture, is important because, in order to understand differences in culture, one must first be cognizant of how native culture affects the interpretation of a second culture.\textsuperscript{34}

As Hall also notes, often times, such defaults only become apparent to a group member upon observation of another group that does not value the same praxis or when a newly introduced non-member acts in a way deemed abnormal in terms of recorded norms. Hall deemed cultural biases to be when an organism only responds in one way to a particular situation. He also noted the tendency to destroy or reject "what could not be controlled and what did not perform in a predictable manner."\textsuperscript{35}

It should become rapidly apparent to an American visitor to China that he is acting on a conceptual framework that greatly differs from those in his new cultural environment. However, this is where one of the major problems in cross-cultural interactions lies. Individuals, more often than not, do not adjust the way they organize information when interacting with members of other cultures. Chen Ling, in describing the experiences of Chinese sojourners in America, notes that sojourners "move about as if they knew the ropes, going about their business as if they were still in their native culture. They deal with matters in the way they always do, until that moment when they find themselves in a problematic situation."\textsuperscript{36} This attitude is not exclusive to Chinese sojourners, but is also characteristic of most individuals when encountering foreign cultures.
2.3.4 Transcending The System

Group members make necessary adjustments by assessing their actions and the corresponding group reaction. Hall refers to the same phenomenon as "syncing." However, on occasion, for various reasons, an individual will ignore group response. This rejection of the norm usually comes at a cultural price which may be as reasonable as a simple notation of the discrepancy by other group members or as costly as being ostracized by the group. Normally, this occurs when an individual simultaneously belongs to multiple microcultures, of which, one values the novel notion or behavior. It follows then that members can adapt to new, outside information by reassigning meanings upon their recognition and acceptance. Thus, the shackles of unconscious cultural biases can be thrown off, if a member becomes aware of the undesired trait even if the other group members disagree. This is what Hall refers to as "transcending one’s own system." An understanding of the notion of changing one’s world view is critical in any attempt to become an accepted participant in a second culture. The earlier in an individual’s interactions with an alien culture that he is able to grasp the concept of cultural registers, or different frameworks for interpreting information, the earlier he will be able to begin constructing a new interpretive framework for interacting in the second culture.
CHAPTER 3

LANGUAGE AND COMMUNICATION

3.1 Language and Communication

According to Wundt, purposeful human activity is mediated by language and draws on the beliefs and customs of the group.¹ Stating the same axiom another way, ethnolinguists, following Edward Sapir’s ideas, hold that all human experience is to some extent mediated through culture and language.² Thus, perceiving culture as a framework which provides meaning for individuals has significance when considering the relation of language and communication. If meaning is derived from culture, then language without culture is void of meaning. Therefore, in order to learn how to successfully interact with members of a second culture, one must possess the ability to manipulate and interpret cultural knowledge. As we have seen, culture provides the framework within which group activity takes place and in which meaning is forged. Language on the other hand provides the vehicle for using that meaning in communication as well as for accessing portions of a culture that are recorded and expressed in the language.

If we take the Chinese philosopher Zhuangzi’s suggestion that words exist because of meaning, language can then be viewed as a key for accessing the meaning locked in culture.³ Or, as Walker depicts it, we should view language as a code for accessing the contexts provided by a culture.⁴ This intertwined nature of language and culture has been
observed by numerous scholars and has been the source for endless debate on the 
importance of each. What is relevant here is to note the inseparability of the two. If 
meaning is not drawn from the second culture, it will be drawn from the first culture, a 
situation that can cause communicative malfunctions.

3.1.1 Public vs. Private Code

Although linguistic code and cultural context cannot be separated during 
communication, it is important to recognize their distinctiveness in any communicative 
endeavor. The pure linguistic code of a language can be thought of as a public code or 
revealed code with which a user may access certain levels of a given culture. This public 
code consists of grammar, vocabulary, sentence structure and the like. However, as 
Michael Agar puts it, "grammar is not enough to communicate and communication can 
occur without all the grammar." The revealed code, which can be accessed through 
reified culture found in libraries and various other institutions, falls short when it 
comes to capturing the myriad of meanings and behaviors that can be found in any single 
cultural milieu.

One has to turn to the hidden code found in culture to find the so called meaning 
between the lines. What makes up the hidden code is the vast wealth of shared knowledge 
recorded by a culture including accepted routine behaviors, shared meanings, common 
presuppositions, ways of encoding intentions, and collective expectations. This type of 
cultural information is not always stored in reified culture and is created through 
common experience. Young describes it as,"the coherence of conversation is based on 
underlying propositions rather than simply on the surface structure of sentences." The 
hidden code provides participants in a given group with an additional set of rules with 
which to play the games of culture.
When my Chinese friends watch American football, they often comment that it appears to be pure chaos, a bunch of men running around without purpose. If they were familiar with the rule book, a version of which all football fans have committed to memory, they would surely be able to see the extremely sophisticated, coordinated movements that have intended results. The difficulty for language learners should be obvious. Such cultural information is not reified knowledge. Furthermore, this hidden knowledge can only be obtained through shared experience. Moreover, portions of this knowledge remain unaccessible without first obtaining some competence in the public code.

3.2 Sharing a Framework of Meaning

Michael Agar suggests that it is possible to communicate with members of another culture without possessing the linguistic code. However, the range of options available for accomplishing any desired act would be minimal at best. Conversely, it is also possible, and quite common, for a person to obtain certain levels of proficiency with the revealed code without obtaining the requisites, equivalent proficiency with the hidden code. Lin Yutang, in his 1935 book, My Country My People, referred to Chinese scholars who had obtained sufficient proficiency with the English public code to produce written texts as: "using English meat with Chinese bones" because the "words are English but the intentions are Chinese." In viewing them as being guilty of translating Chinese sentences into English words, Lin demonstrated that sharing a code is not necessarily tantamount to sharing intentions.

Muriel Saville-Troike, among others, notes the existence of culturally determined patterns of communication that are very predictable. Because such patterns form the way in which individuals affect thoughts and establish intentions within a first
culture, their presence often influences the way those individuals attempt to establish their intentions even when using a non-native linguistic code. Any native English speaker who has interacted with non-native speakers can provide examples of individuals using a non-native linguistic code without the correct corresponding cultural code. Here are a few examples I observed while teaching English at Yantai University in Shandong Province.

A. (Chinese student to American teacher: when taking leave)
   Teacher, I go first.
B. (President of Chinese University in an opening to a letter written in English)
   When will you return to China? My colleagues and I are all longing for your coming back to Wuhan.
C. (Chinese friend to American in casual conversation over the telephone)
   Do you have enough clothes?

The above examples which were delivered with the English linguistic code are perfectly acceptable if we interpret them in terms of Chinese patterns of communication. However, they become rather awkward if interpreted with an American interpretive framework. In sentence A, the Chinese student addressed his American teacher with the proper respectful title required by Chinese culture, teacher or laoshi (老师), and used a common leave-taking phrase to disengage from conversation with his teacher, I go first or wo xian zou (我先走). Sentence B, which sounds too dramatic and insincere in English, is in perfect accordance with Chinese expectations for correspondence between friends which emphasizes the “personalness” and intimacy of the relationship. Finally, in terms of Chinese patterns of communication, the question in sentence C is a normal way to show concern for a friend’s well-being and more often than not refers to wearing enough to stay warm rather than whether one owns a certain amount of clothes. However, the latter of the two may be the message conveyed according to the American cultural code.
These examples are all cases where an understanding of revealed code interfered with the communication of an individual's intentions because the revealed codes were connected with the hidden code of the wrong culture. If we take a look at Americans using the Chinese revealed code without an understanding of the Chinese hidden code, additional examples can be seen.

A. (American answering Chinese host's inquiry as to whether he had gotten his fill to eat at dinner)
   差不多了。 (Just about.)
   chabuduo le

B. (American responding to Chinese friend's request for help)
   我考虑考虑。 (I will think it over.)
   wo kaolu kaolu

The sentences above are acceptable according to normal American communication patterns, but conveyed intentions that differed from what the speakers thought they were conveying. In A, when asked if he had eaten his fill by his host, the American answered in a very acceptable manner, according to his cultural framework. Typical of most American guests, the speaker was straightforward and honest, but intended that he had eaten enough. However, the intention he conveyed was that he had not quite gotten his fill. In the Chinese context, informing one's host that he has not quite gotten enough to eat to feel full indicates that his host has not fulfilled his obligations as host. In this situation, the host's inclination was to order more food. Additionally, the directness with which the statement was made also may be viewed as a breach of Chinese etiquette which calls for the guest to praise the taste of the food served while commenting on its overabundance irrespective to reality.

Sentence B displays a Chinese rhetorical device for denying a request without explicitly stating the refusal. In this situation, a personal experience, I genuinely planned to consider helping this friend, but my response conveyed the exact opposite
intention to my interlocutor. What I learned later was that such phrases as *kaoliu kaoliu* (考虑考虑) or 'I'll consider it' and *mei wenti* (没问题) or 'No problem' are often used by Chinese as conflict avoidance devices. They are employed to indicate that there may be some difficulty in fulfilling a request made by the hearer without explicitly denying that request. These phrases serve to put the issue off until a later date, at which time the speaker may or may not be able to fulfill the request. These brief examples should suffice to prove how lacking an understanding of a culture's hidden code of meaning may hinder interaction with members of another culture. Even more significant, however, is how a lack of understanding of such a code impairs comprehension of communicative events.

3.3 Levels of Meaning

Michael Geis contends there are at least three levels of meaning to every piece of language used in a communicative act. Geis holds that I-meaning refers to speaker intentions, while L-meaning refers to an utterance's literal meaning, and S-meaning indicates the significance meaning or the meaning assigned by a culture including all feelings and connotations an utterance evokes. What is of note here is that a speaker's intentions for selecting a particular utterance need to be taken into consideration if the listener is to appropriately interpret an utterance, an idea first put forth by H.P. Grice. Because every utterance can be understood on many levels, for a participant in a communicative exchange to accurately assess his interlocutor's intentions, he must have access to multiple codes or sources of meaning that allow for extrapolation.

In addition to these types of meaning, receptor and audience meaning should be added. In discussing the role of intentions in communication, the fact that the intention received by the listener may differ substantially from the one intended by the speaker
must be addressed.\textsuperscript{13} Cole accounts for this by pointing out the proleptic nature of speech.\textsuperscript{14} This notion that speakers assume listeners understand what they are saying is one that is often overlooked by language pedagogues and learners. Linda Young also points out that meaning grows from a combination of what an individual intends to say and what the listener understands, which she states are not always congruent.\textsuperscript{15}

Learners, especially at the early stages of learning, focus so heavily on production that they do not stop to check for comprehension on the part of the listener. This particular problem is exacerbated in Chinese culture where public correction is deemed impolite.\textsuperscript{16} The result is that non-natives often make unintelligible utterances that they assume are comprehended, while the Chinese interlocutor hesitates to clarify for fear that they will insult the speaker or make him lose face. On numerous occasions in which multiple foreigners were involved in the interactions, I observed Chinese players act as if they understood what was being said in a conversation with an American only to have them ask me later what the American meant.

Another example that I observed while in Shandong involves an American who, after dining with some Chinese friends, decided to offer to help a female acquaintance with her coat on the way out of a hotel, an act itself which is very American. The American intended to convey the intention that he had the desire to help her put on her coat. However, in a slip of the tongue, he stated in Chinese, "\textit{wo yao tuo nide yifu} (我要脱你的衣服)," which is actually 'I want to take off your clothes.' Rather than informing him of this egregious error, the Chinese woman paused for a moment before allowing him to help her put on her coat. This would indicate that she was able to interpret his intentions based on the context. What is of note here is the failure of any of the five Chinese present to inform the American that he had made a mistake.
Furthermore, when an act is not accomplished or acted upon that hinges upon one of these unintelligible utterances, misunderstandings arise with the non-native often blaming the Chinese because of his false assumption that his intention had been communicated and acknowledged by the Chinese interlocutor. However, if the Chinese interlocutor believes that the information in the utterance might be of import or if his interests are at stake, he will clarify unintelligible utterances. I observed this latter characteristic on several occasions during official negotiations in conjunction with US/China Links in 1997.

Furthermore, on-lookers may produce meanings that differ from both the speaker and the listener. Returning to the previous example, when the American actor made the statement that he would like to take off his Chinese friend's clothes, both I and another Chinese friend who were present exchanged worried looks. After it was apparent that the Chinese woman accepted the American's intention despite the misuse of the linguistic code, we then exchanged grins. Obviously, there were at least two distinct meanings received by the different players involved.

In the process of what Carlson refers to as "reconstructing an assumed intention," it quickly becomes obvious that there are multifarious factors that must be considered.\textsuperscript{17} Not only does it involve interpretation of the immediate event, but it also includes assessing an agent's global purposes. Carlson posits, "an immediate speech act is best understood as a single operation in a whole series of actions directed toward a general goal."\textsuperscript{18} Additionally, the listener must also evaluate what Clark and Carlson refer to as the "second illocutionary act."\textsuperscript{19} In other words, an individual is forced to consider what other "hearers" are involved in the speech act in order to determine whether the utterance was intended solely for his hearing or if it was directed at a
number of people for different purposes.

3.4 Verifying Reception

As a participant in a performance, the speaker must ensure that his intentions are accurately received by his interlocutors. After speaking, the speaker becomes the listener who must ensure his intention was received in the manner in which he had intended to project it. This is especially difficult in cross-cultural communication due to the aforementioned tendency to interpret new information in terms of an already existing world view. Additionally, a non-native's repertoire of checking devices is much smaller than the native's.

3.5 Establishing Intentions

Young suggests that participants in speech acts choose ways of expressing themselves based on their intentions, on what they want hearers to believe, accept, or do. Language "informs listeners by transmitting speakers' knowledge, intentions and attitudes while at the same time providing data for listeners from which to make judgements about speakers."²⁰ Such a description deftly presents language as a tool or vehicle through which intentions are conveyed and analyzed. It also hints at the cooperative nature of communication. Both the speaker and listener have responsibilities to uphold in order to make a communicative event successful.

Only half of the equation is addressed by stating that the goal of language learning is learning to establish one's intentions in the target culture. Establishing one's intentions is vitally important to success within any culture, but even more important and difficult to the language learner is learning how to interpret the intentions of other cultural players. If an individual can interpret intentions, he can survive by reacting to those of others. Furthermore, once one has the ability to analyze and manipulate a
particular intention as established by another interlocutor, he then can draw on such knowledge to establish a similar intention for himself in other situations. This view also implies that language pedagogues and learners should be developing strategies for interpreting and establishing speaker intentions within their target culture framework.

3.6 Kinesic Cues

Also salient to mention here are what Hall refers to as non-verbal clues. These behaviors are part of the hidden code referred to previously which combines with the revealed code to provide the information necessary to interpret a communicative event. Such kinesic cues sometimes carry more meaning than what is being said while at others may reveal a speaker's mood or unspoken intentions. Included in this category of communication devices are gestures, facial expressions, and a host of other culturally recognized non-verbal behaviors. A smile may express a speaker's happiness in one culture while revealing nervousness in another. Similarly, gestures, such as a simple nod, employed while speaking may serve to mark an interlocutor's acceptance of a speaker's request or as acknowledgment of reception of presented information.

3.7 Being in a Culture

It should be clear now that the main goal of learning to converse in a foreign culture is to gain the ability to establish and interpret intentions in the foreign culture. With such a capacity, the language learner is able to actively participate in larger communicative activities. Or, as Walker describes it, a person is then able to be in a culture. This concept may, at first, seem quite alien to the reader and as Walker astutely observes, American students involved in learning foreign languages have great difficulty with the realization that as individuals in the culture they are only who they are allowed to be by that culture. In other
the judge. Finally, although culture does place restraints upon what an individual can do and who he can be in that culture, it should be noted that with skillful maneuvering, the keen player can negotiate his persona within those constraints.

An example that serves as evidence of the restrictions a culture levies on individuals occurred as an ethnically Chinese language instructor and her American-born Chinese student were discussing the term *shentou* (渗透), or "to permeate or seep," during a language course taught at Yantai University. The Chinese American made the statement that he was an American who, after living in China for a year, had experienced aspects of Chinese culture beginning to permeate his American character. The Chinese instructor corrected the student saying that it was impossible for aspects of Chinese culture to seep into his American character because he was Chinese. She continued that, although he was born and lived the first twenty-five years of his life in the United States, he was Chinese and that aspects of American culture were beginning to creep their way into his Chinese character. The American student continued to argue his case, but to no avail. In this particular situation, the culture would not allow him to be American because of his Chinese appearance. It would only allow him to be what it categorized him as, a Chinese who presently lives in America.²⁶

3.8 Accommodating Foreigners

John Gumperz asserts that one "can not assume communication between a competent foreigner and a native is the same as that between two native speakers" because there is an intercultural dimension.²⁷ Agar echoes that because natives both consciously and unconsciously treat outsiders differently than other natives, the nature of the interactions foreigners face is fundamentally different from that of the natives.²⁸ This is a striking thought when one considers that the goal of many language learners is
to speak like a native speaker. The goal of interacting/speaking a foreign
culture/language as a native is a misguided one that causes endless frustration for the
learner because of its "unattainability".

Even if native-like proficiency is attained in some skill areas, subconsciously,
the native speaker still adjusts his styles of interaction for foreigners. These alterations
fundamentally change the rules for communicative interaction. Furthermore, because
such a fundamental difference does exist, it would seem that learning and teaching how
natives interact should not be the sole area of focus for language learners. Thus, rather
than being to achieve "nativeness," an activity that wastes time and energy, learners'
goals should be to become accepted foreign players in the games of a culture, which, in a
role sensitive society like China, is the most realizable goal. It is also important for
the language learner to realize that he will have to achieve this goal in every game and
within every context.

3.9 Rising Expectations

As the non-native's linguistic effectiveness increases, there is a corresponding
increase in the expectations on the part of his interlocutors. Therefore, it becomes much
easier to offend others within the group because assumptions are made about cultural
understanding. Non-natives then sometimes begin to be seen as somehow having
insincere motives, because they should know better. As a result, the person who learns
how to interact with the target culture on its terms while maintaining some semblance of
his individual identity with a trace "foreign-ness" or who is able to forge an accepted
identity within the new culture, seems less likely to be rejected by the group.
3.10 Cultural Mis-firing

It is possible to misfire culturally in one’s native culture, but more frequently, faux pas occur cross-culturally because of the natural tendency to interpret new information in terms of previous knowledge. This “interpreting the new in terms of the old” is the root of a vast number of cultural blunders and misunderstandings.

3.10.1 First-culture Interference

When the rules of the game individual actors are following are not the same and they are acting on different assumptions, performance can become hindered. Because of the symbiotic relationship required for performance to occur, it is vital for actors and audience to be working with the same set of meanings. Because actors’ world views are incongruent, even when using the same linguistic code, they may encounter such stumbling blocks when negotiating a cross-cultural performance.30

An example of such communicative malfunction comes from a discussion of the Chinese phenomenon of guanxi (关系), or personal relationships, with an American who had studied Chinese language for five years and was just finishing a six-month stint working in mainland China. Although possessing the ability to speak Chinese, she continued to use her American interpretive framework to assess what she had observed while participating in intercultural interactions. Her conclusion was that guanxi was solely an unethical means to advance one’s own cause within Chinese society. She failed to note the value of personal relationships and group ties from any other standpoint. Such an interpretation would prevent the full understanding of personal relationships within the Chinese context, thus preventing successful interpretation of the intentions of the various actors in such an environment which resulted in her losing the game. What really matters in the Chinese way of communicating is to nurture bonds and links in
human relations. Furthermore, the American failed to note that the same phenomenon exists within her native, American culture, the distinction being that American culture does not possess the same established explicit ways of discussing relationships that Chinese culture does.  

3.10.2 Misinterpreting Intentions

Since the information one culture holds about another is not always current or accurate, there is the potential for misinterpretations of intentions as well as misguided attempts at intention-making. An example of a misinterpretation of intentions based on incorrect, stored information can be seen in an incident that occurred in the Spring of 1997. At one of the many construction sites in Yantai city, I noticed a number of temporary workers not from the area leaning on their shovels observing us. I saw a perfect opportunity to simultaneously practice some Chinese and find out what areas supplied Yantai with this type of labor. I approached them and began making small talk with them. I allowed them to dictate the flow of the conversation which immediately turned to monthly salaries and hometowns.

After a few minutes, their manager rushed over angrily asking who I was and what work unit I was with. Before I could answer, he began explaining that because China was less developed than the United States, they did not have the luxury to have machinery to do excavating. He went on to explain that even though the workers had to use shovels, they were treated well. At the time, the interaction did not make sense, because I had not been asking about equipment or working conditions.

Later, while watching a news story about the Clinton Administration threatening Beijing with sanctions for human rights violations, it hit me that the information the culture had stored about Americans had caused the manager to make erroneous
assumptions about my intentions. Then, he adopted what he deemed the appropriate strategy to handle an encounter with a meddling American. Although we were physically located in China and were utilizing the Chinese linguistic code, this manager was obviously aware that he was interacting with a member of a different culture. The communicative malfunction occurred as a result of his misinterpretation of my intentions and his desire to save China's collective face.33

3.10.3 Establishing the Incorrect Intention

Due to the fact that an audience judges any performance, and success in communication is largely dependent upon reception, an actor must be aware of the cultural framework within which he is performing. His message is what is comprehended by his audience and not necessarily what he intends as an actor. The following episode illustrates this example. In 1997, I was tasked with arranging a banquet for a number of Chinese colleagues who had recently assisted our organization. Consulting a Chinese colleague about the appropriate restaurant resulted in his introducing me to a local restaurant. When inquiring into prices, I felt that the prices we were quoted were inordinately high and stated so to my Chinese colleague. I then made the decision to arrange things on my own. My interpretation of the performance, which was conducted entirely in the Chinese linguistic code, but without the unspoken cultural code, was that I had politely declined the assistance of my Chinese colleague. The Chinese colleague, as well as the restaurant owners, interpreted the performance in a radically different way. They viewed it as an indication that I did not trust my Chinese colleague. The intention was not received as intended.

3.10.4 Misguided Accommodation

Often times, participants in a performance, aware that cultural differences exist, attempt to adopt strategies to accommodate foreign participants and avoid
misunderstanding based on the information their world view holds about members of another culture. However, this type of strategy can only be successful if the information an individual has about a culture is accurate and both parties are working on the same assumptions. I observed just such an incident when an American that did not eat beef visited a Chinese home. The Chinese host, in an attempt to adopt an American strategy in order to please his guest, prepared an unusually "American" meal including beef, bread, and milk. When the American did not touch the beef, his Chinese host misinterpreted his actions as a sign that her culinary skills were lacking, because the information she had stored about Americans was that "all Americans eat beef." The information she relied upon as a basis for her interactive strategy turned out to be inaccurate. Interestingly enough, the American was obviously operating based on his American interpretive framework or he would have responded by sampling all dishes and commenting on how delicious they were.

These examples point to difficulties that stem from actors in a performance not operating within the same interpretive framework. The last incident also hints that players should sync with their interlocutors, observing and testing to find out which interpretive framework is being applied and then adopting measures appropriate to that framework. However, the emphasis on failures does not insinuate that it is impossible for players from one cultural background to operate in foreign games, but rather accentuates the necessity for an awareness of one's cultural environment and a sensitivity towards participants within that environment. Individuals must be willing to make alterations to their world view which requires creating new methods for interpreting information that incorporate elements of the target culture.

Moreover, if it is possible for a foreign actor to successfully negotiate one game in an alien culture, and culture is made up of games, it follows that it is conceivable for
an actor to compile the information involved in sufficient numbers of these games to efficaciously interact within cultural sagas.
CHAPTER 4

LEARNING A CULTURE

4.1 What is learning?

If learning a culture is tantamount to compiling a memory of that culture, the concepts of learning and memory are crucial. Here, learning is viewed as the continual mental process, conscious or unconscious, through which cultural knowledge is acquired, internalized and automatized. This process is one of accessing portions of culture. Jerome Bruner posits learning as internalizing events into a storage system.¹ He further argues that learning occurs when a member of a culture participates in culture and that individuals learn responses and forms of habituation by participating in a group.²

Bruner also notes the negotiation of meaning that occurs between individuals and the group.³ In addition to Bruner, Michael Cole asserts that cognitive tasks do not just happen, but are made to happen in joint activity among people.⁴ Thus, an individual demonstrates knowledge of a culture by using knowledge entailed in that culture to participate in interactions with individuals from the culture.

In other words, there is an ordered sequence to the process of creating and compiling memory in that one first understands cultural knowledge and second is capable of employing cultural knowledge. This sequence, if viewed in terms of Piagetian theory,
would be tantamount to a preoperational stage followed by both the concrete and formal operations stages. Becoming able to do something, coming to a realization of something, and acquiring knowledge of something all stem from an individual’s negotiations with the culture within which he resides. The level of difficulty in such negotiations escalates when one is working in a second culture in which many default values are not available as reference points. If what we learn is visualizable, additional strategies for obtaining cultural information are at the individual’s disposal, a point that will be returned to later.

Bruner likens learning to the construction of a map of culture, but the process of learning can also be likened to that which occurs in a criminal investigation. The individual can be viewed as an investigator trying to solve a case while the evidence is acquired knowledge. Assembling the evidence and building an account of what has occurred is akin to negotiating within a culture. The case becomes clearer if the investigator is able to locate more clues, just as an individual’s world becomes clearer as he accumulates elements of culture. The type of case an attorney should design becomes clearer as more information is available. Once the type of case is clear, the attorney can research all related cases and access all previous experience with that particular type of case. The same process takes place when an individual accesses known information categorized in a particular schema.

If clues are elements of culture and more clues reveal more about the mystery, the more elements of culture one exposes himself to, the more knowledge of that culture he can obtain. If an attorney has more case experience, his ease at negotiating a certain type of case naturally is increased. Repetition promotes ease and fluidity of operations, both in the process of learning and in trying cases. Cole advances the notion that the level
of one's psychological development depends on the extent of one's experiences. Thus, the greater the number of experiences and types of experiences one has within a culture, the greater the number of opportunities he has to acquire cultural knowledge, and, therefore, the greater the likelihood that cultural information will become internalized.

Cole's work provides evidence to support the notion that if a person already possesses a concept, completing given tasks becomes much easier. People are able to draw more out of a situation if they have previously had similar experiences due to the fact that a portion of the available information is internalized during the first encounter which can then be consciously or unconsciously called upon when a similar situation arises again. Cole posits that "any function in children's cultural development appears twice, or on two planes. First, it appears on the social plane and then on a psychological plane. It first appears between people as an interpsychological category and then within the individual child as an intrapsychological category." Young also views the development of language skills in terms of cognitive stages: "children are able to understand before they speak their own words. They respond appropriately to commands and suggestions made by others." The same principle applies to adult learners of a second culture. Thus, the more cultural doors one knocks on and opens up, the more levels of culture one will experience.

Learning is opening doors or pathways to a culture's pool of knowledge. A culture's knowledge can be likened to a puzzle which can be pieced together through participation in games and linking the experiences of those participations together. The difference lies in the fact that a culture's knowledge pool is continuously changing and adapting with its members while a puzzle is fixed. Learners must be aware of this phenomenon so that they are able to adjust previously internalized information to new
cultural frameworks.

Hall promotes the idea that cultures have varying levels of stratification. Accessing these different levels of culture is a skill acquired through modification of behavioral tendencies developed through experimentation and adjustment to the group's reaction. Piaget also understood human development in terms of adaption to the environment. Adaptation was made possible through assimilation (using a response already acquired) or through accommodation (modifying a response to meet a new need), what is syncing in Hall's terms. Learning therefore is the process of enculturation or the acquiring of the knowledge deemed important by a particular group via negotiation with that group.

Thus, learners and foreign language pedagogues alike should focus their energies on activities that maintain integrity to cultural situations allowing individuals to negotiate with their target culture at whatever level they are capable of performing at. If, as Cole suggests, social relations or relations among people genetically underlie all higher functions and their relationships, then interpersonal relationships and strategies for negotiating those relationships should be the focal point of these cultural situations.

4.2 Syncing

In a group oriented culture such as that of China, "syncing," or conditioning one's actions to conform to the group, plays a much more obvious role than in the more individually oriented culture of the United States. Living in Shandong Province exposed me to a phenomenon that exemplifies the importance of conforming to the group within the Shandong context or rather *pa helijiqun* (怕鹤立鸡群), the fear of standing out in the crowd. Rather than wanting to establish one's own niche or place in society, the
tendency in Shandong is to conform to society’s expectations. Rather than displaying one’s talents or expressing one’s uniqueness, many Shandongese fear having others view them as different regardless of whether it be in a positive or negative way.

One episode that shows this tendency involved a male student of mine at Yantai University who confided in me that he wished to speak more in class, but was afraid of what his classmates would think of him for being different. Since no other students spoke or expressed themselves on a regular basis, if he were to do so, he would be exposing himself to attacks from jealous classmates. He also expressed the feeling that he could confide in me things that he could not confide in his Chinese friends because I was an outsider who could not fully understand and therefore there would be no consequences as a result of my knowing.16

A number of my professional acquaintances went to extremes to ensure that their neighbors and friends were not aware of their successes whether they be financial or of other natures. Additionally, the presence of the following proverbs provides further evidence for the argument that Shandong people hold such a view. Shudazhaofeng (树大招风), ‘large trees attract the wind, meaning those who are well known are most likely to attract attention or meet unfortunate ends;’ renpachuming, zhupapang (人怕出名, 猪怕胖), ‘people fear becoming famous like pigs fear becoming fat,’ having obvious connotations; and muxiuyulin, fengbicuizhi (木秀于林, 风必摧之), ‘if some wood is superior to the other trees in the forest, the wind will surely break it,’ meaning those who out perform the crowd will meet a bitter end.

Although the foreign participant is extended additional leniency in such areas, such a phenomenon is important for the language/culture learner to note for a number of reasons. First, when interpreting the actions of the various people an individual comes
into contact with, he must know their motivations. Disregard for them could easily cause undo stress for native interlocutors. Had I shown excessive attention to any one student, he would have been placed under additional pressures by both himself and his peers.

Second, had I brought attention to the professional acquaintances mentioned earlier, unforeseen consequences might have resulted. By noting this cultural characteristic and adapting to it, I increased the chances that my interlocutors would be willing to interact with me beyond the initial encounter. Finally, if the goal of the language learner is to become an accepted outsider, the group naturally tends to accept those that have characteristics similar to those of the group more quickly than those that have nothing in common with the group. If one realizes this point, it is then possible for him to sync with the group so that he does not stand out for that particular reason.

Returning now to the relation between culture and communication, it should be noted that all cultures provide rules for appropriate communicative interaction, defining behaviors that should occur, that may occur and that should not occur in given contexts. These diverse rules are learned through formal and informal processes of socialization. If culture is what people must know in particular social environments in order to operate efficiently and, as Bruner claims, culture is the source of individuals’ meanings and intentions, then successful learning of communication without an understanding of the cultural framework on which members of a group are acting seems impossible.\

Jerome Bruner sees learning as "internalizing events into a storage system" and posits that memory "allows us to go beyond one encounter by providing us with the tools that allow us to make predictions and extrapolations from our stored model of the world." Thus, an understanding of memory and how culture is stored is vital to
learning a second culture.

4.3 Memory

Here, I do not purport to claim a complete understanding of the concepts and processes involved in memory or what has been characterized as the human capacity to internalize experience, but I will attempt to connect the role of constructing memory and language learning.\textsuperscript{19}

Bruner argues that cultural scripts or narratives are received through experience and are disseminated to appropriate committees in the mind for proper analysis.\textsuperscript{20} This view allows us to view memory as the process of storing information in the form of narratives or to the system with which we accomplish that process. Memory can be viewed as the tracking or guidance system that maps out the coordinates to and assigns a code to each story or memory. The memory system arranges stories chronologically, spatially, through imagery, or through sensory perceptions. Memory's encoding system utilizes key words, body actions, physical behavior, sounds, smells, or images that resemble a password to link stories stored in the subconscious portion of the brain.\textsuperscript{21}

Since memory is an interpretation of an experience, it is flexible with a potential to be accurate or inaccurate. Because it is a record of experience, individuals may store the same story differently. Moreover, memory stores only a framework of an experience. When a password is entered, the system is activated much like the completion of a circuit and the stored information can be called upon through the links created by memory narratives that are archived in the subconscious mind.\textsuperscript{21} They are then activated in the active portion of the mind.
The key to memory lies in the way information is encoded. As Bruner argues, if it is encoded in narrative form, the opportunity for recall is much higher.\textsuperscript{22} This is simply because narrative supplies more ways of linking up with a particular piece of information. Furthermore, what is not structured together by narrative suffers loss in memory. Without narrative, individual pieces of data present limited numbers of links to reach that data. As a result, the information is more difficult to access. If people organize their knowledge and thoughts in narratives, as Bruner suggests, language should not be learned in a way contrary to the way we organize our thoughts.

Cole and Bruner also note the presence of both individual and cultural memory asserting that memory is a way of recording sensations or experiences which may or may not be accurate.\textsuperscript{23} Due to the fact that individuals experience events from different vantage points, they may record a different perspective from that of others who experience a similar event. Cole views cultural memory as written information or systematic knowledge. He holds that schools are "enculturating institutions that deal in reified and codified speech structured in a manner seen appropriate by the culture." He posits that this knowledge is the knowledge that changes the mind once education begins.\textsuperscript{24}

Cole also argues that cultural memory is heavily influential on all members of a culture.\textsuperscript{25} The way people view themselves and others is often dictated by cultural memory. So too is the way people look at problems and go about analyzing questions, especially educated people. Their whole way of thinking is set for them without them realizing it. This is important for language learners to know for many reasons. One of the most important of which is that the way people of another culture perceive an outsider can often be found in the cultural memory of a particular group.
On numerous occasions while interacting in Chinese cultures, people have told me that I am not like an American because Americans are...and then they enumerate the characteristics that Chinese culture has stored about Americans. These often include directness, arrogance, casualness, and superficialness. During one encounter a middle-aged woman I met on a train from Weifang to Qingdao told me that she felt talking with me changed her entire outlook on Americans. She informed me that she felt much closer to Americans now because they were not as different from Chinese as what she had been taught in school and read in newspapers. This would serve as further evidence that Chinese culture has a collective memory in which information about Americans has been recorded.

Both Bruner and Cole also assert that learning and thinking are always situated in a cultural setting and are always dependent upon the utilization of cultural resources. In Cole’s view, every schema is a summary of an event that serves as a framework or outline that the individual must continue to build upon by filling in the gaps. Bruner describes the same notion as adding details to a narrative. Individuals can then use the information in these frameworks to make comparisons, contrasts and intelligent guesses about what to expect in other situations. Thus, if the individual must engage in a good deal of interpretation in figuring out which schemas apply in which circumstances and how to implement those schemas effectively, it would suggest that language pedagogues emphasize developing these interpretive skills in language learners.

4.4 Developing Meaning Over Time

Vygotsky’s notion that word meanings develop over time also supports such a view. Building meaning for concepts is a smaller part of a larger process of building scripts which is accomplished in a similar fashion. My personal learning experience
supports this Vygotskyian claim. I can place each word in my Chinese lexicon into five
different levels of understanding. In some cases, several levels are acquired
simultaneously, but many times a word remains at one level of understanding for a long
period of time without advancing. Normally these levels of understanding occur in the
following order, but are not confined to this path of development.
1) know a concept exists
This is the stage of initial contact with a concept or word. This stage is usually
characterized by a realization of something new or something not comprehensible.
2) recognition
In the recognition stage, one can pronounce the word or character upon contact. This
stage can be characterized by recognition of a character or combination visually without
being able to associate meaning to it or by recognition of a sound, without the ability to
remember the meaning.
3) context association
In this stage, meaning is often equated to an already existing concept, but although the
individual can recognize the new concept, he does not have the ability to employ it
independently. Another characteristic of this stage is that an individual knows a concept
or word is found in a certain context.
4) internalization
In this stage, the new concept becomes a part of natural speech that can be employed
independently. During this stage, the individual normally has a surface or sentence level
understanding of the concept.
5) manipulation
In the manipulation stage, cultural connotations associated with the word are obtained
which enable the individual to manipulate or play with words for desired effect.
Cole argues that such a process of cognitive development is at work on the concept level. In his study of language development among the Oriya people of Africa, the Oriya children were able to use *mara*, a term mothers use in the sense that they are "polluted" when menstruating, in conversation with adults long before they had adult concepts of the term. They began using the term when they only had a vague understanding of what mara involved gradually filling in the gaps as they acquired new bits of information until they had a fully developed understanding of the notion.

4.5 Schemas and Stories

The bodies of knowledge which Bruner calls scripts, but are also referred to as schemas by Bartlett, are the "abstract mental structures which represent one's understanding of the world." Schemas are the way knowledge is organized and committed to memory. Cole points out the context specificity of thinking in that there are numerous schemas and many schemas contain overlapping information. The result of having schemas for everything we do in a culture is that no one person can be a master of every schema even in his own culture. These bodies of knowledge obtained through experience serve as the default values we apply to negotiate all situations. Walker distinguishes the notion of story from schema by purporting that a story is one experience through a schema. Schemas are built by stories and are the units of information storage with which language learners should be most concerned.

4.6 Scripts

Cole notes one type of schema which have been labeled by Schank as scripts. According to Cole, a script is "an event schema that specifies the people who appropriately participate in an event, the social roles they play, the objects they use, and the sequence of actions and causal relations that applies." An example of a script
can be seen in the following dialogue between an elderly Chinese man and myself with the added subsequent comments made by an observer of the conversation. The event took place inside a small camera shop adjacent to Yantai University in 1996 and transpired as follows. The dialogue appears in a rough English equivalent that reflects speakers' intentions followed by the actual Chinese.

Shepherd: *(Standing up from a small stool where I had been sitting and offering it to the elderly man who was walking past the open shop door)* Uncle, please sit down.
Elderly Chinese man: *(Refusing in a display of courtesy)* No, sit down (don't get up on my account).
Shepherd: *(After moving the stool into a position for the elderly man to sit and retrieving a second stool from the back of the store)* Please, Uncle, have a seat.
Man: *(Reluctantly, still refusing)* Don't make such a fuss...ok, ok*(sits)*.
Shepherd: Have you had lunch yet Uncle?
Man: Yes, I have.
Shepherd: How's your health?
Man: Just fine. Thank you for asking.
Shepherd: It's rather cold today.
Man: You're not wearing enough (clothes to keep you warm), you don't want to catch a cold.
Shepherd: *(After several minutes of discussion about recent local happenings, rising)* Uncle, I have something that I have to take care of, I need to be going now.
Man: If you have time, drop by our house.
Shepherd: *(Exiting)* I certainly will!
Man: Take care!
Shepherd: Good-bye!
谢博德：舅舅，请坐。
舅舅：坐，你坐。
谢博德：舅舅，请坐，请坐。
舅舅：太麻烦了....好，好。
谢博德：吃过饭了吗？
舅舅：吃过了。
谢博德：你身体好吗？
舅舅：挺好的，谢谢。
谢博德：今天天气挺冷的。
舅舅：小谢，你穿得太少了，别感冒了。
(对话)
谢博德：舅舅，我有点事儿，我先走了。
舅舅：小谢，你有空到俺家来坐一坐。
谢博德：一定，一定。
舅舅：好走。
谢博德：再见。

An American interpreting the above exchange with his native interpretive framework might find the exchange a little unusual. The questions asked and the ways of asking them are not ones that can be found in the American game of talking to older people. This exchange, although short, is loaded with game and culture specific information that can be easily overlooked. In fact, it was not until a Chinese student that had been present at the dialogue made the comment, "You really understand how things work," nihendongshi (你很懂事), that I even reflected on what behaviors gave him that impression. When asked what he meant, his response was that I had asked all of the questions that one "should ask an older person." His response was a clear indication of the presence of a set expectations for linguistic and cultural behavior recognized and accepted by the group as "the norm." In other words, there was an established formula for handling this very act of talking with an older person. Although the language used may not be the exact wording a native would use, this is an example of an accepted foreigner recognized by at least one player for understanding how to interact in culturally appropriate ways within the Chinese context.
If analyze this performance of a script, the principles can be applied to other encounters with elderly friends in Shandong. The event is obviously interacting with an elderly person. The key participants were a seventy-year-old man and myself. The roles were determined by our ages and our previous relationships. From the terms of address, Uncle and Xiao Xie, it is apparent that we were familiar with one another and that it was not an initial encounter. The objects involved in this example consist solely of the stools in the store. The audience was my friend who later commented on the effectiveness of the performance.

In looking at the order of events and the causal relations involved, a detailed explication is required. I recognized my role as junior by smiling, standing up and addressing him by our established title when my elderly friend entered the store. This was further reinforced when I gave up my stool for him. It was culturally expected that he would refuse my offer of the stool out of courtesy even if he wished to sit down. Recognizing that bit of hidden culture, I insisted and left him no option by obtaining another stool for myself.

After this opening, I employed what turned out to be a culturally appropriate set of questions that should be asked. By inquiring as to whether he had eaten and about the state of his health, I showed concern for my interlocutor’s state of being. After that I broached a culturally appropriate topic of small talk, the weather. During the small talk that ensued, I allowed him to dictate the flow of conversation because of his status as an elder. When it was time to take leave, I used a commonly used mechanism for disengaging oneself from conversation in Shandong, ‘I have something to take care of.’

4.7 Compilation

The question then arises of how to organize, categorize, and retain these scripts and schemas. Constructing a memory through building or expanding schema through
performance is called compilation by Walker. In an individual's first culture, adults control scripts, while when operating in a second culture, natives of the host culture control the scripts. Katherine Nelson asserts that the information in a child's script is less complete than that of an adult so adults try to fill in the gaps for the child which influences the development of his thinking. Bruner would hold that compilation occurs at the narrative level. He asserts that scripts are elements of a narrative that link events over time and lie at the heart of human thought. Narrative provides the frame which enables humans to interpret their experiences and one another. They can be very rough frameworks at first and over time gradually fill in to become very detailed, complex narratives. In familiar situations, individuals already have the schemata as a framework, but may not have the entire script memorized. Cole's redescription experiment in which each time the children described an event, their descriptions became more complex also supports this notion.

Additionally, because acquiring pieces of a culture is a process of both enculturation and acculturation and because adult learners have already acquired scripts in one culture, first culture scripts often form a barrier to the acquisition of a second culture. In other words, at first, an individual is only able to interpret with prior knowledge which often causes misinterpretations especially in areas where the hidden code differs across cultures. Through time, however, second culture scripts can be correctly understood, if the learner is aware that he is using first culture scripts to interpret them and is willing to reassign meaning to certain concepts.

The first culture and second culture are not necessarily in conflict or opposition, but sometimes are such as in the case of certain ritualistic behaviors like drinking and
smoking in Chinese culture. As stated earlier, learners acculturate which requires that learners must be willing to expand their world view incorporating a new set of meanings encountered in a second culture. Choices have to be made about participating or acculturating in the cases where first and second cultures come into conflict.

However, there are consequences for not participating which have to be weighed in the learners’ decisions. Americans who do not wish to participate in the ritual of drinking in Chinese culture are certainly perceived differently from those who do. Two examples of those learners suffering consequences for not acculturating are the many Chinese in America who isolate themselves from American culture and many American businessmen in China who do the same. The result often times is the perception that the second culture is not willing to accept them when in reality it is more likely that they are not willing to accept the second culture.

Cole aptly characterizes the culture/language acquisition process: culturally organized joint activity that incorporates the child into the scene as a novice participant is one necessary ingredient in language acquisition. As children in such activities struggle to understand objects and social relations in order to gain control over their environment and themselves, they re-create the culture into which they have been born, even as they re-invent the language of their forebears. Although slightly different for adult learners of a foreign language, they still need to endure a similar process of struggling for meaning and control over their environment. They do not, however, recreate a culture, but create a third or metaculture which is a combination of their first and second cultures. This new way of organizing information, what Walker refers to as a world view, is obtained through negotiation between first and second cultural group values.
4.8 Sagas and Cases

Walker also espouses the concept of a long series of stories about places and people that he dubs sagas. Stories are narratives of the events that take place in a game. Sagas are on-going compilations of stories that involve a number of actors. They can be likened to a television series or a soap opera. If an analogy is made between learning a saga of a new cultural group and watching a soap opera for the first time, some of the difficulties facing culture learners become obvious. When jumping into a saga in mid-stream, the individual does not know what is going on or what has already occurred in the past. The same is true when watching a soap opera for the first time. However, by associations to already existing sagas of knowledge, he is able to gradually fill in gaps. Sagas enable us to develop large catch-all categories or cases that increase our knowledge of a culture and, in turn, our world view. This does not necessarily affect an individual’s persona, but changes how he looks at the next batch of cultural knowledge.

Walker muses that language learners progress in cycles failing on higher levels as their knowledge becomes deeper and wider. The higher the level is, the more opportunities there are to fail. This beckons the image of the popular Michael Jordan television commercial that promotes the notion that failure is the mother of success. The key to success in language learning, or any endeavor for that matter, then becomes managed failure. Learners who are willing to fail and possess the ability to see that failure are then able to use that failure to reconstruct a new memory that can be used successfully in the next similar encounter.
CHAPTER 5

GAME PRELIMINARIES

5.1 The Scoring System

A more concrete example of what is involved in a game can be seen in a game of gaining social status in Shandong Province.¹ The scoring system involved in this particular game entails rewards for success that come in the form of ease in conducting affairs through continued relationships, recognition by the group, and potentially in the form of economic gains. In other words, through the efficacious management of interpersonal relationships, guanxi (关系), an individual is capable of accessing the resources valued by the group.² Hwang Kwang-kuo analyzes the manipulation of these relationships in the following terms: "The Chinese cultural norm of li demands that an individual interact with people across different guanxi in accordance with various standards of social exchange. Thus the manipulation of interpersonal relationships has long been a strategy for attaining desirable social resources in Chinese society."³ As one gains more social status, the influence concurrent with that status increases, which, in turn, provides the means to accomplish other goals more easily than would be otherwise possible. Guanxi can be both a means to social status and a result of social status. More simply, knowing the right people can help an individual get ahead and, once ahead, others will want to associate with him because of his status.⁴
The game of social status also allows for punishment in the event of failures which most often come in the form of rejection by the group, ridicule from the group, or the failure to achieve one’s goals. With the lack of requisite social status, it becomes extremely difficult to accomplish any task within the society. However, the individual must be aware that he is putting himself on the line when participating in status-generating games. In other words, an individual must be willing to suffer the consequences of losing, which can be emotionally devastating.

5.2 Official Dinners

Chen Si, author of a book on social engagement in Chinese culture, states that banquets are an important form of interpersonal interaction. Mayfair Yang also notes, “banqueting in Chinese culture is not merely a tactic in the art of guanxi, but it is also an important ritual in the social sphere.” Yang further characterizes banqueting as “a medium of not only social, but especially economic and political exchange.” These statements point to the important role of banquets as a ritual forum for social, economic and political interaction within Chinese culture. Because of their importance, banquets are often an arena in which the game of gaining social status takes place. Banquets are also often events in which players’ status is recognized and validated, at least on the surface level.

5.3 The Field of Play

Before discussing the events involved in a Shandong banquet, a word or two about where these dramas unfolded should be added. I was party to banquets in a wide range of restaurants and hotels, but because banqueting is a means for displaying one’s social status, official banquets, more often than not, take place in expensive restaurants. One characteristic that remained consistent even if the quality of the restaurant varied was
that banquets always took place in a private room called a danjian (单间). This simple fact speaks volumes about the role of banquets in determining status. It was extremely important for banquets to be separated from the common customers in this way. Even in situations in which my host was not able to afford a banquet at an expensive restaurant, he would perform a ritual of arranging a private room, a ritual that often involved loudly stating that he had a foreign guest to entertain and therefore needed the best available room.

In the more extravagant restaurants, these private rooms were equipped with anterooms complete with private wash rooms and sitting areas decorated with leather couches and karaoke machines. Banquets in such rooms were catered by as many as five waitresses. In the less elegant restaurants, there was, at minimum, a room large enough to hold a round banquet table for eight to ten people that was catered by at least one waitress. In all cases, hosts either informed me of the high level of class associated with the restaurant or made excuses that although the physical conditions were not ideal, the quality of the food served there was well known.

5.3.1 Luai

Shandong food falls into a category of Chinese food referred to as Luai (鲁菜) named for the kingdom that controlled western Shandong during the Warring States Period (476-221 BC). What Shandongnsese consider the best of Luai is fresh seafood. Most restaurants have tanks with a wide variety of live seafood for guests to select from. If seafood is not alive, huode (活的), just prior to cooking, it is not considered to be fresh. Additionally, hot dishes are viewed as better than cold ones. Important guests are treated to the most exotic dishes which include, among others, live scorpions, any of the thousands of gastropods found in the Bohai Gulf, and various insect larvae.
5.4 The Players

The resources required to host a banquet limit participation in Shandong banquet culture to those individuals with access to social, political, or financial capital. This group is made up of three general types of players: business people, government officials, and intellectuals. Shandongnese engaged in business participate in banquets out of the necessity to maintain connections and good relations with those individuals who control policy or those individuals in positions who may have influence over their particular business. Players must both host banquets for and participate in banquets hosted by individuals of high social status if they wish to maintain sufficient status to accomplish their goals. Additionally, banquets are a common means for establishing and maintaining business connections.

Shandong business people as a group vary greatly in their backgrounds, education levels, and characteristics. Because the short amount of time that has elapsed since the Chinese economy has begun its transition from one characterized solely by state-run industries to one characterized by multiple forms of ownership, the majority of the people now operating in the business sector have come from other sectors. Cao Tiansheng enumerates four types of Chinese businessmen, a paradigm that with slight modification can also be applied to the Shandong context: official-businessmen, who use the power and resources of position to engage in economic activities; intellectual-businessmen, who have either failed in their pursuit of a career in academia or have been enticed by the prospects of economic gain to leave academia for the commercial world; officer-businessmen, who are military officers who use their special status and privileges to engage in commercial activity on the side; and orthodox businessmen, who because they have no other means of existence, rely solely on their ability to operate within the system to engage in business.¹²
Irrespective of their backgrounds, the Shandong business people who are regular players in Shandong official banquet culture have one characteristic in common. They are individuals who have to a certain extent been successful at achieving some level of social status within society or they are individuals who are attempting to forge such status for themselves by interacting with those individuals who already enjoy it.

5.5 The Roles

Cultural performances in Shandong banquet culture involve two major categories of participant roles: hosts, zhuren (主人), and guests, keren (客人). These roles are always relative to those present and can change if a player is added or if one leaves during the course of a banquet. Hosts can be further sub-divided into principle hosts, zhupei (主陪), assistant hosts, fupei (副陪), and a third category peike (陪客) that Andrew Kipnis renders as host representatives. However, although it is generally the case that peike attend banquets at the request of the host, they are not necessarily representing the host or the host’s interests. In fact, despite the fact that they, too, are guests of the principle host, they sometimes operate in ways that are counterproductive to the principle host’s interests where their own interests come into conflict with those of the principle host.13

5.5.1 Principle Hosts

The principle host is normally the person of highest social stature among the hosts and therefore dictates the flow of the activity. Kipnis also recognizes this notion of hosts playing the dominant role: “the strong guest must not exceed his host.”14 The phrase frequently employed by Shandongnese to describe guest/host relationships, ke sui zhu bian (宾随主便), which might translate as ‘the guest does as the host pleases’ or ‘the guest is at the host’s pleasure,’ reveals that expectations of guests and hosts differ
drastically from those in American culture. American expectations are described by Shandongese with a reverse of the same proverb, *zhù suī kě biàn* (主人随客便), which means 'the host does as the guest pleases' or 'the host is at the guest's pleasure.'

Furthermore, any Shandongese will inform you that it is the principle host's duty to ensure that his guests are well taken care of. Shandongese pride themselves on their hospitality, *hǎokē* (好客), a notion employed by hosts to present the characteristics of Shandong people to their guests from other areas.15 This pride and emphasis on hosting also creates pressure upon hosts to perform the duties of hosting to a high standard. In particular, for reasons that will become clear later, the principle host is particularly responsible for the two guests with the highest social status. Yang also observes: "During the course of the dinner, hosts do their utmost to keep their guests' bowls or plates perpetually heaped with food, and for men, to fill their glasses to the brim each time they take a sip of beer, wine or spirits."16 Hosts also have the responsibility to perform the ritual of placing food on the plates of guests seated beside them.

Finally, it should be noted that a foreigner can not play the role of principle host in Shandong culture. Although a foreign player may host a banquet, the same expectations for performance as a host do not apply. The culture simply does not allow foreigners to be viewed in such a role. In situations in which a foreign player attempts to act as host, the rules of the game are altered. One of the guests often assumes the responsibility of dictating the flow of the interaction. This is done in a very subtle manner by repeatedly lauding the foreign participant's hosting skills and understanding of Shandong etiquette so as to avoid causing damage to the foreign host's face. This rule tends to apply even when all players acknowledge a foreign host's understanding of Shandong guest/host
etiquette.

5.5.2 Assistant Hosts

The assistant host, *fupèi* 帮助, also plays an important role in Shandong banquets, a role that is usually designated to the person deemed by the principle host to have the best social skills. Because the assistant host is tasked with assisting the principle host in all aspects of entertaining his guests, as well as settling the bill, principle hosts often appoint their most trusted assistant to this position. While the principle host sees to the two most important guests' needs, the assistant host has the responsibility of attending to the needs of the third and fourth most important guests.

Kipnis notes that this responsibility entails "orchestrating, or at least initiating, eating, drinking and smoking." I would add to those the responsibilities of maintaining a positive atmosphere, helping to guide the flow of conversation, and most importantly protecting the host's face. Through toasting, smoking, and dialogue, assistant hosts aid hosts in their efforts to ensure that guests are comfortable and having a good time.

First, assistant hosts are expected to sacrifice themselves when the host's face is jeopardized. The importance of this role will become clearer in the discussion of drinking that follows, but it should be noted that when the principle host is incapable of drinking or has drank to the point where he can not continue to function as a proper host, the assistant host is expected to drink for him or, at minimum, deflect the guests' attention while the principle host can regroup. Because of this, individuals chosen to serve as assistant hosts are often formidable drinkers and rate highly in the group for that skill.

The duty to sacrifice one's own face for the host on the part of the assistant host can be seen in an incident in which I was the guest of a mid-level government official in
Qingdao. After drinking several glasses of the infamous Chinese baijiu (白酒), a clear liquor of 140-150 proof, my host stated that he was not feeling well and could no longer drink with me, but that his assistant host was feeling up to the task and would drink for him for the remainder of the banquet. After that, the host continued to toast me, but the assistant host drank for him each time forcing the assistant host to drink a tremendous amount.  

Another incident in which I was the guest of a village party secretary reveals the notion that the assistant host must take over should the principle host become incapacitated. After several rounds of toasting and drinking, the party secretary began slurring his speech and slipping into the local dialect, a sign that the alcohol was getting to him. Without a word, the assistant host took control of the banquet toasting the guests and regaling me with stories of his interactions with foreign guests. At that point, I stepped out to use the wash room. When I returned, the party secretary was no longer present and the assistant host was in his seat. He gave apologies that the party secretary was called to a meeting with officials from the city government. This was an unlikely excuse as it was a Sunday afternoon and it also meant that I was in for a long afternoon. In any event, in the absence of the principle host, the assistant host took over as if the banquet had been organized by him in the beginning.

5.5.3 Peike

Peike are usually invited based on their rhetorical and social skills to help create a lively and stimulating atmosphere for the guests. Kipnis relates that one such guest was selected because, "She really knows how to talk, guests are comfortable with her." Another important reason for the presence of peike is alluded to by Kipnis when he states that "host reps were chosen to match the most honored guest at each table in age and
Certain peike may be invited by a host to prove to his guests that he is capable of assembling an interesting and lively group of people.

Peike often attend because they want to be seen at a social event with the host, while the host normally tries to invite peike whose presence lends prestige and legitimacy to an event to fill this important role. In this way, hosts utilize the prestige of other players to enhance their own status in the eyes of other players. Furthermore, Shandong hosts feel the need to have a well-balanced group of people with similar interests so that all parties enjoy themselves and feel a part of the group. Because of this, a host may invite people of similar age, occupation, or sex as that of his guests to act as peike to simply provide company for guests that he feels unable to adequately entertain.

In organizing a banquet for some acquaintances of mine, the importance of selecting appropriate peike was revealed to me by a close friend who I had selected to serve as my assistant host. All of the guests I had planned to invite were male except for one. This particular female guest was an important guest as she had made arrangements for me to give a lecture at the training center she managed. My assistant host said that we could not put her in a situation in which she would have no one to talk to. If we did this and she was lonely during the banquet, it would be worse than not inviting her at all. Thus, we had to arrange to invite his wife, who was of comparable age and social status, to act as a peike so that our manager friend would have someone to converse with during dinner.

5.5.4 Guests

Yang suggests that both guests and hosts in Chinese banquets are subject to a set of cultural etiquettes. She also remarks that, “There is a constant chatter by hosts of how
modest and simple the meal is, and by guests of how sumptuous is the repast laid out before them." Complimenting the host on his hosting skills is an indispensable part of guest etiquette. If a guest fails to deliver such compliments in a timely manner, the host may either become nervous that he is failing in his role as host or offended that he is hosting an ungrateful guest.

Kipnis intimates that another aspect of guest etiquette is that guests should not help themselves to food and drink: "people drank only during toasts and ate only what someone else put on their plates..." Despite the fact that the host will tell a guest that he should help himself and that the guest will repeatedly protest saying that he can take care of himself, the ritual is performed again and again, often as a display of the principle host's hosting skills. However, this is the case only when guest and host are not familiar with one another. Otherwise, the guest who protests and waits for the host to take care of him would seem insincere.

Guest etiquette also includes being happy even when one is in a bad mood, being polite to people one does not like, eating things one does not particularly like, and drinking when one does not wish to drink. This is a non-verbal manifestation of what Michael Bond refers to as an affective style, or an attempt on the part of a person to adjust to the feelings of the other parties in a communicative event.  

5.5.5 The Positions

The specific seat in which individuals assuming particular roles sits is fixed in Shandong culture. The principle host is to be seated in a position that allows for him to be the first thing a guest sees when they open the door. Thus, the principle host sits facing the door and directly opposite to it. Forming a straight line with the principle host, the assistant host sits with his back to the door directly opposite the principle host.
One variation that is beginning to enter into some Shandong communities is that the principle host should be seated facing the source of entertainment. Whether that be an ocean view or a karaoke video screen, the room will be arranged in such a manner as to allow the host to both face the door and the source of entertainment if possible. This is an example of what Richard Bauman refers to as the process of emergence, or “the interplay between communicative resources, individual competence, and the goals of participants, within the context of a situation.”

Yang observes that in the “protocol of seating, guests of honor always sit farthest away from the door.” In Shandong culture, the number one guest will be seated to the immediate right of the principle host while the number two guest will be seated to the principle host's immediate left. Since the principle host typically occupies the seat facing the door, the guest of honor's seat is also located at the farthest point from the door. The same principle applies to the seating of the number three and number four guests who sit to the right and left of the assistant host respectively. Any additional guests and peike sit alternating guest and host, on the right, between the number one guest and the number four guest and, on the left, between the number two and three guests. Again, right is always superior to left.
CHAPTER 6

THE GAME: PART ONE

6.1 Introductions

Introductions are rituals that normally begin banquets that involve any unfamiliar players. Since introductions serve as the basis for any interaction that is to follow, they take on a level of importance in any culture. If an introduction is smooth and effective, it can facilitate the flow of an interaction. On the other hand, a poor introduction can intensify the tension and awkwardness present at the beginning stages of most relationships.

Generally speaking, introductions between players in the game of banqueting in Shandong provide three main pieces of information. The first is an individual's name. Second, but possibly more important to the participants, is a person's title.¹ The title serves to inform the interlocutors of the individual's social rank which determines how each individual will attempt to interact with the person in question. The final piece is a bit of information about the person relevant to the event at hand. Examples include stating one's work unit, one's reason for participating, or a piece of background information that will allow the listeners to identify the individual in some way.

These three bits of information inform all listeners how they should address the individual, what forms of speech should be used when addressing him, and what types of
discourse can be employed. The length and content of introductions varies according to the situation and the social status of the individual being introduced. Formal contexts, such as business negotiations, lectures, and meetings tend to require lengthier introductions in which more detailed background information is provided. This stems from the fact that such venues do not provide the same ready means of obtaining additional biographical information that a banquet setting allows for.

Modesty is normally observed in self introductions while significant manipulation of information may take place when introducing a friend, colleague or superior. For example, although it has lost some of the original connotations and is now equivalent to 'what is your name,' the most common way to ask for a person's name in Chinese, *nin guixing* (您贵姓), is literally equivalent to the English 'Of what noble family are you?' When asked in this manner for their name, Shandong people, almost without fail, employ a set response using the word *mian* to deflect the honorific in a display of modesty, *wo mian gui xing wang* (我免贵姓王). However, while Shandong people inevitably will deny their own accomplishments, individuals often boast of the accomplishments of others present, especially their friends and acquaintances. Xi Changsheng sees this as a culturally appropriate method of self-representation that stems from the collective nature of Chinese culture.

Chen also points out the following example that bears this principle out. An individual that holds the position of head of personnel in a particular organization would introduce himself as someone working in personnel rather than as the head.
A. Correct: 我是在海尔集团搞人事的。
   *wo shi Haier jituan gao renshide*

   Incorrect: 我是海尔集团的人事部部长。
   *wo shi Haier jituan de renshibu buzhang*

Similarly, a professor would never initially introduce himself as a professor, but rather as a teacher.

B. Correct: 我是烟台大学教师。
   *wo shi yantai daxue jiaoshi*

   Incorrect: 我是烟台大学教授。
   *wo shi yantai daxue jiaoshou*

Members of the younger generation and those who have yet to obtain high social status should not use titles with their own name in order to avoid appearing pretentious.5

Additionally, hierarchy is displayed in the order in which individuals are introduced. If a series of individuals are to be introduced, the highest ranking is accorded the first position with subordinates following in rank order. Furthermore, individuals of lower social status often suffer cursory introductions from superiors while subordinates tend to spend more time building pedestals for their superiors when charged with introducing them.

Finally, if a person changes positions, retires or for some reason no longer holds a particular title, he is usually addressed by the title of the highest position ever held. Thus, man who had once been the head of a bureau in the Yantai city government, although he had been retired for nearly ten years, was afforded the courtesy of his former title by everyone including the current bureau chief.
For players in Shandong banquet culture, this information is recorded and analyzed instantaneously, because such knowledge is part of the implicit knowledge embedded in the interaction patterns of the region, an understanding of which is an integral component of a competent player's social repertoire.

6.1.1 Exchange of Business Cards

The ritual of business card, *mingpian* (名片), exchange should be considered a subcategory of introductions. The role business cards serve in Shandong culture should not be underestimated and the importance they carry can be seen in a small experiment that I conducted while working as program officer for US/China Links during 1997. I had two unique sets of cards printed. One contained our organization's name, my name, and all relevant contact information, but no title. On the other set of cards, the title Program Officer was added.

Over the course of six months of interactions with various government officials and businessmen, I alternated using the two styles of business card. The reaction to the two types of cards was remarkably consistent and therefore quite revealing about the importance of titles as a referencing device within the hierarchical culture of the area. When I distributed the card not bearing a title, my interlocutors often meticulously examined both sides of the card looking several times at both the English and Chinese sides. The amount of time that elapsed before they addressed me was longer than when using the cards with title. Often times parties would wait for someone else to address me prior to adopting that form of address used by others present at the event. On occasion, however, a more extroverted interlocutor would approach this problem by directly asking *wo zemoe chenghu nin*? (我怎么称呼您), or 'How should I address you?'
When using the business cards with the added title, the actions of my interlocutors were strikingly different. After accepting a card, they usually looked quickly for my surname and title. Once they knew my social position as designated by the business card, interlocutors were able to determine which forms of address and types of discourse were appropriate. The result was that they were able to open dialogue with me without the hesitation noted in the interlocutors who were unable to determine my relative social position.

Furthermore, I was also afforded an additional amount of respect that I had not been when using the title-less cards. Interlocutors more frequently employed the term of address xiansheng (先生), or 'Mr.,' when aware that I was coordinating the US/China Links program. Conversely, when they were unaware of my position, my full Chinese name without title was often used, as was the term xiǎo (小), which is often used when addressing younger people who have no bureaucratic rank or social status.

The business card contains the information often delivered in introductions only in written form which serves as a reference until name and rank are committed to memory. On several occasions, I observed officials consulting cards that they had received just prior to their addressing a participant. Furthermore, it is clear that business cards provide information necessary for culturally appropriate interaction in such settings, specifically the location an individual occupies in the hierarchy of the room. This position then partially determines the roles to be played during a banquet, which, in turn, determines how players interact. The role an actor sees himself in combined with his knowledge of other actors involved in an interaction determine both his behavior and speech.
In his 1918 classic short story, *Diary of a Madman* (狂人日记), Lu Xun (鲁迅), one of China's greatest modern writers and social critics, depicted people through the pen of the Madman as: “fierce as lions, timid as rabbits, and sly as foxes, shizi de xiongxin, tusi de qieruo, huli de jiaohua” (狮子似的凶心，兔子的怯弱，狐狸的狡猾, ...). This analogy can be employed to characterize three of the potential attitudes players adopt once cognizant of their location in the hierarchy of an event. First, if an actor perceives himself as being the highest player in rank present, he often times speaks in a loud and confident manner, sometimes being condescending towards others of lower status. This type of player speaks more frequently dictating the flow of interaction.

On the other hand, a player who feels that he falls into one of the less important positions normally behaves in a very reserved, even timid manner deferring the stage to higher ranking participants. Finally, those players who are unable to determine or have yet to identify the hierarchy of the event, adopt self-preservation strategies that involve characteristics of both lions and rabbits mixed with cunning attempts to improve their own position.

In determining hierarchical ranks in any Shandong game, players follow the postulate that government is bigger than business, *zheng da yu qi* (政大于企), and the Party is bigger than government, *dang da yu zheng* (党大于政). Government refers to any individual holding an official position such as village head, mayor, and all of the positions that make up the government bureaucracy. Business refers to anyone engaged in commercial activity such as factory heads and managers. Party generally refers to party secretaries who hold the number one position in most organizations.
The implications of such a rule are that in a situation in which the manager of a large Chinese corporation and a government official are both guests at a banquet, the government official takes the higher position. Furthermore, on the rare occasion when the mayor and the party secretary of a city are simultaneously hosting an event, the party secretary always acts as the principle host, while the mayor serves as the assistant host.

On a more practical note, business cards are normally delivered when being introduced or when introducing oneself. If seated, one should stand, regardless of whether the receiver is standing or seated. Cards are passed using both hands holding the card in such a manner that allows the receiver to read the information on the card without turning it over. These particular acts are performed as much to display an understanding of the rules of etiquette to members of the audience as they are for the convenience of the receiver of the card.

Those players who perceive themselves to be in relatively high positions will not prepare to pass out their card until they have determined the social status and character of their interlocutors. If they determine that an actor is of appropriate social status and character to be worthy of maintaining a relationship with beyond the encounter at hand, such high status players will exchange business cards with them. The philosophy that dominates the thinking of modern businessmen in such situations can be seen in the following quote: "I definitely take care to properly manage relationships with people that are of use to me or possibly could be of use to me in the future. As for those people who are of no use to me, I do not bother maintaining relations with them."
If such actors deem an individual unworthy or of no practical use to them, they may employ the excuse that they have forgotten to bring their business cards with them. I once witnessed a certain mid-level government official tell another guest at a banquet that he had forgotten his card. During the course of the meal, he made it a point to accompany me to the washroom so that he could speak with me in private. On the way, he presented me with his business card and asked me not to tell the other guests that he had given me one because they would only hassle him if he were to give them one.

6.2 Seating

The second order of business following introductions in Shandong banqueting is the complex ritual of seating. Neither guests nor hosts can simply enter a banquet room and sit down. Seating must be arranged in a ritual that establishes the hierarchy within the room and therefore determines the roles to be played by each individual present. Yang notes, “When it is time to be seated, there is often a minor ritual struggle over who is to occupy the seats of honor.” Kipnis records similar practices in western Shandong: though Fengjia banquet procedures did not constitute political hierarchies so directly, banquet seating was still negotiated and was still relevant to problems of reproducing and recreating specific hierarchies. It is often the case that everyone present at a banquet knows who should sit where, but the ritual is conducted nonetheless.

The seating ritual involves the principle host designating seating assignments based on political or social status. When hosts suggest that a particular guest should take a seat of honor, the guest is expected to decline in a display of modesty, tuici (推辞). Even in situations in which the guest of honor is known to all, the guest will attempt to defer to another guest. Hosts know that guests will decline so they will continue to insist until they get each guest seated in the proper place. On numerous occasions, I witnessed
guests continuing to refuse while hosts literally dragged them to their proper seat and forced them to sit down. The seating ritual can be rather time consuming as the host must go through the ritual repeatedly with each guest until all present are seated. In order to avoid conflict, disagreement with the way the host orders the seating will not be brought up during the banquet. However, players dissatisfied with the arrangements discuss such topics afterwards making comments on the appropriateness or inappropriateness of the arrangements.

6.3 Ordering

Once all guests are properly seated, the game can begin in earnest. All Shandong banquets are conducted in one of two formats. Either the hosts makes arrangements with the restaurant in advance for a set dinner or the dishes are selected from the menu once all guests are seated. The set dinner is determined by the hosts and does not allow the guests to participate in the selection of dishes to be eaten. If this format is chosen, a number of cold dishes, liangcai (凉菜) will be on the table before the guests arrive.15

If the host decides to allow the guests to participate in the selection of what to eat, the ordering ritual begins with the host passing the menu to the most important guest. At which time the most important guest will attempt to defer to the host by saying that the choice of dishes does not matter to him. Anticipating this, the principle host will insist that his guest choose something that he enjoys to eat. The guest, not wanting to impose on his host, will then select a relatively inexpensive dish. The menu will then be passed around the table providing an opportunity for everyone to select a dish.
After all guests have had the opportunity to select something from the menu, the principle host, knowing that his guests were too modest to select any expensive dishes, will order a dish that is more expensive than any the guests have chosen. Usually, the host will then order several expensive dishes balancing out the number of seafood, vegetable and meat dishes. The number of dishes ordered always depends on the number of guests, but is usually eight, ten or in multiples of three. Eight is a popular number because the word for eight, $ba$ ($八$), is a homophone in Cantonese for the word to get rich, $facai$ (发财). The auspicious connotations are also connected to the number eight in Shandong.\textsuperscript{16} Similarly, ten is appropriate because the character for ten, $shi$ ($十$), is also used in an idiom meaning perfect, $shi$ $quan$ $shi$ $mei$ ($十$ 全 十 美). Multiples of three such as nine and twelve are also common because three is considered an auspicious number by some Shandongese. Banquets of less than eight dishes are rare.

The final component of the ordering ritual involves determining what to drink. As will be explained later, it is given that men will drink alcohol. The only question involves what type of alcohol. According to Shandong etiquette, the principle host will allow the honored guest to choose the type of alcohol. However, if the principle host has a habit of drinking a particular type of alcohol and the guest does not select that type, the host will often persuade him to change his mind. Normally, everyone drinks the same type of drink, but in many urban areas this custom is changing so that it is possible to see several types of drink poured at the same sitting. Shandongese have four choices when it comes to alcoholic beverages: $baijiu$, wines, beers, and foreign liquors. Communist party members and men over the age of forty tend to be inclined to drink baijiu, whereas younger men, and some women, choose beer more frequently. Those people who see themselves as urbane, many women, and some men who have a low
tolerance for alcohol drink white or red wines. Finally, a small percentage of men of high social position who have either gone abroad or have interacted with foreigners enjoy brandy and whisky.

Women are not obligated to drink or smoke. However, although they have the option not to drink, women who have the ability to drink are respected and even feared if they can drink more than their male counterparts. I met a number of women who had realized the importance of drinking as a social skill and, as a result, developed considerable capacities to drink. However, because it is considered more lady-like for women to abstain, most Shandongese women opt not to indulge in alcohol. I frequently heard the phrase he jiu shi nanren de shi (喝酒是男人的事) or 'drinking is men's business.' In the case of smoking, I never observed a women smoking at a banquet, but knew women who smoked in other more private settings. Once again, smoking is deemed "unladylike."

6.4 Serving

As noted earlier, the first course of food always consists of cold dishes. Once guests have had their fill of the cold dishes, hot dishes are served one dish at a time. Servers usually place a new dish on the table on the opposite side of the table directly across from the most important guest. As tables in most Shandong restaurants are equipped with a rotating Lazy Susan, after placing a dish on the table, servers then announce the name of the dish and rotate the dish towards the principle host until it rests before the number one guest who is extended the courtesy of the first sampling. In some cases, the dish will be rotated to a point half way between the principle host and the most important guest. I have also noted persons sitting in the honored guest position adjust the position of a dish so that it rests half way between himself and the host. Then, a principle host normally uses what are called gonggong kuaiizi (公共筷子), or 'public chopsticks,'
to serve both the number one and number two guests before partaking of the dish himself. Chen Si’s guide to social etiquette advises to wait for a signal from the host before moving one’s chopsticks to eat.\textsuperscript{17} Hosts normally pick up their chopsticks and motion for everyone to eat while saying either \textit{chi} (吃), ‘eat,’ or \textit{qing} (请) ‘please’.

After the principle host has taken his first helping of a dish, the dish is then rotated to his right so that each person can sample the dish. Each guest is expected to partake of every dish whether they wish to or not. It is pertinent to add that hosts are very keen observers who will discern immediately what dishes guests like and dislike by the amount of a dish an individual eats and the speed with which he eats it. Because of this, hosts do not ask whether a guest likes a dish or not. Finally, when the dish reaches the assistant host, he first serves the number three and four guests before serving himself. All dishes that follow are handled in a like manner.

The serving of a fish signals the end of the round of hot dishes. Again, the sound of the Chinese word for fish, \textit{yu} (鱼), is homophonic with such sounds as the word for excess, \textit{yu} (余), having the connotation of an abundance of food. Following the fish, a soup is generally served. Then, the guests are asked what kind of staple food, \textit{zhushi} (主食), they would like to end the meal with. The staple food is only served after the hosts determine that their guests have had enough to drink and a ceremonial final group toast has been made.\textsuperscript{18} Finally, as a signal that the banquet is nearing a close, fruit is served.

6.5 Smoking

Although not as pervasive as in the recent past, smoking remains an integral part of Shandong banquets especially in those areas that have less frequent contact with outside cultures such as Qixia, Laiyang and Zibo. Cigarettes are important props found on every banquet table in Shandong Province and are utilized by hosts as a tool to entertain
guests. When I inquired into the purpose of smoking at banquets, one Shandong businessman explained that although he did not particularly enjoy smoking, he felt that smoking is an important means of interaction among men. He went on to explain that offering a cigarette to a stranger is a ritual act that expresses one's desire to open dialogue with him. Furthermore, when hosting a banquet, if a guest is quiet or appears to be bored, a host can offer a cigarette to fill in the gaps. It is also general practice in Shandong for hosts to offer cigarettes to their guests in the early stages of banquets. Cigarettes are frequently smoked prior to eating the first bite of food. If an individual does not smoke, hosts still present them with plastic, Bic-like lighters and name brand cigarettes as gifts. Guests can then take them home to offer guests that they entertain on other occasions.

First, hosts generally offer cigarettes to guests while persons of lower status offer cigarettes to those of higher status. Kipnis states that in Fengjia village, "Cigarettes were smoked only when offered and lit by someone else." However, more often than not, when an individual offers cigarettes to others present at a banquet, it is because he himself wishes to smoke. Smoking without first offering a cigarette to the others present would be seen as selfish and a breach of etiquette, therefore, if one wishes to smoke, he must first offer cigarettes to those within his reach. This pertains to both guests and hosts.

Additionally, many Shandongnese men observe a ritual manner with which to offer a cigarette. When offering a cigarette in a formal manner, Shandongnese first tap the bottom of the box of cigarettes so that one or two cigarettes extend from the pack. They then extend the box to the receiver with both hands. As soon as the individual accepts, both parties rush to light the cigarette. I witnessed individuals, who later turned out not to have a lighter on their person, resist accepting a light from individuals
that they perceived to be of high social or political status. If an individual did accept a light, he would first place the cigarette in his mouth and then surround the lighter along with the offerer’s hand with both of his own hands before lowering the cigarette to the flame. Once the cigarette was lit, the individual would then tap the back side of the offerer’s hand lightly in a display of gratitude.

At one banquet in Weihai, my host expressed what significance both smoking and drinking held in his mind. At the beginning of the banquet, two American members of our party refused to drink or smoke with our host for personal reasons. One stated that he did not drink, while the other stated that it was against his religion to drink. Both stated that they did not smoke. Near the end of the banquet, our host began discussing what his notion of a friend involves by saying that a friend is willing to hurt himself for you. The analogy he used was a friend is someone who is willing to \textit{wei peng you liang lei cha dao} (为朋友两肋插刀), or 'cut out both of his ribs for a friend.' He went on to express veiled criticisms of the two individuals who did not partake of smoke or spirit. He stated that since he had made himself uncomfortable on their account by not smoking around them, they should be willing to make themselves uncomfortable on his account by drinking with him. This particular host’s response was a commonly seen reflexive reaction invoked by his sense of a loss of face.\textsuperscript{20} His discussion of friendship was consistent with many others that I heard while in Shandong.
CHAPTER 7

THE GAME: PART TWO

7.1 Drinking

Liu Dezeng proclaims, "When discussing the entertainment of guests, one can not avoid discussing alcohol. In Shandong, drinking is the theme of the entertainment of guests."¹ In other words, drinking rituals form the core of the game of official banqueting in Shandong Province.² Drinking in Shandong, as I have observed the ritual, serves four main purposes: 1) building mianzi 面子 or 'face;' 2) creating or building ganqing 感情 or 'feelings;' 3) displaying that one is shizai 实在 which sometimes is translated as 'honest and forthright;' and 4) creating a positive atmosphere.

7.1.1 Building mianzi

Yang states, "The Chinese notion of 'face' is an important mechanism through which obligation and reciprocity operate."³ She defines it as "a combination of a sense of moral imperatives, social honor, and self-respect."⁴ Quoting Hu Hsienchin, she adds that face "is gained or lost in the jockeying for social prestige and social advantage. One accumulates mianzi by showing oneself capable, wealthy, generous, and possessed of a wide network of social relationships."⁵ However, Ambrose King's notion of face is a more succinct way of describing the concept.⁶ He describes face as a sense of social status that includes what a person thinks of himself in relation to all other people.
The following incident reveals the importance of drinking as a form of face-building in Shandong as well as the importance of performing for the group. While in Qingdao, a government official invited me to serve as a peike for a banquet that she was hosting. She informed me that she had invited a number of guests whom she had told a young foreign friend who could speak Chinese would participate. As I did not have a car, she picked me up on her way to the restaurant. We arrived prior to the guests to inspect the banquet room. In the course of small talk, it came out that I had been too busy to have lunch that afternoon. My host friend immediately became excited and began reprimanding me for not eating.

At first, I thought that my friend’s reaction was a display of her concern for my well being. Then, she asked me how I expected to be able to drink on an empty stomach. I replied that I would be careful to only drink a glass or two. To that my host friend adamantly replied that I had no choice, I must drink and that I must biaoxian biaoxian (表现表现) which translates as ‘show off’ or ‘perform.’ Not knowing what to do in such a situation, I told my host friend that I would just have to drink on an empty stomach. She then proceeded to order a plate of shuijiao for me to eat before the guests arrived. When I told her that I would not be able to eat dinner if I ate shuijiao, she responded that it did not matter if I ate during the meal as long as I could drink. So, I sat at a table for ten by myself, eating shuijiao, while my host friend and her other peike entertained the guests outside the door. When I had finished, the guests were brought in and introductions were made. It is obvious that my friend would have lost face had I not been able to perform for her guests.
7.1.2 Creating ganqing

_Ganqing_ (感情), or the sentiments between and among people, play an integral role in interpersonal relationships in Shandong Province. Ganqing combines with mianzi to form the basis of any relationship in the Shandong context. When two individuals meet for the first time, no ganqing exists between them because there is a gap between them, or as Irene Yeung words it, they "have no ascribed commonality." Yang refers to the same notion as the gap between the outside and the inside. Yang deems this a guanxi transaction and employs the term "transformation" to describe this bridging of the gap between the outside and the inside. Yeung, on the other hand, refers to this as "altercasting" the object of which she claims is the arranging of social networks in ways to include new people. In Shandong, banquets provide a forum for building ganqing while drinking provides a means for bridging the gap between two persons.

7.1.3 Displaying shizai

One of the characteristics most valued by Shandongese is being shizai (实在), a notion that cannot be likened to one single word in the English language. Additional terms that can be found in Shandong which refer to this same concept include shuaizhen (率真), a more literary term, and zhigang (直剛), a term used in the Zibo dialect. Being shizai involves being candid in one’s relationships, straightforward about one’s motives and intentions, and honest in one’s speech and actions. If an individual is willing to sacrifice himself for a friend, he is perceived as being committed to the friendship and as not having any ulterior motives. Thus, he is deemed shizai.

Furthermore, shizai involves the notion of one’s true nature or character. Drinking provides a means for displaying that one is shizai in a public setting, which, adds to the weight of the display because of the presence of mianzi. Drinking with
someone gives them *mianzi*, while such a performance in front of a group proves that you are *shizai*. Such displays serve to deepen *gangqing* closing the gap between other players by affording them face. Moreover, drinking is also seen as a means to find out information about the character another player. It is used to break down false fronts which is one of the keys to why players must partake in drink warfare. Players are attempting to assess the character of other players. Drinking is viewed as a way to determine if a player can be trusted and depended upon. To abstain would be a statement of one’s unwillingness to reveal something to the group which would leave doubt in the minds of the other players about one’s trustworthiness and dependability.

More often than not, Americans in China were not viewed as *shizai* by our hosts, but were often considered *shahuhude* (傻乎乎的), a term that can be rendered as ‘simple-minded.’ This is a drastically different term that was used to describe the drinking patterns of individuals who, because they did not understand the purposes underlying the drinking ritual or the rules of the game, continually over drank. One friend explained to me that drinking to excess in a sincere display of friendship under the right conditions, and without ulterior motive, was a display of true *shizai*. On the other hand, drinking to excess without knowing why one was doing it was considered *shahuhude*. Often times players derived pleasure out of getting foreign guests drunk by continually stating that they were *shizai* in their drinking. This deceptive act itself was deemed un-*shizai* by many other Shandongnese, but entertaining nonetheless.

7.2 Drinking as a Test of Manhood

The phenomenon of *mianzi* also sometimes turns banquets into contests in which players display their ability to drink. Because the ability to drink large amounts of alcohol is seen as a symbol being a man, those who can drink without getting drunk are afforded a certain amount of *mianzi*. Also, *baijiu* is perceived to be the most potent of all
alcoholic beverages and is afforded a special place in the minds of Shandongese. Therefore, men who can consume large quantities of baijiu without appearing to be drunk are looked upon as "real men." Kipnis points out that men often size up their competitors by the number of ounces of baijiu they can consume.12

Furthermore, men who cannot drink are seen as having less face, and therefore, less capable. The ramifications are that in the social setting, there is extreme pressure on Shandong men to drink in order to display their mianzi. Additionally, on several occasions I witnessed superiors, such as managers and teachers, pressuring their subordinates and students to drink. In each case, the superior ridiculed the subordinate for not being up to standard and stated that by forcing them to drink, he was helping them develop their ability to drink, which he informed would make them better persons. The added element of performing up to their superiors' standards, affording them face, often led to over consumption and drunkenness on the part of the subordinate.

7.3 The Art of Drinking

As a result of these drinking wars, drinking has developed into an art form. Tactics for when to drink, when not to drink, when to toast, when not to toast, how to make others drink, and how to keep from drinking all are indispensable during a Shandong banquet. Combine the factor of mianzi with the notion that hosts feel it their responsibility to ensure that their guests drink sufficient amounts of alcohol and it becomes easy to see how someone not well-versed in the art of drinking, Shandong style, could become drunk very rapidly in such warfare. This is especially the case when there are tactics such as chelun zhanshu (车轮战术), which literally is a tactic in which several people take turns attacking one person in order to defeat him. In the banquet setting, this tactic involves several people working together, taking turns toasting one
individual, usually the honored guest, until he is drunk. On numerous occasions, I witnessed players drink to the point of being sick. However, this was much less frequent among high status players in larger urban areas where players saw this type of behavior as unrefined.

7.3.1 Toasting

*Jingjiu* (敬酒), toasting, is an integral, but extremely complex part of the drinking ritual. Many of the tactics involved in the art of drinking are implemented in some form of toasting. Knowing how to toast, when to toast, and when not to toast are all knowledge key to survival in drink warfare. The importance of toasting is also noted by Kipnis who sees refusing a toast as tantamount to refusing to give *mianzi* which is the "starting point for relationships." In Shandong banqueting, there are two distinct periods of toasting. First, banquets generally open with six ritual toasts delivered by the principle and assistant hosts. Second, there is a period of open toasting in which all players freely toast each other. Up to the point of the sixth toast, guests do not engage in any toasting and all interaction is conducted by either the principle host or the assistant host. The rhythm of the banquet is fixed with a toast followed by short intervals of eating and small talk before another toast. Players must not toast out of order until after the sixth toast. Finally, drinking is brought to a close with a ritual toast lead by the principle host.

7.3.1.1 The Opening Ceremony

The principle host signals that the drinking is about to begin with a ceremonial first toast in which he welcomes his guests. All players present are expected to participate in this group toast, including those not drinking alcohol who raise glasses of tea or water instead. While offering his toast, the principle host raises his glass with all
present following his lead. When finished delivering the toast, players touch glasses before emptying them completely.

The several ritual mannerisms associated with the act of toasting should be addressed here. First, one purpose that such group toasts serve is to build the atmosphere of the event. The size of banquet tables used are often too large to allow players to reach any other participants besides those to their immediate right and left. As a result, a custom of tapping glasses on the "Lazy Susan" is employed to prevent everyone from having to get up to touch glasses. This custom is termed *guodian* (过电), 'passing the electricity.' Everyone touches his glass to the table at the same moment and the table acting as a conductor allows feelings to pass through which builds the atmosphere.

Furthermore, when glasses are tapped, *pengbei* (碰杯), one must empty all of the contents of the glass. Otherwise, he will be deemed as not being *shizai*. It is possible to add a half-glass disclaimer, but it must be delivered prior to touching glasses. Additionally, when touching glasses, players hold their glasses with two hands attempting to lower the brim of their glass below that of their counterpart in a show of deference. Some players carry this to extreme by lowering their glasses below the edge of the table. The phrase *ganbei* (干杯), literally 'dry glass,' used in the sense of 'bottoms up' is delivered when touching glasses as well.

After tapping glasses, the contents of the glass must be drank in one continuous drink, a task that is not always easily accomplished considering that Shandongnese fill each glass to the brim when pouring alcohol. Finally, when a player finishes emptying his glass, he normally tilts his glass towards the individual who has toasted him allowing him to see the dry bottom of the glass. This gesture is occasionally recognized with a
verbal acknowledgment or a nod.

After drinking the first glass, the principle host then invites all guests to partake of whatever food is on the table. While the guests are eating, their glasses are immediately refilled. Normally, this is performed by waitresses. However, in the event a waitress has left the room to get the next dish, one of the lower ranking peike will take it upon himself to refill all glasses beginning with the most important guest. A guest's glass must never be allowed to be empty, a fact that keeps waitresses extremely busy at large banquets.

Following a brief period of small talk, the host will then perform his second group toast, the content of which is normally very broad in nature. In business situations in which two parties are in the midst of negotiations or where two organizations have been working on a joint project together, the principle host will take this opportunity to deliver a statement of his desire for overall success. The second toast is performed in the same manner as the first and again is followed by the host inviting his guests to partake of food. The second toast is also followed by a period of small talk in which the hosts obtain information about their guests which they might use in later toasts. This is also the period in which players begin sizing each other up for potential drinking contests.

Finally, the principle host's part in the opening ceremony comes to a close with his third group toast. The content of the third toast varies widely, but always involves all participants. Moreover, in the event that a banquet involves multiple tables, both the principle and assistant hosts are expected to perform a ritual toast at each and every table. This is performed sometime after the close of the opening ceremony first by the principle host and then by the assistant host so that guests at the main table are never left unattended. Some more extreme hosts, in their strict observance of ritual and
concern with displaying their hospitality to their guests, toast each guest at every table. However, most hosts avoid forcing themselves to drink any more than is absolutely necessary.

Once the principle host has performed his ceremonial three toasts, control of the interaction shifts to the assistant host who has the responsibility to deliver the next three toasts. One friend commented that the assistant host must be more creative and flexible than the principle host for at least two reasons. First, the principle host's toasts come first and are normally restricted to welcome toasts that have prescribed formats. Second, the host usually does not need to worry about what he says offending any home team players. The assistant host, on the contrary, must ensure that he does not encroach upon the principle host's mianzi.

Because of this second fact, the assistant host generally opens his first toast by building up the principle host's face before delivering his version of a welcome toast. This type of toast might open with a statement such as, *wo daibiao wang juzhang* (我代表王局长...), which can be translated as either 'On behalf of Director Wang...' or 'I represent Director Wang.' Once the formality of giving the principle host his due mianzi has been disposed of, the fifth toast affords the assistant toast an opportunity to show his creativity. For the most part, assistant hosts utilize this second toast to build the atmosphere and involve everyone in the festivities. Finally, a banquet's opening ceremony comes to a close with the delivery of the assistant host's third toast in which he normally expresses his and his host's desire to have many more opportunities to host the guests present at the event.
On one occasion when US/China Links was being hosted by the local government of Shidao, located on the southeastern tip of the Jiaodong Peninsula, a US/China Links fellow, who realized the importance of toasting, but not the importance of timing, attempted to offer a toast of appreciation to the principle host at his table before the sixth toast had been delivered. What followed was an elaborate explanation of the toasting procedures and rules that must be observed in Shandong Province, a sure signal that the fellow had violated the rules of etiquette. In nearly every instance in which I observed a foreign guest violate the rules of banquet etiquette, the act was immediately followed not by direct correction, but by explanations of how Shandong people conduct themselves in like situations. "Reprimands" of this sort are important sources of information about etiquette in Shandong.

7.4 Drinking Wars

Once the opening six toasts have been delivered, the drinking wars begin in earnest. This stage is also frequently acknowledged verbally with the phrase suiyi (随意), or "[drink and eat] as you please." Guests and hosts alternate toasting one another in a much less ordered fashion while dialogue becomes more free flowing than in the early stages of a banquet. This involves a shift in conversation patterns from a more formal, much slower form of interaction in which one player speaks at a time to a multiparty interaction in which players must process significant amounts of information from different sources simultaneously. Toasting, during this phase of the game, serves one of four functions: 1) bridging the gap; 2) exchange of feeling; 3) building the atmosphere; and 4) displaying mutual respect or giving face.

As stated earlier, one important goal of banqueting is to bridge the gap between two strangers. Both hosts and guests use toasting to appeal to shared identities in order to bring others into their circle. Yang notes that people from the same place, colleagues,
and classmates possess the types of relationships considered most intimate and valued.\textsuperscript{16} Hosts often attempt to bring guests into their circles by toasting them using intimate terms of address or by acknowledging a fictitious intimacy with their guests regardless of reality.

In Shandong, I observed two distinct strategies for attempting to bridge the gap with me which involved using intimate terms of address. First, hosts, who were in every instance older, would often adopt the term \textit{xiao (小)} as a prefix to my surname, meaning 'young,' when toasting me in an attempt to place us on familiar terms. The second strategy adopted the opposite and more honorific \textit{lao (老)}, meaning 'old,' for the same purpose. When I inquired about the logic behind fifty-year-old officials calling a thirty-year-old guest \textit{old}, the reply was that it should be interpreted in the sense of old friend, and is employed because it sounds \textit{qingjie (亲切)} or 'intimate.'

Another strategy frequently adopted was elevating me to the status of a local. On numerous occasions, hosts and \textit{peike} employed statements such as, "You are half a Shandongnese, \textit{bange shandongren (半个山东人)};" or "You are half a home-townsman, \textit{bange laoxiang (半个老乡)}." These statements were intended to bring me into the user's circle and bridge the gap that existed between us. These were strategies consciously adopted by the user and were more often than not employed to bridge the gap between players who were not already on intimate terms with me. Players who were intimate displayed similar feelings in their actions rather than verbally.

An effective strategy relied on by experienced Shandongnese guests can be viewed as making oneself less of an outsider. One use of this tactic involved employing the inclusive form of the pronoun \textit{zán (咱)}, or 'we,' rather than the more commonly used non-inclusive \textit{wǒ (我)} when referring to the host unit. For example, when addressing
the host, Director Wang, guests would include themselves as one of Mr. Wang’s subordinates by saying "Our Director Wang..., zamen Wang Zhuren (咱们王主任)..." rather than Director Wang. Or, when referring to the hosting unit Yantai Port Authorities, a guest wishing to sound more intimate would use "Our Port Authorities, zamen gangwuju (咱们港务局)."

Toasting is also an effective means of acknowledging friendships through the exchange of feeling. This use of toasting is employed by hosts and guests who have banqueted together previously or who are familiar with one other in some other capacity. Toasts in this category often refer to the length of time players have been friends and are personal in nature. By the third time I drank with an individual, I was often honored with a toast that included some version of the statement, "We are already old friends, women yijing shi liao pengyou le(我们已经是老朋友了)." It is in this capacity that one must display his shizai. Friends are well aware of each other’s drinking capacities and expect each other to be shizai in their drinking and toasting. As noted earlier, the expectations of the group place tremendous pressure on individual players, in this case, to drink.\textsuperscript{17}

A third function toasting served is to build the atmosphere of the occasion. If hosts felt that the occasion was not festive enough, was too tense, or if they sensed that their guests might be bored, they would immediately propose a toast to liven things up. Kipnis also observed a similar phenomenon in western Shandong: "skillful host reps coaxed their guests to drink and relax."\textsuperscript{18} For this reason, it is important for guests to appear to be enjoying themselves regardless of whether they are or not. Otherwise, hosts will continue to toast them until they are gaoxing (高兴), or 'happy,' which as Kipnis notes carries the connotations of consuming large quantities of alcohol and food.\textsuperscript{19}
A fourth function served by toasting involves showing respect for another player. Kipnis observes that "toasts materialize respect" among participants at banquets. In the case of guests, it is expected that they, at a minimum, show their respect and appreciation to the principle host with a toast. Most guests feel it necessary to toast everyone present at least once so as not to offend any particular player by not giving him the mianzi afforded by a toast. Although skillful declines are appreciated, players must be aware of the implications for not drinking or not participating in the toasting ritual. The face gained and given and the ganqing built through participation far out weigh the discomfort of drinking a few glasses of baijiu. Moreover, experienced players consciously manipulate their toasting strategies so that they may take advantage of such attitudes.

One example of how players manipulate toasting strategies can be seen in the female host friend mentioned earlier. Women hold an advantageous position in the drinking game in that they are not expected to drink. Additionally, because of male attitudes about their superiority in drinking, men in Shandong feel that they can not refuse when toasted by a woman. If they would refuse to drink with a woman, they would diulian (丢脸) or 'be shamed' in front of the group for being less manly. This particular female host was well aware of this fact and deftly used it to her advantage. She was able to make men drink whenever she felt it necessary, but did not have the same set of expectations placed upon her by her male counterparts to drink. As soon as she wanted to stop drinking, she merely need to state that she had consumed too much. For women, there were no repercussions for stopping in the middle of battle, a fact that caused men to avoid getting into drinking contests with such women because of the obvious lose-lose situation.
A second tactic critical to survival in Shandong drinking wars as revealed to me by an experienced native can be seen as a type of bluffing. First, one must size up the competition while simultaneously determining the purpose and importance of the banquet. If, in the early stages of the interaction, another player reveals some weakness in his drinking abilities, it may be safe to use the *shuodahua* (说大话) or the 'talk big' strategy in which one brags about the amount of alcohol he can consume in an attempt to scare his opponent out of a direct contest or at least place a seed of doubt in the minds of unfamiliar players. However, the player adopting this strategy must be prepared to suffer the consequences in the event the opposition calls his bluff.

A third tactic that some players adopt when their reconnaissance reveals that the opponent might be a formidable drinker is the reverse psychology method. This involves continually stating that one's capacity to drink is minimal, but delivering such self-effacing statements in a manner that causes the opposition to interpret them as displays of modesty and attempts to draw them into a drinking war. One's motive again is to avoid drinking by insinuating that one is a wily and seasoned veteran of drinking wars.

On many occasions, it was during the open-toasting segment of a banquet that the purpose for the banquet became clear to all. Because the stage was open for all participants to make toasts or raise topics of conversation, propositions were raised. Players frequently made their desires and intentions known at this time. However, this is also the stage in which banquets often became competitions involving players each trying to out perform or one-up the other in both drinking and speaking. One of the most successful players I observed in the banqueting game of Shandong commented that all participants in a banquet are thinking all the time of what to say, always trying to build on what others have said, and waiting for their opportunity to make the requisite statements and toasts. He further stated that participants are not thinking of eating
during a banquet, but rather are spending every ounce of energy trying to outperform other participants.

7.5 Speaking

This brings us to the what players talk about and how they talk about it. As in any communicative situation, the forms of rhetoric adopted and topics of discourse broached were determined by the players present. Young states that people make choices about language use based on characteristics of other participants in the speech event.²¹ She continues by adding that individuals “choose unconsciously (without having to think about it) which communicative features are most appropriate given the person(s) to whom they are speaking.”²² The result is that Shandong players’ choices of what to talk about when Americans were present was inherently different from when only Chinese were present. What normally developed in the cases where foreign players were involved was a discussion about the United States, US-China relations, or differences in American and Chinese culture, especially those concerning dining and banqueting.

The way in which Shandong players speak when dealing with foreigners who are not viewed as players can be called “foreigner Chinese.” This is a modified Chinese, or metalanguage, adopted to facilitate communication and comprehension.²³ The language used when speaking to a foreigner is both consciously and unconsciously, changed in terms of speed, vocabulary, references, structures, and topics. Such a shift facilitates communication in the cases where the speaker knows very well what the foreign listener knows and understands. Banquets conducted in “foreigner Chinese” are inherently different from those conducted by the normal rules of the game.²⁴ In those banquets in which I was the only foreign player, which were more than likely conducted in a mode somewhere between “foreigner Chinese” and the normal player mode, a number of such
distinctions became discernable. In an environment of less accommodation, the number of quotes of the classics, proverbs, and idioms increased dramatically.

7.5.1 The Art of Speaking

Artistic speaking is an integral facet of Shandong banquets that when altered, as when non-players are present, changes the entire atmosphere of such performances. Each participant is trying to out do the other not only in terms of content of speech, but also in terms of artistic delivery. Players with the best rhetorical skills enjoy significant amounts of prestige and rate extremely high in the group. Thus, verbal skills, like drinking, can be used to enhance one's position in society. One common characteristic of banquet speech that was conspicuously absent from accommodated banquets was creatively employing what are called *taoyu* (套语), or 'set phrases,' for their aesthetic effect. For instance, a government official might adopt a portion of the official discourse, change it slightly making it fit the situation, and deliver it to show his ability to manipulate the discourse. An example of such a technique can be seen in the following two phrases.

1)  **he dao dang zhongyang** (喝到当中央)

   'Let's drink half a glass.'

2)  **he dao dang zhongyang** (喝到党中央)

   'Let's drink to the Party Leadership.'

The two phrases are a play on the homonyms *dang* (党), 'Communist Party' and *dang* (党), 'just to a certain point,' which differ only in tones. Although usually employed with *dang* (党) and meaning a toast roughly equivalent to 'Let's drink half a glass(or to the point on the glass where the speaker points),' it invokes images of the Communist Party because the homonym *dang* (党), changes the phrase to 'Let's drink to the Party
Leadership:

A second is invoking political slogans to evoke particular images. This is sometimes just done for aesthetic effect, but can also be used to put pressure on another player to drink.

1) \textit{wenti buzai daxiao guanjian zaiyutaidu}

(问题不在大小，关键在于态度)

'It is not a problem of size, the key is in your attitude.'

2) \textit{gan hao gan huai shi shuiping wenti, gan yu bu gan shi taidu wenti}

(干好干坏是水平问题，干与不干是态度问题)

'Whether a person does something well or not is a question of ability, whether he does it or not is a question of attitude.'

Both phrases were political phrases formerly used to call into question an individual's political attitude. Now they are used to call into question one's attitude towards drinking at banquets.

The political realm is not the only realm that players venture into. Literary and historical references abound, especially in the genre of speech called \textit{xiehouyu} (歇后语). \textit{Xiehouyu} involves a speaker stating a phrase that has a set response based on some cultural story. \textit{Xiehouyu} is frequently used by the veterans of Shandong banquets to show their verbal prowess. Below are a few examples:

1.) \textit{(猪八戒讲��论}>-----假圣人) \textit{Zhu bajie jiang lunyu}

'Zhubajie teaching \textit{The Analects}---A phony saint.'

This particular reference plays on the characteristics of Zhu Bajie, a key character in the classic Chinese novel, \textit{Journey to the West}. The phrase can be used to criticize another player's logic.
2.) (诸葛亮娶丑妻...为事业着想) zhuge liang qu chou qi--weishiye zhuan xiang
‘Zhuge liang takes an ugly wife...He's thinking about his career.'
Example two is used to describe a person who has married an ugly woman because she is capable of advancing his career. The reference is to Zhuge Liang, the renowned strategist in the classic novel *Romance of the Three Kingdoms*.

3.) (张飞吃豆芽...一盘小菜) zhang fei chi dou ya---yi pan xiao cai
‘Zhang Fei eating bean sprouts...A small dish of vegetables.’
This example was encountered in numerous situations and was utilized by a number of people. It was used to infer that because of an individual's superior ability, the task at hand would be no trouble to accomplish. The reference is to another *Romance* character, the fearless and capable General Zhang Fei.

4.) (阿Q找对象...谁也不肯) Ah Q zhao dui xiang---shei ye buken
‘Ah Q looking for a wife...Nobody is willing.’
Sentence four, a reference to the antagonist in the Lu Xun short story *The Real Story of Ah Q*, is a handy rhetorical device for the single player who must continuously answer why he is not yet married. It calls on the image of Ah Q who at one point in the story engages in a lice popping contest with another social outcast.
Although all of these examples contain references to well-known literary characters, *xiéhóuyú* is not restricted in this manner. There are phrases that suit every occasion and every type of person. The art of speaking entails applying such phrases in a timely and well delivered manner.

7.6 Ending the Game
As any game, Shandong banquets are bound events with a distinct opening and closing. Normally, the principle host will signal that the curtain is about to close by
asking whether the guests have enjoyed themselves. The question itself is a ritual act that only has one valid type of response associated with it. That is an affirmation of how much food and drink one has eaten and how happy one is because of the host's ability to throw a gala event. It is a fact known to all players that regardless of the circumstances, no guest would ever answer in the negative. Thus, it can be concluded that such a question serves to bring the performance to an end on a high note, while, at the same time, indicating to the players that the festivities have come to a close. On occasion, principle hosts make closing remarks or verbally indicate that the banquet is over.

After the closing remarks, players begin making their way to the exit which itself is the site of another performance. Guests and hosts alike attempt to allow others to pass through the door before them in a display of deference and modesty. What results is that players become entangled in disputes of etiquette to determine who should go last. Although deferring to another person is deemed to be a positive characteristic in Shandong society, in the end, it does not matter who leaves first as long as each individual performs sufficient acts of resistance to establish that he is modest and understands etiquette.

Once outside the banquet room, principle hosts have the responsibility to see guests at least to an elevator where they will be sure to push the button for their guests. When I inquired about this point, an experienced player responded that pushing the elevator button for a guest makes them feel as though you have thought of everything, down to the most minor of details. Most Shandongnese principle hosts see their guests out to their transportation or provide it for them in the case of foreign and important guests. Hosts not only have the obligation to walk their guests to their transportation, but they must wait patiently until they begin to drive off, at which time they raise both hands to wave. In the Shandong wave, hosts extend both hands, palms open, just above head level
in a ritual wave. The host’s responsibilities end as his last guest drives off.
CHAPTER 8

BECOMING A PLAYER

In this chapter, I will attempt to address some of the most important issues that culture learners need to address in their pursuit of becoming players in a given culture game, a long-term, multi-step endeavor that entails substantial amounts of time and effort. In doing so, I hope to summarize some of the main themes espoused in the earlier chapters of this thesis.

8.1 Reorganizing One's World View

We have shown that players from different cultures rely on distinctive frameworks of meaning and that in order to accurately interpret and establish intentions in a second culture, an individual must employ methods for establishing intentions that are recognizable in the target culture. The key for language learners then is twofold. They must first recognize this so that they may begin cultivating their skills of information organization in target culture modes. Second, they must be willing to change their world view taking into account the new information provided by the target culture. Because of the discomfort such reorientation causes, it is something many learners are reluctant to do. World view reorganization requires that the individual reconsider notions taken as facts in his old world view, supplementing them with a new world
view that conflates previous knowledge and new target culture information.¹

8.2 Focusing on Microcultures

We have stated that because of the complexity of any given culture, it is impossible to know all of the information associated with a culture. Natives are not players in all of the games of their own culture and certainly are not proficient in all of the games in which they participate. Microcultures, however, with their smaller number of players and scaled down games, seem to be significantly more manageable than sagas or entire cultures.² Thus, if an individual learns to participate in the games of microcultures, one by one, compiling a memory of each, through time, his field of play can be expanded to include a significant number of games.

The question then becomes: How do learners know which microcultures to choose as their target of study? In many cases, this is not a matter of choice for the learner. He must learn the microculture of his work unit or place of stay. However, language learning activities can be designed around general types of microcultures which would allow learners to select those microcultures that they are most likely to encounter. By exposing learners to various types of frequently encountered microcultures, language teachers can allow them to develop initial narrative frameworks or scripts about those microcultures which can later be used for reference when they encounter actual microcultures. This brings us to the question: How does an individual get into a game?

8.3 Getting into the Game

In order to get into a game, an individual must know something about the microcultures involved as well as the rules of the individual game. In other words, learners must know how to score before they can become a successful player. The prospective player must seek out information about the microcultures involved that is
heid in reified culture as well as any other sources of public knowledge available. The memory a culture holds of itself provides a significant repository of cultural knowledge. It is necessary that learners seek out information about the culture that can serve as both background knowledge and a potential key to get in the game. This is pregame work in which the learner can be seen as fulfilling the role of a collector. Although this is often the work of language pedagogues, it is also an area in which good learners separate themselves from average learners. To again extend the sports metaphor, good players read scouting reports, watch games films and learn everything they can about both their opponents and their teammates so that they are able to anticipate their actions during games.

8.4 Playing the Game

If we follow Cole’s notion that learners must participate in a language learning activity in order to learn, learning how to play the game should include performing culture. In other words, the learner must participate in culture games, an activity that entails establishing and interpreting intentions in a second culture. Such a proposition requires that learners see themselves as active players rather than fans or analysts who focus their energies not on performing for a culture, but on watching culture performances.

This philosophy can be used in creating pedagogical materials and activities as well. Activities developed around games and scripts give learners practice in skills needed during actual games. The image of the good player who reviews game films and hones his skills in unscored practice performances comes to mind. However, each game and script is different. Moreover, what the learner encounters will never be the same as the scripts provided in pedagogical materials. However, as we have seen, knowing what
to expect in games is half the battle. In other words, if a learner is aware of certain patterns of communication and what types of behaviors and concepts are frequently found in a game, he can use that knowledge to make educated guesses about similar games.

As we have seen, Shandong banquets are an excellent training ground for language learners because of their performative and inclusive nature. All participants are forced to participate at the level at which they can perform. However, the ordinary language learner does not have access to a Shandong banquet room. But much of what is encountered in this game is applicable to other Shandong games. Concepts important in these banquets such as *mianzi*, *shizai*, and *gangqing* are encountered in nearly every Shandong game. Furthermore, Shandong banquets are replete with performable culture such as displays of modesty, accepting and declining compliments, showing concern for other players, introductions, and ordering food. Additionally, strategies for recognizing and fulfilling roles that can be applied to nearly every Shandong context are repeatedly encountered in banquets. These bits of performed culture can be used to form the core of language learning activities and materials.

This would also suggest that language teachers should be preparing activities that involve learners participating in culture games or simulated culture games that expose them to scripts which contain culturally coded patterns of communication, social roles they might encounter or be required to fulfill, and potential sequences of events. Such exposure would allow learners to begin to develop mental frameworks of these events that can be applied to future encounters. As we have seen, this is most effectively done if these events are developed in story form.

Furthermore, the learner must be a risk-taker in that he must convince the target group that interpreting his intentions is a worthwhile proposition, which can only be accomplished through cultural performances of recognized roles. A group
normally will assume that an outsider cannot play the game until he proves otherwise. In order to do this, an individual must perform culture that other players can recognize. This suggests that learners should have extensive opportunities to perform for audiences which ideally should include natives of the target culture who can comment on the effectiveness of those performances.

8.4.1 Using the Environment

To find ways to perform, the learner should turn to his environment. In other words, the learner should be using all available resources. As noted earlier, in Shandong culture, interlocutor reprimand, in which players indicate when a player has done something incorrectly in an overt; corrective-feedback, which includes responses to the learner's behaviors which may not be explicit; and consultation with natives, in which the learner actively seeks out natives with the intent to discuss ways of making one's intentions known to the group.**6**

8.4.2 Experimental Thinking

If no model exists, the individual must engage in something akin to experimental thinking.**7** This involves making attempts at meaning-making based on existing or previous knowledge combined with information found in the environment. This type of behavior should be fostered in the language classroom so that learners' interpretive skills are developed. As previously noted, learners need to struggle for meaning in order to learn. In natural culture games, foreign participants rarely, if ever, possess all of the information. The majority of the time they must make educated guesses based on their knowledge of the game. Thus, language learning activities should be designed with this fact in mind so that learners develop the skills required to handle situations in which they only have partial knowledge. The learner can then be seen as using the
resources available to him to extrapolate a meaning of the particular event. This meaning can then be added to memory related to the appropriate schema. Bruner aptly describes the learner in this phase as groping through a maze of toggle switches until they come to recognize a visualizable path or pattern.\(^9\)

8.4.3 Re-mediation

The process of determining which behaviors are acceptable followed by a reassessment of meaning adding the newly acquired information can be seen as a form of what Cole refers to as re-mediation.\(^9\) If learning culture is viewed in this manner, it would suggest that a newcomer must adjust to the group while the group adjusts to him, a proposition that will be returned to momentarily. US/China Links utilizes the method of participation in culture games followed by periods of discussion of the events and people involved in those games. This can be applied to other language learning situations as in the manner in which Chinese is taught at The Ohio State University. Students watch videos or clips of movies that involve natives of the target culture participating in everyday games. Then, students are required to narrate portions of what they witness which is followed by discussion of what they have encountered. Moreover, language teachers can create a meta-environment in the classroom in which students are required to sync to various target culture norms.

8.4.4 Finding a Comfort Zone

Not possessing all of the information necessary to negotiate an encounter naturally creates an uneasiness on the part of an individual. Success, to a certain extent, can be said to hinge upon what the individual does in response to that uneasiness. There are at least three possible responses. The first type of learner does not know how to deal with this fear created by a lack of information. As a result, they avoid exposing
themselves to this type of situation. A second type of learner feeds off the adventure of trying to figure out what information is missing, and therefore enjoys putting himself in that uncomfortable situation. By putting himself on the line, this type of learner is participating in cultural performances, a pre-requisite of learning. The third type of learner does not necessarily enjoy the feeling associated with a lack of information surrounding an event, but is able to manage that uneasiness. This would suggest that learners need the opportunity to perform in relatively safe environments at first so that they are able to develop strategies for coping with the discomfort involved in situations in which they have less control than they enjoy in their first culture games.

8.4.5 Gap-filling

How do you know if what you are doing is accurate? In this sense, learners need to be analysts. We have seen that in order to accurately assess the intentions of players, they need to become acute observers of culture, people, speech, and behavior. In other words, learners need to assume that cross-cultural discourse is not necessarily proleptic. Prolepsis presupposes that the listener is understanding what the speaker is intending which we have shown is not necessarily the case. Pedagogues need to teach learners to read clues in the reactions of the listener to ascertain whether comprehension is occurring or not. This is an extremely difficult proposition even in one’s own culture where the number of devices one possesses to handle such checking is infinitely larger. However, approaching cross-cultural encounters from this perspective will cause the individual to be on the look out for signs of “intention malfunction.” Furthermore, activities should be developed which require learners to point out signs of intention malfunction. Again the video method can be employed, but a more ideal situation would be one in which natives and non-natives were involved in role
plays that require them to establish intentions. The differences that would arise between
natives and non-natives creating the same intention would be an invaluable source of
information for learners.

8.4.6 Incorporation

Another key to becoming a successful communicator in a non-native culture is
becoming incorporated into the group. Cole notes that even a child must make itself
welcome when it first enters its own culture.13 It would hold then that in order to
become a competent player, a learner must make himself welcome in his second culture.
Furthermore, it is significant to note that all groups are more reluctant to accept
outsiders if the outsider has nothing in common with the group members. Therefore, he
needs to find something in common with the group members so that he can remain in the
game. This then becomes a primary goal of the second language learner, syncing to the
extent that he becomes an accepted outsider. This is a process that, in each individual of
the new culture’s perception of the learner, holds him at different stages in the
enculturation process. The first time a learner meets someone, he is always a complete
outsider who knows nothing about the culture, even if, unknown to the interlocutor, he
has been a member of the culture for a number of years.

Making oneself welcome includes acting in culturally appropriate ways as well as
avoiding cultural taboos and stigmas. It also involves making oneself less of a burden. We
have noted that in the early stages of game play, newcomers must be accommodated by
other players. By syncing with the group, the learner can make himself less of a
cultural burden on the other players involved by acting in culturally appropriate ways.
Syncing also involves finding one’s role in each communicative event which, as we have
seen, is information vital to successful participation in the game of Shandong banqueting.
By finding the appropriate role established by the culture in each encounter and
fulfilling those roles to the expectations of the group members, the learner further lightens the burden on the veteran players. Furthermore, it is important to keep in mind that roles are not fixed, but may differ in each performance.

8.4.7 Creating a Persona

Fulfilling culturally accepted roles involves creating a persona in the target culture. By persona, I follow Walker in referring to what an individual allows an audience to know about him. This involves negotiation with the group because the culture will only accept certain personas. An individual sees how people react to certain behaviors and ascertains which personas are desirable in that particular culture. Then, the individual consciously manipulates his behavior to fulfill the expectations of the content at hand. This conscious manipulation of behavior to fit a persona among those available in society is how we are individuals in our own culture. Thus, it should not seem to be less than shizai, to use a Shandong term, because it is how individuals are who they are in any culture.
END NOTES

CHAPTER ONE NOTES

1-Intention is employed here in the sense of aim or purpose.


6-Cole, p. 301.

7-Walker, Galal. "Performed Culture: Learning to participate in a culture." Forthcoming. Also lectures at Ohio State University Department of East Asian Languages and Literatures and US/China Links.

8-Other types of cultural performances include artistic performances and unscored performances.

9-Bruner(1990), Walker, lectures in language pedagogy at Ohio State University, and Cole, p. 103. Narrative here is employed in the sense used by both Bruner and Walker in that individuals organize their experiences in story form rather than referring to written narrative. See also Schank, Roger C. 1990. Tell Me A Story: A New Look at Real and Artificial Memory. Charles Scribner's Sons: New York, pp. 1-27.


13-As stated, the target learners for this study are participants in the US/China Links internship program. Because their training is conducted in Qingdao, an understanding of Shandong banquets is particularly important to their success.
CHAPTER TWO NOTES


2-Carlson, p. 42-57.


5-IBID.

6-Carlson, p. 38.

7-Here, as noted in the introduction, I follow Michael Cole’s use of the notion of teleology that sees individuals as intentional agents.


9-Carlson, p. 42-57.

10-Carlson, p. 52.


12-IBID.


14-Carlson, p. 48. Walker’s view of the target culture as a game comes from lectures on Chinese language pedagogy at the Ohio State University and on related lectures on language learning delivered at the US/China Links Cultural Training Institute conducted at Yantai University, Shandong Province in 1997.

15-Accommodation refers to the phenomenon of players consciously or unconsciously making adjustments in game styles, rules or expectations because they are interacting with a non-native of the group.
16-Levels of participation can be broken down further, but for the sake of brevity, only the four most common are addressed here. Walker suggests six levels of participation: observer, spectator, collector, critic, player, and shareholder. I have combined the observer, collector, and critic stages under one category of fans. Walker also notes that there is a shareholder stage that exists beyond the player stage, but because of the unlikelihood that non-native language learners can reach such a level of participation, it is not included here.


20-Cole, p. 103.


23-Cole, p. 301.

24-Cole, p. 301.


26-Cole, p. 301.

27-Cole, p. 301.

28-The term is Cole's(1996). Cole defines it as a process that involves becoming a cultural being and arranging for others to become one, the two of which are intimately linked. I to see the two as linked, but operating in two different directions. Therefore, I use enculturation to describe a process of assimilation carried out by a group on the individual(Cole's arranging for other to become cultural beings). I use acculturation, or syncing, to describe the individual attempting to adapt to the group.


31-Additionally, Cole's (1996) view of children as cultural artifacts supports the argument of enculturation espoused here. He, too, explains that culture is learned from day one and that the cognitive development of children is directly related to their cultural and educational environments. A child's cognitive framework is formed by the culture in which he lives while the types and ways of storing information are directly affected by that framework. Cole's study of memory among the Kpelle rice farmers in central Liberia in which they proved highly proficient in guessing weights and amounts of rice because such concepts were frequently encountered is another demonstration of this phenomenon.


37-Hall, p. 61.

38-Hall, p. 61.
CHAPTER THREE NOTES


4-Walker, lectures, Ohio State and US/China Links.


10-See Perry Link. Evening Chats in Beijing: Probing China’s Predicament. W.W. Norton and Company: New York, p. 186-191, for a discussion of what he categorizes as official language, I would assert that rhetorical devices such as mei wenti (没问问题) and kao lu kao lu (考虑考虑) are not only part of the official Communist rhetoric, but are also techniques employed in day to day conversation by most members of society to express intentions in a way accepted by the group. They are employed most often as conflict-avoidance devices or what some people refer to as a face-saving mechanisms. A second function that such devices can be utilized for is what is essentially dealing with someone by telling them what they want to hear. Northern Chinese refer to this as to fuyan yige ren (敷衍一个人). This also is a device for getting through the situation at hand without disrupting the harmony of the interaction. One native speaker commented that even if her family members use such terminology with her, she would not be sure if they were just brushing her off or if the words were being used with their assigned
literal meanings. Thus, she would seek alternative solutions for the problem at hand to ensure that it be solved. Her description included the proverb buyao zai yikeshu diaosi (不要在一棵树吊死) meaning literally 'not to hang yourself on one tree,' and more colloquially, 'do not put all of your eggs in one basket.' See also Michael Bond's _Beyond the Chinese Face: Insights from Psychology_. Oxford University Press: Hong Kong, 1991.


13-Grice, pp. 103-109 and 121-133. Grice's notions assume a common background and therefore do not adequately address this important source for cross-cultural communications malfunctions.

14- See Cole, pp. 183-5 on prolepsis.


16-Bond(1986), p. 248, 261-2. Bond(1991), p. 65. Bond notes that exposing another's mistake in Chinese society will cause a loss of face for the other person so, in order to maintain harmony, they avoid publicly criticizing others.

17-Carlson, p. 69.

18-Carlson, pp. 69.

19-Carlson, pp. 72-74.

20-Young, p. 101.

21-As noted by Patricia Davis. 1991. _Cognition and Learning_. The Summer Institute of Linguistics: Texas, pp. 1-16, Piaget would argue, once the knowledge of how to establish this particular intention is assimilated into an existing cognitive structure, it allows new forms of reasoning to be developed based upon it. If one can understand an intention, he can react accordingly and through time develop the ability to use that knowledge for his own use. See also Searle, John R. "What Is a Speech Act?" as reprinted in _Readings on Language and Mind_. Edited by Heimir Geirsson and Michael Losonsky. 1996. Blackwell Publishers: Cambridge, Massachusetts, pp.110-121. The Speech-Act Theory established by John Austin and developed by John Searle describes an adequate way of viewing what the goals of a speech-act participant should be. Austin and Searle delineate three types of communicative acts. The locutionary act involves meaning in the traditional sense. Illocutionary acts are acts that involve an intention and perlocutionary
acts focus on the effect the act has on the hearer. What is referred to above as receptor meaning is akin to the perlocutionary act with the added responsibility placed on a speaker to ensure that his utterance is having the desired effect on the listener. Key for language/culture learners is the view that "to say something is to do something."


23-Walker,"Performed Culture: Learning to participate in a culture."

24-Walker, "Performed Culture: Learning to participate in a culture." Walker advances a four-stage chain of being an individual in a culture. Culture creates contexts. Contexts provide meanings. Meanings produce intentions. Intentions define individuals.

25-Walker, lectures Ohio State and US/China Links.

26-It should be noted that the Chinese view of overseas Chinese is very complex and standards such as the one noted here are applied in different ways in different contexts. In some contexts, the overseas Chinese would rate for have American characteristics.


30-Walker points out a representative instance in which a Chinese visitor to the United States is invited as a guest to an American friend's home for dinner. During the course of the interaction, the Chinese, although utilizing the English language as means for communication, interprets his host's intentions in terms of his familiar interpretive framework while the American host, unfamiliar with Chinese notions of "guest" and "host," utilizes his familiar set of cultural values to entertain his guest. The result is that when the American host offers food and drinks, his Chinese guest, although hungry and thirsty, politely declines as he should based on Chinese cultural norms. Although such differences are now known to many Chinese and Americans alike, the significance is clear. When members of differing cultural groups interact, it is imperative to ensure both parties are working with the same interpretive framework to avoid misunderstandings.


32-Yang, pp. 41-74.

33-See Bond(1991) and (1986).


3-Bruner(1990).

4-Cole(1996).

5-As noted by Patricia Davis. 1991. Cognition and Learning. The Summer Institute of Linguistics: Texas, pp. 1-16, Piaget would argue, once the knowledge of how to establish this particular intention is assimilated into an existing cognitive structure, it allows new forms of reasoning to be developed based upon it. If one can understand an intention, he can react accordingly and through time develop the ability to use that knowledge for his own use.

6-Bruner(1990).

7-Cole, pp. 15 and 69-97.

8-Cole, pp. 227-256.


10-Young, p. 245.

11-Hall(1976), p. 43.


22-Bruner (1990), p. 56-60.


26-Cole, p. 108-130 (Schemas p. 128-130.)


29-Here, word refers to a unit of meaning whether that be one character, two characters or a four character combination.

30-Cole, p. 205.


33-Schank, p. 1-17 and Walker, lectures at Ohio State University.

34-Cole, p. 126.

35-In a situation in which a young person is unrelated to the elder male he is addressing and the elder male is roughly the age of the speaker's own father, Chinese custom dictates that the appropriate kinship term to apply is shushu, or 'paternal uncle.' In this special situation, I had established a relationship with the younger sister of the elderly man in the dialogue. She considers me her adopted son, gan erzi, so when she introduced me to her brother, she introduced him as my jiujiu, or 'maternal uncle.'

37-Cole, p. 126-130.


39-Cole (1990), p. 215-219. Walker has applied this principle to second language acquisition by requiring students of Chinese to watch short segments from Chinese movies which provide the learners with basic background information and then having them narrate scenes back to the group. In redescription, the learner can repeat a narrative several times which allows him to gain more knowledge by filling in the gaps as he repeats the script. Developing stories about particular events not only improves students' fluency, but it also promotes retention of encountered scripts.

40-Walker, lectures.

41-These are personal observations.


43-Walker "Performed Culture: Learning to participate in a culture," as well as lectures at Ohio State University.

44-Walker "Performed Culture: Learning to participate in a culture," as well as lectures at Ohio State University.
CHAPTER FIVE NOTES

1-The data used was collected during three periods of work and research in Shandong Province between 1995 and 1998. Most was gathered through a technique of participani-observation. At the time of recording, no specific goal was in mind other than gaining a better understanding my surroundings. I made a conscious effort to record and analyze each communicative event that I encountered. Because I have had repeated encounters with this particular game, I have been able to compile my version of a narrative account of official dinners in Shandong Province. Although I am not a native of the region, I played the game at a level at which the other players in the game only made minimal accommodations for me as a foreigner. Distinct differences in the manners in which players conducted themselves could be observed when other foreign participants were involved including topics chosen for conversation, use of local dialects, amount of money spent, speed of interaction, and the location chosen for such events. Accommodations were even made for Chinese who were not themselves members of any Shandong.

2-Bond(1986), p. 223. A simplified version of Bond's definition of guanxi states that guanxi are particularistic ties in China that are key to understanding Chinese behavior in social, political, and organizational contexts.


4-Bond(1986).


7-Yang, p. 139.

8-It may be helpful here to note that rituals are seen to be established forms of behavior, recognized by the group, that serve to accomplish particular goals vital to success in cultural games. Rituals are bound communicative events, and are examples of what Walker calls performed culture. Games are made up of rituals in that rituals are mediums of expression used by players that provide order to games as sequenced sets of performed behavior. Rituals are also behaviors recognized by the group as accepted means for the accomplishment of goals.

9-De Mente, Boye Lafayette. 1996. Chinese Etiquette and Ethics in Business. NTC Business Books. Lincolnwood, p. 207. Although I cite De Mente’s book here, I would add the note that after reading it, I found major flaws in his analysis. De Mente has spent thirty years in Japan and East Asia, but is not a China expert. He appears to have collected information from a wide variety of sources and thrown them all together, claiming that he is writing about Chinese culture and business etiquette. However, he
does not distinguish which Chinese culture and often times mixes characteristics of
etiquette from different Chinese cultures together that clearly would not occur together.
Many of the tips he gives as things to do in Chinese etiquette would be serious social
blunders in Shandong. Therefore, I would not recommend the person not familiar with
Chinese culture who can not distinguish among the regional subcultures to use it as a
guide to interacting with Chinese professionals. The notion of subculture should be
considered when professionally interacting with Chinese. The subculture and Chinese
culture have some overlap and share some of the same characteristics, but subcultures
also exhibit characteristics unique only to the place occupied by the subcultural group.
These differences can be very large or very subtle and include language, traditions,
rituals, behavior and modes of thinking. Before moving directly into the game, it should
also be noted that the banquets described herein are representative of Shandong
subcultures, even more specifically, Jiaodong subcultures and can not be considered
representative of Chinese banquets. Although some aspects of Shandong banqueting are
found in other areas of China, during the time of the compilation of the data used for this
thesis, I participated in official banquets in Beijing, Tianjin, Chengdu, Chongqing, and
Wuhan as well as sixteen cities in Shandong. The differences observed while
participating in such subcultural games reinforced my view that Shandong banqueting is
a unique social drama.

10-Waitresses in Shandong were always females. It is clearly an occupation not seen as
"men's work." Many of the waitresses were young girls with low levels of education that
had come into urban areas from the countryside to find work.

11- Qicai (齐菜) might be a more appropriate name for what is called Lucai. Although
the main component of Lucai is seafood, the Kingdom of Lu did not border the ocean.
However, three borders of the neighboring state of Qi, which was located in what is now
the eastern portion of Shandong Province, were formed by the sea. It seems that although
the origins of what is known as Lucai can probably be found in the State of Qi, but
because the revered philosopher Confucius hailed from Lu, Shandong is more often
associated with Lu.

translations of guanshang (官商), rushang (儒商), junshang (军商), and zhengshang
(正商) are my own and my use of rushang differs slightly from Cao's in that I include
those intellectuals who were successful in the academic world, but have been lured by
the prospects of economic prosperity to leave academia for the commercial world, a
phenomenon referred to by many Chinese as 'plunging into the sea;' xiahai (下海).

13-Kipnis, Andrew B. 1997. Producing Guanxi: Sentiment, Self, and Subculture in a
North China Village. Duke University Press: Durham, p. 48. It is for this reason that I
resist using the term host representatives to render peike. Instead I will simply use the
Romanized version (pinyin) of the Chinese word.

14-Kipnis, p. 39. Kipnis draws the quote from the Chinese classic Outlaws of the Marsh.
15-Liu, Dezeng. 1997. 山东人民出版社: 济南, pp. 38-43. Liu describes what Shandong people claim are the characteristics of the people of Shandong and what they are willing to reveal to outsiders, including Chinese from other areas of China.

16-Yang, p. 138.

17-Kipnis, p. 52.

18-Kipnis, p. 54. What Kipnis views as the delegation of the responsibility to drink, I see as subordinates fulfilling a duty to sacrifice their face, and sometimes their body, to protect the face of their superiors. I did not encounter a situation in which hosts who had the ability to drink had their subordinates drink for them. Such an act would either cause a significant loss of face, as unfamiliar players would assume that he could not drink, or the impression that he was not shizai, as familiar players are usually aware of one another’s drinking capacity.

19-Kipnis, p. 40.

20-Kipnis, p. 48.


22-Kipnis, p. 47-50. Kipnis notes similar considerations when arranging the seating of guests in western Shandong.

23-Yang, p. 138.

24-Yang, p. 138.

25-Kipnis, p. 52.

26-Bond(1991), p. 54. Bond notes an instrumental communicative style, or one that is goal oriented and aimed at bringing the individual into a verbal exchange, as well as an affective communicative style, which is relationship oriented, and its verbal content reflects the attempt of the speaker to adjust to the feelings of the other parties to the conversation. My use here adds the non-verbal behaviors that inevitably accompany the verbal.


CHAPTER SIX NOTES


4-Chen, p. 9.

5-I encountered the latter when adopting the title most often given to me by my Chinese counterparts, Teacher Xie, to refer to myself. It was pointed out by a close friend that my use of such a title might be mistaken as a sign of pretentiousness.

6-The responses and reactions of individuals was consistent both in different areas of Shandong Province and with different groups of actors. This particular experiment was conducted with similar results in interactions with officials from Yantai, Weihai, Shidaoy, Qixia, Laiyang, Qingdao, Muping, Weifang, Wendong, Fushan, Qingzhou, Huangdao and Jinan. Additionally, businessmen, government officials and intellectuals all tended to respond in the same way.

7-Bond(1991), p. 36. Bond notes a general tendency among Chinese to defer to any person in a position of power, status, or control and can take the form of dogmatic or rigid behavior. He further notes that the Chinese are oriented towards finding their place in the hierarchy and working within its dictates. My findings support these claims.


9-Bond(1991), p. 83. This is evidence to support Bond's findings that subordinates are less likely to volunteer opinions, take individual initiative, or depart from standard operating procedures without a superior's approval. As Bond points out, risk taking does not benefit subordinates. As a result, they are often very reserved in front of personages of high status or power.

10-See Jingfen Zhang(1991), for more insights on concepts of hierarchy in Shandong Province. Zhang also contends that these relationships are in the process of changing.


14-Kipnis, p. 52. Of significance here is that Kipnis seems to have been describing wedding banquets while I am describing the day-to-day banqueting engaged in by most Shandong officials. There are distinct differences in the nature of and purpose for the two types of banqueting. However, the wedding banquets that I observed did maintain political and social hierarchies.

15-Kipnis, p. 51.

16-Kipnis, p. 51.

17-Chen, p. 105-108.

18-Staple dishes in Shandong include steamed rice; fried rice; noodles; shuijiāo (水饺), or ‘dumplings;’ bǐng (饼), or ‘fried bread;’ and various types of steamed bread including, mǎntóu (馒头), wùtóu (窝头), and huájuàn (花卷). Particularly important guests are served shuijiāo, which are the most expensive of the staple dishes, while noodles, a symbol of longevity, are served on occasions when a guest is celebrating a birthday.

19-Kipnis, p. 52.

1-Liu, p. 30. Again the translation is my own.

2-Kipnis, p.53. According to Kipnis, *ganqing* is central to social relationships. Kipnis also observes that "drinking was important to banqueting for many reasons."


4-Yang, p. 140-141.

5-Here, I would insert that what Yang and Kipnis describe is not *ganqing* in the sense of feelings between two friends, but rather the feelings between unfamiliar, economic actors. These can be described in terms of utilitarian relationships which are very different from relationships with friends or relatives. Although Bond discusses *ganqing* in Bond(1986) and Bond(1991), I do not believe that he captures all of what is involved in ganqing. However, it is the best available description of the concept.

6-De Mente, p. 58-9.

7-Closely associated with *mianzi* is the concept of *chiwei* (吃well), a term that is roughly equivalent to having a bad taste in one's mouth due to a violation of face. In this particular instance, *chiwei(r)* refers to the feeling a player has when another player goes over their head in a bureaucracy. An understanding of this cultural phenomenon is vital to one's successful participation in the Shandong official government and business culture.

    During 1997, a Chinese colleague and I conducted a preliminary visit to Jinan in order to arrange some official meetings. The visit included a stop at a provincial level government office, in which, we presented our program to the director. The meeting went smoothly and our Chinese counterparts expressed their enthusiastic support of the venture. Agreement was made that further talks would be conducted a month later when our program directors visited China.

    After the meeting, my Chinese colleague expressed his concerns that we should pay a visit to another official due to the fact that we had first discussed such a program with him while he was an official in the city of Yantai a year earlier. My Chinese colleague explained that even though the first office was not bureaucratically subordinate to the second, we should pay a courtesy call to our friend, director of the
second office, so that he did not feel slighted because we had snubbed him for the other office. The concept seemed very logical and the courtesy visit was conducted the following day. During the visit, the director of this second office expressed his support of the development and direction of the venture and he made a telephone call to introduce us to the director of the provincial economic commission.

At this point, I will jump to the eve of the visit of the US/China Links program directors a month later. In making arrangements for their trip to Jinan from Qingdao where they had entered China, as our counterpart in the first office was a new acquaintance, we called a friend in the Shandong People's Congress to inquire into whether he could meet us at the train station. His enthusiastic response left me feeling as if everything was developing rather smoothly and I decided to contact the first office upon our arrival in Jinan. When I did, they agreed upon a meeting that morning. The developments at the meeting allowed me to experience the concept of chiwei(r) and showed me the importance of possessing a thorough understanding of such non-linguistic, but expected cultural behaviors.

The meeting opened in a fashion consistent with the numerous other official meetings that I had experienced in Shandong up to that point. There were formal introductions beginning with the highest ranking member and proceeding in rank order to the lowest. Business cards were exchanged so that titles and organizational positions were clear. Then, instead of the usual opening statement recapping the history of our relationship, the director of the first office began by explaining that she had thought that I would send her a fax notifying her of our arrival. She proceeded to explain that she could have arranged everything that our friend at the People's Congress had done. She repeated several times that we should have contacted her rather than anyone else, emphasizing that we did not need to go any higher in the bureaucracy than her. Her reaction is an outward manifestation of chiwei(r).

8-Kipnis, p.53. According to Kipnis, gangqing is central to social relationships. Kipnis also observes that "drinking was important to banqueting for many reasons."


10-Yang, p. 140-141.

11-Zibo is located in west central Shandong.

12-Kipnis, p. 53-4.

13-Kipnis, p. 53-4.

14-If fact, filling a glass just beyond the brim without allowing a drop to pour over the edge is considered a display of skill.
15-De Mente, p. 214. De Mente’s translates suiyi as 'to sip.' Sip might be what some people do when the host tells them to suiyi, but suiyi does not mean to sip. This is a phrase commonly used by hosts to accomplish three tasks. One, it is a means for calling a sort of time out in the performance. Actors can then eat a few bites of food and chat freely. This suiyi can be translated as 'Make yourself at home.' Suiyi can also be used by hosts to display to the guests that he is performing his duties as host. Again, it should translate something roughly equivalent to relax or as you please. The third use of suiyi comes in the drinking context. Sometimes it means 'we are not going to play the Shandong banquet game today. Let's just eat.' However, when used in the context of drinking wars, it should be translated as 'Since you can't handle drinking very much, you do not have to drink your entire glass.' Combine this with the fact that glasses are filled almost to the point of overflowing and the result is De Mente’s sip.

16-Yang, pp. 192-197.

17-It is important to note that true friendships are often judged in terms of time. Many Shandongese feel that two people can not be true friends until they have known each other for a long period of time. True friendship is judged in terms of what one is willing to do for his friends and involves forgiving a friend no matter what shortcomings he has or mistakes he commits.

18-Kipnis, p. 54.

19-Kipnis, p. 56. Kipnis also likens the banquet table to a battlefield. This and similar war analogies were used on numerous occasions when Shandongese were explaining the art of drinking to me.

20-Kipnis, p. 54.

21-Young, p. 88.

22-Young, p. 89.

23-Cole, p. 204. Cole discusses a particular register of language used by parents in order to facilitate communication with babies. The same thing occurs when Chinese speak Chinese with foreigners and when Americans speak English with Chinese in China.

24-foreigner Chinese includes not only verbal behavior, but also kinesic behavior and expectations.
CHAPTER EIGHT NOTES

1-Cole, p. 278-305. This is what Cole describes as re-mediation and is the key process involved in becoming enculturated into a group.

2-Cole(1996). Each type of social institution has its own shared culture and language distinct from all others. Learners must be aware of this and familiarize themselves with the particular institutional culture and language that they will most often have contact with so that they can effectively interact with the participants of that social institution. They will also be better able to anticipate intentions, behaviors, and language used.

3-Arthur Brittan and Mary Maynard, Sexism, Racism and Oppression, (Ney York: Basil Blackwell, 1984), pg. 71-193. An important aspect of culture is the “reality” that a cultural group has constructed for itself.

4-Cole, p. 248.

5-Bauman, p. 31.

6-Cole, p. 195. Cole’s uses social referencing to refer to what I mean by using the environment.

7-Cole, p. 248-9. What is attractive about the idea of experimental thinking is that it supports the idea that individuals are constructing something through a process of filling in gaps in available information. F.C. Bartlett views experimental thinking as one type of one system in which individuals are in the position of explorers rather than spectators. They have a notion of the goal, but the set of appropriate responses is unspecified, as are other constraints on attempts to reach the goal. Here, I use it in the sense that learners must use whatever tools are available for adding to a developing structure.

8-Bruner(1966), p. 11.

9-Cole, p. 285. Cole sees the process of learning to read in developmental terms, as a process of mediating the behavior of the group and each individual in it in a qualitative way. He terms this process re-mediation.

10-Walker, Galal. "Performed Culture: Learning to participate in a culture." Forthcoming. Also lectures at Ohio State University Department of East Asian Languages and Literatures and US/China Links. Walker calls this stage fright.

11-Barro, Anna, Mike Byram, Hanns Grimm, Carol Morgan, and Celia Roberts. 1993. "Cultural Studies for Advanced Language Learners," Language and Culture, British Association of Applied Linguistics, Multilingual Matters LTD, Clevedon, p. 55-70. This group developed critical awareness classes in which students developed observation and analysis skills.
12-Cole, p. 183. Cole refers to prolepsis as the mechanism that brings the end into the beginning and the representation of a future act or development as being presently existing.

13-Cole, p. 188.


Walker, Galal L.R. "Performed Culture: Learning to participate in a culture." Forthcoming.


