

Acknowledgements

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英汉称呼语对比研究

（摘要）

作为社交礼仪的重要组成部分，称呼语具有保持、加强、甚至建立各种人际关系的作用。通过称呼语的使用，交际双方的身份、地位、角色以及二者之间的亲疏关系被突出出来并加以认定。它们也是常规用语，构成了礼貌用语的一部分。虽然这类常规用语在社会学、人类学、社会语言学、话语分析学等学科中得到了一些研究，但对其自身功能、使用以及在不同语言和跨语言交际中的应用尚无系统探讨。有鉴于此，本论文试对英语和汉语这两种关系较远的语言进行一下这方面的对比研究。这一研究无疑会有助于人们对不同文化背景下的称呼语的了解，从而增进彼此间的了解，提高人与人之间的交流水平，建立良好的人际关系。

本文以语言环境和社会环境作为广阔的背景，对这类常规用语的语言特性和社会功能做了分析，对两种语言称呼语的词汇差异做了探讨，又根据布朗和莱文森的礼貌语言模式以及厄尔文·特丽普和祝畹瑾的描写框架对称呼语的使用做了解释，并追根求源，对称呼语在两种文化背景下的哲学渊源进行了探索，揭示了不同文化背景、不同的价值观、不同的思维模式对语言使用的影响。本文有关跨文化交流情况下常规用语使用问题的讨论说明，为了促进不同语言和文化的人们相互交流，有必要深入进行语言对比研究。

Abstract

Address phenomenon is important as well as frequent in social interactions. Appropriate address behavior is crucial for effective communication and successful maintenance of interpersonal relationships. Normally, address behavior is governed by politeness phenomenon which is culturally bound. This thesis attempts to draw a cross-cultural comparison of address phenomenon between Chinese and English from pragmatic and sociolinguistic perspectives. It also goes beneath the surface and explores the cultural differences in value systems and philosophical sources of differences in these aspects. I have based my research first on earlier studies of address forms carried out by linguists such as Brown & Ford, Ervin-Tripp, Zhao, Scotton & Zhu, on politeness theories proposed by Brown & Levinson, Leech and Gu, and then on my own observations and investigations from the daily interaction between Chinese in real life situations. Through the analysis of some practical problems in the use of address forms in interethnic communication, the need for further cross-cultural studies in linguistic routines and politeness is emphasized.

The intended contributions of this research will be: (1) helping people develop a fuller understanding of the meanings of the address terms, and of the polite intention in social contacts so as to reduce misunderstandings in social communication; (2) facilitating cross-cultural communication by indicating cultural differences in value systems; (3) advancing the suggestion that as

an important component of communicative competence, knowledge about cultural implication such as forms and meanings of the address terms should be equally stressed in teaching or learning Chinese or English as the second or foreign language.

The thesis consists of five parts:

The first part provides an introduction to address phenomenon and discusses the rationale of the present study.

The second part discusses the social functions of address behavior and social factors that affect the choice of address forms from sociolinguistic and pragmatic perspectives. It reviews studies of address phenomenon as speech acts and linguistic routines of politeness. Brown & Levinson's model of politeness for address use in social contexts is presented. Ervin-Tripp's and Zhu's frameworks are used to identify the kinds of factors that govern the use of address forms in English and Chinese.

The third part compares and contrasts the address forms in the two languages. It demonstrates that while the functions of address use and factors of address choice are the same, the linguistic possibilities to express them are quite distinct.

The fourth part focuses on their respective cultural background in terms of politeness principles and explores their philosophical sources.

At last, based upon the analysis of some practical problems in the use of address terms in interethnic communication, the practical meaning of the research in cross-cultural communication is discussed and then a conclusion is followed.

Part I Introduction

Address forms are the words speakers use to designate the person they are talking to while they are talking to them. As Ralph Fasold (2000:1) points out:

When people use language, they do more than just try to get another person to understand the speaker's thoughts and feelings. At the same time, both people are using language in subtle ways to define their relationship to each other, to identify themselves as part of a social group, and to establish the kind of speech event they are in. ...

In no area of sociolinguistics is this second function of language more clearly highlighted than in address forms.

Address phenomenon is important as well as frequent in social interactions. Most of the verbal communication starts from designating the audience (i.e. addressee or hearer) to whom the following remarks will direct. Address behavior serves not only as a means of attracting the attention of H (i.e. the hearer), but also as an indication of social relations between S (i.e. the speaker) and H (Brown & Gilman 1960). Appropriate address behavior is crucial for effective communication and successful maintenance of interpersonal relationships. It is a highly complex interactional phenomenon which can be understood as "extremely important strategies for the negotiation and control of social identity and social relationships between participants in conversation." (Laver 1981:304)

Address use is one of the aspects of pragmatics. Many overseas scholars have discussed the relationship among politeness, pragmatics, and culture (for details, see Lakoff (1973), Leech (1981, 1983), Fraser & Nolen (1981)). Normally, address behavior is governed by politeness phenomenon, and the choice of a particular address term is often made out of considerations for politeness. However, different cultures may have different notions of politeness. Misunderstanding and misinterpretation can lead to feelings of offence, insult, and suspicion on the individuals involved, which will result in break-down in cross-cultural communication. For instance, nonnative speakers of English often express their surprise at the wide use or distribution of reciprocal first naming among people in the U.S.. This change from an address form employed to define intimate relationships within a family or among close friends or business associates to the one used to define general relationships between strangers, between people of asymmetrical age and occupational status, between students and professors, and between young people and their seniors, has been quite a recent development which has naturally stimulated cross-cultural studies of address behavior in different countries.

Various researches have been conducted around the central topic of forms of address. These studies have focused their attention on forms of address from perspectives of various disciplines such as linguistics (Zhao Yuanren 1956, Koehler 1967), sociology (McGivney, J. 1993), anthropology (Das 1968), and sociolinguistics (Brown & Gilman 1960, Brown & Ford 1961,

Ervin-Tripp 1972, Scotton & Zhu 1984). A good number of data drawn from empirical studies have been analyzed and findings have been discussed and published. However, most of the classical studies on address behavior, such as Brown & Gilman(1960), Brown & Ford(1961), Ervin-Tripp(1972) mainly focused on address patterns in languages other than Chinese. Every adult native speaker of Chinese is aware of the changes in people's address system as well as in people's address patterns. Since the founding of the People's Republic of China, changes in the address system have accompanied the social development of the country. People's address patterns also have been undergoing changes, and it is possible for groups of individuals to identify themselves as users of a particular address pattern. Studies such as Zhao (1956), and Scotton & Zhu(1984) did not approach the address phenomenon in reference to its underlying politeness considerations. Brown & Levinson (1987) have attempted to analyze the functional application of politeness to the performance of FTAs in order to claim politeness phenomena as universals in language usage. Gu (1990) has made a contrastive analysis of politeness phenomenon between Chinese and English, and has pointed out the cultural difference in politeness phenomenon. On the basis of these theoretical studies, therefore, it makes practical sense to compare and contrast the address phenomenon between modern Chinese and English in terms of sociolinguistics and politeness principles. The present study also attempts to explore in this particular domain the cultural differences between Chinese and native speakers of English and

their underlying philosophical sources.

Before we examine the two different address systems, we should understand the limitations of the topic. First, by the general “terms of address”, the thesis proposes to describe vocatives, or terms of direct address to call persons by, rather than terms of references which include all the mentioning terms one uses as part of connected discourse in speaking of persons. This can be an important distinction as far as the present study is concerned, for the latter may not involve too much politeness consideration. Second, by the term “native English speakers”, the thesis restricts itself to American English and American culture, since it is not possible to cover all of the English-speaking peoples. This is partly because of the political, economic and cultural position of the U.S. in the English-speaking world. Third, it is difficult, of course, to generalize about a whole nation, especially one that is as large and complex as the U.S or China. With the different cultures that exist among China’s many ethnic groups, and with the diversity in languages and dialects, how can we study and compare all? Therefore, the thesis will limit its study mainly to current usage in Mandarin which is based in Beijing area. All in all, there are certain attitudes and ideas, certain culturally prescribed rules of behavior and certain ways of social interaction that are generally observed either by most Americans or by most Chinese, irrespective of the differences in national origin, class, geographical region, occupation, age and sex. It is these attitudes, ideas and ways that will be referred to in this thesis.

Part II The Function and the Use of Address Forms

In this chapter, we review the studies of the most important functions of address forms in different social backgrounds. First, we discuss addressing as speech acts according to Austin's speech act theory. Then, we review Laver's analysis of addressing as linguistic routines of politeness. After that, the use of address forms in actual social interaction will be examined. We shall proceed from the discussion of social factors in addressing in Brown & Gilman's theory to the analysis of addressing strategies in terms of Brown & Levinson's model of politeness, and to the choice of address forms in terms of Ervin-Tripp's and Zhu's descriptive frameworks in respective languages.

2.1 The Function of Address Forms

2.1.1 Address Behavior as Speech Acts

As Ralph Fasold (2000:1) comments, address forms are "a system of signs that convey other than overt messages". But how do people take the covert messages (i.e. the intention or goodwill of the speaker) from this intricate sign system? Austin's speech act theory is helpful for the explanation of this phenomenon.

The basic assumption of Austin's theory is "to say something is to do something" (Austin 1962:12). According to him, utterances are the production of words and sentences on particular occasions by particular speakers for particular purposes.

They are not ends in themselves, but means to ends—means to affecting listeners in certain ways. They are speech acts for achieving certain communicative goals.

As we know, terms of address are frequently used as summons, politeness intensifiers of greetings or as greetings in their own right. They are used to identify the relationships between the speaker and the hearer or the speaker's attitudes towards the hearer. Take English for example.

(1) A: Tom!

B: What?

(2) Mary, it's your turn.

(3) A: Good morning, Mr. Smith.

B: Good morning, Mrs. Jones.

(4) A: Henry Crane. Lady Daniel.

B: Mr. Crane.

C: Mrs. Daniel.

(5) I'm sorry, Mum, I've broken a glass.

(6) Oh, don't be too sad, my friend.

"Tom" in (1) is used as a summon and in certain context may be used to alert the addressee to some dangerous situation; "Mary" in (2) may be used to transfer topic; "Mr. Smith" and "Mrs. Jones" in (3) are used as politeness intensifiers in the greetings; "Mr. Crane" and "Mrs. Daniel" used by Party B and Party C in (4) are greetings in their own right; "Mum" used in (5) is to identify the relationship between the two participants and to express the speaker's apology, regret or even timidity; "My friend" in (6) is used by the speaker to comfort the hearer. In the

above examples, various address forms are used by the speaker not only to designate the hearer, but more importantly, to achieve certain communicative goals. Similar use can also be found in Chinese.

There are more interesting examples given by Scotton and Zhu (1984) in Chinese which illustrate the alternative forms available allowing speakers to manipulate the tone of some encounters in quite subtle ways. As will be discussed later, *Tongzhi* is an address form well accepted in China reflecting the egalitarian relationships between speakers and hearers. However, it can have special effects under some circumstance. For example, if the speaker with more authority has to reprimand the other, *Liang tongzhi* might be used, as when a university vice-president tells a faculty member who wants to leave his job to take another position, “Comrade *Liang*, we will help you if you are in trouble, but we won’t let you go.” (Scotton and Zhu 1983 : 487). As Scotton and Zhu explain it, this use of *tongzhi*, emphasizes not the solidarity between the speaker and the hearer, but the solidarity relationship between the addressee and the Chinese people as a whole. In other words, the vice-president is saying, in effect, “I can’t let our personal relationship influence me here, I have to treat you just like anybody else.” *Tongzhi* ironically becomes a way of temporarily establishing a certain social distance between speaker and addressee.

Another example has a section head bringing a report to his superior. He first addresses the superior as “Bureau Head *Wang*” and then delivers the report. But his goal is to get *Wang* to agree

to some changes, so after finishing the report, he says, “Comrade Bureau Head, I know our comrades have some opinions. Do you think you can make some changes in the project?” This tactic could be hazardous if you are approaching an official you do not know personally, according to Fang and Heng (1983:499). There is a chance that the official might be one who insists on the prerogatives of the office and would be offended at being addressed with *tongzhi* instead of the occupational title and might not grant your request.

Let’s take one more example in which Chinese often manipulate first naming as a powerful and convenient device to achieve personal ends. We find in real life situations an unmarried young lady who has several admirers may address the one she loves most by first naming him, thus, setting him off from all others as the most intimate friend.

The above discussion shows that from pragmatic perspective, address behavior can be regarded as speech acts. Using and changing address forms variously and properly, the speaker can highlight and confirm the individual identity, social status, respective social roles and the extent of intimacy between the hearer and himself. Thus, certain communicative goals can be achieved.

2.1.2 Address Behavior as Linguistic Routines of Politeness

As Laver (1981) asserts, routine behavior is polite behavior. As an important component in social rituals, addressing can help achieve certain communicative goals and establish, maintain and negotiate social relationships. It is a tool of polite behavior and

its use is guided by a polite norm. Based upon this assumption, Laver makes a further study of the rationale for the existence of routine elements and employs Brown & Levinson's politeness theory to explain the functions and use of terms of address.

As Laver comments, the central concept Brown & Levinson employ in their model is that of "face" after Goffman (1967). Influenced by Durkheim's distinction between negative and positive rituals, they distinguish two components of face (Brown and Levinson 1978:67): negative face (i.e. the want that one's action be unimpeded by others) and positive face (i.e. the want that one's wants be desirable to at least some others). By "face" they mean the public self-image that every member wants to claim for himself. Negative face includes one's basic claim to territories, personal preserves, rights to non-distraction, i.e. the freedom of action and freedom from imposition. Positive face refers to the positive consistent self-image or "personality" (crucially including the desire that this self-image be appreciated and approved of) claimed by interactants. If the strategic ends of speakers in conversational act are to be achieved, various politeness strategies must be used to maintain the interactants' negative face or enhance their positive face. In the process of addressing, such maintenance or enhancement of face has to be taken into consideration.

For example, in English, such forms of address like Your Grace, Your Honor, Your Excellency are clearly status-marking, thus used to enhance the hearer's positive face. Chinese has evolved a whole set of honorific and humble bound forms

prefixed to terms of address, one's house and so on, in place of first and second person pronouns (Zhao 1968:212-213). The prefixes “*gui* (noble)”, “*bi* (humble)” and “*bi* (shabby)” are often used for the sake of politeness in social interaction. For example:

A: *Nin guixing?* ([What is] your noble name?)

B: *Bixing Zhang.* ([My] humble name [is] Zhang.)

A: *Zhang xiansheng, nin hao.* (How do you do, Mr. Zhang?)

The above example illustrates some routine expressions used in social greetings in which both participants must take each other's face into consideration. Some formulaic expressions such as “How do you do, Mr...” have to be used to maintain negative face or enhance positive face, depending on the status of the participants and the social setting.

In short, address forms are important conversational routines in the negotiation of social relationships. Some analytical frameworks accounting for the factors that affect the use of address forms will be further discussed in the following section.

2.2 Social Factors in Addressing

2.2.1 Brown & Gilman's Theory: Power and Solidarity

As a necessary component of verbal communication, the choice of terms of address may change in accordance with many factors such as social, psychological and pragmatic ones. As is mentioned in Part I, this phenomenon has been studied by many linguists in sociology, anthropology, sociolinguistics and discourse analysis. Among them, the classic and most influential study of address forms and the social relationships they reveal was published by Brown & Gilman in 1960. Together with

Brown & Ford who studied the optional use of FN (first name) and TLN (Title + Last Name) in address in American English, and Ervin-Tripp who designed the famous flow chart of address forms to present rules and patterns, they provided the fundamental notion that address use is basically associated with two dimensions fundamental to the analysis of all social life, namely, “power” and “solidarity”, or two semantics of the pronouns of address. By semantics they meant “covariation between the pronouns used and the objective relationship existing between the speaker and the hearer.” (1960:252) This research is interesting to me in three aspects.

Firstly, they discovered that: (1) pronoun usage was governed by two semantics of power and solidarity and (2) power was an original semantic; solidarity was developed later and largely won out over power.

Secondly, they claim that the nonreciprocal power semantic was associated with a relatively static society where power was not subject to much redistribution; and the reciprocal solidarity semantic has grown with social mobility and an equalitarian ideology. The social background (a static and hierarchical society vs. equalitarian ideology) was very important for the development of the two semantics governing pronoun usage.

Thirdly, they pointed to the expressive style by which they meant the covariation between the pronoun used and characteristics of the person speaking. A man’s consistent pronoun style gives away his class status and his political views. In literature, pronoun style has often been used to expose the

pretensions of social climbers and the would-be elegant people. Brown & Gilman also described the ways in which a man may vary his pronoun style from time to time so as to express transient moods and attitudes.

Although this research focuses on pronoun usage, it provides insight into the impact of the social background upon address use, and the predominant influence of semantic rules upon typical individual address style. Although later linguists seem to think that the two-semantic model is a little too simple, they do state that role, status, age, sex and some other social factors merge into this model.

However, from one society to another, from past to present and even from one individual to another within a society, the definition of power or solidarity and the level of solidarity required for reciprocal address vary substantially.

In fact, address behavior is such a complex phenomenon and is always concerned with politeness in social interaction that it needs to be further discussed in terms of Brown & Levinson's model of politeness.

2.2.2 Brown & Levinson's Model, Ervin-Tripp's and Zhu's Frameworks

Now, let's apply the typology of politeness strategies provided in this model to the analysis of addressing strategies.

According to Brown & Levinson, politeness strategies are concerned with interactant's face: they are used when doing FTAs (face-threatening acts) to maintain the interactants' negative face or enhance their positive face to any degree. There

are five strategies for this purpose:

1. bald on record,
2. positive politeness,
3. negative politeness,
4. off-record, and
5. not-doing the FTA.

Bald on record strategy is starting a conversation without addressings, as in many short conversations with short intervals between family members, colleagues or friends. It is also used when the maxim of efficiency overrides the maxim of politeness, for example:

(1) A: Hey, we're late.

B: Let's hurry.

(2) A: They are coming! Get away through the back door.

B: Yeah.

Dialogue (1) may occur when A and B meet on their way to school or office in a hurry. Dialogue (2) may occur when B is being chased by others. In these situations, addressings are dispensed with due to the urgency.

Positive addressings are those directed toward the addressee's positive face. They are used to please the addressee to a certain degree. They are quite common when children address elders, juniors address seniors, even people of similar social status address each other using honorific titles. For example:

Zhang jiaoshou, jiu yang jiu yang. (Professor Zhang, I have heard a lot about you.)

Hao shushu, bang bang wo ba. (My good/dear uncle, please

help me!)

In the above examples, the speaker praises or flatters the addressee directly or indirectly and tries to enhance the latter's positive face.

Negative addressings are those usually with redressive action directed towards the addressee's negative face. This strategy is frequently used when addressing someone who the speaker does not know or does not know well. For example:

Excuse me. Are you Professor Jones?

Qing wen nin guixing? (Excuse me, what is your noble name?)

The expression "Excuse me" (*Qing wen*) can be considered to be a negative redressive action directed towards the addressee's negative face, i.e. the want to be free from intrusion.

Off-record addressings are those used between intimate friends to enhance solidarity or to create a kind of humorous language environment. They are realized through teasing, irony or in seemingly impolite ways. For example:

(1) *Ni zhe ge lao bu si de, shen mo feng ba ni chui lai le?*
(You never dead, what wind brings you here?)

(2) You bastard!

Sentence (1) is a joking address between persons of joking relationship as Irvine (1974:180) suggests, and sentence (2) may express the speaker's heartfelt admiration toward the hearer of the same relationship.

Not-doing the FTA may happen when people simply clear their throat loudly, or make some noise or gesture to attract the

person's attention because they are not sure of the proper title for the addressee or the actual title may cause embarrassment to both participants. This can be illustrated in no-naming in both English and Chinese.

In the context of mutual vulnerability of face, any rational agent will seek to avoid the FTAs, or will employ certain strategies to minimize the threat. In other words, he will take into consideration the relative weightness of (at least) three wants: (a) the want to communicate the content of the FTA, (b) the want to be efficient or urgent, and (c) the want to maintain H's (hearer's) face to any degree. Unless (b) is greater than (c), S (speaker) will want to minimize the threat of his FTA. By doing so, the speaker will choose from among a variety of strategies to employ.

But why should addressing involve such a complex system and what is the rationale for the existence of addressing paradigms? The answer may lie in the social reality and the interactants' communicative intention as many linguistic researchers suggest. Now, let's examine the influence of some social factors on the choice of addressing strategies in the light of Brown & Levinson's analysis and Ervin-Tripp's (1972) and Zhu's (1990) descriptive frameworks in their respective languages.

According to Brown & Levinson (1978, 1987), the choice of politeness strategies is for the most part determined by the weight of seriousness of FTAs, assessed with two social factors and one cultural factor:

$$W_x = D(S, H) + P(H, S) + R_x$$

where $D(S, H)$ is the social distance between S and H, $P(H, S)$

is the relative power of H over S, and R_x is the absolute ranking of imposition in the particular culture. All the three factors P, D and R contribute to the seriousness of FTAx and determine the level of politeness with which FTAx will be communicated.

We would argue that politeness strategies are not only used for doing FTAs. In the case of addressing, they are more often used to maintain or enhance social relationship between the interactants without definite communicative goals or specific purposes in terms of exchange of goods and services. Besides, there are more factors which influence the choice of politeness strategies. At this stage of discussion, we can revise Brown & Levinson's formulation as follows for the choice of addressing strategies:

$$X = D(S,H) + P(H,S) + \dots$$

where X represents degree of politeness in addressing. The formulation is open-ended as other factors may influence the degree of politeness of addressings. It shows that both D and P (and other social factors) contribute to X, i.e., if P is held constant, X varies with D. For example:

(1) A: Hi, John!

B: Hi, Jack!

(2) A: How do you do, Mr. Smith?

B: How do you do, Mrs. Jones? I am pleased to meet you.

(3) A: Good morning, Mr. James!

B: Good morning, Jane!

The social distance of interactants in example (1) is much shorter than that in example (2). While example (1) and (2) may

occur between interactants of equal social status, example (3) may occur between a secretary and her boss!

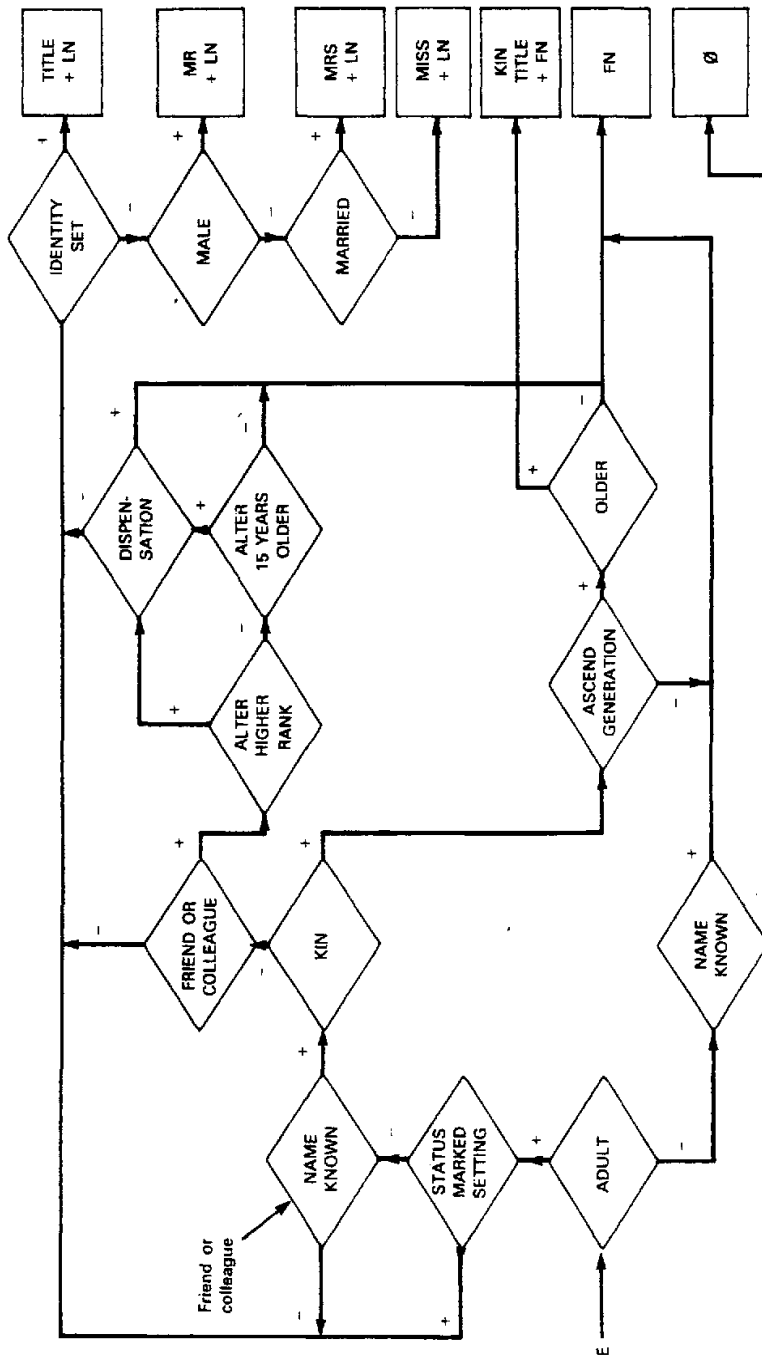
Ervin-Tripp presents the address form system as a series of choices, using the computer flow chart format developed by Geoghegan (1971). Figure 1 (see page 24) is reproduction of the address system she finds valid for a competent adult member of a western American academic community (Ervin-Tripp 1972:226-7).

Zhu (1989) also designs a flow chart of a Chinese address form systems—Figure 2 (see page 25) from sociolinguistic perspectives based on a lot of studies of Chinese linguists and Ervin-Tripp's model.

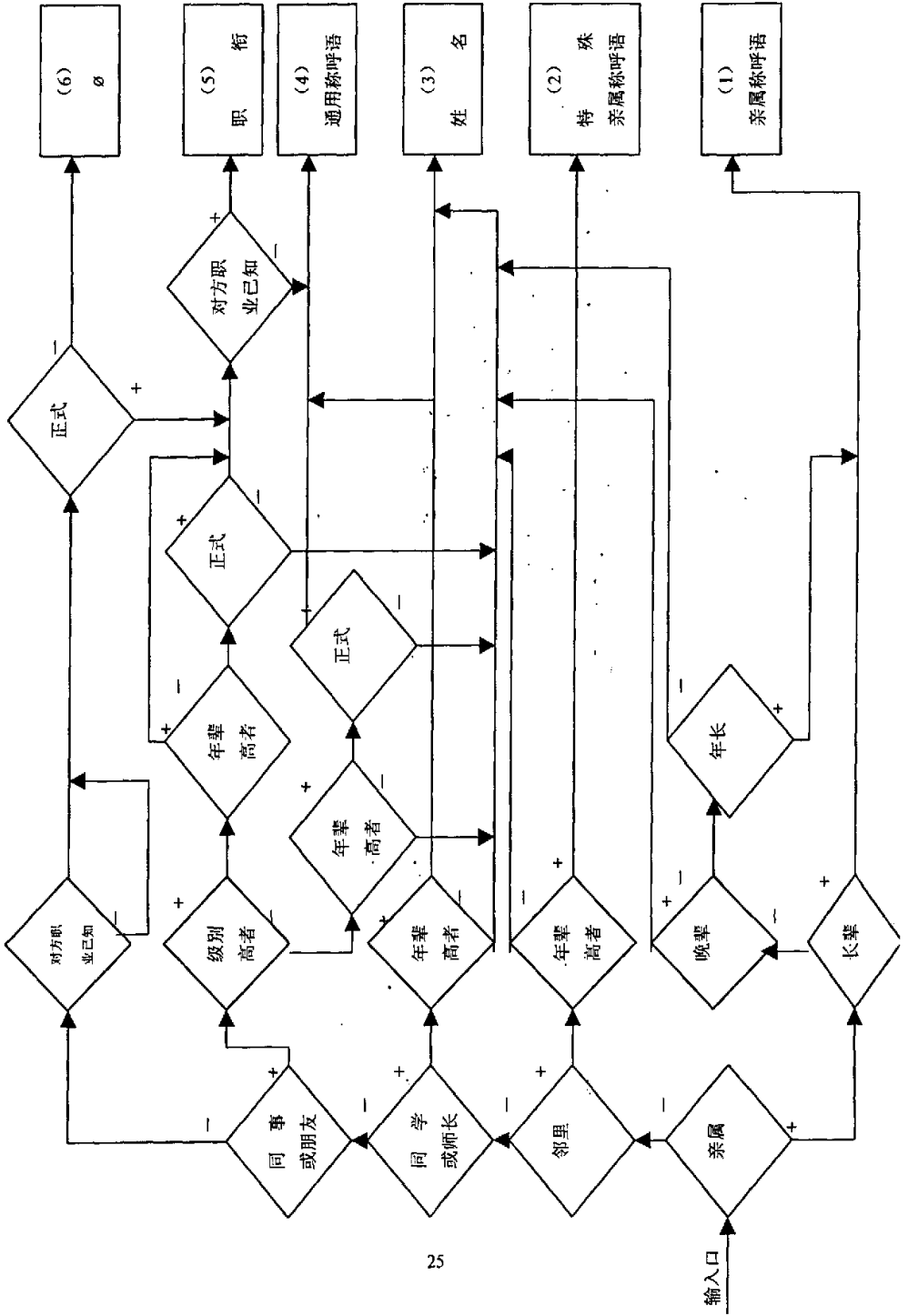
In two frameworks, such social factors as age, sex, intimacy or acquaintance, kinship, setting, generation and rank are taken into consideration. They are determiners of a set of specified address expressions. Ervin-Tripp has also taken into consideration such factors as dispensation, which simply means that the addressee has made it clear, explicitly or tacitly, that it is acceptable for addresser to call him or her by first name. It is not difficult to find that in Chinese address system, order of seniority and age play an important part in their choice of proper address forms especially when addressing relatives, neighbours and seniors. However, in American English address system, seniority and age exert influence mainly on people of higher generation (15 years older) in kinships, while first names instead of honorific titles can be used even when addressing older generations among friends and colleagues.

In fact, it is important to note that neither Ervin-Tripp nor any of the other scholars who use the model suggests that it actually represents the thought processes a speaker goes through in deciding address forms. It is simply a logical model designed to include all the critical information organized in a way that gives the right results. As Ervin-Tripp (1972:226) says, it is like a formal grammar. Through the presentation of two frameworks, we want to claim that in both the languages, address choice is affected by various social factors, though different factor may carry different weight in the choice of address strategy in different languages.

To conclude the discussion of the function and the use of address forms in this part, Brown & Levinson's model of politeness has proved useful. However, its emphasis on universals in language use must be supplemented by cross-culture studies of the repertoire of linguistic routines in the two languages. Ignorance of the difference in the routinization of polite expressions and the constraints on the use of such expressions in different languages can cause miscommunication and misunderstanding in cross-cultural interaction. This argument is supported by a contrastive study of the repertoire of English and Chinese address forms and their actual usage patterns in the following part.



汉语称呼系统图



Part III Forms of Address in Chinese and English

This chapter provides a contrastive study of the various forms of address in both Chinese and English, based on studies by Chen Song~~an~~ (1989) and Quirk (1985). It classifies the forms according to various aspects and highlights their cross-cultural differences.

In both Chinese and English, six types of address forms can generally be found: kinship terms, proper names, titles, pronouns, no-naming and others.

3.1 Kinship Terms

Kinship terms are used to reflect family relationships. Chinese has evolved a much more complex system of address terms in kinship than English has.

First, the age difference of the same generation and the difference between paternal and maternal relationship are reflected in kinship address terms in Chinese but not in English. (for details, see Zhao 1968:200-201 and Wang 1983:143)

Second, in Chinese social interactions, people are accustomed to addressing nonrelatives using kinships terms, which are referred to as “special kinship terms” (Zhu 1990). And in actual use, these terms are often prefixed by the hearer’s family name or surname, such as *Li ayi* (Aunt Li), *Zhang shushu* (Uncle Zhang) and *Li dashen* (Big auntie Li). However, this is far from common in English where some general honorific titles, particularly Mr.,

Mrs., Miss etc. are used under the same situation. A few commonly used special kinship terms in American English include “Uncle Sam” referring to the American government, and “son” or “sonny” used by a senior man to address a junior. In English, “Brother Joseph” or “Sister Mary” would commonly be understood as referring to persons belonging to a Catholic group or some religious or professional society.

Third, in both English and Chinese, people sometimes address the hearers from the perspective of their children or grandchildren, which represents modesty and high esteem, and enhance intimacy . With the Chinese kinship terms in far excess of English ones, this phenomenon occurs more frequently in Chinese, especially among acquaintances in villages, towns, and neighbourhood in cities. What’s more, these kinship terms are usually prefixed by *Ta* (his or her)—*tadaye*, *dadayi*, *tadashu*, *taba* and so on.

3.2 Proper Names

This is not the place to discuss in detail all aspects of Chinese and English proper names, but only those aspects which will be relevant to terms of address. There are three forms of address: first naming, last naming, and full naming.

3.2.1 First Naming

In both Chinese and American societies, first names (given names) are generally used to define personal relationships, especially intimate ones. However, first naming address forms in Chinese and American English are quite different because they are derived from dissimilar linguistic systems. Each has a number

of distinctive variant forms of its own. In this aspect, the Chinese first naming address forms seem to outnumber the American ones. Compare (Du 1999:208): Chinese first naming address forms include:

- (1) one-character first name
- (2) two-character first name
- (3) one-character first name + er (儿)
- (4) two-character first name made by the reduplication of a one-character first name
- (5) one-character name made by just keeping the second word of a two-word first name (also but rarely by keeping the first character of a two-character first name):
- (6) two-character first name made by putting A /a:/ before a one-character first name (mainly employed in South China):
- (7) two-character first name made by putting Xiao (young) before a one-character first name
- (8) two-character surname used as first name
- (9) infant name (mostly used in small towns or rural areas before a child goes to school)
- (10) nickname (among friend or associates)

In contrast, the English language finds fewer variant address forms in first naming. The American first naming address forms include:

- (1) one-word first name
- (2) compound first name
- (3) endearment first name
- (4) generic first name

(5) nickname

In the two languages, nickname is included because Robbins Burling (Du 1999:209) believes that a nickname even when based on one's last name, unquestionably acts as the equivalent of a first name. The generic first name (Jack, Mark, Buddy, etc.) is a special form invented for people to address a person whose first name is unknown or who is a stranger.

Although Chinese first naming address forms outnumber the American ones, American use them far more widely both within and outside a family. Nessa Wolfson (ibid : 212) observes that in modern America, first names are exchanged symmetrically between strangers (service personnel in stores, car agencies, restaurants, and similar places first naming their clients and customers) and between people of asymmetrical age and status (employees first naming their bosses, student their professors, and young people their seniors).

However, Chinese confine it to intimate relationships. We find, in daily interaction, husband and wife, brothers, sisters, brother and sister, and cousins reciprocate each other's first name. Outside the family, the symmetrical pattern is also found to occur between lovers or boy and girl friends, close friends, classmates, or schoolmates and associates. Moreover, sex, generation difference and setting may affect the use of first naming in Chinese. For example, between male and female friends or associates, first names are generally avoided in the presence of others for fear that doing so might leave on others an impression of intimate relationship between the interactants. Elder members

of a family such as grandparents, parents, uncles and aunts, etc. can generally first name family members of the younger generation, yet the latter can not reciprocate.

Still another marked difference between the two addressing systems is that Chinese first names, especially the one-character and two-character first names can be followed by other address forms, while this is less seen in American English. For instance, first name + *xiansheng* (Mr.), *tongzhi* (comrade), *xiong* (elder brother), or *di* (younger brother), *jie* (elder sister) or *mei* (younger sister). This peculiar Chinese usage adds politeness, a new dimension of meaning to intimacy.

Another peculiar aspect is that Chinese often manipulate first naming as powerful and convenient device to achieve personal ends. The love affairs of young people often witness a gradual development of their relationship demonstrated in the use of the variant address forms (Du 1999:218). At the beginning of their relationship they often address each other by full name or by full name + title such as *tongzhi* (comrade) or *xiansheng* (Mr.). For instance, *Xia Hongxia* or *Xia Hongxia tongzhi* (*Xia hongxia* or Comrade *Xia Hongxia*). As their relationship deepens in intimacy, they try to show their affection to each other by first dropping the addressee's family name (*Hongxia* or comrade *Hongxia*), then turning the 2-character first name into a one-character first name (*xia*). The last variant is the most intimate, showing the shortest distance between the two but the greatest affection for each other. There are also instances when husband and wife, sweethearts or lovers fall out or when their relationships deteriorate, they often

switch immediately from first naming to full naming in addressing each other, which signals no affection at all but demonstrates the longest distance between them.

3.2.2 Last Naming

Last name is also called surname or family name. The actual uses of last naming in two languages are distinct.

In Chinese, a man inherits at birth his father's surname, such as *Zhang*, *Wang*, *Li*, of which there are a few hundred very common ones. There are a few dissyllabic surnames like *Ouyang* and *Shangguan*, but only about half a dozen are at all common. Grammatically, a monosyllabic surname is not a free form, but must be bound to something else to form an independent word. Thus, while one can say "*Ouyang* has come", one must say "Mr. Wang has come" or "Lao Wang has come", the prefixing of *Lao* (old) being socially equivalent to dropping "Mr." and calling the person or referring to him in his absence by his last name alone (Zhao 1956:221). Other affixes include a prefix *Xiao* (little) and a suffix "Lao" (old), and this form of address can be followed by other titles such as *tongzhi*, *jiaoshou*, etc.. The prefixes *Lao* and *Xiao* are signs of intimacy and solidarity, while suffix "Lao" in "Wang Lao" is an honorific title showing respect to a person of higher social or academic status.

In American English, last naming was once used among males in 1950s. However, nowadays, this form of address is seldom found except on such special occasions as armies and schools, seniors last naming juniors, officers enlisted men, and prison guards prisoners. The popular use of last names today is

prefixed with social titles such as Mr., Mrs., and Miss. etc., and some occupational and official titles such as Professor, Doctor, General , President and so on.

3.2.3 Full Naming

American English and Chinese are different both in structure and in actual use of full names.

In American English, a person's full name is composed of a given name (or first name) and a family name (or last name). In some cases, a middle name is used between the given name and family name. Full naming is uncommon except in formal situations such as military camps. When criticizing his junior, a senior sometimes address the hearer by his full name for purpose of emphasis.

While in Chinese, a person's full name = family name + a given name (first). It is regarded as a common use between people of the same seniority, or seniors towards juniors. Orally, the use of full names is interestingly common among classmates, colleagues, friends, even lovers and spouses, and this adds special meaning to Chinese intimacy.

3.3 Titles

3.3.1 Occupational Titles

There are hundreds of names about occupations in the two languages, but all of them can not be used as occupational titles. Among Chinese, the most frequently used ones are: *Shifu* (master), *Daifu* or *Yisheng* (doctor) and *Laoshi* (teacher), etc..

According to Scotton & Zhu (1984), *Shifu* is being used in three different senses: (1) in its traditional sense of "elder, master

craftsman”, used only to elder, male masters of the same trade; (2) in an innovating/modified sense, meaning “comrade worker”, with several variations as to its exact referents. In its narrowest sense it connotes solidarity with those at the same workplace or those of the same occupation. In its broadest sense it is a neutral term of address to anyone who is , or appears to be, a worker of any type; (3) in a replacement sense, meaning “comrade” and appropriate for anyone when a neutral term of address is needed. Here, we can see *Shifu* is also regarded as a popular social title.

Daifu or *Yisheng* is used to address medical staff. However it is also an official title indicating technical status, thus inappropriate for druggists, chemists, nursing staff and other handymen in hospitals and clinics.

Laoshi is an occupational title for teaching staff in schools, colleges and universities. However, it has now become a popular term commonly used in entertainment circles and research institutions.

The above three titles are commonly used because they are regarded as honorific titles. They can be used alone, or follow family names, dissyllabic first names or full names.

Other occupational titles such as *Siji* (driver), *Youdiyuan* (postman), *Menwei* (guard), *Hushi* (nurse), *Jingcha* (policeman/woman), *Shouhuoyuan* (salesman/woman), *Fuwuyuan* (waiter/waitress) are not as common because they show less respect for the hearer. In actual use, some of these titles are generally followed by other address forms like *tongzhi* (comrade), *shifu* (master), *shushu* (uncle) and *ayi* (aunt) to be

made more acceptable.

In American English, formal titles are seldom used except in some special occupations—by judges, high government officials, certain military officers, medical workers, doctors, professors and religious leaders. Most of these titles are followed by last names or full names. For example, Judge Harley, Senator Smith, General Clark, Dr. Brown (medical), Dr. Green (professor), Bishop Gray. Most of them can also be used alone. One exception is the word “Doctor”, when used alone, it refers to medical workers with Doctor’s Degrees, those without being addressed by “Doctor + last name”. Other occupational titles like waiter, boy, conductor, usher and so on can be used alone, indicating less respect for the hearer.

3.3.2 Official Titles

Official titles include a person’s title of post and rank, both political and technical or professional. Official titles prefixed or unprefixed by last names in Chinese are far more widely accepted and employed in China than in the United States. There are enormous official titles ranging from administrative department and political party to military, business and academic circles.

In American English, however, one seldom hears English speakers addressing others as Bureau Director Smith, Manager Jackson, Principal Morris. Only a few official titles would be used: Doctor (common for those who have qualified in the medical profession), Judge (for those authorized to try cases in law courts) and Governor and Mayor (may be used for those

who hold such offices), although often without the name. It is the same with Professor.

It should be noted that in addressing military officers in Chinese, *Chen Siling* (Commander Chen), *Liang Paizhang* (Platoon Leader Liang) are common. English speaking people, however, tend to use the rank of the person, and not the command or duties that he has been assigned; for example, Captain Johnson, rather than Company Commander Johnson, Admiral Benjamin, rather than Fleet Commander Benjamin.

Other official titles or ranks are: Queen Mary, Prince Charles, President Roosevelt, Senator Fulbright, Judge Harley, Father White, General Patten, Colonel Quail and so on. Among these, Father, General, Colonel can be used alone. When addressing a King or Queen, one need to say “Your majesty, His Majesty or Majesty”; when addressing a prince—Your highness; a president—Mr. President, a judge—Your Honor.

3.3.3 Social Titles

In Chinese language, there are two categories of generally accepted social titles: (1) *tongzhi*, (irrespective of differences in age, occupation and official ranks) (2) *xiansheng*, *taitai*, *xiaojie*. (general honorific titles).

However, the use of these address terms has changed as the social and political situation has altered. “During a semantic change in progress a linguistic form has different meanings for different groups of speakers” (Scotton & Zhu 1984). In the previous section (3.3.1), we know *shifu* has become a spreading general term of address versus *tongzhi*—an unmarked term for

three kinds of people: (1) strangers (2) those whose occupations carry no specific title and (3) with whom the speaker is not very familiar. *Tongzhi* can be used alone to address someone, or with a name or another title. Some examples of usage are given by Scotton and Zhu (1983:484-5).

During the Cultural Revolution of 1966-1976, some supervisory positions were eliminated and their function taken over by revolutionary committees, making the titles associated with those positions obsolete. At the same time, workers were moved to professional positions while professional people were sent to work in factories. This led to some spread of *tongzhi* where other titles were used before, and considerable increase in the use of *shifu* (master craftsman), because the virtue of working people was being emphasized and because working people were in positions of responsibility. After the leaders of the Cultural Revolution were politically defeated and workers returned to factories, the use of *shifu* declined, although it is still more widely used in some regions and segments of society than it was previously.

Tongzhi, the first social title established after the founding of the People's Republic of China, reflected the egalitarian ideals of the new order and emphasized the solidarity relationship among Chinese people as a whole, thus once became popular nationwide.

Another category of general honorific titles has also gone through changes in use. *Xiansheng* was once used to refer to a knowledgeable person with certain social status irrespective of

sex. Zhao (1956) claimed it was the most general title in polite society, literally “first born”, since seniority was a compliment in China. The term for women corresponding to *xiansheng* was *xiaojie*, literally “miss” for unmarried women and *taitai/furen*, Chinese equivalent for “Mrs.” for married women. The term *nǚ shi* (women scholar), was an innovation of the 20th century, and could be used for both married and unmarried women. However these titles fell out of favor after 1949 and during the Cultural Revolution, since they were associated with the capitalist class.

More recently, the use of *tongzhi* is sharply declining, because it is associated with the era of the Cultural Revolution, an era that is now not looked at favorably, although it might be used in writing and to address strangers, especially in the north. To use *tongzhi* to address someone you know now seems unnecessarily formal to many Chinese people, and is often used to make jokes. The most common address forms are *lao* (old) and *xiao* (little). *Shifu* is still used to address an unknown man, and the kinship term *dajie* (big sister) would be preferred for addressing an unknown woman if she is middle-aged or older. To some extent, the use of *xiansheng* (Mr.) and *xiaojie* (Miss) is increasing, particularly in the coastal provinces, where there is more contact with outsiders. The meanings generally attached to these terms are “friendly”, “courteous”, “polite” and “fashionable”. This form of address was once restrictedly used toward foreigners, distinguished figures of other political parties, etc. At the beginning of its resurrection in the current address system, it was used more frequently among employees in foreign

enterprises, by waiters/waitresses and shop assistants in big, fashionable stores toward their customers. At present the term *xiansheng*, used to address a person of higher social or academic position, has revived. However, the term *xiaojie*, in its development, is recently associated with women taking up special services as their profession, thus not preferred by young girls.

Compared with Chinese, social titles in American English differ both in use and in meaning. There are also two categories: (1) Sir, Madam, Lady, (2) Mr. Mrs. Miss, Ms.

When you first meet with an American and want to be respectful, you can always use “Sir” or “Madam” in place of their names. The person you address will probably realize that you are not sure of the proper title to use and will help you by telling you the correct term. “Sir”, “Madam” show respect for position and seniority but not intimacy. They are widely used in various social situations—junior to senior, soldier to officer, civilian to police, school student to teacher, shop assistant to customer. They are not followed by either the first names or the last names. Don’t say “Sir ford”, “Madam Smith” except when “Sir” is used as the title of a knight or baronet in England. For example, Sir John. His wife is addressed as Dame or Lady Smith.

Another category of social titles in American English includes MR., Mrs., Miss and Ms.. Mr. is used to address a man without official or occupational titles or those titles are unknown. He would generally prefer to be addressed by his occupational or official titles like “Dr.” or “Professor” since for people of

academic circles, the use of Mr. instead of Dr. or Professor is regarded as deliberate depreciation. Mrs. is used for married women; Miss for unmarried women; Ms is used either for a married or unmarried woman. The four terms are followed by the last names or full names. Mr., when used as its full form—Mister, can be used alone, as an honorific term as in example (1) or showing such emotions as annoyance or resentment as in example (2).

(1) “Hey, Mister, you dropped your wallet.”

(2) “What do you think you are doing, Mister?”

And nowadays there is a growing tendency of using Miss in the United States irrespective of ages, which expresses American women’s longing for eternal youthfulness. The same use of this term for a Chinese woman 40 or 50 years old would, however, arouse dissatisfaction since age plays an important part in the use of address forms in China.

Through the above analysis, we can conclude that in the two languages, the uses of social titles are distinct. For one thing, we can not find English equivalent for such terms as *shifu*; for another, even if we roughly translate such terms as *xiansheng*, *xiaojie*, into “Mr.” or “Sir”, “Miss” or “Lady”, their actual usage patterns and implied meanings are quite different.

3.4 Pronouns

In English, at an earlier time in its history, there were two (or more) words for “you”. One of them was used for people you were close to, or who had a lower social position than you did. The other was used for people you were less well acquainted with

or who were socially superior. The use of these forms in several European languages was analyzed in classic article by Roger Brown and Albert Gilman (1960/1972). They found that the use of the familiar pronoun T and the deferential pronoun V were governed by two forces, which they called “power” and “solidarity”. “Power” derives from higher or lower social status, and “solidarity” comes from intimacy and “shared fate”. However, in modern American English, the second person singular “thou”, as an honorific pronoun, is seldom used except when people are at their prayers to God.

Chinese has forms for “you” that roughly parallel the T and V forms in European languages (Brown & Gilman 1960) with *ni* as the T form and *nin* as V form. According to Fang and Heng (1983), this distinction largely fell out of use after the revolution of 1949. At present, *nin* has been largely replaced by *ni* in spoken usage in some parts of the country, including the South. Even in the South, *nin* might be used by educated speakers to show respect for the person they are addressing. In Beijing and other parts of northern China, *nin* is still commonly used when someone is talking to an older person. In writing, *nin* is sometimes still used, especially in the opening greeting formula “*Nin hao*”, functionally something like “Dear Sir” (Fasold 2000:31).

3.5 No-Naming

There are situations under which a speaker might avoid using any name at all in the two languages. First, the addresser does not know the addressee’s name or the proper title for him or her.

Second, the addresser knows the proper title but is too reserved to address.

In the first case, there is no general term in English for getting the attention of a stranger or of a person whose name we may not know. In Chinese we have *tongzhi* and the now fashionable *shifu*, or such expressions as “*Wei*” (喂) or “*Lao Jia*” (劳驾). Then what do people do in English if such a need arises? Depending on the conversational situation, English custom might suggest using some such expressions as “Excuse me”, “Pardon me” or in England “I say there”. Expressions like “Hey”, or “Hey you” or “You, there” are used, but are not considered polite.

Sometimes, you may not know the proper title for the addressee in certain situations. You may not know if the other person considers your friendship to be close enough for you to use a first name. Perhaps you think you may have a tacit “dispensation” to use a higher-status individual’s first name, but you are not sure. Maybe other person is older than you are, but not a great deal older. Will that person be insulted if you use a first name, or hurt if you do not? Often, people resort to a way that needs no language. They simply clear their throat loudly, or make some noise or gesture to attract the hearer’s attention.

The second circumstance exists more commonly in China than in the United States because Chinese people attach too much importance to seniority. According to the order of seniority in a family or clan, a 50-year-old may rank as a 20-year-old’s junior and call the latter “uncle”! Therefore, both parties may choose to start their conversation without addressings.

3.6 Others

We find in our daily life, some address forms both in Chinese and English do not fall into the above 5 types. They may be grouped into a separate category. This includes some terms of endearment and derogation, like (my) daring, (my) dear, (my) dearest, (my) love, honey, (my) friend, handsome, beautiful, (you silly) bastard, coward, pig, liar, idiot, stupid, old guys. Also there are indefinite pronouns, nominal phrases and nominal clauses. For example:

You with the red hair, come to the front.

Get me a pen, somebody.

Workers of the world, unite!

Anybody interested, please ask for information.

Whoever wants to stay here a little longer, please stand up.

Similar use can be found in Chinese.

To conclude, the contrastive study of the repertoire of forms of address in English and Chinese made in this part suggests that although in both the languages there exist 6 general categories of address forms, they vary greatly in contents and usage patterns. Besides, although social factors like age, kinship, acquaintances, generation, rank and setting and the principles governing politeness strategies are universal, the linguistic possibilities for the realization of politeness strategies are language specific. What counts as polite in one language may not do so in another. For the convenience of later analysis, let's now summarize the major differences in Chinese and American English address use as follows:

(1) Recently, the trend of many English-speaking people has been to address others by using the first name than using titles like Mr., Mrs., or Miss even when people meet for the first time. This applies not only to people of roughly the same age, but also of different ages. It is not a sign of disrespect. However, this is quite counter to Chinese custom.

(2) Kinship terms play an important part in Chinese address system. Age, generation and order of seniority are regarded as far more important than those in American system.

(3) The use of a person's title, office or occupation is quite common in Chinese address system. But one seldom hears English speakers addressing others as Bureau Director Smith, Manager Jackson, Principal Morris. In English, only a few occupations or titles would be used which include Doctor, Judge, Governor, Mayor and Professor.

(4) Due to the complexity of Chinese address system, there do exist some problems in finding the English equivalents of some Chinese terms of address.

a) English translations of Chinese works usually keep such forms as Grandpa, Auntie, Sister-in-law, but they sound strange to the English ear. Such terms are used in English-language writings about China just in order to keep or give a Chinese flavor to the story.

b) How to address a teacher has long been a problem. Should it be Teacher or Teacher Zhang? Neither of these is in keeping with English custom. Or should we simply follow the English custom and call the teacher Mr. Zhang, Mrs. Yang, Miss Fei, or

just his or her first name? All of these would sound terrible to Chinese if school-age youngsters were to do so.

c) Should we say Comrade or Comrade Li? This involves using the term “comrade”, which is not widely accepted in non-socialist countries. *Shifu* is another difficult social title. To translate it as master carries the idea of a master-servant relationship, or a relationship that *shifu* does not have in present-day usage. The problem is further complicated by the fact that the term is now widely used as a general form of address for people in various occupations, for both men and women and not just for veteran craftsmen or workmen, chefs or automobile drivers as in earlier times.

d) While “*Jingcha shushu*” (警察叔叔) “*Jiefangjun shushu*” (解放军叔叔) sound quite normal in Chinese, Uncle policeman sounds very odd—perhaps one reason is that uncle connotes endearment, whereas policeman does not have the same connotation to English ears. P.L.A. Uncle not only sounds strange, but often leaves people wondering what is meant, for very few people outside of China know what the letters P.L.A. stand for.

e) Although terms such as *xiansheng* and *xiaojie* can roughly be translated as Mr. or Sir, Miss or Lady, they carry different connotations. In Chinese, *xiansheng* and *xiaojie* are honorific titles, while Sir or Mr. is only a very common address form. Therefore, American professors or scholars often prefer to be addressed by their occupational or technical titles such as Professor or Doctor and would be offended if otherwise addressed by Mr..

f) Prefixes such as *lao* (Old), *xiao* (Little) and the suffix *lao* (Old) are also regarded by Chinese people as showing friendliness or affection or respect. However, the word “*lao*” (Old) may make an American extremely unhappy. Similarly, while the use of *xiaojie* (Miss) may please a middle-aged American woman, it may really annoy a Chinese woman. Here again we can see the importance of age, generation and seniority in Chinese address system. What is considered proper and polite in one language may cause embarrassment or disrespect in another.

In the next part, we will focus on their respective cultural background and try to explore their philosophical sources.

Part IV Cultural Differences in Addressing

Based upon the contrastive study of the repertoire of forms of address in English and Chinese, we find although Brown & Levinson have attempted to analyze the functional application of politeness to the performance of FTAs in order to claim politeness phenomenon as universal in language usage, the linguistic possibilities for the realization of politeness strategies vary from language to language. Gu (1990) has made a contrastive analysis of politeness phenomenon between Chinese and English, and pointed out the cultural differences in politeness phenomenon. In this part, we will first review Gu (1990)'s politeness theory and then we will try to explore the respective philosophical sources.

4.1 Gu's Theory: Politeness Principles in Addressing

Politeness has been a focus of interest in pragmatics for decades now. A considerable amount of literature has been accumulated, and there is no sign of receding interest. In 1990, the *Journal of Pragmatics* organized a special issue on politeness to pinpoint landmarks and predict future trends. It seems now that Brown & Levinson (1978, revised 1987) and Leech (1983) provide the two dominating frameworks for politeness studies. The latest trend of studies is markedly shifting to cross-cultural perspectives with the objective of challenging or amending these two frameworks.

As far as Chinese politeness is concerned, Gu's two papers,

one in English and the other in Chinese (1990, 1992) prove to be most cited both at home and abroad. He argues against Brown & Levinson's face approach and favours Leech's principle and maxim framework. Based on modern Chinese data, he modifies some of Leech's assumptions and puts forward some maxims such as the self-denigration maxim, the address maxim that are claimed to be unique features of Chinese politeness.

According to Gu, there are basically four notions underlying the Chinese concept of politeness: respect for other (respectfulness), denigration of self (modesty), warmth toward other (attitudinal warmth) and refinement in language use. "Respect for other" is self's positive appreciation or admiration of other concerning the latter's face, social status, and so on. "Denigration of self" is self's way of showing modesty. "Warmth toward other" is self's demonstration of kindness, consideration, and hospitality to other. "Refinement in language use" refers to self's behavior to other which meets certain standards (Gu 1990:239). On the basis of these four essential notions underlying the Chinese conception of politeness, Gu has formulated seven politeness Maxims (See Gu 1985). Here I will concentrate on two of them, namely, the Self-denigration Maxim and the Address Maxim.

The Self-denigration Maxim consists of two clauses or submaxims: (a) denigrate self, and (b) elevate other. This maxim absorbs the notions of respectfulness and modesty. When referring to self and anything related to self, one should denigrate and be modest. When referring to other and anything related to

other, one should elevate and be respectful.

The Address Maxim requires that one should address his/her interlocutor with an appropriate address term. This maxim is based on the notions of respectfulness and warmth toward other. The act of addressing involves: (a) S's recognition of H as a social being in his/her specific social status or role; and (b) S's definition of the social relation between S and H. Appropriate address use is interpreted as polite, respectful, and attitudinally warm. Inappropriate address use will be interpreted as rude. According to Gu, politeness consideration is peculiar to Chinese address.

Now let's go further and try to explore the philosophical sources behind the differences in Chinese and English address use.

4.2 Philosophical Sources of Different Cultures

Interpersonal relationships, the cultural, social, and psychological variables, almost constitute the most important factor that influences communication both in Chinese context and American context. However, interpersonal relationship in the Chinese context is underpinned by Confucianism, especially *Ren* (仁) and *Li* (礼), which lie at the very core of Confucianism. It is well-acknowledged that *Li* and *Ren*, which can hardly be appropriately translated into English, virtually determine almost all aspects of the Chinese life—they have become the collective unconsciousness for the Chinese programming their social behavior including speech acts such as apologies, compliments, addressing, etc; as well as interactional rules, such as

conversational principles, politeness principles, face work, etc. In short, *Ren* and *Li* have shaped the way the Chinese behave (Jia 1999:505-506). And obviously the understanding of *Ren* and *Li* can help explain why the Chinese people behave the way they do.

4.2.1 *Ren* and *Li*, the Key Concepts of Confucianism

Ren and *Li*, the core concepts of Confucianism, complement each other in nature. If we look at these two concepts in terms of ends and means, we can say that *Ren* serves as the goal of life, while *Li* serves as the norms and means for achieving the acceptable ends of social life. At the same time, these two concepts overlap with each other.

Ren (仁), etymologically a combination of the Chinese ideographic characters for “人” (human being)(represented by the radical on the left of the Chinese ideograph) and for “二” (two)(represented by the radical on the right), means, on the one hand, the ideal manhood, defining all the fine qualities that make up an ideal man, and on the other hand, the ideal reciprocal relationship that should pertain between people. Men should be warm and benevolent to others or love them and respect themselves. Self or an individual must merge himself into the group or collective. We can say that *Ren*, the cardinal principle of Confucianism lays great emphasis on relationship. To some extent, the largeness of heart which *Ren* renders knows no boundaries as *Ren* advocates that “within the four seas all men are brothers and sisters.”

Li, as we have pointed out, serves as a norm or a means for people to achieve ideal manhood or good relationships. It defines

almost all the norms or rules for the appropriate conduct and behavior for every social member according to his or her social position. It defines the specifics of obligations and responsibilities for every member in the society. The norm consists of the proscriptions and prescriptions for acceptable behavior concerning almost every aspect of life, such as morality, social and political order, social rituals, customs, social interactions and so on and so forth (ibid:507).

Ren advocates reciprocity, the reciprocity of love or benevolence, however, is not unlimited. Unlike the western humanism, the love and reciprocity *Ren* advocates has never been symmetrical in the Chinese context. It is based on the kinship relationships in the patriarchal Chinese society or rather it is a symbol of patriarch. The reciprocity or love *Ren* advocates is best expressed in the obligations and responsibilities ascribed to the people according to their social positions in the society. As for *Li*, it specifies Five Constant Relationships that constitute the warp and woof of social life. The relationships are those between ruler and subject, parent and child, husband and wife, elder sibling and junior sibling, elder friend and junior friend. These relationships are asymmetrical. Rulers should be benevolent, subjects loyal; parents be loving, children reverential; elder siblings gentle, younger siblings respectful; husbands good, wives obedient. Three of these five relationships pertain within the family while two are the extensions of family relationships, which is indicative of the importance of family institution.

Ren and *Li* in fact is a system of moral codes in the Chinese

context predisposing a society in which relationship is complementary, asymmetrical, and reciprocally obligatory. The relationships are asymmetrical in that behavior that is appropriate to one party in each pair of the five relationships is not identical with what is appropriate for the other party. It is just this asymmetry that predisposes role differentiation and details its specific.

The Chinese society, traditionally speaking, is hierarchical in nature. In a society as such, *Li* is used as norms and means to maintain this hierarchical social order by differentiating the difference between the emperor and his subjects, father and his sons and daughters, brothers and obligations according to their positions. If the people in lower social positions are obedient to and respect those in higher positions and the humble respect the venerate, the younger respect the elder as *Li* advocates, the society will be in order. As a matter of fact, *Li* advocates nothing but vertical or hierarchical relationships and its essential function is to build social order upon this hierarchical relationships. It functions in the society as law does in the western society.

Under the influence of *Ren* and *Li*, the core concept of Confucianism, *LunLi* (伦理) ethnic principle has ruled over China for several thousands of years. *Lun* (伦) in Chinese means the hierarchical order while *Li* (理), (meaning principle in Chinese) homophonic with 礼, in fact means exactly what 礼 means (ibid:508-509). Therefore *Li* becomes the important principle in China. This is why China becomes a country of *LunLi*, both in terms of politics and morality. And when we say

that China lays emphasis on *Li* (for example 礼仪之邦), we do mean to say that it is the country with *LunLi* ethic.

In short, the Chinese people, no matter what social positions, can all best be characterized by the spirit of *Li*—people from all walks of life each have his or her own *Li*. People can only do what *Li* allows them to do. All the concepts, all the ways of life, modes of thinking, ways of perception, and patterns of behavior are underpinned by the principle of *Li*.

4.2.2 Individualism and Human Rights

Let's begin with the examination of history of the United States, which is unique in that the dominant culture is relatively young and was formed primarily through two processes. First, those who originally arrived on the Atlantic coast brought many English values, the English system of law, and the basic organization of commerce that was prevalent during the sixteenth century. Second, these settlers were immediately confronted with a wave of new citizens who arrived through migration. This produced what is sometimes referred to as the “melting pot”, “stew”, or “mixed salad” metaphor of culture. Cultural integration did not come about easily. The shared, desperate desire of the American people to be separated from what was known as the Crown and Divine Rights, as well as from the Church of England, provided the impetus to seek unity. This impetus led, in part, to the binding of Germans, Irish, and English together in social fabric ample enough to contain Catholics, Congregationalists, and Methodists and to unite North, South, East, and West within a national framework (Samovar

2000:112-113). The fundamental American proposition became “Life, Liberty and the pursuit of happiness” for each individual. The environmental factors also had psychological effects on the settlers: after developing habits of survival based on individualism, a lack of formality and efficiency, they soon also developed thought patterns, beliefs, values, and attitudes attuned to that environment. Therefore, we can say that unlike Chinese culture, *Ren* and *Li* find no place in the western philosophy and religion. What is highly valued in the west is individualism and as a result, equal or horizontal relationship is highly valued. And therefore what is advocated is not the obligations and responsibilities ascribed to each member of the society according to his or her social position but humanitarianism and human rights and thus the slogan: everybody is born equal—democracy, liberation of the individual is everybody’s wish. In this case, the love and benevolence humanitarianism advocates is entirely different from those advocated by *Ren* in the Chinese context. The love and benevolence advocated by humanitarianism is not selective or asymmetrical but symmetrical in nature. The relationships are symmetrical in that behavior that is appropriate to one person in each pair is identical with what is appropriate to the other person. This symmetry presupposes role equality rather than differentiation as in the case in China.

4.3 Differences in Interpersonal Relationships

The above exploration of the philosophical sources is sure to help us better understand the cultural differences, conventions and values in the use of address forms in the two languages.

Since the use of address is a reflex of interpersonal relationships, let's begin this section with the discussion of basic interpersonal relationships that are crucial in the two societies.

Generally, kinship, power and solidarity relationships are a universal phenomenon in all societies. However, different societies generally have different attitudes towards them. That is, comparatively speaking, power may be more important in one culture while solidarity may be more important in another culture. In another word, people in one culture may be sensitive to power while people in a different culture may be sensitive to solidarity. And the attitude toward kinship, to some extent, serves as the basis for the last two relationships.

As we have discussed, the ancient Confucian kinship relationships are an extremely powerful force in Chinese cultural relationship. Such relationships may be seen as the major magnetism holding together its people. In contrast to this, a recent United States census accepted fourteen different family types (Ron Scollon & Suzanne Wong Scollon 2000:130), from the traditional extended family to the single parent with adopted child. Almost any current newspapers from Europe, North America, or Australia will show that for most westerners, kinship is far from being felt as a significant tie among members of society. In many cases, kinship relationships are seen as significant barriers to individual self-realization and progress. The increasingly popular American practice of children calling their parents by first names, for example, would be quite unpleasantly surprising to most Chinese.

Kinship relationships emphasize that people are connected to each other by having descended from common ancestors. In doing so, kinship relationships emphasize, first of all, that ascending generations are before, prior to and even superior to descending generations. This hierarchy of relationship is emphasized by Confucius and the principle of *Ren* and *Li* which help reinforce the asymmetrical or vertical relationship by advocating the maintenance of differences between the emperor and his subjects, father and his son, elder brother and younger brother, male and female; the obedience of the lower position to those who are in higher position and respect from the humble to those who are superior in the society. Logically, in terms of interpersonal relationship, it has become an unwritten rule that authority and power relationship should be valued in daily interactions. What authority refers to varies with time. Nowadays it may include, for example, father in a family, leaders at different levels, the elders and the aged, and even people who are considered to be useful in the society. In old times, government officials (官) meant control or govern (管), (which is homophonic and synonymous to 官) while common people must be obedient to government officials, the phenomenon of which in Chinese is called 顺 (*shun*). And in old times, 顺 meant 循 (meaning “adhere to” or “follow” in English). The implication is clear: authority is respected and listened to and power relationship, in sociolinguistic terms, is highly valued. This emphasis on hierarchical relationship has a two-fold consequence for discourse: from very early in life one becomes subtly

practiced in the discourse forms of hierarchical relationship. One learns first to show respect to those above, then, in due time, one learns the forms of guidance and leadership of those who come after. The second consequence is that one comes to expect all relationships to be hierarchical to some extent. If hierarchy is not based on kinship relationship, then it seems to be based on age, experience, education, gender, political affiliation, or one of the many other dimensions of social organization within culture. This relationship is best demonstrated in the use of titles or honorifics when addressing occurs.

Kinship and power (hierarchical) relationship are the predominant norm or value orientation in the Chinese culture, just as individualism is the important value orientation in the western culture. Each member of the western society, comparatively speaking, enjoys independence and equality, which lays the foundation for the establishment of solidarity relationship as the main relationship in the social interactions in the west.

Solidarity is a sociolinguistic term not only referring to the equal and informal relationship, but also the desire for the setting up of equality, intimacy, common interest, sharing, etc.. Whatever it may possibly mean, its core notion is equality. The emphasis on solidarity over power on the Western side can best be demonstrated in the use of first names in everyday interaction.

This differences in power and solidarity (hierarchy and egalitarianism) are, most likely play out in the choice of strategies of interpersonal politeness as is shown in Brown &

Levinson's politeness model in 2.2.2 Also, as Brown & Levinson pointed out, the cultural difference in values can be illustrated by the culture-specific dimensions of social relationships. Since types of social relationship are repetitive throughout a society, it is possible to generalize about the kinds of relationships that prevail in that society. If these relationships generally reveal a heavy emphasis on status differentiation, high power values are likely to be assessed; if alternatively they reveal an equalitarian emphasis, low power values are likely to be assessed. Assessments of power or solidarity crucially determine the weighness of other factors which regulate the choice of politeness strategies. Consequently, it is possible to generalize about the kinds of politeness that are typically employed by members of that society. Conversely, through studying typical politeness strategies in a given society during a given period of time, it is possible to generalize about the specific assessment of power and solidarity in that society, and the consequent social relationships. The understanding of this point can help discover social changes behind the change of address use in both English and Chinese.

Let's take the popular first naming usage in both languages for example. In the American usage, the reciprocal and nonreciprocal use of first name is regulated or conditioned by a number of factors such as age, sex, occupational status, etc. Robbins Burling (1979) well summarized the traditional American usage of this particular address form. She says that the most common pattern is for two people mutually to use first names. Americans are even a bit proud at the speed with which

they get on “first name basis”, though this does not mean that Americans are friendlier than people of other nations, but only that they use first names in situations where many Europeans would continue to use a more formal address form. In situations where the addressee’s first name is unknown, Americans may even substitute a sort of generic first name--Mack, Jack, Buddy. Between newly introduced adults, title and last name are generally used symmetrically, but only a small increment of intimacy needs to develop before first names are substituted.

The nonreciprocal pattern is employed only when people differ markedly in either age or occupational status. Children are often expected to address adults as Mr. or Mrs. So and so, but they themselves are always addressed by first names. Adults address those who are 15 years older than themselves by first and last name, though they are often called by first names. Asymmetrical address may also occur between master and servant, employer and employee, officer and enlisted man, or professor and student.

However, this linguistic phenomenon has now undergone considerable change, although its rules or principles are not entirely outmoded. It has been changing in the direction of ever increasing use of first names between strangers and between people of asymmetrical age and status. Katherine French (1951) conducted an investigation of this linguistic change in American English and examined the way in which service personnel, often total strangers to their customers, not only introduce themselves by first name, but request that they be so addressed. According to

French, the reasons for this usage given by interviewees were that the use of first name was friendlier, that it simplified the interaction since last names are often difficult to understand or remember, and such usage provided the employee with anonymity. Thus, with no manifestation of the difference in status, both participants to the interaction are put on an equal footing. So we see here once again the idea of solidarity is manifested and stressed.

As for the Chinese usage which still confines it to intimate relationships and has not changed much, it has its own reason. Due to traditional Chinese culture, whether inside or outside a family, from ancient times to the present day, personal relationships have been well defined in various ways. And the Chinese are well aware of these relationships, and they don't want to confuse them by the misuse of address forms. The Chinese are culturally trained to be deferential. They do not think it appropriate or polite enough to address a person with whom he has no close relationship by first naming him or her in their encounter.

The Chinese culture as we can understand is characterized by two types of politeness stress. The first one is the "respect for other". China is a country with a long history of culture and politeness. Traditionally, the "respect for other" has been greatly emphasized as a means of showing politeness. This culture-specific politeness stress has made the Chinese culture different from many other cultures. The second type of politeness stress in the Chinese culture is characterized by the emphasis of

solidarity and social equality between S and H. This can be best illustrated in the use of *tongzhi*. After the founding of the People's Republic of China, this term has become a predominant form of address as a reflex of the currently emphasized dyadic type in the country. Since the late 1970s, the use of *xiansheng* and *xiaojie*, which are the manifestation of the traditional politeness stress, has been revived in the Chinese address system. Although the meanings and uses of these two terms in the current society are quite different from those in the past, the revival of the terms indicates that the value of the first type of politeness stress has been restored in the current Chinese society.

As we can see from the above discussion, society is not static, but rather is dynamic and constantly changing. Therefore, culture and its linguistic realization are subject to change. Especially for the world today, as never before, cultures are bombarded, through either electronic sources or face-to-face interaction, with many "strangers". These "foreigners" may live next door or across the globe, but contact and change are inevitable.

Part V Addressing in Cross-cultural Communication and Conclusion

Having discussed the use of address forms in English and Chinese and the differences in culture, we proceed to discuss the problems of addressing involved in cross-cultural communication and to call for further cross-cultural studies of linguistic routines of politeness.

5.1 Addressing between English and Chinese Speakers: Problems in Cross-Cultural Communication

Cultural Communication is much more problematic than people may think. As Gumperz (1982:1) points out:

When (cultural) backgrounds differ, meetings can be plagued by misunderstanding, mutual misrepresentation of events and misevaluation... Interactions that are normally seen as routine often meet with unforeseen problems.

This is clearly seen in the use of linguistic routines such as addressing in cross-cultural communication between English and Chinese speakers. Here I'd like to analyze some examples. The first one is given by Scollon (2000:122) between two men meeting on a plane from Tokyo to Hongkong. Chu Hongfai (C) is a Hongkong exporter who is returning from a business trip to Japan. Andrew Richardson(R) is an American buyer on his first business trip to Hongkong. It is a convenient meeting for them because Mr. Chu's company sells some of the products Mr. Richardson has come to Hongkong to buy. After a bit of

conversation they introduce themselves to each other.

R: By the way, I'm Richardson. My friends call me Andy. This is my business card.

C: I'm David Chu. Pleased to meet you, Mr. Richardson. This is my card.

R: No, no. Call me Andy. I think we'll be doing a lot of business together.

C: Yes, I hope so.

R: (reading Mr Chu's card): "Chu Hongfai". Hon-fai, I'll give you a call tomorrow as soon as I get settled at my hotel.

C: (smiling): Yes. I'll expect your call.

When these two men separate, they leave each other with very different impressions of the situation. Mr. Richardson is very pleased to have made the acquaintance of Mr. Chu and feels they have gotten off to a very good start. They have established their relationship on a first-name basis and Mr. Chu's smile seemed to indicate that he will be friendly and easy to do business with. Mr. Richardson is particularly pleased that he had treated Mr. Chu with respect for his Chinese background by calling him Hongfai rather than using the western name, David, which seemed to him an unnecessary imposition of western culture.

In contrast, Mr. Chu feels quite uncomfortable with Mr. Richardson. He feels it will be difficult to work with him and that Mr. Richardson might be rather insensitive to cultural differences. He is particularly bothered that Mr. Richardson used his given name, Hongfai, instead of either David or Mr. Chu. It was this

embarrassment which caused him to smile.

The second example observed by Gu Yueguo (1990:250) is a talk exchange which actually occurred between a Chinese student (C) and an English lecturer (E). It goes like this:

- (1) C: Teacher, how do you do?
- (2) E: How do you do? Where do you teach?
- (3) C: No, I'm not a teacher, I'm a student.

The English lecturer felt puzzled and asked Gu later on why that student told her that he was a teacher but at the same time denied it. As Gu explains, the puzzlement is caused by the use of the word "teacher" as an address term. The Chinese equivalent for "teacher" is "*laoshi*", which can be used as an address term. When C said (1) to E, C was using "teacher" according to Chinese discourse formality as an address term, which was interpreted by E according to English discourse formality as a self-introduction.

There are more examples in actual interactions. As mentioned earlier, an American scholar was greatly annoyed when addressed as Mr. instead of Professor by Chinese speakers of English, who actually tried to show respect to him. A female Chinese student in a University of the United States was also annoyed by the term "pet" directed to her from a cleaner. The student thought how that person could treat her as an animal, say, a dog or cat. She was quite unhappy until someone explained the goodwill of the cleaner towards her in using the term.

The above cases show, on the one hand the interference of mother-tongue on the part of speaker in using English as a

foreign language and the ignorance on the part of hearer of Chinese address behavior; on the other hand the misinterpretation or misunderstanding on the hearer's part of expressions in a foreign language. All the above examples show the importance of, and difficulty in, understanding the address behavior of people of other ethnicity.

In principle, one cannot expect that the literal translation of the routine expressions of his own language into another will have the same effect in the target language. But in practice, the interference of one's mother tongue in using a foreign language seems to be inevitable for foreign language learner. As Young (1982:83) observes:

The fact that different sociocultural assumptions underlie message construction on the discourse level is not easily recognized. Speakers from different cultural backgrounds, in attempting to formulate a sensible interpretation when faced by an unfamiliar discourse style, fall back on their knowledge of the evaluative frameworks conventionalized by their own culture.

Since misunderstandings can easily occur, Helen Oatey (1987:22) suggests that "it is important to consider how addressings are conveyed in English and Chinese, and to what extent there are differences between the two cultures in this respect." It is important to remember that the communication rules are culturally bound. This means that if you want to be successful in intercultural communication, you must know not only the rules of your culture but that of the culture of the person

with whom you are interacting as well. If you know the rules, the other person's behavior will make more sense to you and you can alter your behavior to the rules of the culture. Otherwise, you may interpret what you hear according to the rules of your native culture and misunderstand the speaker's intension or even perceive insincerity or offence where none was meant. The key to clear the difficulty is to acquire adequate knowledge of, and to be willing to accept the cultural differences in communication.

From the above analysis we can see that it is highly necessary for linguistic researchers and foreign language teachers to make cross-cultural studies of language interaction. These studies may contribute to promoting understanding of contact across different cultures and help foreign language learners/users to avoid potential offence and insult. In this sense, address phenomenon as linguistic routines in both native and second language context require more intensive and extensive studies.

5.2 Conclusion

In this thesis, a contrastive study is made on address phenomenon in the two distant languages, i.e., English and Chinese. The linguistic properties and social functions of such linguistic routines were reviewed in wide language and social contexts. The differences in the repertoire of address forms in the two languages were investigated. The uses of address forms in the two languages were explained in terms of Brown & Levinson's (1978,1987) model of politeness and illustrated by Ervin-Tripp's (1972) and Zhu's (1989) flow chart of address system. Differences reflected in cultural backgrounds, value

systems and philosophical sources were discussed. This study of the system and use of English and Chinese address form may suggest:

(1) Address behaviors are important tools for establishing, maintaining and negotiating social relationships. They impose special problems in cross-cultural communication and need to be studied in depth.

(2) Although the principles governing the use of politeness strategies are universal as Brown & Levinson (1978,1987) claim, the linguistic possibilities for the realization of these strategies are language specific. What counts as polite in one language may not do so in another.

(3) Although the choice of address forms is generally constrained by common social factors, the actual use may vary from person to person and from language to language.

The discussion of the problems in the use of linguistic routines in situations of language contacts in this study suggests that comprehensive knowledge of culture-specific norm of politeness as well as its linguistic realization (e.g. address use) are both crucial for cross-cultural communication. Foreign learners of Chinese should not only learn the forms of address used in social contacts, but also know the conventional and current use and meanings of the address terms. Similarly, Chinese learners of English should not only learn the address rules in English but also grasp the cultural values embedded in address behavior.

Addressing takes place so frequently in social interactions

that it is an important component of communicative competence. Apart from the traditional rules of grammar or reading and writing skills, knowledge about cultural differences in the politeness norm and knowledge about sociolinguistic factors influencing address behavior should be included in the curriculum of both Chinese and English teaching courses. It will facilitate learning of Chinese or English as a foreign or second language, and help language learners become not only linguistically competent but also communicatively competent.

In this world with a diversity of cultures, no culture may necessarily be better or worse than another. By the same token, no culture may necessarily be superior or inferior to another. Cultures are just different from one another. It is the cultural differences that make this world move, grow and enrich itself. Let me end this thesis with a beautiful sentence written by Benedict (Samovar 2000:78), "God gave to every people a cup, a cup of clay, and from this cup they drank life... They all dipped in the water, but their cups were different."

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