

MULTILINGUALISM IN THE WORKPLACE: COMMUNICATIVE PRACTICES BETWEEN STORE OWNERS AND ASSISTANTS IN CHINESE SHOPS IN CAPE TOWN

By

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DECLARATION

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ABSTRACT

Since the introduction of representative government in 1994, South Africa has seen a significant influx of Asian and African migrant workers, and their presence in South Africa has become part of the diverse population of most towns and cities. Most of these newcomers find employment in the informal sector, doing unskilled labour in areas such as construction, transport, agriculture, domestic work, hospitality or, as is particularly relevant to this study, various forms of trade. One community that has become well-known for success in establishing such trade occupations and managing them profitably, is the one of Chinese origin. This is illustrated in the sizable number of new informal shopping centres in South Africa settled specifically by groups of Chinese traders, known as *China Towns*. The established pattern is that these traders employ African migrants or local unemployed people as shop assistants. This makes China Town a multilingual and multicultural hub, no matter where it is located.

The study reported here investigates patterns and strategies of business communication in a China Town centre near Cape Town in the Western Cape. The variety of first languages of the various role players, predominantly Mandarin Chinese among shop owners, and Lingala, French, Swahili, Edu, and isiXhosa among shop assistants, emphasises the communicative dependence of this community on a lingua franca. In conformity with the rest of South Africa, this community relies on English as a workplace language, even though they speak different “Englishes” with varying levels of proficiency. The study therefore undertakes to explicate the ways store owners of Chinese migrant origin and their store assistants of African migrant origin draw on their linguistic repertoires to communicate in the workplace where English is the lingua franca.

This study is a Linguistic Ethnography in which Conversation Analysis, Discourse Analysis, and Critical Discourse Analysis are used to obtain different and integrated perspectives on informal workplace communication. To analyse the intersection between language and the social context within which the communication occurs, this study draws on Gumperz’s (2001) Interactional Sociolinguistic approach to the analysis of discourse and conversation. This approach is significantly contextual and focuses on “situations of speaking” by using ethnographic methods of inquiry. Conversation analysis addresses the micro-specifics of how participants conduct workplace communication; and discourse analysis is used to interrogate the forms and strategies of talk that “articulate” the power relations between shop owners and assistants.

Through audio-recorded spoken interaction of the participants throughout the work day as the primary source of data, aligned with field notes and observations, this study illustrates the creative forms of language that emerge in a grassroots multilingual workplace. Communication between the shop owners and their assistants is shown to portray the kind of language contact phenomena that typically develop in informal workplaces where there is an apparent need for a common trade language. Specifically, the study illustrates the forms of language and the communicative strategies that develop in a communicative context where various non-mutually intelligible languages are present.

OPSOMMING

Sedert verteenwoordigende regering in 1994 ingestel is, het Suid-Afrika 'n buitengewone invloed van immigrante werkers uit sowel Asië as Afrika beleef. Hulle teenwoordigheid het deel van die diversiteit van die bevolking in Suid-Afrikaanse stede en dorpe geword. Die meeste van hierdie nuwelinge werk in die informele sektor, waar groot getalle van hulle ongeskoolde arbeid doen in werksomgewings soos konstruksie, vervoer, landbou, huishouding, die gasvryheidsbedryf of, soos veral in hierdie studie relevant is, in verskeie vorme van handel. Een gemeenskap wat bekend geword het vir hulle sukses in die bestuur van sulke handelondernemings en die winsgewende bestuur daarvan, is dié van Sjinese oorsprong. Dit is merkbaar in die beduidende aantal informele winkelsentrums in Suid-Afrika wat spesifiek deur groepe Sjinese handelaars gevestig is. Hierdie sentrums, wat ook as *China Towns* bekend staan, maak dikwels gebruik van migrante uit Afrika of plaaslike werkloos as winkelassistente. Dit maak *China Town* 'n multi-kulturele werkplek, ongeag waar dit geleë is.

Hierdie studie ondersoek patrone en strategieë van besigheidskommunikasie in 'n *China Town*-sentrum naby Kaapstad in die Westelike Provinsie. Die verskeidenheid tale wat die onderskeie rolspelers as eerstetaal aangee, hoofsaaklik Mandaryns by winkeleienaars, en Lingala, Frans, Swahili, Edu en Xhosa by winkelassistente, beklemtoon hoe afhanklik hierdie gemeenskap in alledaagse kommunikasie is van 'n *lingua franca*. In ooreenstemming met die oorgrote meerderheid in Suid-Afrika, is die taal van die werkplek Engels, alhoewel verskillende variante van Engels met verskillende vlakke van taalvaardigheid gebruik word. Hierdie studie is onderneem om lig te werp op hoe Sjinese winkeleienaars van migrante-herkoms en hulle Afrikataalsprekende winkelassistente, ook grootliks van migrante-herkoms, in die werkplek vir kommunikasie steun op hul linguïstiese repertoires, met Engels as die *lingua franca*.

Die studie is 'n linguïstiese etnografie waar gespreksanalise, diskoersanalise en kritiese diskoersanalise gebruik word om verskillende perspektiewe op informele werkplek-kommunikasie te bekom, en dit te integreer. Om die breuklyn waar tale en die sosiale konteks bymekaarkom en die kommunikasie wat daar plaasvind te analiseer, gebruik hierdie studie Gumperz (2001) se interaksioneel-sosiolinguïstiese benadering tot diskoersanalise en kommunikasie. Hierdie benadering beskou die kommunikasie-konteks as 'n onontbeerlike element van betekenisgeving, en fokus op gespreksituasies deur etnografiese metodes in gesproke taalondersoek aan te wend. Gespreksanalise spreek die mikro-elemente van deelnemers se kommunikasie in die werkplek aan; diskoersanalise word gebruik om die taalvorme en verwante strategieë van gesprekke tussen winkeleienaars en winkelassistente te

ondersoek, met spesifieke aandag aan hoe dit gebruik word om onderlinge magsverhoudinge te vestig en in stand te hou.

Stemopnames van die verbale interaksie tussen deelnemers gedurende hul werkdag is die primêre bron van data. Deur dit in verband te bring met veldaantekeninge en die navorser se volgehoue waarneming, illustreer hierdie studie die kreatiewe taalvorme wat op grondvlak ontstaan in 'n veeltalige werkplek. Die kommunikasie wat tussen winkeleienaars en hul winkelassistente waargeneem en ook vasgevang is, beeld iets uit van die soort taalkontakverskynsels wat tipies ontwikkel in informele veeltalige werkplekke waar daar 'n behoefte bestaan aan 'n gemeenskaplike handelstaal. Die studie illustreer spesifiek die taalvorme en kommunikasiestrategieë wat ontwikkel in 'n kommunikasiekonteks waar verskeie onderling onverstaanbare tale tussen sprekers teenwoordig is.

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“I can do all things through him who gives me strength”- Phil. 4:13

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

This dissertation investigates the communicative practices between store owners of Chinese migrant origin and their assistants of African migrant origin in *China Town*, a Chinese shopping centre in a suburban area within the Cape Town metropole. The owners and assistants have mutually unintelligible first languages (L1s), but as they are living and working in a multilingual country where English is the most widely used lingua franca, they communicate by means of English, a non-native language (L2) for both groups. Considering the different L1s and different communities from which they come, it can be presupposed that the employers and employees in China Town speak different "Englishes" with varying levels of proficiency.

Communication between the shop owners and their assistants is hypothesised to illustrate the kind of language contact phenomena that typically develop in workplaces where there is an apparent need for a common language in order to get the regular business done. The focus of the dissertation is therefore on how Chinese shopkeepers and African shop assistants use language in workplace conversation when L2 forms of English are the lingua franca. Specifically, it will investigate the forms of language and the communicative strategies that develop in such a communicative context.

This chapter provides a rationale for the study, and contextualises the participants and the research site. Specifically, it addresses the central research question to be investigated in this study, and articulates the research aims and objectives. Further, this chapter gives an introduction to the kinds of literature that will be dealt with in this dissertation, as well as to how the study has been structured overall.

1.1 BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE

This study is undertaken in the context of South Africa's history of population movements with cross-border flows into and out of the country that have increased considerably since the introduction of representative government in 1994. Landau and Segatti (2009) point out that the massive influx of both temporary and permanent African and Asian migrants is a major characteristic of the post-Apartheid transition in South Africa after 1994. More recently, since the opening up of trade between China and the West, there has been a new wave of trade and

workers from China into African countries. Driven by various factors such as warfare, poverty, unemployment, over-population and political strife, transnational movements of large numbers of (im)migrants have become endemic.

South Africa has been and presently is still perceived as a destination of opportunity for people from neighbouring areas, drawing groups from Malawi, Mozambique, Zimbabwe, Democratic Republic of Congo, Botswana and Lesotho to name a few (Plus news, 2006 cited in Rwodzi, 2011). Jobs available for these migrants are often in the section of informal, unskilled labour such as domestic work, construction, transport, agriculture or, as is particularly relevant to this study, various forms of trade (Rwodzi, 2011). The focus of this dissertation is the communicative practices that feature in these forms of trade – specifically in informal businesses.

As mentioned, the dissertation refers to informal Chinese markets in South Africa, focusing on the nature of interaction between the Chinese shopkeepers and their African shop assistants. Both parties identified as role-players appear to have become integrated into specialised occupations, with the Chinese opening the (in)formal stores and the Africans working closely with them as shop assistants. These different groups of migrants then find themselves in new social and linguistic environments to which they adjust in ways that are of interest from a linguistic and sociolinguistic perspective.

1.2 CHINESE MIGRATION TO SOUTH AFRICA

The trajectory of the Chinese movement into South Africa and Africa at large depicts an era of the breaking of home ties, the crossing of physical boundaries and the formation of relationships that surpass national, cultural or linguistic barriers. This specifically holds true for the research population in this dissertation, which comprises Chinese traders and their assistants from various African countries (e.g., the DRC, Angola, Zimbabwe, Malawi, West African countries) as well as a few from other regions in South Africa. Although the Chinese participants in this study have forged their own pathways into Africa and are thus removed from the policies and politics between China and Africa, the relationship between the two countries is prominent in modern day globalization. Chinese citizens have been migrating into South Africa since long before the establishment of China Towns or Chinese investments in the South African economy, or before the Apartheid government had established ties with the Taiwanese.

Chinese migration into South Africa dates back to the 17th Century, and according to Laribee (2008) occurred in three waves. The first wave arrived when merchants and small-scale traders

came ashore from passing ships during the 17th Century. In the 19th Century a new wave of Chinese migrants entered colonial South Africa by means of the indentured labour systems, and in the late 20th Century a post-Apartheid South Africa has welcomed more than 200 000 Chinese migrants. This last group of migrants from China have established themselves as small and large scale entrepreneurs in the country, and many have made South Africa their home. According to Park and Chen (2009:30) this group of migrants is made up of mostly peasants from the Fujian province, who tend to operate in the “lower rungs” of the retail sector. Further, looking beyond South Africa, China’s recent engagement in the global economy and that of the African continent has registered many successes. Currently China is significantly invested in various African countries, including South Africa, Gabon, Angola, Democratic Republic of Congo, Zambia, Nigeria, and Sudan, to name a few (Siu & McGovern, 2017; Ndenguino-Mpira, 2013; Gill, Huang & Morrison, 2007). At the informal level, Chinese have established a market in South Africa and other African countries that sells goods at comparatively low prices, and which of course gives Africans access to Chinese goods and services.

Since the emergence of China within the BRIC group in 2001 (BRICS as from 2010) people of Chinese origin have gradually secured a market share in Africa that is successful at both formal and informal levels (Rwodzi, 2011:39). According to Lee (1966:53) it is a common occurrence for immigrant groups to specialise in particular occupations and become scattered throughout the destination area wherever such specialised work is in demand. A fitting example of this would be China Town stores and Chinese markets. The Chinese shop owners form a network of small, family owned businesses which sell goods imported from China at highly competitive prices. Their business model is one that has been successful in South Africa (Laribee, 2008:360).

1.3 MIGRATION INTO SOUTH AFRICA FROM OTHER AFRICAN COUNTRIES

South Africa is seen as a destination country for many migrants from neighbouring countries. With the relaxing of border restrictions post-Apartheid, there has been a marked increase in migration into South Africa from other African countries. While migration in South Africa is not a new phenomenon, considerable restrictions were put in place during the Apartheid years (i.e. between 1948 and 1994), which allowed temporary migrant labourers of African origin to enter the country in terms of “job reservation” policies for menial labour on farms and in mines. The transition to the post-Apartheid era changed this, attracting migrants of all categories from Africa and beyond. It is estimated that nationals from over one hundred countries now live in South Africa (Adepoju, 2003:3). These include migrants from West African countries like

Nigeria, Ghana, Senegal and Mali, as well as Central African countries like the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Zaire and Zimbabwe. Atinkola and Atinkola (2015) state that migrants presently play an important role in the informal economy of South Africa, while pointing out that migrants from the South African Development Community (SADC) predominate in this sector.

In view of the linguistic diversity of individuals from various parts of the continent, Rwodzi (2011:26) states that immigrants are faced with many challenges of which most are in one way or another linked to language. Newcomers are often reported to have difficulty in speaking, reading and writing in the national language(s) as well as the language of business. The fact that English is not a first language for many migrants in South Africa has the unfortunate effect of not only limiting an individual in terms of opportunities, but also their success in the business sector. This study works with the assumption that English is the language of wider communication in South Africa and that in interactions between migrant groups with different L1s, English is the preferred language of wider communication

1.4 PROBLEM STATEMENT

Despite daunting challenges that migrants of various backgrounds face, their presence in South Africa, specifically since 2001, has become part of the landscape of most towns and cities. One of the social domains where the migrant communities are represented in large numbers is the informal trading sector. The problem to be investigated in this study relates to the communicative practices of shopkeepers and shop assistants in a marketplace where shop owners of Chinese migrant origin and workers of African migrant origin meet. The study will focus on the accommodative language practices and strategies used to negotiate meaning in transactional contexts of constrained communication.

Notwithstanding the opportunities that appear to be open, there is a myriad of socio-economic and political difficulties in establishing new personally managed businesses. The Chinese migrant community has recorded success in establishing such businesses and managing them profitably. What is remarkable is that these businesses do not operate in isolation. As is illustrated in the number of new shopping centres settled specifically by groups of Chinese traders, this is a community of migrants that provide mutual support by setting up businesses in close proximity of one another. Overwhelmingly, the established pattern is that these businesses employ African migrants, and in some instances, local unemployed people as shop assistants.

The participants in this study are all multilingual with varying repertoires and varying levels of proficiency in the range of languages they know. They have mutually unintelligible L1s and therefore cannot rely on their first or home languages for communication in the workplace. They use a language of wider communication in South Africa, which in this case is English, in their interaction with one another as well as with customers. Thus this dissertation reports on communicative practices in a China Town as a multilingual language contact situation where migrants in the informal workplace draw on their repertoires for employer-employee, employee-employee, and employee-customer communication.

1.5 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This study seeks to describe and explain how communication or language-in-interaction is performed or socially produced where participants do not have a common first language and English is the lingua franca. The central research objective related to the stated problem, is to investigate how meaning is created and communicated in interactions between Chinese shopkeepers and African shop assistants

The research therefore seeks to answer one overarching question, namely: What are the characterising features of communicative events where English is used as lingua franca in the work place between Mandarin or Cantonese L1 shopkeepers and shop assistants with an African language (such as Lingala, Swahili or Tshiluba) as L1?

This is divided into the following research questions.

1. What are the language biographies of the participants and how do they draw on these to negotiate meaning? Which languages make up the linguistic repertoire of shopkeepers and shop assistants in China Town stores? Besides the value of English, which other languages besides English feature in the workplace communication?
2. What are the communicative strategies typically used between the various participants? Which of these appear to be typical of such language contact situations and which appear to be new, i.e. not recorded in previous studies of workplace communication between speakers of mutually unintelligible languages while in a foreign country.
3. How can the conversations between shop owners and shop assistants in the shop as workplace be categorised in generic terms, e.g. discussion of stock, giving and receiving instructions, conversation between owner and assistant on client relations, and the likes?

4. How is functional workplace communication maintained in the China Town store setting? What kinds of misunderstanding or linguistic conflict occur in the communication, how are they recognised, and how are they resolved?
5. How do participants use their linguistic repertoires to assert and contest power in the informal workplace?

1.6 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This PhD dissertation is a sociolinguistic study in which aspects of language and globalisation, mobility and language contact phenomena are addressed. The study can be characterized as a Linguistic Ethnography (see e.g. Rampton, 2007; Creese, 2008; Rampton, Maybin & Roberts, 2014) which includes and integrates various approaches to a sociolinguistic problem, as will be indicated below.

The study focuses on the communication between two migrant groups of differing origin and how they draw on their language repertoires in their interactions using English as lingua franca in the workplace. The research project collected data ethnographically (see chapter 4), and uses a variety of approaches (see discussion below and in chapter 3) to gain insight on the phenomena under investigation. This approach allows for an emic perspective of the everyday lived experiences and language practices of the participants as they navigate the workplace context.

To interpret the recorded conversations and show their significance as language practices and strategies used in negotiating meaning, the research refers also to Conversation Analysis and Discourse Analysis. These frameworks have proven to be highly suitable for engaging with the kind of phenomena to be observed and analysed in a study of spontaneous and unscripted workplace conversation as it occurs in real time (see Rampton, 2014; Schegloff et al., 2002).

1.6.1 Linguistic Ethnography Interactional Sociolinguistics

As an interdisciplinary approach aimed at giving a holistic view of spoken communicative events, linguistic ethnography integrates the study of language and communication using ethnography as a resource, thus enriching a fundamentally linguistic project. This study views ethnography as an epistemological resource that complements CA as a method for accessing social processes. CA is seen by Goffman (1955) (cf. also Goffman, 1967) as a theoretical framework which uses empirical data to gain insights into the organization of interaction within the domain in which it occurs. For Rampton, Maybin and Roberts (2014) community life and

the context within which interactions are embedded need to be grasped ethnographically. A linguistic ethnography in this dissertation supplements CA in providing valuable accounts of the organisation of verbal communication in the workplace (Wooffitt, 2005).

1.6.2 Conversation Analysis

Conversation Analysis (CA), as the term suggests, is a generic approach to the analysis of conversation, which originated as a study of spontaneous, everyday talk (Goodwin & Heritage, 1990). It represents a methodological approach which is adapted to investigate all forms of talk-in-interaction. Schegloff (1987) describes CA as a “mode of analysis” applied to ordinary conversation as the fundamental form of talk-in-interaction (see also Schegloff, 1988). Schegloff, Koshik, Jacoby and Olsher (2002:3) characterise CA as a “mode of inquiry” into spoken interaction as well as the conduct of interlocutors within such interaction. Verbal interaction includes forms of conduct such as gesture, posture, facial expression and other activities that take place during interaction (Schegloff et al., 2002). In this dissertation CA is the principal framework, as it accounts for not only the spoken interaction between two migrant groups, but also the contribution to the communicative encounters of the context within which their interaction takes place. Thus this framework will allow the researcher to describe and explain what happens linguistically as well as socially in the organisation of workplace communication. CA discloses covert and often unconscious interactional rules within specific contexts, and for this reason has been selected for an investigation of L2 interaction in a situation of language contact in the workplace. To assure proper attention to all aspects of the problem described in section 1.4, a mixed methodology typically used in ethnographic studies, will be used. Specifically, I will make use of the instruments provided in DA as described below.

1.6.3 Discourse Analysis

Discourse Analysis (DA) is a systematic approach to studying language-in-use, considering the formal and contextual features of spoken (as well as written) communication (cf. Levinson, 1983; Cook, 1989). According to Johnstone (2008:6), DA “sheds light on how speakers indicate their semantic intentions and how hearers interpret what they hear, and on the cognitive abilities that underlie human symbol use”. In this dissertation DA will enable the researcher to systematically analyse the transcriptions of spontaneous, unscripted workplace interaction. This will allow for the analysis of how interpersonal relationships and power are negotiated in this context. Using Gumperz’s (2001) interactional sociolinguistic (IS) approach, DA enables an

analysis of how participants interpret and convey meaning in everyday communicative practices, how they assert or contest power, and how they negotiate social roles in the workplace through language. The IS approach integrates contextual knowledge and focuses on “situations of speaking” by using ethnographic methods of inquiry (Gumperz, 2001:215). Although DA and CA have differing ideological underpinnings, both are required for addressing the research questions set out in 1.5 above. In order to analyse power, interpersonal relationships, social roles and identity constructions as they are negotiated in language, a DA and to a lesser extent also Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) which deals with matters of language and power, is imperative. The rationale for referring to various analytical approaches is given in the idea that all talk is a site of struggle and negotiation, and that power and identity negotiation is inherent in all forms of talk – therefore also in this language contact situation. Although CA and DA are introduced and applied separately, all findings are eventually synthesised.

As an ethnolinguistic study gives special prominence to contextual, interdisciplinary knowledge, the dissertation will further refer to literature from various theoretical schools, considering also relevant social processes such as globalization and migration, and referring to research on multilingualism and the linguistic repertoire, as well as language contact situations where English Lingua Franca (ELF) is used. The following sections will elaborate briefly on these topics to demonstrate their relevance to the study. Pertinent literature on these themes will be covered in Chapter 3.

1.6.4 Globalization as impetus for migration

“Globalization” is a term that refers to recent developments in how people with various cultures, customs, languages and belief systems are not limited to their assumed place of origin. Various social, political and technological developments have brought about greater mobility worldwide, than was formerly possible. One of the significant characteristics of globalization, has been enhanced interaction between people and cultures that were formerly much more isolated. Globalization studies in view of Sino-African engagement is largely oriented towards economic description and analysis (see for example Gill, Huang & Morrison, 2007; Laribee, 2008; Alden & Hughs, 2009; Dobler, 2009), and the early migration of Chinese groups and individuals (see Fan, 2008; Harris, 2003, 2006, 2010; Park, 2008; Park & Chen, 2009). In view of the multiplicity of the impacts of globalization, Jacquemet (2005) mentions that there is a significant need for study on the global phenomenon of language contact. With this in mind this study addresses one specific impact of globalization, namely the linguistic activity that emerges from a language contact situation where globalized people meet.

This study will rely on existing knowledge of globalisation, which is argued to be both cause and effect of migration. Globalisation in this study is therefore seen as a process which explains the presence of transnational migrants and their cooperation in a foreign country. The process is regarded as an impetus for migration and the deterritorialisation of people, cultures and languages (see Jacquemet, 2005). It is furthermore also a catalyst for language contact.

1.6.5 Migration and language

Language fulfils a number of functions, communicative and otherwise, and therefore has a significant role to play in societal and individual integration (Esser, 2006). Rwodzi (2011) has given a panoramic view of the linguistic challenges faced by migrants in South Africa, focussing particularly on informal traders in Gauteng hailing from three African countries. According to Kerswill (2006:19) "migration and language interact in a complex, yet transparent way. Chiefly, migration leads to language or dialect contact, and is, indeed, the prime cause of such contact". In many cases, migrants are obliged to acquire the language of their host country, owing to the fact that inequalities arise in terms of education, societal recognition and integration when linguistic competence in the national language of the destination or host country is lacking. This study will review literature on challenges faced by migrant workers in destination countries such as South Africa (see Vigouroux, 2008) and around the world and will subsequently compare and contrast these studies with findings that emerge from this study.

As a concept 'migration' refers to the movement of people from an origin country to a destination or transit country. It can entail a permanent or semi-permanent change of residence (Lee, 1966). Park (1928) asserts that migration is not merely identified with movement, but more significantly it involves change of residence and the breaking of home ties. Immigrant groups find themselves in new social and linguistic environments to which they have to adjust in many ways. For Rwodzi (2011) migration usually yields effects such as diffusion and change in cultural markers among the migrant population as well as the receiving community, as people tend to migrate with their language, music, religion, and the likes to the destination regions. The process of migration is found necessarily to bring about certain changes, as in cultural traits, ideas and attitudes as they are expressed in language (Rwodzi, 2011:18). This is particularly relevant to the Chinese and Africans in this study, who after arrival in South Africa have had to acclimatize to a different cultural, political and social order.

1.6.6 English as lingua franca

The term “lingua franca” is of Italian origin, and originated as a designated concept referring to a stabilised Mediterranean pidgin circa 14th century. It has since been used to denote a makeshift form of language that develops in trading between speakers of mutually unintelligible languages (Brosch, 2015). Currently, however, it refers to a creative and versatile form of communication that allows a level of mutually understandable interaction where otherwise there may have been a communication breakdown. Seidlhofer (2009:240) is one of a number of scholars encouraging the study of English as a lingua franca (ELF) as a means of understanding of the more general communicative processes which are evident among L2 speakers of English who come from vastly different L1 communities. This research does not primarily look at the linguistic features identified in English lingua franca interactions, but focuses more specifically on the various functions that English lingua franca fulfils in the interactions that are observed. The research moves away from a surface description to an explanation of the underlying significance of the identified functions. In considering ELF studies, attention also goes to linguistic repertoires and linguistic biographies of multilingual speakers. Here the work of Seidlhofer (2001, 2005, 2009), as well as House (2003, 2013) and Mauranen (2006) on the notion of ELF and their approaches to uses of English in view of multilingualism and language diversity are relevant. For example, the work of Pölzl and Seidlhofer (2006) on how the local context of an interaction influences the use of ELF in terms of the integration of interactants’ mother tongue into the use of L2 English, will inform the study. This will specifically be informative in investigating how Chinese and Africans integrate their L1s into their English interaction. A study of how the context, i.e. the work space and broader social context influences the uses of English between specific groups of ELF users, will draw on ELF studies in the interpretive phase of the research.

1.6.7 Multilingualism and Linguistic Repertoires

To fully understand the communicative practices in the context of the informal workplace, a good grasp of the kinds of multilingualism of the various role-players – how they developed the linguistic repertoires that they have – is a prerequisite. For this reason, the literature also explores the theoretical framing of multilingualism, linguistic repertoires, and the multilingual speaker. Wei (2008:4) defines a multilingual speaker as “anyone who can communicate in more than one language, be it active (through speaking and writing) or passive (through listening and reading)”. A simple, yet less useful, conceptualisation of multilingualism is that it entails engaging in more than one language. More recent work has started to replace this understanding

by viewing multilingualism “holistically” (Cenoz, 2013) and not as restricted to the knowledge and use of languages as separate entities. A holistic view of multilingualism according to Cenoz (2013) considers not only the multilingual person, but also multilingual communities, and also takes the social context of the multilingual practices into account. In the same vein, this dissertation can be said to take a holistic approach to multilingualism – one that does not merely consider languages as fixed and distinct entities, but that considers the multilingual speaker, their languaging practices, their trajectories of language (and variety) acquisition, and how their multilingual practices are context-shaped.

Multilingualism is both a social phenomenon, and a phenomenon on the individual level. While English is perceived as the world lingua franca, the awareness of societal multilingualism is spreading to all parts of the world aided by globalisation processes, therefore language use is diversifying (Aronin & Singleton, 2008:4). Although multilingualism can be viewed from the perspective of societal languages and varieties spoken, this dissertation focuses specifically on the multilingual individual in a multilingual context rather than on the languages themselves. In dealing with the multilingual speaker, the dissertation is able to give an overview of the language biographies and linguistic repertoires of the participants. A multilingual speaker uses the languages as resources in their linguistic repertoire. Cenoz (2013) refers to the multilingual speaker as having fluid, indistinct boundaries between the languages in their linguistic repertoire, therefore enabling speakers to cross and draw on the various languages in their communicative practices.

1.7 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

The research has been designed to collect empirical data experientially, and to process the raw data in a way that enables the researcher to analyse and explain the phenomena being studied. As a linguistic ethnographic case study, the dissertation describes and explains the kinds of conversation that takes place between participants with vastly different linguistic biographies in the workplace as contact situation. Specifically the study concerns a workplace in what is a foreign country for most who are working there, i.e. a shopping centre where different migrant groups work and need to find common interactive practices.

The research considers communication between employers and employees working in three different stores. The participant population will therefore comprise four shopkeepers of Chinese migrant origin and seven shop assistants of African migrant origin. The data here are recordings of their interaction throughout the business day, as the research interest is in how they use

English as the language of wider communication, and which specific conversational strategies develop as generic means of workplace interaction. The complete data set comprises questionnaires that collected the language biographies and repertoires of the various participants, recordings of communication between the participants during working hours, and field notes taken during a couple of months' observation in the participating stores, as well as informally in non-participating stores in China Town.

The data collection produced 80 hours of recorded material, of which the conversation was transcribed in order to do thorough analysis using the methods identified above. The amount of time spent in each shop was calculated to minimise the effects of the "observer's paradox", i.e. to assure participants get accustomed to the presence of an observer-researcher and behave as closely as possible to what is their everyday custom.

1.8 IMPACT OF THE STUDY

By investigating communicative practices of a particular migrant community in their workplace interactions in a South African retail centre, the study forms part of a larger research interest in the languages of migrant communities and how these features in speakers' integration into the receiving community. The dissertation not only describes and explains patterns of multilingual communication; it also reflects on a particular kind of language contact situation and contributes to new knowledge of how groups with vastly different first languages and communicative cultures, manage contact in the workplace. Using the instruments of Conversation Analysis and Discourse Analysis opens the possibility of contributing to these areas of theoretical reflection from a new and so far, less researched perspective. Considerable work has been done on multilingualism and emergent languages in the workplace, such as Otsuji and Pennycook (2010, 2011) and their work on Japanese speakers in the Australian workplace context and Pennycook and Otsuji (2014) on metrolingual francas in the marketplace, Amelina's (2010) multilingual study of Russian speakers in the German workplace; and Eley's (2015) linguistic ethnography of multilingualism in a Frankfurt barbershop. More recently, Kraft (2017) investigated multilingual language practices on a Norwegian construction site, and further study into linguistic practices in these blue-collar spaces was conducted by Lønsmann and Kraft (2018). However, while these studies contribute conceptually to this study, in light of the recent discourse on the epistemic divide between the global North and the global South, this dissertation contributes to an understanding of multilingualism and diversity from a Southern perspective. Even with the work done in the South African context that deals with language and its function in the economy (cf. Deumert & Mabandla, 2009), and Dhupelia-Mesthrie (2009)

on Indian immigrant workers in Cape Town, this study deals specifically with a language contact situation where migrant groups from considerably different linguistic and cultural backgrounds meet. It reflects on multilingualism and the multilingual individuals who come from diverse backgrounds, and reflects on the effects of globalization and migration from the Southern periphery (cf. De Sousa Santos, 2014 on epistemologies of the South).

1.9 CHAPTER OVERVIEW

The dissertation will be organised as follows:

Chapter 2 illustrates the defining characteristics of the South African conceptualisation of China Town. It focuses on setting the contextual scene for the research site and the participants who populate it. The chapter provides a detailed description of a typical China Town, and focuses on issues of job description, how these shopping centres typically operate, and also focuses on the mobility of employers and employees. More significantly, and quite central to the study, it introduces the language biographies of each participant.

Chapter 3 provides the theoretical and analytical framework by introducing the relevant theories that inform this study, as well as existing research done on similar social and linguistic phenomena. This chapter also provides a description of the frameworks that will be used for analysis of the data, and specifically details why such frameworks are suited for this study.

Chapter 4 details the methods used to collect the data, as well as how it was processed. In this chapter I elaborate on how participants were approached, how I gained access to the participating stores, how data was collected, as well as how much data was collected. I also provide a detailed breakdown of who the participants are in the study and how they relate to one another. This is useful for the understanding of how each store is populated.

Chapter 5 introduces the language biographies of the participants who formed part of this study. It provides a brief background to their migration trajectories and relates these to their linguistic repertoires.

Chapter 6 is the first data analysis chapter, and focuses specifically on analysing data using a Conversation Analytic lens. The focus in this chapter is on the interaction and meaning-making processes in the participating stores, and investigates the creative and seemingly taken-for-granted ways in which participants negotiate and signal meaning.

Chapter 7 is the second data analysis chapter, and takes a Discourse Analytical and Critical Discourse Analytical approach to the analysis of the conversational data. In this chapter the focus is particularly on how participants signal and “struggle” for power in a context where English proficiency is truncated. It shows how, even though participants have varying proficiency in the lingua franca, there are still bids for power that are manifested specifically in their communicative practices.

Chapter 8 is the final chapter which synthesises the findings of the preceding two chapters, and addresses the research questions in view of the findings from the data analyses. It concludes with a reflection on the overall research aims and objectives, and whether these have been met in this dissertation.

CHAPTER 2

CHINA TOWN AS RESEARCH SITE

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter introduces the context in which this study has been undertaken, as it discusses the South African conceptualisation and establishing of a *China Town*. In many cities where people of Chinese¹ origin migrate as temporary or permanent residents who make a living by trading goods sourced in China, the physical market place where they set up their shops, is referred to as “China Town”. In many parts of the world where Chinese migrants have settled as a subsection of the larger population, China Towns are ethnic enclaves where people of Chinese origin live, work and maintain a relatively close-knit community of expats and their descendants. South African China Towns, however, refer to shopping centres owned and managed by Chinese entrepreneurs. The particular “China Town” to which this study refers is essentially a shopping mall comprising a collection of Chinese-run informal stores that retail in affordable Chinese manufactured goods, or sell typical Chinese cuisine. These China Town shop owners do not necessarily live in close proximity to their businesses. They are predominantly temporary and long-term migrants, many of whom come to South Africa for a few years only, largely to make enough profit to take back home to China. Those who make South Africa their home, typically retain ties to their families and friends back in China, and also return relatively often (Fan, 2008; Park & Chen, 2009).

Chinese stores, also locally known as *China Shops*, have been in existence since the inception of Chinese informal trade in South Africa, as early as the start of the 20th century when the first wave of Chinese migrants arrived in the country from the southern Chinese port of Canton, and settled in Johannesburg to work in the mines. Thus, shops established in Johannesburg at the turn of the previous century, became what is now known as the first China Town in Johannesburg (Laribee, 2008:357). The second wave of Chinese migrants arrived from Taiwan in the 1970s, facilitated by the Apartheid regime's strong ties with the Taiwanese (Huynh et al., 2010). For years, the Chinese lived as a relatively small, marginalised community. However, by 1994, the number of Taiwanese in South Africa began to diminish as a result of the new political dispensation. Following its transition to democratic rule in 1994, South Africa saw a

¹ “Chinese” here refers to the diverse Chinese migrant population in South Africa, which includes people from Taiwan (Republic of China) and Mainland China (People’s Republic of China). The majority of the Chinese population in South Africa are from the Fujian Province (Huynh et al., 2010).

significant growth in the number of Chinese migrants entering the country, so that by the end of Apartheid, estimates of a Chinese community ranged from 200 000 to over 350 000 registered and unregistered migrants from mainland China, mainly from Hong Kong (Huynh et al., 2010; Harris, 2007; Park, 2009). This group is referred to as the third wave of Chinese migrants (Laribee, 2008; Park, 2009), a large number of newcomers who have since settled in urban and rural areas throughout South Africa. In 2009 the estimated number of the Chinese population on the African continent ranged between 580 000 and 800 000, with South Africa hosting the largest Chinese community on the continent (Park, 2009). Many of these migrants have become entrepreneurs in formal business sectors, while others elected to specialise in informal trade. This study focuses on the latter group.

2.2 CHINESE ENGAGEMENT IN SOUTH AFRICA

For almost a decade, China has been South Africa's largest trading partner and an ally of the national ruling party. On a broader scale, Chinese engagement in Africa has raised hopes for such involvement to be a catalyst of economic development, infrastructure improvement, and for Africa's global status to increase (Gill, Huang and Morrison, 2007). This hope has been realised in various African settings as China has recently negotiated interesting agreements with various African countries (see 1.2). By offering aid to African countries without preconditions, China's involvement poses a far more appealing approach than much of the prevalent Western aid.

Despite China's 'unconditional' aid, Wasserman points out that of the relationships between South Africa and its BRICS partners, the relationship with China has been the most controversial (Wasserman, 2015:111). Chinese engagement in South Africa has recently been hotly debated. Wasserman clearly articulates that "while for some China's growing concern in Africa is seen as an opportunity for the continent to grow its economies and become a stronger presence in international markets, others are concerned that the economic boost that China brings to the African continent comes with too high a price tag" (Wasserman 2015:110). Currently, there are more than [300 Chinese businesses](#) in South Africa, in finance, mining, telecom, automobile, and logistics. In 2018 China surpassed US and former colonial powers as biggest source of funding to Africa. Since the BRICS partnership, Chinese engagement has extended beyond economic influence. This became evident in 2014, when an agreement was made between the two nations that Mandarin would be introduced into the South African school curriculum. To date, nearly 50 schools in South Africa have already introduced Mandarin into the system, with more to follow.

Despite the economic engagement that China has with Africa, most Chinese traders have forged their own pathways to Africa and remain excluded from the policies and the politics of Africa-China relations. Africa is the "bottom-rung destination" for the average Chinese migrant, and their migration to the country is owing to the minimal entry requirements and the fact that their skills seem to be more valuable in South Africa than they are in China. It is in Africa that they can put to use skills that are less profitable in the Chinese job market.

Although the traders in this study have all forged their own pathways to South Africa, there is no doubt that China Towns are the everyday face of Chinese investment and capital in South Africa. According to a recent article published in Quartz Africa (2017) "the China malls and the people who work in them are a kind of proxy for China and its growing role in South Africa (...) They are small traders, but they are stand-ins for larger geopolitical forces."

2.3 THE "CHINA SHOP"/ "MR CHINA" PHENOMENON

Over the last fifteen years a common feature has emerged: across Africa, in virtually every town, there is at least one shop owned by a Chinese migrant (cf. Dobler, 2009). In South Africa, the impact of Chinese entrepreneurship is obvious in that the country now has China Town complexes in nearly every major city, and there are at least two *China shops* in most malls and shopping centres. Chinese businesses are also found in rural areas in South Africa, and traders do not only sell global consumer goods, but their trade is also embedded in local contexts (cf. Deumert & Mabandla 2016:27). According to Dobler (2009), Chinese owned shops are at the forefront in trading relations, and they are rapidly changing Africa's integration into the world economy. Subsequently, South Africans and Africans alike now have opportunities to purchase products and services they were not exposed to before, and at a remarkably low cost (Dobler, 2009; Huynh et al., 2010) in comparison to other imported, and even some locally manufactured goods.

Within the last decade, the presence of a Chinese diaspora in the Western Cape has become widely confirmed. This is evident in the number of informal (often mobile and temporary) Chinese shops established in various working class communities. Prior to the opening of official China Town centres in Cape Town, working class consumers became familiar with the concept of a *China shop*, or *Mr China* – the former referring to the informal establishment of a densely-packed store selling goods manufactured in and imported from China, and the latter a label coined locally to refer to the sellers and their products from the *China shop*. Chinese goods are

often said to be of poor quality, and have for this reason been coined *Mr China* items or *fong kong* (Deumert & Mabandla, 2016). Given their appealing prices however, the *China shop* quickly became associated with affordable, attractive goods for the everyday consumer. According to Laribee (2008:354) “Chinese immigrants around the world readily adapt to the changing demands of their consumers within the competitive market for cheap commodity goods”. The store owners do not take the purchasing of stock lightly. This is substantiated by Deumert and Mabandla’s investigation of Chinese integration in rural areas in South Africa’s Eastern Cape Province. They found that Chinese stores also sold local fashion such as African-inspired patterns, accessory items for ceremonial contexts, and distinctly local cuisine. They describe Chinese trade as being “embedded in local consumption needs” (Deumert & Mabandla, 2016:25). As similarly noted by Thompson (2015), a great deal of thought goes into the importation of various goods to meet the demand of South African customers. Store owners are aware that China shops are associated with variety and affordable prices (Huynh et al., 2010; McNamee, 2012). A *China shop* owner cited in Thompson (2015:124), explains the process of choosing which stock to purchase:

“... we just check the stuff we like, maybe we think, maybe this one customer will like it and we get it in. Maybe first time we just try a few, three or five. And if its popular, go quick, ya we will get more in ... it is not the price only. They [*customers*] can find something else that they couldn’t find [*elsewhere*]”.

With the success of sporadic *China shops* in working class areas in Cape Town, three major China Town retail centres were established in three suburban metropole areas in 2008, 2010, and 2012. This study focuses on the most recently built of these China Town complexes. Retailing in clothing and shoes, bags, home décor, car parts and accessories, toys, board games, gadgets, lingerie, themed party goods, and cellular accessory shops to name a few, this China Town is a one-stop destination for many consumers, also due to its competitive prices and the variety of goods available. The appeal is therefore that one can find whatever one needs in one retail centre, and at lower prices compared to local, international, and franchised stores. What also appeals to customers, is that stores are self-service in their spatial layout. Aisles are narrow and shelves are densely packed with items for sale. Essentially, “what you see is what you get”.

Customers walk into the stores and are free to browse, and proceed to purchase, or to leave, without having uttered a word. Observations from Thompson (2015) correlate with what has been observed regarding customer interaction in this study. Customers hardly ever engage the shop keepers; instead they opt to browse in silence, or to request assistance from the shop assistants. A finding in Thompson (2015:99-100) attributes this to the assumption that “the

Chinese cannot speak English”. The shop keepers are aware of this, as expressed by a shop owner: “Yeah and some customer they say ‘it’s fine I can check myself’” (Thompson, 2015:76-77).

This does not appear problematic for those who maintain and manage the stores. As indicated in Thompson (2015), the shop keepers largely emphasise the price and the product in their stores, stating that these two components are what attract and maintain a satisfied client base. Spoken interaction is, to a large extent, absent and seemingly superfluous. When customers do require assistance, they speak directly to the shop assistants and seldom approach the shop keepers. Asked about this practice, shop keepers and their assistants pointed out the assumption that the shop keepers “cannot speak English”. Thompson (2015:76) refers to a shop owner who explained:

“... we see from his attitude. You know sometimes customer is quiet, he think Chinese can't communicate. So that's why they don't automatically come to ask you”.

This brings into focus the shop assistants who are a marked “second community” in China Town as they are employed with the explicit assignment to assist and communicate with customers when needed. The trend of employing African shop assistants in Chinese owned shops has been apparent for more than ten years. Laribee (2008) investigated ten Chinese shops in a small town in the Western Cape, and reported that seven of the ten stores employed at least one African worker. More recently, Deumert and Mabandla (2016) found that even in rural areas where Chinese traders have locally acquired the language of the area based, a local shop assistant was a common feature of every store. At the time of my observation in China Town, every single store had at least one African employee. Four of the roughly 40 assistants in China Town were local South Africans; the remainder were of migrant origin. Most of these assistants are from the Democratic Republic of Congo, many are from Zimbabwe, some from Angola, and only one assistant – who is a participant in this study – is from Nigeria.² The majority of the assistants in the stores are females, with a relatively small number of males who are employed in more specialised occupations such as cellular repair and telephone accessory stores, and in stores selling automobile parts and accessories. In many cases the assistants, and even the shop keepers, indicated that they do not intend to stay in China Town permanently. This was also found to be the case in Thompson (2015) where in an interview with shop

² As derived from observations and conversation during field work.

assistants, participants explicitly stated that working in China Town was a means to an end until something more lucrative presented itself.

Customers who frequent China Town are from the surrounding working class community, comprising a largely South African clientele. The area in which China Town is situated however, has over the last 15 years become an area with a high migrant population, and thus many of the store assistants live within walking distance from China Town. This also contributes to the predominance in migrant employment in this context. The migrant community most represented in the area is that of Nigeria, DRC Congo, and Zimbabwe. This of course also has an effect on the language practices in China Town, as the store assistants can communicate not only with South African customers, but also those who come from the aforementioned countries who speak the associated languages.

Store assistants in China Town are predominantly of migrant origin, and very few assistants are local. This is possibly due to low wages and to the exploitation of informal labour (as discussed above). Findings in Thompson (2015) point to the attitudes of local shop assistants who regard working in the China Town as a means to an end – a transit occupation while they seek better employment opportunities.

2.4 MOBILITY OF EMPLOYERS AND EMPLOYEES IN CHINA TOWN

In China Town, there is no guarantee of permanency among employers or employees, which brings to light the factor of mobility among China Town's occupants. As will be discussed in Chapter Four (4.4.2), observation of stores in China Town spanned a period of three years. Across the period spent on two studies, Thompson (2015) and the current study, it was not unusual to find that an assistant I had encountered and with whom I had had conversations on one occasion, was no longer there a few weeks later.

My study concentrated on the linguistic biographies, linguistic repertoires and communicative strategies of owners and workers in three shops. Shop 1 was owned by a married couple who managed the store with three employees. Between the first and second observation periods (December 2016 – April 2017), the female co-owner had gone back to China with her baby, leaving only her husband and the three shop assistants. Similarly, in Shop 2, at the start of data collection there was a female shop owner whose assistant, in spite of reporting satisfaction with her position, had left when I returned three months later. The assistant was no longer working

there as, reportedly, she had found a better-paying job in a franchised grocery store. A year later, the new assistant had also left, having moved to Johannesburg. In Shop 3, there had been a young female shop keeper and two local assistants. When I returned after three months, one assistant had found a more promising employment opportunity, and the other had gone to the Eastern Cape for a month. A new assistant who had been employed temporarily, left when the second assistant returned from the Eastern Cape. The temporary nature of employment was not only evident on the part of the assistants, though. During the period of data collection, the owner of Shop 3 had left for China, and one of her family owners was temporarily in charge of her store.

Mobility appears to be normative in China Town – employees are prepared to leave once a better job opportunity presents itself, which is a common trend in low-skilled labour positions in the informal economy (cf. Akintola & Akintola, 2015). This is echoed in Deumert and Mabandla (2016:27) who found that Chinese stores in rural areas presented with similar prevalence in mobility: “shops open and close, people move elsewhere and start afresh”. In a study on low-skilled Nigerian traders in Durban, South Africa, it was found that majority of the migrant informants had settled into the informal economy as a means of survival. Their intention, as stated in Akintola and Akintola (2015), was to use the informal workplace as a stepping stone into the formal economy, or to enter South Africa as a transit country to other countries. On the other hand, many Chinese store owners want to make just enough money to go back to China and support their families. This pattern of migration is echoed in Park (2006:210) who found that a migration pattern has been trending in Chinese communities for over a century. She states: “often, families already settled in South Africa would send one or two children back to China for a Chinese education. Young men who could afford to pay for their passage returned to China for wives”. She further adds that once they have made enough money to live comfortably in South Africa, married men went back to China to fetch their wives and children to live in South Africa. These migration patterns are still apparent today, as evidenced by the staff turnover, and in the decline in occupancy of the retail spaces in China Town, where at the beginning of 2018 only half of its capacity was in use. This is further discussed in section 2.6.

2.5 ROLES AND RELATIONSHIPS IN CHINA TOWN

The roles and duties of the shop owners and the assistants appear to be fixed in China Town. From one store to the next, the layout is similar. The owners are seated at the point of sale, which is an elevated platform behind a counter with the cash register and in most cases an

electronic payment device; while, besides assisting customers, the assistants are tasked with unpacking and restocking shelves, cleaning the store, running errands and even babysitting. Even though most shop assistants are foreigners themselves (from other African countries) observably the nature of work brings them into daily contact with customers, so they do not maintain the same distance between themselves and customers as their employers do. They assist the customers with the fitting of clothing or inspecting items, and even offer opinions on which products to buy. Their interaction ends at the point where the customer makes the decision to make the purchase, which is where the shopkeeper's key role is performed at the sales transaction point. The established norm is that should customers require assistance with anything in store, they should approach the employees. This is evident in the informal notices found in certain stores. In other stores notices encourage customers to "ask for help" should they require assistance (*Figure 2.1*). Signage of this nature is found in virtually every store. These informal notices are also often in the form of warnings or prohibitions such as "do not fit the wigs" or "no cash refunds". Although this does not directly instruct them to speak to the assistants, they are usually the ones within reach, as the owners are at the point of sale and do not work on the shop floor. This has been observed to be due to two reasons: the first is that the owners remain at the cash register as a security measure; the second is because they have surveillance cameras that transmit a live feed to a monitor at the pay-point. This means that store owners are able to monitor the activity of the customers, as well as the assistants, in real time.



Figure 2.1

2.6 CHINA TOWN AS AN INFORMAL WORKPLACE

According to Akintola and Akintola (2015) the informal economy comprises all small business that are not listed, registered or recorded in the labour market data. These small businesses are usually run from home, pavements, or other informal setups. One fitting example is the *China Shop* mobile containers that commonly trade in working class areas. The China Town stores referred to in this study however, can be conceptualised as informal workplaces within the *formal* economy. The formality relates to the businesses being registered, their compliance with trading regulations, and the rental paid to the Chinese Body Corporate for subleasing the store spaces. Although they comply with regular trading regulations by paying VAT, the practices and policies within the workplace in terms of the agreements between shop owner and assistant are *informal*. The characteristics of informal workplaces therefore include insecure employment, irregular income and low wages, lack of social protection mechanisms and benefits, the inability of employees to access credit, and lack of operating permits and accounting procedures (Akintola & Akintola, 2015:382). Although one defining feature of an informal workplace is mentioned as the lack of a formal premises (Akintola & Akintola, 2015), the China Town in this study is an established complex, developed and owned by the China Town Trust.³ The less-restrictive workplace rules, low wages, lack of benefits, absence of union representation, and relaxed structure in the chain of command, typically characterizes China Town as an informal workplace. In most cases, these informal workplaces are entered by migrants who are in search of an immediate income opportunity, and many will leave when the prospect of formal employment presents itself (Akintola & Akintola, 2015).

The informality of China Town as a workplace is evident in many aspects. All shop assistants report to have commenced employment in China Town through informal networks such as friends or family, or via informal advertising as seen in *figure 2.2* below. Job seekers aware of vacancies simply approach the shop assistant and ask to be introduced to the shop owner to gain work there. There is no contractual agreement. Added to the informality of employment is the fact that employees are not affiliated with a worker's union, and most of their salaries are not paid into bank accounts, they receive it in cash at the end of each month. Throughout the period of observation and data collection, I also noted that there is no fixed opening time for the stores, although it ranges between 9 a.m. and 10 a.m. In many of the stores, I have observed that assistants are not allocated official lunch or tea breaks; they would eat while on duty and would often assist customers while having a beverage or a sandwich. In some stores such as Shop 3,

³ Information obtained from Centre Management in the China Town complex during data collection

assistants would leave the store at any time during the workday without requesting permission or informing their employer that they intended to step out. Observably this appeared to be unproblematic as the employers do not leave their posts at the point of sale- not even to monitor their children when they wander about. This gives rise to another significant observation: the presence of the children in China Town.

There are a few shop owners who bring their children to work daily, and the assistants help with care-taking duties. In Shop 3 specifically, the toddler walks around to different stores, and everyone knows her and entertains her in their store for a while. As Shop 1 is in close proximity to Shop 3, the little girl wanders to Shop 1 to play with the baby. The shop assistants carry her and the baby around and visit other stores to casually chat to other shop assistants.

During work hours, some of the store owners engage in a Chinese gambling game that takes place in the backrooms of the stores. This has also been reported to be beneficial to some of the employees, like the assistants in Shop 1, who were often gifted with a percentage of the winnings when their employer had won at the games. The setting of China Town is ostensibly communal, owners frequently visit the owners at neighbouring stores, and shop assistants visit each other as well, often having long conversations in store even when customers are present. It is through this communal network that I gained access to do data collection in the stores.

Communication between shop assistants and shop owners follow patterns that fit the various roles each party has. There appears to be not only a division of labour, but also a hierarchy that determines minimal interaction between the store owner and assistants. This brings into focus the non-work-related conversation that takes place during the day. Assistants communicated in languages other than English when they were not addressing the employer, and the employer did the same. There was no rule that regulated the use of languages other than English. The covert understanding however, was that employer-employee interaction was conducted in English, and customers were attended to in the languages that they spoke, be it English, Afrikaans, or if the customer was also of foreign origin, e.g. from the DRC, Lingala. This again emphasises the notion of “just enough English to get by” and “just enough English to attend to customers and generate a sale”.

In Shop 3 for instance, there was no communication, not even small talk or sharing of workplace information, unless it became absolutely necessary. In other stores, such as Shop 1, there was noticeably more interaction between employer and employee, although the although the division of labour was the same: the store owner remained at the point of sale, either overseeing

or occupied with his mobile phone, while the assistants performed their routine duties. Chapters 6 and 7 will elaborate on these interactions, as they are the focus of this study.

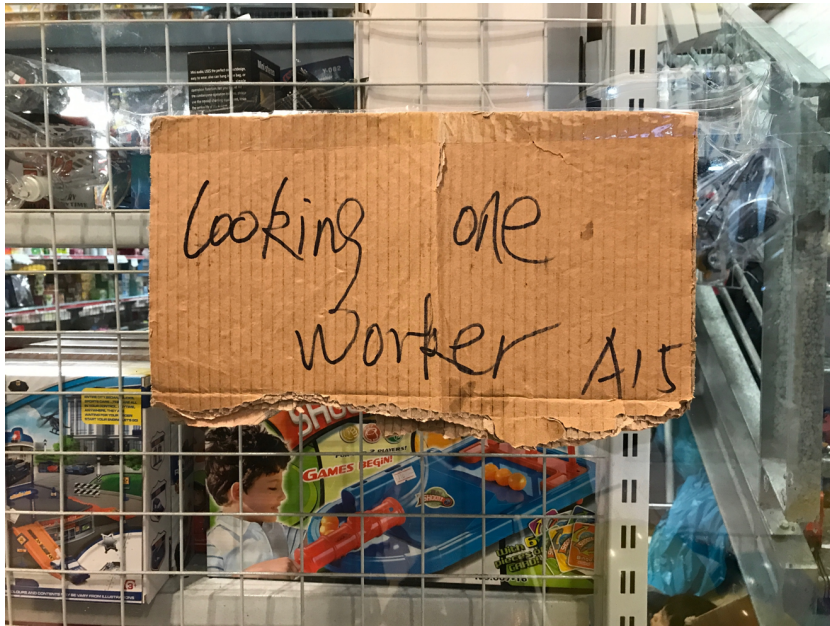


Figure 2.2

2.7 THE STORES AND PARTICIPANTS

China Town forms part of a retail complex occupied by popular national anchor stores, namely Shoprite, Food Lover's Market, Footgear, and OK Furniture. There is also a gym and a bank in the complex. The China Town section occupies half of this complex, and is a separate zone amid the national stores. The entrance is adorned with Chinese Lanterns and vibrant red decorations and dragon decals. The different walkways are named after popular Chinese provinces or cities, like "Guangdong Street", "Beijing Street" and "Shanghai Street", and the walkways are adorned with beautifully dressed mannequins who are positioned outside the individual stores. The boundary that separates China Town from the national stores is clearly marked. It is therefore of such a nature that customers feel as though they have entered a different space, as the oriental design is exclusively used in the China Town zone of the complex.

China Town has the capacity for 60 *China shops*, although during initial observation only half of the retail spaces were in use. During data collection, around 30 stores were trading, leaving half of China Town's store spaces vacant. Some stores however, have expanded to use two shop spaces for one store. The three participating stores are briefly introduced below. A more detailed profiling of participants is provided in Chapter 4.2.

Shop 1 is a clothing retailer owned by a married couple, Ireen and Number-One. They have employed three Congolese shop assistants – Gina, Nathalie and Sandra.

Shop 2 is lingerie outlet owned by Suzanna. Throughout the course of data collection and observation, she had two employees – Grace and Faith.

Shop 3 retails in toys, board games, fancy dress costumes, party items and decorations. The store is run by Tina, who during data collection was assisted by two South African females – Porsha and Vuyo.

2.8 CONCLUSION

This chapter has given a description of the physical context and the setting of the research population, by describing China Town as a workplace, and giving the participants' migrancy trajectories. This section has also briefly reflected on current debates regarding China's partnership with South Africa in terms of economic and political engagements. Further, this chapter has stated that the Chinese participants in this study have forged their own pathways to South Africa and are therefore to a greater extent removed from formal Sino-African relations. In illustrating China Town as a research site, and focusing on the roles and obligations of not only the participants in the study, but of the tenants in China Town as a whole, this chapter has contextualised the research site with a view to the informal multilingual workplace that necessitates creative language practices between migrants of various origins. The following chapter presents the conceptual and analytical framework, which situates the current study within the theoretical field and refers to relevant existing research.

CHAPTER 3

THEORETICAL AND ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This dissertation is a sociolinguistic study undertaken within the framework of Conversation Analysis (CA) and Discourse Analysis (DA), considering the details of spoken interaction, as well as taking a more holistic view, looking not only at micro-level conversational features, but also on a macro-level at discursive features of the workplace engagement between employers and employees. Aspects of language and globalisation, migration, multilingualism and language contact that contribute to shaping the conversational and the discursive context, also will be addressed. The participants in this study are mostly of migrant origin, therefore the research takes as its point of departure, that already multilingual participants have moved into a linguistically diverse South Africa, bringing their customs, culture, migration trajectories, and their language repertoires into a context which is new to them as well as to the community within which the *China Town* is established. Based on recent research (Jaquemet, 2005; Otsuji & Pennycook, 2010; Eley 2015; Deumert & Mabandla 2016), I work with the assumption that people and languages cannot be identified solely on ethnicity, nationality and socio-cultural belonging. Rather, this study views its participants as mobile individuals who maintain links with their place of origin, who then engaging in transnational processes and thereby create transnational spaces (Wei & Hua, 2013). With this in mind, this chapter briefly refers to transnationalism in conceptualising contemporary forms of population movement. This movement is taken as both cause and effect of globalisation. Facilitated by technology and enhanced by mobile technologies, globalisation is understood as a process whereby human interaction and contact occurs despite time and space constraints. A significant feature of globalisation is contact, not only between nations, individuals, politics, economies, religions, culture, but also between different languages and language communities. Based on this departure, this chapter will address intercultural communication as it occurs in the case of a specific workplace, focusing specifically on multilingual practices in a contact situation where English is a lingua franca.

This chapter will give an overview of the various kinds of existing research that have informed the study, that provide a theoretical perspective for the analysis of particular kinds of workplace

communication, and have shaped the lens with which the discourses can be looked at more closely. As this is a linguistic ethnographical case study, the content of this chapter will be presented as follows:

First, I shall explain what linguistic ethnography (LE) entails and how this intersects with interactional sociolinguistics (Section 3.2). Considering that LE is characteristically interdisciplinary, using ethnographic data collection methods and then triangulating various kinds of information to gain a holistic and integrated view of the linguistic practices and their functions, the second step will be to introduce various fields of research that help us to understand and properly interpret the research site as a complex “contact zone” (cf. Pratt, 1992) where speakers from various backgrounds meet (Section 3.3). Third, CA as an approach to better understanding spoken language, will be explained due to this study working with recorded spoken language, specifically with samples of conversation that mark a site where spoken interaction (as opposed to any written forms in this context) is endemic (Section 3.5). Fourth, for a particular interpretation of the conversations as workplace discourses and Discourses (see Gee, 2011) I shall give an exposition of discourse analysis (DA), as well as briefly also critical discourse analysis (CDA), to show their relevance to understanding the particular employer-employee and employee-employee discourses that occur in China Town (Section 3.6).

3.2 LINGUISTIC ETHNOGRAPHY AND INTERACTIONAL SOCIOLINGUISTICS

This study is essentially an analysis of conversation in the workplace. According to Eggins and Slade (1997) one of the most relevant approaches to analysing conversation is Gumperz’s (1982) foundational work on Interactional Sociolinguistics. Interactional Sociolinguistics (IS) deals with situated communication and “pays particular attention to the efforts individuals make to get other people to recognise their feelings, perceptions, interests, etc.” (Rampton, 2007a:3). IS draws on four analytical resources: *linguistic and discourse analysis (DA)*, and *conversation analysis (CA)*, which are both interested in the analysis of meaning-making in situated encounters; and ethnography and *other public and academic resources*. An IS approach would amplify a DA or CA study by paying attention to the fine-grain of the interaction wherein meaning takes place, and would render insight into the ways that participants draw on resources in their immediate surroundings to negotiate meaning.

Interactional Sociolinguistics is grounded in earlier work on ethnography of communication

(Hymes, 1968, 1971, 1974) which focuses on situations of speaking. The premise for IS is noting the importance of context in talk, and analysing the intersection between language and the social setting. IS essentially stems from the view that small moments of interaction could be attributed to large social implications. Creese (2008:231) conceptualises IS as “concerned with intercultural encounters and the systematic differences in the cultural assumptions and patterns of linguistic behaviour which are considered normal by those involved”. For the type of data presented in this study, an IS approach is imperative. As noted in the methodology chapter, I was present in the stores throughout the data collection, and making field notes of contextual circumstances and occurrences. This is significant because the participants do not communicate in isolation- they interact with various people during the workday, specifically customers and other shop owners and assistants. This means that in terms of transcription and analysis, I would need to filter out all the other interactions that I have not been authorised to use for this dissertation. Nevertheless, my presence as an observer in the field affords me ethnographic insight. According to Gumperz (2001) this kind of insight which is gained through first-hand immersion in the field, allows for the researcher’s ability to interpret what participants intend to convey in interactions. IS thus focuses on everyday communicative practices in the participants’ social world. As a researcher looking to uncover the ways that participants interact in the workplace with limited linguistic common ground, the context needs to be accounted for in both interpretation and analysis of conversation. Listening to recordings and doing transcriptions without knowledge of the interaction as it occurs, would render a shallow analysis without ethnographic insight. In the same vein, Seedhouse (2004) puts forward that the conversation analyst’s task is to develop an emic perspective to uncover the underlying principles of interaction. How, for example, would the researcher know what items of clothing the owners and assistants are referring to? How would the researcher be able to factor in gesture and prosodic features which are so crucial in a context where there is a language barrier?

Gumperz (2001:216) maintains that “to look at talk as it occurs in speech events is to look at communicative practices”. Although the aforementioned are attributed to the physical context, relating to the physical realities surrounding the interaction as it occurs, it is within this physical space that communities of practice exist. The everyday workplace communicative practices are contingent on this physical context, and nearly all workplace interaction (except for some instances of small talk) is embedded in events that transpire within this physical space. Therefore, there is a great deal of focus on what happens physically as well as verbally.

Holmes and Stubbe’s (2015) recent work on politeness and power in the workplace presents with similar aims to this study. Their analysis focuses on talk at work, stemming from recorded

interactions as well as participant observation. Their corpus includes over 30 different workplaces, comprising various contexts such as offices, building sites, and elderly care facilities. Despite the variability in workplace contexts, their analytical approach to analysing workplace communication has its roots in IS, which they define as an approach which analyses discourse in its wider socio-cultural context (Holmes & Stubbe, 2015:viii). They state that their analysis focuses on the interactional resources that participants draw on within the ethnographic context.

In a research site like China Town where the participants communicate with various other role-players throughout the workday, it is pertinent that analysis of recorded interactions be carried out with field notes and the observer's perspective of the context. The focus is on the workplace as a site of interaction, therefore the context needs to be investigated alongside the interactional data. For this reason, this study is characterised as a linguistic ethnography (LE) which emerged from IS. Roberts (2007) in her chapter on multilingualism in the workplace, contends that when it comes to interactive patterns of workplace communication, "linguistic ethnography allies the focus on recorded and analysed discourse with a study of the communicative ecology of the workplace and the subjectivities that sustain it" (Roberts, 2007:415). In this case, linguistic ethnography provides a theoretical and methodological foundation for this study. Linguistic Ethnography (LE) and Interactional Sociolinguistics (IS) are two closely related perspectives with LE emerging as a branch of IS. LE is a recent development that has been influenced by linguistic anthropological traditions such as Hymes' (1968, 1972) ethnography of communication, Gumperz's (1972, 1982, 2001) interactional sociolinguistics (IS), and Erickson's micro-ethnography (1996). LE therefore describes a broad area of shared interests that take these ethnomethodological traditions into account rather than it being a distinct bounded field. For Creese (2008:232) "LE shares much in common with other approaches to research in sociolinguistics in making linkages between language, culture, society and cognition", which I would argue makes it an umbrella term for ethnomethodological traditions pertaining to sociolinguistics. In this mind, IS is a branch of linguistic ethnography.

An LE combines ethnography with linguistics, thus allowing for the epistemological observation of language as it is used in its immediate context. It addresses the ways that participants' interaction is embedded in the context, and according to Creese (2008) combines the details of interaction with that of the wider social world. Rampton (2007a) similarly advocates for LE in sociolinguistics, contending that the interactional context should be investigated alongside the interactional data, and that LE provides a view into the context of communication. Rampton (2007b:591) states further that

it meshes well with discourse analysis, which is often centrally involved in stepping back from the easy flow of communicative practice, interrogating its components, underpinnings and effects. For example, in spite of some striking differences ... both Critical Discourse Analysis and Conversation Analysis provide ways of stepping back from the taken-for-granted in order to uncover the ideological (CDA) or interactional (CA) processes that constitute common-sense and everyday practice.

Departing from the knowledge that this study is rooted in the theory and methodology of Linguistic ethnography as a whole, the following section introduces conceptualisations of Conversation Analysis (CA) and Discourse Analysis (DA) as the analytical frameworks for the analysis of the data.

The dissertation takes its CA and DA approach from the interdisciplinary work of linguistic ethnography (LE), which integrates the study of language and communication with ethnography as a resource. In a broad sense, ethnography enriches a fundamentally linguistic project. This study views ethnography as an epistemological resource that complements CA and DA as a method for accessing social processes. Linguistic ethnography is a fairly recent concept, stemming from earlier, more established approaches of linguistic anthropology such as, interactional sociolinguistics and Hymes' (1968, 1974) ethnography of speaking. It combines the ethnographic approach, that is a description of social or cultural phenomena from an emic perspective, with applied linguistics which is the study of language in "real-life" spaces or contexts. Building on this, Creese (2008) maintains that LE as a sociolinguistic approach weaves together language, culture and society in a complex way that is difficult to achieve through other epistemological approaches. She refers to LE as an "orientation towards epistemological and methodological traditions in the study of social life" (Creese, 2008:232). LE is viewed in this study as a resource, which allows for the in-depth observation and analysis of a linguistic phenomenon as it occurs in real-time contexts.

This dissertation focuses on communicative practices, therefore it is essential that the linguistic analysis of these practices be used concomitantly with an approach that views in-depth observation within the context as it is critical to the analysis and description of these linguistic phenomena. Where cross-cultural multilingual communication is a backdrop to such communicative practices, a LE provides researchers with an orientation that moves away from essentialist depictions, as it helps them understand the processes people participate in when they communicate. Creese (2008:236) puts forward that the future of LE is uncertain and refers to it as "new and under debate", however Rampton (2008) states that a number of research traditions such as interactional sociolinguistics, literacy studies as well as critical discourse

analysis, benefit from adopting a LE approach. It is further maintained that LE is distinguished from the approaches it stems from, i.e. linguistic anthropology, interactional sociolinguistics, etc., in that it draws on different approaches to the analysis of text, such as conversation analysis and discourse analysis, and therefore transcends typical analytical frameworks associated with its antecedent approaches (Creese, 2008).

LE is an emerging research area, in that even as an established approach, its methodological procedures adapt to the particular phenomenon being studied. Scholars such as Creese (2008) and Hammersley (2007) find that from the point of CA, LE does not provide a new methodological orientation even if it allows triangulation with other approaches. Pérez-Milans (2015) in his paper on LE and language and identity, while posing the same questions about the effectiveness or "usefulness" of LE, attempts to address these issues. As a starting point he discusses the notion of social reality and how it is mutually constitutive of agency; in other words, people's daily social practices are determined by the social context in which they find themselves, and the social practices of people make such situated contexts possible. Obviously such phenomena have to be approached empirically, from both linguistic and ethnographic perspectives. Building on this, Hymes' (1974) ethnography of speaking focuses on how language is used within the context of situation. While this may seem all encompassing to sociolinguistic phenomena such as what is being researched in this dissertation, the ethnography of speaking approach is limited in scope, as it observes language use with the community as context, where the language practices in the community is studied. Further, because this approach focuses on linguistic behaviour in a community, Pérez-Milans (2015:3) critiques that it ultimately represents these communities as fixed, and represents the linguistic behaviour as a "true reflection of the social order". This, I would argue also could lead to essentialist representations, as it does not account for the dynamism of communities, linguistic behaviour or most importantly its speakers. LE on the other hand, as articulated by Pérez-Milans (2015) is detail-focused on all the aspects of interactions, as the researcher becomes immersed in the context that is observed, and in working closely with video or audio recordings, allows for a detailed analysis of linguistic data. More significantly, as opposed to analyses that leads to fixed representations of communities, LE calls for observers to treat the transcribed and recorded data as separate and unique events where interactants perform social actions and construct meaning verbally and non-verbally by appropriating language and the materials and surroundings within the space in which they find themselves from day to day.

Ethnography as a methodology in itself addresses complexities that cannot be investigated from an etic perspective. In context of this study, a linguistic ethnography addresses the complexities

within the context of the communicative events to be investigated. The context of this study in itself is complex, as the research site is a Chinese shopping centre comprising 60 stores (although only 30 were trading at the time of data collection), with Chinese store owners from various regions in China, and store assistants from various continents in Africa. The language used by these speakers is thus dependant on the communicative context, and is drawn from the repertoire of languages and is often mixed and creolised (Jaquemet, 2005). This ties into the “habitat factor” and once again illustrates a need for studying linguistic phenomenon with the aid of ethnographic methods in order to grasp the contexts within which communicative practices take place. As Jacquemet puts forward, the participants’ communicative practices “have a significant impact on their everyday life, and in the lives of people with whom they interact [...] finding themselves on the cutting edge of the creation of new ways of speaking and communicating” (Jaquemet, 2005:267). These practices he argues, are the results of multilingual talk as well as electronic media. Although individual stores in China Town operate in isolation, it should not be assumed that the patrons within the research site go about their day-to-day activities in isolation. Early preliminary observations for example have shown that there is a lot of back and forth visits between the store owners during the workday, and store assistants frequently visit their colleagues in neighbouring stores, which illustrates a very communal space. With this in mind, Rampton (2008) maintains that a LE investigates processes that involve people, situated encounters as well as the institutions and communities of practice within which communication occurs. For this reason this study cannot use conversation analysis and discourse analysis in isolation, by simply collecting spoken recorded data, without taking into account the latter facets that influence the spoken interaction. Linguistic ethnography, conversation analysis, and discourse analysis are therefore used within this study, where data collection takes place with the researcher being present, observing as part of the space within which the phenomenon under investigation is researched.

3.3 CHINA TOWN AS A SITE OF INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION – SITUATING THE STUDY

In view of the importance of physical context in multilingual communication, Blommaert, Collins and Slembrouck (2005) investigated the way the communicative environment influences multilingual practices. They refer to these environments as “spaces”, which they argue are constitutive in determining multilingual practices. Their premise is that in a globalised world, a change in space poses linguistic requirements which in some instances incapacitates people. Thus, the problem is not that people do not have the necessary linguistic competence,

but that given particular spaces or environments, these competencies are not suitable for these spaces. The lack of competence within the space then becomes a problem *for* the speaker and not a problem *of* the speaker (Blommaert et al., 2005). Thereupon it is argued in Blommaert et al. (2005) that if we want to investigate or provide an analysis of how multilingualism operates in and across societies, the notion of space requires close investigation.

In line with Blommaert et al. (2005), Pözl and Seidlhofer (2006) investigate the significance of the physical context, or the conceptualised 'habitat' in ELF interactions and how factors in the context bring about variation in the ELF interactions. They depart from previous ELF studies which have acknowledged different settings, however they argue that the significance of the 'habitat' has not been investigated. The argument posed by Pözl and Seidlhofer is thus that when ELF interaction is occurring in the speakers' natural habitat, they are more likely to indicate their linguacultural stance than if they found themselves interacting in a foreign setting. The habitat or contextual factor is said to be influential in determining what role speakers' culture plays in the interaction. This notion can ostensibly be linked to the research site and population in this study.

China Town is of course a space of multilingual and intercultural communication. Given the migration trajectories of the various role-players (detailed in Chapters 1 and 2), China Town is undoubtedly a language and culture contact zone (cf. Pratt, 1992). In a similar study investigating intercultural communication in the informal marketplace, Dyers and Wankah (2010) posit that even when there is a common language such as English as the lingua franca, there are still communicative barriers because of difference in cultural backgrounds. Focusing particularly on barriers to effective intercultural communication, Dyers and Wankah's ethnographic study in a popular market in Cape Town found that not only did non-verbal communication and kinesics, and the high versus low context orientations pose a barrier, but that the space of the market itself constituted a significant barrier to communication (Dyers & Wankah 2010, 2012). This brings to light again the significance of space (Blommaert et al., 2005) or habitat (Pözl & Seidlhofer, 2006) in intercultural communication.

Hülmbauer et al. (2008) maintain that ELF users should be conceptualised as a community of practice, as their mutual engagement repertoire does not come from a shared language but rather a shared variety. Similarly, Pözl and Seidlhofer (2006) identify the context factor as a significant catalyst for cultural transfer, and they maintain that the physical context is an influencing factor in determining how speakers perceive the interaction. I therefore continue from the suggestion of Pözl and Seidlhofer (2006:172) that "norms for pragmatic fluency are

highly context dependent" and it calls for closer attention to the effects of the locus of interaction on the speakers. In this vein China Town is conceptualised as a site of intercultural communication; as a contact zone of transnational and diasporic communities.

3.3.1 Globalisation, migration and sociolinguistics

Globalisation in this study is seen as a process which subsumes the presence of transnational migrants as well as their integration in a foreign country. This study relies on existing knowledge of globalisation, which is argued to be both a cause and effect of migration. Globalisation theories (cf. Appelbaum & Robinson, 2005; Rosenberg, 2000; Rosenberg, 2005) provide descriptions of late-modern integration of cultures, politics and economics, worldwide. Globalisation as a theory has significance in various academic disciplines, as its implications are far-reaching and affect almost every aspect of our lives. Dewey (2007:338) articulates the multiplicity of globalisation in stating that

"there is a plurality in the impacts of globalisation: on the one hand, free-market trading and economic interconnectedness may have led to increased migration and displacement, but it is the technologies of globalisation that enable the expression and empowerment of displaced communities, allowing dispersed groups to maintain old ancestral/cultural links and create new emerging ones".

Benton-Short, Price and Friedman (2005) in focusing on the effects of globalisation on urban cities, place strong focus on immigration as a prominent feature of globalisation, and therefore immigration should be integrated into our understanding of this globalisation. Their work on globalisation places specific emphasises urban immigration into established cities, which is seen as the "central locale" for immigrant destinations. In this dissertation globalisation is regarded as an impetus for migration and the deterritorialisation of people, cultures and languages.

Significantly, Jacquemet (2005) expresses that while globalisation theory does place emphasis on cultural flows and migration flows, there is an intrinsic need for study on the global phenomenon of language contact. He argues that within the fields of linguistics, globalisation theory is one aspect that is scarcely engaged with, and in the cases that such literature does emerge, it focuses more on threats to language vitality and language maintenance (Jaquemet, 2005:260). On the other hand, Fairclough (2009:318) from the standpoint of discourse theory, paints a picture of globalisation and its processes as dependent upon forms of communication, and argues that it is *language*, or forms of talk, that is globalising and that is presently globalised. There is therefore an undeniable gap in the conceptualisation of globalisation and theories of globalisation in relation to sociolinguistics, with Blommaert, Collins and

Slembrouck (2005) similarly expressing that globalisation phenomena forces us to seek a better integration of sociolinguistics. Globalisation is as much a sociocultural and sociolinguistic phenomenon as it is an economic, political and migratory one.

Sociolinguistics specifically should be a conceptual focus of globalisation, as people communicate and interact before any other contact takes place, either globally or locally. Why then, do theories of globalisation not account for the possibility of language and language contact as a significant catalyst for everything else that develops and transpires within globalisation and its processes? This standpoint resonates in Jacquemet (2005) where he maintains that language contact as a global phenomenon is the nucleus for any discourse on globalisation, intercultural communication or migration and deterritorialisation. There is an obvious need for globalisation and sociolinguistics to be viewed as interdependent. Coupland (2003) iterates that sociolinguistic phenomena that occur locally should be accounted for by processes of globalisation. He further maintains that globalisation is influential in local sociolinguistic events, where traces of global structures and social trends are found in local contexts. A social sciences approach to globalisation thus calls for the consideration that, as a process, globalisation is an impetus for the development, maintenance, and deepening of social relations at a world level (Giddens, 1990). With these intensifying relations, we then also have to consider cultural globalisation, which arises based on increased societal openness and contact. This cultural perspective sees globalisation as a dialogue between functionally differentiated societies and cultures.

Globalisation cannot be viewed as separate from language, whether it is related to discourse (Fairclough, 2009), language contact (Hymes, 1971), language endangerment (Krauss, 1992), or language vitality (Mufwene & Vigoroux, 2008), globalisation and language are intrinsically connected. As Mufwene and Vigouroux (2008) put forward, languages are affected by both colonization and globalisation owing to language spread, population movements, and contact between local and migrant languages. Therefore, they maintain as a certainty that globalisation accounts for the worldwide changes in linguistic landscapes. This is also echoed in some earlier works by Kachru on World Englishes, which is a well-known approach to the global spread of English which is understood as vernacular varieties in postcolonial contexts (Mauranen, 2006:125).

3.3.2 Transnationalism, Deterritorialisation and language

With the current status of globalisation, the movement of people across borders has intensified. With this in mind, this section focuses on the concept of transnationalism, which I have elected to use in place of the term "migration". Understanding migration is important in this study, as majority of the participants in the study are essentially of migrant origin. Although it is a broad concept related to a myriad of issues, descriptions of migration in relation to globalisation and more specifically language, are essential to framing the context of this study.

Conceptually, 'migration' refers to the movement of people from an origin country to a destination or transit country, which entails a permanent or semi-permanent change of residence (Lee, 1966). Hence immigrant groups find themselves in new social and linguistic environments to which they have to adjust in many ways. In a study on the linguistic challenges faced by migrant workers and informal traders in Gauteng Province, Rwodzi (2011) found that migration usually yields effects such as diffusion and change in cultural markers among the migrant population as well as the receiving community, as people tend to migrate with their language, music, religion, and the likes to the destination regions. The process of migration is found to bring about certain changes, such as cultural traits, ideas and attitudes as they are expressed in language (Rwodzi, 2011:18). This is particularly relevant to the Chinese and Africans in this study, who after arrival in South Africa have had to acclimatize to a different cultural, political and social climate.

The term "migration" may appear suitable for framing the phenomena in this study, however, the term is arguably limiting in that it denotes a movement of populations from one country to the next, the abandonment of home, and a difficult process of blending into a new society. As Schiller, Basch and Blanc-Szanton (1992) explain, the term 'migrant' or 'immigrant' paints a picture of being uprooted and leaving behind old practices to integrate into the destination country. Similarly, Park (1928) equates migration to not only the movement of people but a change of residence and subsequently the breaking of home ties. The notion of migration has clearly been conceptualised to evoke images of the "alien" venturing into the unknown. This conceptualisation seems to have evolved in the late 1980s to the 1990s, when a new consciousness arose around the more modern understanding of migration identified as transnationalism. This new understanding of migration saw migrants not as people who are displaced and have abandoned their host societies, but as people who maintain a simultaneous presence in two societies in both their origin society and their host society. I therefore propose going further to use the term "transnationalism".

3.3.2.1 *Transnationalism*

Transnationalism refers to a new category of contemporary migrants, whose identities are linked to more than one nation (Vertovec, 1999). This contemporary approach views migration as more than just the movement of people from one place to another, but also accounts for the ways people's practices transcend one or more nations. They are therefore not detached from their nation states, but live their lives in more than one place and participate in processes that transcend borders and create, shape and transform their identities.

The concept of transnationalism has received considerable criticism, with scholars questioning how it is different from migration to the extent that it warrants its own separate conceptualisation. These criticisms however were levelled in the late 1990s when the concept was still fairly novel. Other criticisms involved the idea that not all migrants are transnational, as well as the concern that transnational practices would dwindle (Vertovec, 2004). Although these criticisms may seem valid, 14 years later they appear obsolete. Technological advancement has made it possible for transmigration and deterritorialization to be normative; communities are no longer isolated, and people scarcely migrate without maintaining connections to their home countries. In the age of social media and real-time virtual communication it is almost impossible for people to be completely detached based solely on distance. This is proven in Rehbein, Herkenrath and Karakoç (2009) who, in investigating the language contact and change of Turkish immigrants in Germany, state that immigrants maintain strong ties to their home country, and still speak the varieties spoken in Turkey.

The concern for the “dwindling of transnational practices” as Vervotec notes, also has no standing, since research on transnationalism is still ongoing today. Wei and Hua (2013) for example, investigated the way transnational students in the UK create transnational space through multilingual practices. The significance lies in the way the transnational students' multilingual practices created a transnational space and negotiated their transnational identities. It was found that certain students did not identify with being Chinese from China, nor being Chinese in Britain, but rather Chinese students at a London university (Wei & Hua, 2013). In this way these students were transcending the boundaries of their origin country, thereby creating a transnational space, through their multilingual practices and use of Chinese dialect as well as Chinese writing within their interaction.

3.3.2.2 *Deterritorialisation*

When people enact social processes that are essentially practiced in certain geographical locations, in other words when certain activities are acted out transnationally, it is said that these activities are deterritorialized. This refers to the way communities, practices and identities become detached from local places and performed transnationally. This is the case of the study by Wei and Hua (2013) whereby the students in the study are deterritorialized from their country of origin by being in Britain and constructing their own transnational space. In essence then, the transnational migrants in this dissertation are deterritorialized, as they form communities outside of a homeland. The Chinese in this dissertation, for example, have formed a Chinese community, where they can speak Mandarin or Cantonese, eat Chinese food and listen to Chinese music, while being in a different country. The same can be said for many of the Congolese assistants, who have established enclaves in particular residential areas. Wei and Hua (2013) state that to understand the lives of transnationals requires an analytical shift that does not hold essentialist perceptions of communities and social practices as being limited to their nation state, but that we approach them in the transnational social fields wherein they find themselves. Deterritorialization therefore nullifies the supposed link between a nation and its practices, identities and cultural performances. Jacquemet (2005) argues however, that this is not the focal point of deterritorialization, but that the significance lies in the interplay between the local and the global. Transnational deterritorialized people further exhibit cultural and communicative dynamism. The exploration and description of this dynamism is a key feature of this dissertation. With this in mind there is a need for investigation into scholarly work that deals with language and transnationalism.

According to Kerswill (2006:19) "migration and language interact in a complex, yet transparent way. Chiefly, migration leads to language or dialect contact, and is, indeed, the prime cause of such contact". In many cases the general assumption is that immigrants are obliged to acquire the language of their host country, owing to inequalities that arise in terms of education, societal recognition and integration when linguistic competence in the national language of the destination or host country is lacking. While language is seen to be resource which, in terms of linguistic diversity can lead to intercultural exchange and give rise to creative forms of language and language use, Esser (2006) states that linguistic variety can also obviously cause communicative breakdown and lead to problems of misunderstanding. This is evident in Dyers and Wankah (2010) who conducted an intercultural study in an informal market where traders from South Africa, and migrant workers from African and the rest of the world meet. Their study focused on how these traders negotiated barriers to communication, and found that

participants found the cultural aspects of communication to be most problematic. Esser (2006) further adds that this linguistic diversity in the workplace or any context where societal integration is necessary, triggers a need for a language of wider communication which, in the context of this dissertation, is English.

Jacquemet (2005) argues that linguistic studies should address the globalisation of communicative practices that arise from transnational movements. He states that one of the outcomes of modern technology is that people are able to maintain multiple cultural and linguistic links, and have access to distant communicative environments. This is particularly echoed in Eley (2015) who conducted a linguistic ethnography in a barbershop in Frankfurt populated by multi-ethnic participants; those who work there, and the clients who enter the space. In this multilingual setting, people with highly diverse migrant backgrounds and language biographies come into contact every day, and communicate using their various repertoires. German is the lingua franca in this setting, given the context of location. Eley (2015) describes the linguistic strategies of one key participant who manages the barber, referring to his language use as “ecumenical German”. This, she describes is the way he improvises with language, using various accommodations that enable communication across diverse levels of German proficiency (Eley, 2015:19). This relates to Jacquemet’s (2005) argument that there is a need for investigation into how “linguistic mutations” occur with multilingual and deterritorialised speakers in communicative practices. It opens a platform for discussion within this dissertation, where communicative practices of deterritorialised speakers are seen as something creative or “linguistically mutated”, happening in various language contact zones, or “feature pools” (Eley, 2015). As Dewey (2007) argues, given the variability of ELF it is impossible to attempt to describe a standard variety of such interaction. Jacquemet (2005) regards the notion of ‘communicative practices’ as one of the most significant breakthroughs in language studies. He further proposes to use the term ‘transidiomatic practice’ which refers to the communicative codes and ways of speaking adopted by transnational groups in various language contact situations.

Ostensibly, the multilingual practices of transnationals have different conceptualisations, such as Wei and Hua’s “translanguaging”, Jacquemet’s “transidiomatic practices”, and Han’s “grassroots multilingualism”. Seidlhofer (2009) in describing the innovative process of ELF communication, likens it to Swain’s (2006) notion of ‘languaging’ which relates to the way speakers use linguistic resources to meet communicative ends. These concepts collectively bear the characteristic of a language contact situation that constitutes transnational or migrant

people, participating in deterritorialized processes, using language creatively in a way that is neither characteristic of standard language varieties or that implicates their first languages.

3.3.3 Multilingualism, Language biography and Linguistic repertoire

Globalisation, transnational movements and linguistic diversity are inextricably linked to multilingualism. With the intensification of globalisation and migration, so multilingualism continues to develop. While English continues to be the dominant language internationally which increases the need for people to acquire it to a degree of comprehensive proficiency, it calls attention to globalisation and the consequences it holds for language. This leads to two contradictory trends in language in context of globalisation: 1) the worldwide spread of English, and 2) the diversification of languages in use (Aronin & Singleton, 2008). The spread of English has led to negative predictions regarding the existence of indigenous languages, with scholars questioning language vitality, and others predicting language death. For others, globalisation leads to Englishisation which unavoidably leads to language loss. More optimistically, Aronin and Singleton (2008), state that the spread of English has in many parts of the world resulted in multilingualism *with* English.

While English is undoubtedly the world lingua franca, the awareness of societal multilingualism is spreading to all parts of the world aided by globalisation processes, therefore language use is diversifying (Aronin & Singleton, 2008:4). Dagenais (2003) studied multilingualism in the context of immigrant families in Canada. By making use of in-depth interviews with 12 immigrant families of diverse backgrounds, she found that the immigrant parents elect to enrol their children in bilingual French-English schools, while simultaneously maintaining their respective home languages to preserve multilingualism. Ultimately it was concluded that these immigrant families chose to invest in multilingualism as opposed to allowing a language shift, and viewed multilingualism as a resource that would allow for access to various language communities nationally and abroad. This shows that discourses around globalisation and migration and its impact on languages should be addressed from a different perspective; one that takes into account the fact that multilingualism is linguistic capital, and therefore is not endangered because of English as a lingua franca. House (2003) attests to this, contending that ELF is a transactional language, which based on its hybridity, does not seek to displace national or local languages. She ultimately posits that within the lingua franca utterances, speakers make use of their native culturally conditioned ways of interacting, which manifest in their interactions. This shows that speakers do not simply drop their first languages or dispose of their multilingualism in exchange for the prescribed mastery of English. Hülmbauer et al.

(2008) similarly argue that ELF does not undermine multilingualism but that it sustains it based on its dependency on other languages that form part of the interaction. This is an example of 'linguaging', the appropriation of other languages as resources as part of the interaction. They further point out that the influences of other languages are crucial to the formation of ELF utterances and therefore ELF is interwoven with multilingualism. ELF is a phenomenon that subsumes multilingualism, intercultural communication, and language contact, therefore it should not be investigated as an isolated phenomenon. A significant signpost to this dissertation is the understanding and awareness that speakers do not simply interact without drawing upon their inherent cultural customs or ways of speaking which are normative to them or their nationality. These features of interaction are dynamic and indeterminately salient in ELF communication. This is echoed in Seidlhofer (2009) who found that ELF interactants make use of their multilingual repertoires in a way that is suited for the communicative purpose that the interaction seeks to fulfil. Similarly, in Hülmbauer et al. (2008:25) speakers of ELF draw on their "multi-faceted linguistic repertoire" where the context and purpose of interaction govern the selection of these resources.

The idea that multilingualism is a sum of language proficiencies, or as a collection of two or more monolingualisms, is being replaced with the notion of linguistic repertoire. Drawing on Gumperz's (1964, 1982) original notion of linguistic repertoire which he defines as the "totality of distinct language varieties, dialects and styles employed in a community" (Gumperz, 1982:155), Busch (2016) advocates for a biographical approach to addressing these language practices and speakers' linguistic repertoires. Adopting a biographical approach to linguistic repertoires allows for a view into an individual's life trajectories and "linguistic practices referring to specific time-spaces" (Busch, 2016:2). Thus conceptualised, Blommaert and Backus (2012:27) put forward that "repertoires in a super-diverse world are records of mobility: of movement of people, language resources, social arenas, technologies of learning and learning environments". A biographic perspective into linguistic repertoires enables researchers to explore participant speakers' trajectories in terms of their uniqueness and how each contributes to the speakers' linguistic practices. Blommaert and Backus (2012:16) evidently characterise linguistic repertoires as being made up of "polycentric learning experiences", which do not stem from non-linear trajectories but that develop often sporadically and sometimes gradually in various stages of life. While the notion of linguistic repertoire does, in its simplest sense, refer to all the resources that people use in communication, Busch's (2016) biographic approach and Blommaert and Backus' (2012) perspective of the mobile individual in a super-diverse context, suggests that we not only investigate the resources that individuals possess and draw

on in communication, but also allow for the reflection on how individuals acquired these resources in various phases of their life, their domains of use, their attitudes towards these resources, and how these manifest in discourse. This moves away from the notion of a linguistic repertoire as external to the observer, as grouping together the totality of languages and situating them as Hymesian “communicative competence”.

The participants in this study have relatively complex linguistic repertoires, thus as a way of informing the analysis, in reflecting on their language biographies, my research interest is in the way they use these linguistic repertoires to meet communicative goals. As this study is centred around multilingualism, the focus is on the language use of participants. This firstly brings into question the conceptualisations of language. On one hand the structuralist approach sees language as separate from the speakers, as a system made up of grammar i.e. phonology, semantics, syntax and morphology. On the other hand, this study adopts a sociolinguistic approach which views language as a practice, not an entity; a practice that is dynamic and fluid and is situated in context of events and spaces in which the speakers find themselves. Multilingualism is therefore is not simply the ability to speak two or more languages, but is made up of several languages, varieties, dialects and in view of the linguistic repertoire, attitudes and polycentric learning experiences, where proficiency is varied. The heteroglossic language practices and use of these linguistic resources in the repertoire is referred to as *linguaging*, or *poly-lingual behaviour* (Jørgensen, 2008). This refers to the way speakers use the features of whatever ranges of languages they know for a communicative purpose. The participants in this study, being of varied origin, speaking various languages such as Mandarin, French, Lingala, Swahili and English, and using features of the languages they know for effective communication, is a prime example of linguaging.

Pietikäinen, Alanen, Dufva, Kalaja, Leppänen and Pitkänen-Huhta (2008) explored multilingualism and how it manifests in the everyday lives of individuals. Multilingualism is a phenomenon that pervades different levels of life, as Pietikäinen et al. (2008) puts it, entire societies can be multilingual, but so can smaller groups and individuals. In the latter case, multilingualism is then investigated at the level of the individual’s “life-world” (Pietikäinen et al., 2008), thereby focusing on the experiences of the language situation as well as the roles that the linguistic repertoires fulfil. In their exploration of the multilingual practices of the individual, they also propose to use the term “linguaging” to refer to the “the sets of linguistic resources that are afforded for language users in different social and cultural circumstances” (Pietikäinen et al., 2008:81). This concept moves away from the traditional essentialist ideas of multilingualism as simply the ability of an individual to speak two or more languages, but rather

to view multilingualism as a dynamic use of language forms, styles, registers and language varieties. The dynamism of languaging can also be applied to the community whose communicative practices are being studied in this dissertation. The phenomenon of multilingualism is not one that is static, and just as Pietikänen et al. (2008) provide an analysis of multilingualism at an individual's life-world level, so multilingualism will be investigated at grassroots level within the community of practice in this dissertation.

Multilingualism and languaging is fundamentally seen in the way participants use the range of languages and codes they know to communicate across linguistic barriers as well as time and space, as facilitated by technological affordances. This fundamental appropriation of language features is conceptualised in different ways, with Jacquemet's notion of transidiomatic practices describing specifically the way speakers' practice languaging across time-space constraints. The fundamental principle of transidiomatic practices is described as the multilingual practices exercised by deterritorialized speakers (Jacquemet, 2005:265). This notion therefore also subsumes Wei and Hua's (2013) study on the multilingual practices of transnational speakers. Multilingualism and multilingual practices are evidently characteristic of language contact situations where transnationals meet, or where there are different linguacultural allegiances. As an exploration into this phenomenon, Han's (2013) study explored multilingualism in Africa Town, an African marketplace in Guangzhou, China. She specifically investigated how Africans and Chinese in Guangzhou as workplace, expanded their multilingual repertoires through language contact. The context for her study was that Africa Town comprised people who speak a large variety of language, for example, she describes one of her participants from Guinea who speaks French, Arabic, certain African languages like Susu, Fula and Mandinka, as well as a limited English and Chinese vernacular. The focus was on the linguistic varieties used in people's interactions and how this resulted in the expansion of their multilingual varieties, as well as how their transnational connections facilitated this multilingualism. Considerable aspects of her study overlap with this dissertation, in particular the dynamic of the participants. While her study focuses on African migrants and native Chinese in Africa Town in China, the participants in this study are both migrant groups in China Town, South Africa. What is particularly of interest is that she found that her participants developed a language variety cleverly coined "Chinglish", which she describes as a lingua franca that emerged as a result of the language contact between Chinese and Africans working in the markets (Han, 2013). This is a mix of Chinese and English, where quite significantly, English is not the language of wider communication in China, yet it still features in multilingual interaction. Significantly, neither group abandoned their native language for the acquisition of

another; instead a creative, hybrid language variety emerged. Han refers to this as *grassroots multilingualism*, which she reports subsumes the non-standard, fluid linguistic forms that are at play in such a multilingual context. The findings from Han's study are evidence of the creative forms of language that emerge from multilingual language contact situations between people from diverse locations. She found further that in some of her participants, their translocal and transnational ties contributed to the expansion of their multilingual repertoires.

3.3.4 English as a Lingua Franca

More recently many developments have occurred in terms of globalisation and its sociolinguistic implication, with an increasing body of work building on Kachru's (1992, 1996) World Englishes paradigm, such as Seidlhofer's (2009) work on World Englishes and English as a Lingua Franca (ELF) and other earlier papers on ELF that are founded within the World Englishes paradigm. This development of a sociolinguistic-globalisation research corpus, proves that if different conceptualisations of globalisation are discussed, it opens up dialogue for the discussions of World Englishes and debates around ELF. As Dewey (2007:349) articulates in his article on globalisation and ELF:

"To discuss the various means of conceptualizing globalisation is to better comprehend the World Englishes and ELF arguments, and better understand how the current transformations English is undergoing are part of far broader global trends. Acknowledging the increased cultural flows so prominent in the contemporary world order adds significant weight to any discussion of why and how innovative linguistic forms are emerging in ELF".

Such a shift in the configurations of globalisation are favourable to sociolinguistics as it has opened a space for new issues of inquiry and research into phenomena that may be implicated, facilitated or influenced by globalisation, as is the case in this dissertation. This is similarly expressed by Coupland (2003) who at the time foretold that globalisation was steadily growing as an essential context for locally occurring sociolinguistic experiences. Evidently discourses around globalisation have developed and evolved tremendously in the 21st century.

Globally, at least a billion people have a degree of proficiency in English and, according to Edwards (2004) people across the world use English in various ways, with non-native speakers outnumbering the native speakers. Alluding to the "World Englishes Paradigm" (cf. Kachru 1992, 1996) she uses the notion of concentric circles to illustrate how and where in the world English is used. The first circle (inner circle) comprises countries where English is the native majority language, such as the United Kingdom, Ireland, Canada, Australia and the United States (Edwards, 2004:3). The outer circle contains countries like India and South Africa,

wherein English was introduced as a colonial language and remained an official language. The expanding circle with countries like China and Japan, speak English as a foreign language which is used for wider communication. Hülmbauer, Böhringer and Seidlhofer (2008) however, argue that this categorization should be reconsidered, given that non-native speakers outnumber native speakers, the centrality of native speakers in the inner circle comes into question. In the same mind, ELF communication takes place within all three circles. Thereupon, Hülmbauer et al. (2008) argue that this view ignores the fact that ELF is not a fixed language, but rather an emergent variety where speakers draw on certain elements of the language based on what is needed in the interaction. The Expanding Circle thus does not follow linguistic prescriptivism, but creatively uses language and forms norms of its own.

A significant hypothesis in this study stems from this notion of ELF not being norm dependent, as the overall educated prediction is that in intercultural communication, speakers negotiate their identities and cultures in these highly creative instances of lingua franca communication. Further, it is predicted that within these communicative events they draw on their *own* diverse linguistic resources, not those that are prescribed by "norm-providing" or "norm-developing" circles. On the contrary, the pragmatic interest in lingua franca studies is on how speakers appropriate their first languages and all other languages in their repertoire to meet the needs of the communicative situation, and this I argue deviates from Inner and Outer circles norm behaviours. The aim of ELF is ultimately not to learn or mimic an "acceptable" form of English, but to achieve efficient communication that results in mutual understanding. Seidlhofer (2009:242) similarly articulates this: ELF speakers "are focused on the purpose of the talk and on their interlocutors as people, and emphatically not on the linguistic code itself".

The focus of this dissertation lies in the way transnational workers in a Chinese shopping centre communicate where participants do not share a first language. Initial observations into the research site showed that the most common first languages of the shopkeepers is Mandarin, and store assistants have French, Lingala and Swahili as first languages. It is therefore obvious that in such a multilingual context speakers have to communicate by means of a language of wider communication or lingua franca. The term "lingua franca" (ELF) was initially used to denote a makeshift form of mutually intelligible language between people who do not share a first language (L1). Currently, however, it refers to a creative and versatile frame of communication that allows a level of mutually understandable interaction to occur where otherwise there may have been a breakdown in communication. House (2003) explains that ELF is neither a pidgin, nor a language restricted for specific purposes, but rather a language of wider communication which draws on the repertoires of instruments that speakers have at their disposal, and that has

full functional and linguistic range, which allows for contact between people who do not share the same first language. Seidlhofer (2009:240) emphasises the study of ELF as a means of understanding of the more general communicative processes which are evident among ELF speakers. Building on this, this research does not seek to merely look at the linguistic features identified in English lingua franca interactions, but focuses more specifically on the various functions that English lingua franca fulfils in the interactions that are observed. Thereupon the study moves away from a surface description to an explanation of the underlying significance of the said functions. In addition another overall aim of ELF analysis as stated by Hülmbauer et al. (2008) is also to investigate the way the speakers' first languages influence the interaction. These 'overall aims' form part of this research project to a significantly large extent, although the objective is to generate findings that does not necessarily seek to prove or disprove previous findings on ELF features. Most influential studies in ELF appear to be in the European context or within academic settings. This research however is set against the backdrop of not only migration in South Africa from both Asian and African countries, but also in the workplace where both employer and employee do not speak English as a first language in a country where English is both an ELF and an official language. As Hülmbauer et al. (2008:32) point out, the interest is also in how speakers achieve cooperation and consensus.

Conceptualizations of English as a Lingua Franca (ELF) have developed significantly over the last 20 years. From emerging as a seemingly deficit language that speakers of varying cultural and linguistic backgrounds employ to meet communicative ends, to being ignored as an object of study for investigation within the field of intercultural communication (cf. House 1999). However, as globalisation and the internationalisation of English became a trending phenomenon, and international and intercultural communication emerged as an apparent characteristic of globalisation, studies in ELF rapidly gained attention; firstly from a phonological stance with the emphasis on understanding ELF talk (Jenkins, 1998, 2000), to descriptive studies which highlight the features of ELF (Dewey, 2007; Mauranen, 2006) to the current emergent pedagogical studies which focus on ELF in academic settings (Smit, 2010a, 2010b; House, 2013). The conceptualisation of ELF since its emergence in the late 1990s have hence evolved dramatically from a language variety that was compared to native-English forms, to a creative language variety that has the ability to create its own norms. Hülmbauer et al. calls for a more functional conceptualisation of ELF; one that does not view ELF as a deficit language but rather as one that should be seen as functional within intercultural communication. Dewey (2007) on the other hand, argues for a description of ELF within a broader conceptual framework, which he argues should be viewed from a perspective of the interconnectedness

that comes with globalisation and globalisation theory. He further suggests that we consider the impact of globalisation in terms of cultural factors, which he believes is evidently connected to the conceptualisation of ELF. House (2003) calls for the conceptualisation of ELF interactions as a community of practice. This, I argue, fits into how the participants in my study should be considered. While this research focuses on the communicative practices of shop-keepers and assistants in five different stores, she characterises an ELF community of practice as having "mutual engagement", as both aiming to reach a common goal in terms of content, communication and function of the communication, and a "shared repertoire of negotiable resources" which consists of English linguistic resources (House, 2003:572). What House does not take into account here is that while English is a linguistic resource of varying degrees for all speakers, what is not shared is the participants' first languages or their cultures. Therefore their "resources" are arguably highly diverse. As Firth (1996:204) states, ELF is "a contact language for people who share neither a common native tongue nor a common (national) culture".

There is a general assumption that all ELF interlocutors have formally been taught English at some point (Mauranen, 2003; Mauranen, 2006) thus speakers share a diverse education background in English. Mauranen (2006:126) therefore regards ELF as a "distant contact language", as she maintains that it has been learned through foreign instruction and not personal contact. Dewey (2007:347) expresses that for a lingua franca interaction to be successful interculturally, there has to be "certain levels of stability" which should ideally contain grammatical and lexical knowledge. This, I argue, puts a limitation on how creative ELF interactions can be and how speakers in the interaction could possibly draw on their grammatical rules of their own first languages and incorporate it into their interactions. I also argue here that one should guard against attempting to describe ELF interaction as successful, simply because this brings into question what bars are put in place to measure "success"? And on the other hand, this statement hankers dangerously towards what scholars such as Seidlhofer, Mauranen, House and the likes refer to as English native speaker norms which assumes a prescriptivist approach.

3.3.4.1 Features of ELF

There is to date no standardised or codified variety of ELF, as every interaction between intercultural multilingual speakers varies in different settings. This means that there is a significant gap for investigation into ELF interactions, whether these interactions are observed in businesses, universities, or international business relations, every ELF contact situation

would yield different features and open new areas for investigation. While some features of ELF have been predominantly presented as fairly standard, such as oversimplification, explicitness or repetition (cf. Dewey, 2007; Mauranen, 2006), there is a need for deeper analysis of ELF talk which not only looks at surface level features, but that also investigates the appropriation of both English and the speakers' first languages into the interaction, as well as investigating how specific speech acts are articulated, as opposed to only analysing naturally occurring talk. This study therefore seeks to contribute to the existing body of knowledge on the features that have been identified as characteristic of ELF as they occur in natural ELF talk, as well as features that may emerge in specific communicative events. Further the appropriation of linguistic resources from the speakers' linguistic repertoires is also an object of investigation.

Dewey's (2007:339) work on ELF and linguistic transformation in ELF interactions reports prominent linguistic features that occur in ELF. These features are identified as "exploiting redundancy, enhancing prominence, increasing explicitness, and reinforcement of proposition". *Enhancing prominence* refers to speakers making use of article "the" where a significant factor in using the definitive article depends on the importance of the noun, and often ends with speakers adding definitive articles before abstract nouns for example "the nature" "the society" "the pollution" (Dewey, 2007:340). Words where the definitive article is used are usually the words that characterise the conversation, therefore the definitive is used to emphasise key words or concepts. *Explicitness and reinforcement of proposition* is a feature where the speaker uses frequent repetition, synonyms and rephrasing, in aid of reliable communication and to make the message clearly understood. Dewey adds that in within this feature of ELF, additional prominence is given to certain elements within the utterance, thereby providing emphasis to the intended message (Dewey, 2007:342). He adds that these processes may prove to be characteristic of lingua franca interactions in general, but that it is yet to be further researched and theorised. Mauranen (2006:126) on the other hand, maintains that it can be assumed that some discovered language contact features are assumed to be present in general ELF interactions, for example "negotiation" which occurs when speakers alter their language to imitate what they believe to be features of another language. It should additionally be noted that these markers vary and that they are not recognised among all languages. According to Mauranen (2006) the notion of all ELF users using a simplified structure of a language is a plausible assumption, however this is not a unilateral process and therefore requires further research to be undertaken.

One of the major research questions in this study is around what kinds of misunderstandings occur in the ELF interaction of the participants, and how they are recognised and resolved. In

ordinary conversation where speakers share the same first language, the assumption within the interaction is that there is mutual intelligibility and understanding. Mauraanen (2006) states that misunderstandings are generally likely to occur between speakers who do not share the same first language, but that little research has been done on what *kinds of misunderstandings* occur within these interactions. On the other hand, she also argues for the possibility that in such interaction not much is misunderstood, since interlocutors would attempt to make their messages as clear and simple as possible to avoid communicative breakdown; however the general expectation remains (and therefore the research question remains) that misunderstandings are more likely to occur. Mauraanen (2006:124) further states that there is a relatively under-developed corpus of research that actually deals with what actually takes place in lingua franca discourse, as well as how they predict and subvert possibility of misunderstanding. This research thus seeks to address this gap by analysing the interlocutors' interactions and specifically focusing on instances of misunderstanding or conflict.

As Deterding and Kirkpatrick (2006) found, there are many instances in ELF communication where interlocutors do not always comprehend what is being said, but it does not hinder the communicative process, as there is still continuation of the conversation even when there are instances of misunderstanding. This alludes to Firth's (1996) "let it pass principle" where it was found that ELF users are competent enough to produce joint discourses with the competency to monitor each other's turns, and would "let pass" instances of communicative breakdown. This seems to be the case even when misunderstanding occurs.

3.3.4.2 *ELF as language of the workplace in China Town*

Preventing misunderstanding is another significant focus of this dissertation. In actively trying to prevent misunderstanding, interlocutors generally make use of repetition, explication and over-explicitness (Mauraanen, 2006:131). In Mauraanen's study there were three methods for preventing misunderstanding, which are proactive efforts during the speakers' turns. Firstly, the speakers made use of clarification or confirmation checks, which is characterised by rephrasing or providing additional information. Secondly is 'interactive repair' which is characterised by co-construction of expressions in interaction where participants may aid in repairing of interaction sequences. The third feature is self-repair, which is self-explanatory and is a feature of all human communication; being able to monitor, regulate and repair one's speech. In considering ELF studies, attention also goes to linguistic repertoires and linguistic biographies of multilingual speakers. Similarly, Mauraanen (2006:127) describes ELF as having three set features: the first is that the levels of bilingualism vary in every language contact scenario, the

second is that speakers come from various first language backgrounds thirdly as being characterised by "language shift" where speakers elect to use different languages in different domains. These features all apply to the participants in this dissertation, whom all possess varying degrees of bilingualism and multilingualism and proficiency in English, as well as the differences in their first language backgrounds. What is furthermore interesting is to link these language backgrounds to where and how they manifest in the ELF interactions.

There is an apparent trend in ELF studies from a discourse perspective, as Hülmbauer et al. (2008) put forward that the overall aim of ELF analyses lies in the interest as to how linguistic repertoires function and contribute to efficient communication, as well as a focus on the strategies or features presented in ELF interaction. For this reason, the two main foci of this research are interactional phenomena, and power negotiation where English is the lingua franca, and with a specific view into the linguistic repertoires of the participants. Although insights from ELF studies have been helpful, this project is not an ELF study, as the analytical tools for the analysis of the phenomena identified above, move the focus from the structure of language form to the functions of various parts of conversation and spoken discourse. The following sections turn to these analytical instruments.

3.4 ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK

In *Analysing Casual Conversation*, Eggins and Slade (1997) approach the analysis of conversation from a critical as well as a descriptive stance. Their focus is on casual conversation, and how various kinds of causal interactions enact and confirm social relations, and in-so-doing, unearth both the structure and function of the interactions. They propose the concept of Critical Analysis, which "involves analysing how language is used in different ways to construct casual conversation and how patterns of interaction reveal the social relations among the interactants" (Eggins & Slade, 1997:18). In the same vein, I want to shift from the idea that this research is solely focused on the conversational data as a verbal object of analysis, and gear towards a holistic view of language as both an interactional and a social phenomenon. This means that although the primary focus is on the micro-structure of conversational sequences and turn organizations that bring to light how participants negotiate meaning, they are embedded within the macro-social structures. It is the embeddedness which I also seek to explore in the analysis. This stance is echoed by Fairclough (1995:34) who states that "the micro-event and the macro-social event are inextricably linked". He further asserts that it would be of little value to isolate verbal interaction from macro-structures and study them as if they were not related. It is through conversation – the micro-structure – that we construct our social

realities – the macro-structure. The central argument here is therefore that conversation is an “interactional achievement” (Schegloff, 1981) thus allowing one to be a social entity, to do social activities, and to negotiate a social identity. Ultimately then, interaction is both a semantic and a social activity.

The primary objective lies in the detailed exploration and description of the communicative practices between individuals in the workplace who do not share first languages. The interest is therefore in language that is used in such a language contact situation, and of course to uncover the resources that enable efficient communication in such a context. A key element here is essentially to investigate how participants understand and respond to one another, and how they bridge the linguistic gaps that come from minimal overlap in linguistic repertoires. As the primary data is the spoken interaction between shop keepers and assistants with mismatched linguistic repertoires, an approach that deals with the detailed analysis of the nature of talk is required. The aim is to show how language is structured to enable the participants to negotiate meaning in the workplace, and further to show how they use language to enact social relations. Additionally, the structure of the interactions cannot be separated from what it is that participants essentially *intend* to do with their language or utterances. It is at this point that I want to move away from what is simply observable and analysable interaction as bounded, verbal objects of analysis, and move onto the meta-discursive, to language beyond what is uttered. This entails analysis beyond what is present only in the recorded data and transcriptions, to making informed hypothesis on what it is that speakers intend to achieve in interaction; and how they wish to position themselves in relation to their interlocutors

For this kind of analysis that deals with both the micro- and the macro-structures, two ideologically different approaches will be used. The first is Conversation Analysis, which focuses on the micro-structural issues of interaction such as turn-taking, turn organisation, and sequence organisation, to name a few. The second is Discourse Analysis and some aspects of CDA, which seeks to analyse how people use language to enact social identities. Discourse Analysis is a cyclical process in which we examine pieces of language and the meanings they attempt to build about the world in a specific context. It is clear from the definition of the two analytical approaches that although they have very specific aims, the use of both approaches in the context of this study would yield findings that present not only linguistic, but social phenomena. Rampton et al. (2014) also show awareness of the ideological differences between Discourse Analysis and Conversation Analysis when they state that “it is easy to make very productive use of CA findings on the sequential organisation of talk *without* refusing to consider the participants’ ideological interpretations. In fact, this denaturalisation of paradigms is hard

to avoid in interdisciplinary dialogues ... and it generates a methodological reflexivity that has to be embraced” (Rampton et al., 2014:15 [original emphasis]). In using both Discourse Analysis and Conversation Analysis, I would be able to critically analyse not only how participants go about interactional achievement, but also what they wish to enact through their interactional achievements.

3.5 CONVERSATION ANALYSIS

Drew and Heritage (1992:17) observe that "CA begins from a consideration of the interactional accomplishment of particular social activities". CA focuses on issues of meaning and context in interaction (Heritage, 2001:105). It investigates how speakers formulate talk in a way that is meant to be understood and interpreted in an appropriate way. The premise for CA is that talk is context-shaped and that speakers create or maintain a context for the next speaker's turn. Further it aims at uncovering how people negotiate meaning in these turns, by looking at the ways in which speakers show an understanding of a prior turn, and further build on that by either confirming the meaning or having it become an object of repair (Heritage, 2001:105). The goal of CA is to analyse the practices of speakers analysing one another's actions, and assigning meaning to these actions, and producing a reciprocal action based on the prior action.

When conducting an analysis of talk, the most significant task is to ask the question proposed by Schegloff and Sacks (1973): “why that now”. This relates to *what is being done* by that utterance, uttered in *that specific way, in that specific place?* This, argues Schegloff et al. (2002) is the central issue for both the construction of talk in interaction and understanding talk in interaction. They further add that if we are to make sense of how language is used in its context, it is imperative that we understand the purpose of the language use and how it is understood as well as how this understanding is reflected in the way interlocutors respond. In the context of the informal workplace where the participants have varied proficiency in the lingua franca, studying their talk and framing it against its context is important for the uncovering what it is that participants wish to accomplish in their talk. It is fundamental to note that the kinds of talk-in-interaction that are analysed here comes from a context where participants do not share social competencies, thus the interest is in investigating the underlying system and principles which enable participants to achieve their interactional goals. Ultimately then, the aim of CA research is to explicate how speakers arrive at understandings of one another's talk, while focusing on the principles they use to interact linguistically.

Conversation Analysis is one framework that accounts for not only the spoken interaction between two migrant groups, but also the contribution to the communicative encounters of the context within which their interaction takes place. Thus this framework allows for the description of what happens linguistically as well as socially in the organisation of workplace communication. CA discloses covert and often unconscious interactional rules within specific contexts, and for this reason has been selected for an investigation of L2 interaction in a situation of language contact in the workplace. The following section provides an overview of Conversation Analysis in terms of its aims and methodology.

3.5.1 CA and its methodological aims

Conversation Analysis (CA) is a generic approach to the analysis of conversation, which originated as a study of spontaneous, everyday talk (Goodwin & Heritage, 1990). It uses a methodological approach which is adapted to investigate all forms of talk-in-interaction. Schegloff (1987) describes CA as a “mode of analysis” applied to ordinary conversation as the fundamental form of talk-in-interaction (see also Schegloff, 1988). CA is also characterised as a “mode of inquiry” into spoken interaction as well as the conduct of interlocutors within such interaction (Schegloff, Koshik, Jacoby & Olsher, 2002:3). It takes all verbal interaction into account, including forms of conduct such as gesture, posture, facial expression and other activities that take place during interaction (Schegloff et al., 2002).

The aim of Conversation Analysis is to identify the practices and patterns that enable interlocutors in an interaction to be able to construct their talk and be able to do it in a way that is understood and interpreted in the intended way, and responded to in an appropriate, co-constructive way. As Drew (2005:94) states, by asking how they construct their talk and make their talk understood "we mean to focus analysis on the practices, resources and procedures through which people produce and understand conduct in common with one another". Research in CA is based on qualitative spoken data which is naturally occurring which is then transcribed and analysed. In this case analysis is more focused on the verbal as opposed to the non-verbal conduct. Relating to this, Drew (2005) argues that none of the practices and patterns identified in CA research are shaped or altered in any significant ways by taking non-verbal action into account. In this instance this dissertation might disprove this argument. Since the participants wholly make use of English as a *Lingua Franca*, a language that is not native to either shopkeeper nor assistant, it is plausible to hypothesise that non-verbal conduct may in some respects aid in the interaction. Specifically, because this takes place in the institution of the workplace, and one that relies on action more than interaction, non-verbal conduct will be

present and may aid in understanding success as well as a breakdown in communication. The aim of CA however is to explicate the way participants arrive at understandings of one another's talk in turns during interaction and how they co-construct their turns. This analytic approach is largely focused on verbal devices, although the role of gesture as an aid in the participants' understanding and interpretation of each other's turns is acknowledged.

3.5.2 Institutional and Basic CA: conceptual differences

CA departs from the understanding that utterances are not isolated, but that they are formed and understood in particular contexts, and are formed to conform to these contexts (Goodwin & Heritage, 1990). Two essential forms of CA exist, namely *basic CA* and *institutional CA*. Basic CA, according to Heritage (2005) investigates conversation as an institution in itself, whereas institutional CA builds on the findings of basic CA to analyse how social institutions influence conversation. Institutional talk however, is not limited to a specific physical institutional setting. Talk is institutional when a conversation features institutional elements and when characters of the institution are displayed in the interaction. Institutional talk has specific speech exchange systems. As an example, we could take the practice of a doctor's consultation as institutional, and the actual discourse that takes place in the consultation as institutional talk. The physical setting as well as the features of the conversation is what makes the talk institutional. However, if a doctor and patient consult via email or Skype, the conversation that takes place would still be institutional because of its features. The way talk is organized, the way speakers take up and evaluate each other's turns, the sequence within the interaction, and allowable contributions within talk is what makes talk institutional. As Schegloff et al. (2002:11) states, "institutional talk involves showing how that institution is embodied in the details of the talk and other conduct".

With basic CA, when it is said that it investigates talk as an institution, it means that the conversation is the object of investigation and how practices and organization of talk within conversation are based in sets of norms. Ultimately both basic and institutional CA focus on meaning and context in interaction (Heritage, 2005:105). Basic CA therefore is interested in the ways that context shapes talk, and the ways in which interlocutors practice turn-taking which is constructive of context and also how participants signal understanding or misunderstanding of a prior turn. The latter relates to the adjacency-pair framework, through which speakers analyse one another's turns in order to produce a reciprocal appropriate turn (Goodwin & Heritage, 1990).

As the phenomenon in this study is multilingualism in an informal workplace, conventional (basic) CA is used as the method of analysis. Although the research site could be seen as a social institution (the workplace) and to an extent concurs with the three basic elements of institutional talk as identified by Heritage (2005:106) namely: 1) that the conversation or talk within the institution is goal orientated towards the institution, 2) that there are constraints on what can or cannot be said within the conversation, and 3) that the conversation is associated with activities and procedures that are specific to the institution, this is a study that focuses on the informal workplace where there is a grassroots kind of multilingual interaction. The workplace in this study, as explained in Chapter 2, is one that does not conform to normative workplace practices. The kinds of conversation that occur in this context are different from that of more sophisticated workplaces as described in Clyne (1994), Roberts (2007), Amelina (2010), Holmes and Stubbe (2015), who all investigated workplace communication.

3.5.3 Conversation Analytical tools

Schegloff et al. (2002) identify the main components that inform areas of CA. These comprise *turn-taking* which refers to the way interlocutors organize how and when they take up opportunities to talk. These deal with length of turns and how they are constructed. The second main component is *turn organization* which is the way interlocutors organize their turns to be contributing to the context of the talk; and the third component is *action formation* which is the practice of the interlocutor forming his/her talk so that it accomplishes one or more actions. This is similar to Drew's (2005) concept of *turn design*, which is an aspect of CA that is interested in which action the turn will perform, and the words that will be used to perform that action. It captures how interlocutors choose their actions in a turn. Other major components proposed by Schegloff et al. (2002) include *sequence organization* which refers to the way speakers draw on resources to ensure coherence of contributions in talk. Drew (2005) further adds that sequence organization is the way that turns are connected with one another in organized patterns. Sequence organization further entails the notion of *adjacency pairs*, which refers to the way recipients are expected to respond to actions in a way that pairs with that action, for example questions responded to with answers, invitations responded to with decline or acceptance, or a greeting responded to with a greeting. Another facet of sequence organization is *preference organization* which according to Drew (2005:90) refers to the way speaker's instances of talk at a turn can be constructed so as to increase the likelihood of obtaining the preferred response. This is followed by *presequences* which initiate actions according to the co-participant's responses to the talk in the preference organization. Schegloff et al. (2002) pose another component of CA referred to as *organization of repair*, which focuses

on how interlocutors deal with problems or breakdown in communication caused by speaking, hearing or comprehension in the talk. Repair is a major factor in CA and is a significant resource for interlocutors for dealing with communication breakdown in the talk such as issues of misunderstanding. Repair can of course occur both from the speaker (self-repair) when they correct themselves or when they are aware that the utterance is unclear. Within conversation the aim is to construct an utterance with a particular aim as to what that utterance should mean and what action should come from that utterance. Thus, self-repair can also occur when a speaker notices that their talk will not be understood or bring about the action which it is meant to. Drew (2005) also refers to "other-initiated self-repair", where he provides an example of a participant making a statement and the co-participant remaining silent as a way of disagreeing. This silence results in the speaker realizing that she had made an incorrect statement and performing self-repair. In this way speakers' self-repair also stems from their co-participants' reactions, verbal or non-verbal. In relation to the data that is to be analysed in this dissertation, the notion of repair is highly significant. Owing to the differences in language background, participants have to consistently make sure that their turns are understood and interpreted in the way that they constructed it to be.

Engaging in conversation of course involves more than just knowledge of a language. It requires social competencies that consist of the knowledge of knowing what to say, when to say it, how to say it and saying it coherently so that it does not deviate from the conversation topic. These social competencies according to Drew (2005) are aspects which are shared by members of a communicative culture.

3.5.4 CA studies in ELF interaction

CA-based research has been used in various contexts at both institutional and non-institutional levels. Firth (1996) who coined the "let it pass" principle which is identifiable in ELF and CA research, examined naturally-occurring work related talk. In his paper he questions the suitability of CA as a methodology to lingua franca interactions, or rather how CA is applicable to lingua franca communication. He ultimately advocates for such an approach in stating that when ELF communication as data is addressed from a Conversation Analytical perspective, it contributes to an understanding of the nature of conversational competence as well as the linguistic and interactional resources used for participants to achieve meaningful communication (Firth, 1996:240). He analysed the telephonic communication between a Danish international trading company and their international clients, and subsequently made findings that are still applied to ELF studies today. His "let it pass" principle, an instance where

the hearer lets the unclear utterance pass, still holds as a concept for lingua franca interactions (cf. Mauranen, 2006, on signalling and preventing misunderstanding in ELF interaction). This occurs when there is a miscommunication, or when one participant does not understand the other's turn, but proceeds to act as if the turn was understood. Various factors could contribute to this principle, such as participants judging the specific utterance as 'non-essential' to the overall communicative aim, or the idea that clarification might cost time or effort, or to avoid conflict that might stem from going back to the utterance at that turn. Firth (1996:244) adds that for the analyst it is difficult to handle "let it pass" from a CA perspective, owing to the researcher not knowing whether the utterance was missed by the hearer, or whether it was simply allowed to pass. While this may be true for telephonic communication as data, when real time observation is employed within CA studies, judging how, when and why the "let it pass" principle occurs should be easier to identify.

Another area in linguistics that has benefitted from a CA is the one of bilingual interaction studies. This is echoed in Wei (2002) who puts forward that CA's focus on people's methodic turns in interaction and the way interactional activity is ordered is particularly useful for the study of bilingualism. The question of how people "make strategic choices that involve the manipulation of their environments" has direct applicability to the study of bilingual interaction in that it helps to account for the linguistic resources people draw on in their communicative encounters. Therefore Wei (2002) argues that a CA approach to bilingual interaction uncovers the "work" participants in talk put in to achieve understanding. One notion of CA that Wei (2002) notes to be quite useful for analysing code-switching in bilingual interaction, is that of contextualization (Gumperz, 1982, 1992). Contextualization refers to the ways that participants in talk alter their communicative conduct, wherein they draw on all available linguistic elements such as prosodic, phonological, morphological and syntactic elements to situate themselves in relation to one another (Wei, 2002:165). These, according to Wei, can also be used to signal social identities. Although the notion of contextualization cues is applicable to bilingual interaction, it also holds relevance to this study. Questions of how participants orient themselves to one another, or how they assert their attitudes and identities through their linguistic choices and activities, will be explicated by observing this feature of CA. Given the context of this study, where the focus is on participants' range of languages and how they use them to communicate in the workplace, taking into account the way that they negotiate their social selves through the manipulation of the linguistic elements (prosody, phonology, morphology, syntax) would make for significant findings in the field of informal workplace communication

where English is the language of wider communication. Having provided an overview of CA as one analytical framework, I move on to DA as the second framework for analysis.

3.6 DISCOURSE ANALYSIS AND CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS

Discourse Analysis departs from the knowledge that our lives are constructed in and through language, and performing a discourse analysis is an attempt to observe and unravel these constructions (Coupland & Jaworski, 2001:134). Discourse Analysis allows researchers to uncover how people in communicative events use language to construct and enact various social identities, or how they use language to communicate who they are and what they are doing. From a DA perspective, there are significant links between what people intend to do with language and what they wish to accomplish through language (Gee, 2011). Through these links, people may use language to engage in certain practices or activities, to build or maintain certain relationships, or to negotiate specific social identities. Simply put, discourse analysis looks at how language is used to *say* something, to *do* something, and to *be* something. Therefore, it can be said that it is through communication that people construct various identities, and through which they orient these identities towards specific audiences. Gee (2011:18) further notes: “We often enact our identities by speaking or writing in such a way as to attribute a certain identity to others, an identity that we explicitly or implicitly compare or contrast to our own. We build identities for others as a way to build ones for ourselves”. DA of course, does not only look at spoken interaction but at all kinds of communicative events, including written texts as well as multimodal events. For the purpose of this study though, DA is as an approach dealing with spoken interaction, which is treated as text. As Heller (2001:252) states: “An ethnomethodological approach to analysis of discourse in interaction has perhaps the strongest tendency to treat interactional data as text”.

Discourse Analysis also takes as a significant factor in its analysis, the relationships between speakers, and how they maintain or change roles in their relationships through language. Through analysing language, analysts are able to make hypotheses about the kinds of relationships that speakers intend to build and enact in interaction. According to Bailey (2007) language is the primary medium through which speakers are able to represent and negotiate their social identities and their social realities. Through interactions speakers are able to position themselves in relation to others (Bailey, 2007; Gee, 2011)

Critical discourse analysis, on the other hand, brings a variety of theories into dialogue. This interdisciplinary framework mediates social, linguistic and critical theories (Chouliaraki and

Fairclough,1999). Weiss and Wodak (2003:12) contend that studies in CDA are multifarious, “derived from quite different theoretical backgrounds and oriented towards very different data and methodologies”. In essence, the cornerstones of CDA could be identified as discourse, ideology, and power (Weiss & Wodak, 2003). Power is always to greater or lesser extent related to struggle, control, and difference. Social difference gives rise to social inequalities, which are both overtly and covertly encoded in language. Weiss and Wodak (2003:15) therefore argue that “the constant unity of language and other social matters ensures that language is entwined in social power in a number of ways: language indexes power, expresses power, is involved where there is contention over and a challenge to power. Power does not derive from language, but language can be used to challenge power, to subvert it, to alter distributions of power in the short and the long term”.

CDA’s interest is in the relationship between language and power, further regarding language use as a social practice embedded in the social context. This implies that CDA recognises and attends to the dialectical relationship between a communicative event and the social context which frames it; in essence then “the discursive event is shaped by them, but it also shapes them” (Fairclough & Wodak 1997:258). Discourses are therefore socially situated forms of knowledge or socially situated ways of representing things, relationships, people, the self, etc. The context of language use is therefore crucial to interrogating instances of language use.

3.6.1 Aims and focus of DA

For Gee (2011:128) what makes DA a valid analytical approach is that it enables the analyst to form hypotheses about the functions and organisation of language, based on patterns and links within and across utterances. He adds that DA is a cyclical process in which we examine pieces of language and the meanings they attempt to build about the world in a specific context. With this in mind, DA is useful for interpreting what speakers say, even in seemingly limited linguistic code, and what they intend to achieve, in terms of *saying*, *doing* and *being*, with their utterances. It allows for the interpretation of how participants attempt to build meaning about their identities as well as the identities of their hearers, and how relationships are negotiated in the contexts in which the interaction occurs (Gee, 2011). A such, DA is fundamentally “a movement from context to language and from language to context” (Gee, 2011:20).

In the context of this study, participants may have various ascribed or negotiated identities, perhaps as Congolese or Chinese in South Africa, or as employees and employers, or as a mother or a father, as a caregiver, or a migrant. All these identities are possible in the workplace,

owing to the various roles that participants have in China Town, as explained in Chapter 2. Discourse analysis would aid in the explication of how speakers navigate and signal these identities in interaction. Although the focus is on the verbal interaction and the ways that participants make themselves understood in interaction, one cannot ignore the identity constructions and the power struggles that accompany these constructions. Following Gee (2011) this study views discourses as socially situated ways of representing, doing, and being. In this way the analysis interrogates what participants attempt to represent in their interactive patterns, what they wish to achieve through their use of particular linguistic choices, and what the consequences are of these achievements.

3.6.2 Aims and focus of CDA

CDA is aligned to DA in that it also attends to linguistic structures and their meanings above the level of sentences. Also, it uses the term “discourse” to refer to content and to how discourses that share and interest particular social themes, become Discourses with meanings embedded not only in the language, but also intertextually in more and less explicitly articulated ideologies. Ideology is one of the central foci of CDA, and “is seen as an important means of establishing and maintaining unequal power relations. CDA takes a particular interest in the ways in which language mediates ideology in a variety of social institutions” (Weiss & Wodak, 2003:14). The focus of CDA is therefore the analysis of power, attitudes and ideology as they manifest in discourse. CDA also specifically sets out to interrogate social relationships and how power, dominance and inequality are enacted in these relationships (Van Dijk, 1993a, 2001). For Van Dijk, the aim of CDA is to understand the nature of social power and dominance – where dominance is understood as “the exercise of social power” (Van Dijk, 1993a:249). Linguistic forms are used in various expressions and manipulations of power, and CDA addresses these linguistic forms and its effects in context. Dominance, the social control over others, also relates to ethnic dominance and racist ideologies (Van Dijk, 1993b), which is interrogated through CDA. This is specifically articulated in Van Dijk’s (1993b, 2004) work on racist discourses.

One of the core concepts with which CDA works, is ‘ideology’. CDA not only premises that the way people use language, or their discourses, reflect their ideologies; it also assumes that language creates and sustains ideological positions in ways that make them appear to be natural and thus not always easy to disclose. CDA analysts assume that all language use is in one way or another ideologically driven (cf. Cameron, 2001). These ideologies are linked to power relations and social (in)equalities. This is maintained by Fairclough and Wodak (1997:258) who

attest to the social and ideological significance of discursive practices, suggesting that these practices may produce and reproduce unequal power relations. With this in mind, the workplace, however informal, is a context inherent with power inequalities. For this reason CDA's focus on power will be invoked in analysing not only top-down relations of power, but also bottom-up resistance to power.

3.6.3 DA and CDA studies relevant to China Town discourses

DA is polysemic, and is used in a range of disciplines for different applications. As an approach aligned with DA, CDA's distinctiveness lies in its critical interrogation of the relationship between discourse and the social context. Van Dijk in expressing the tenets of CDA, states that CDA "requires true multidisciplinary, and an account of intricate relationships between text, talk, social cognition, power, society and culture" (Van Dijk, 1993a:253). CDA thus allows us to consider communication from various perspectives, eventually also aligning and integrating or contrasting such perspectives. Keeping to Van Dijk's proposition for multidisciplinary, one DA approach, which is perhaps the most applicable to this study, is the *Communication* perspective as put forward by Tracy (2001). She argues that from the Communication perspective, DA helps researcher study how people present themselves, and offers a distinct voice to the polysemic conceptualisation of discourse. She states further that when we look at DA from a Communication perspective, we are studying "people talking with each other" (Tracy, 2001:735). Scollon and Scollon (2001) take a discourse approach to the study of intercultural communication, another perspective that is applicable to this study. Their position is similar to Gee's (2011) and Bailey's (2007), which holds that when people communicate they are positioned within an indefinite number of identities or *discourse systems*. They further argue that it is important to uncover how participants in an interaction claim one identity over multiple other possible identities.

It is important to mention here that contrary to CA, which has a distinct set of methodological tools, there is no one way of doing a DA or CDA. Anthonissen (2003:297) does posit however, that the only "singular characteristic of CDA is agreement on the perspective that discourses are situated in, shaped by and constructive of circumstances that are more than and different to language". In the context of this study however, in doing a DA we need to draw on additional knowledge about the context or circumstances in which these utterances are performed in order to analyse and interpret them – hence the LE approach. "LE aims to use discourse analytic tools in creative ways to extend our understanding of the role language plays in social life" (Creese, 2008:235).

The discourse analytical approach spans across various fields of study. Scholars have used DA for the analysis in the interrogation of classroom interaction (Rampton & Charalambous, 2016), language in the media (Fairclough, 1995; Cotter, 2001; Machin & Van Leeuwen, 2005) as well as discourse and culture (Scollon & Scollon, 2001; Scollo, 2011). A large body of influential CDA work focuses on political discourse (Wilson, 2001; Van Dijk, 1993a, 1993b, 2006a, 2006b), discourse and social structures (Fairclough, 1989, 1992, 1995, 2001) and discourses on gender (Wodak, 1997; Cameron, 1999; Milani & Jonsson, 2011; Ehrlich 2003). CDA in its multidisciplinary and multi-methodical approach to discourse provides the ideal tools for analysing social phenomena. The applicability of CDA to the data in this study is summarised in Wodak and Meyer (2009:2):

“The objects under investigation do not have to be related to negative or exceptionally ‘serious’ social or political experiences or events – this is a frequent misunderstanding of the aims and goals of CDA and of the term ‘critical’ which, of course, does not mean ‘negative’ as in common-sense usage (...) Any social phenomenon lends itself to critical investigation, to be challenged and not taken for granted.”

Finally, in the context within which this study takes place, CDA allows for a critical analysis of how power, both collaborative and coercive, is asserted in workplace discourse. This will be done by (e.g.) interrogating how directives are given and responded to, how deference is shown, and how participants assert or attempt to maintain social control over the other, i.e. in employer-employee interactions.

3.7 CONCLUSION

This chapter has presented an overview of a range of issues and concepts that inform this study. It commenced with conceptualisations of globalisation, and has further problematized the lack of sociolinguistic engagement in perceptions of globalisation. I have shown here how linguistic studies that refer to globalisation predominantly attend to issues of language loss and language death, as opposed to the prediction of multilingual vitality. Considering various social outcomes of globalisation, this chapter has looked at issues of migration, and used the term “transnational” to refer to the way migrants are no longer presented as uprooted or isolated from their place of origin. This developed into a discussion of transnationalism and language practices, which, by reviewing studies from scholars in the field, have been discussed as being dynamic, transcending borders and constraints of time and space. The multilingual and flexible language practices of transnationals have been identified by the various concepts proposed by scholars, such as transidiomatic practices, translanguaging and more predominantly,

linguaging. This panned out into a discussion on multilingualism, languaging, and linguistic repertoire, and provided an overview of scholarly work on multilingualism and how individuals use the resources in their linguistic repertoires to meet communicative ends.

Finally, this chapter has provided detail on the frameworks for analysis of the data to follow in Chapters 5 and 6. I have explained how this study is rooted in interactional sociolinguistics, which is related to linguistic ethnography, an umbrella term encompassing seminal ethnomethodological traditions. Both IS and LE have been shown to make use of DA and CA (although not simultaneously) for analysis. Roberts (2007) however, states that studies in workplace communication generally have drawn on three dominant methodological approaches, namely pragmatics, IS, and LE. The significance is that many of these workplace studies have blended aspects of these three approaches in order to identify how people navigate workplace interaction (Roberts, 2007).

Further I want to reiterate my awareness of CA and DA being distinguished approaches that have not yet, to my knowledge been applied in the same body of work. In the context of this study however, both traditions are applicable: CA's overarching concern is with interactional achievement, whereas DA focuses on what people wish to do through these interactional achievements. The latter is based on the informed interpretation of the analyst, while the former analyses what it present and observable; hence the ideological split between the two approaches. According to Heller, this ideological split stems from two schools of thought. On the one hand, scholars want to confine analysis to "what is observable, and analyse interactions in and of (and for) themselves" (Heller, 2001). On the other hand, other scholars have questioned what goes on beyond the bounds of observable interaction. My objection is thus to interrogate what goes on beyond the bounds of observable interaction, in a context where the linguistic phenomenon of language contact in the informal multilingual workplace has not yet received much scholarly attention. In this mind, using both DA and CA approaches fits the aims and objectives of the study.

The chapter that follows discusses the methodology used for data collection. Here the research setting, participants and procedures for data collection and analysis are discussed. The methodology chapter also provides explicit details of the kinds of data that were collected and further attests to the use of DA and CA as analytical tools.

CHAPTER 4

METHODOLOGY

INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses the research design and methods that were used to collect and analyse the data for this study. The methodology is designed to address the central research objective, which is to explicate the ways in which Chinese store owners and their African shop assistants conduct informal workplace communication. The interest here is particularly in communicative strategies used among employers and employees who do not share a common L1, and who communicate through an L2 in which they have varying levels of proficiency. The research takes place in one of three major China Town centres in Cape Town, thus in a shopping centre where a network of Chinese-owned stores is established.

4.1 RESEARCH DESIGN

The research design for this study was structured to collect ethnographic data which would give observational and experiential data on the communicative practices of participants. Although all participants were multilingual, they used English as the workplace lingua franca. The study was designed to be qualitative, as it sought to interpret and describe the naturally occurring communicative phenomena of human interaction as it happens in real time in the given context. Welman, Kruger and Mitchell (2005:9) summarise qualitative research as the investigation of human behaviour within the constraints of day-to-day events, in which detailed attention can be given to behavioural features that cannot be captured sufficiently if the data sample is large. This aligns with the ethnographic perspective that human behaviour, in this case workplace interaction, cannot be properly understood if it is separated from the context in which it takes place.

Linguistic ethnography is an interdisciplinary method described as qualitative participatory research. Although Welman et al. (2005) consider ethnography from a sociolinguistic perspective, they point out that ethnographic approaches have been fruitfully adapted and used in other fields such as education and psychology. As indicated above in section 3.2, it is an approach widely used in the field of applied linguistics, blending relevant frameworks and procedures to answer specific interdisciplinary commitments of the field.

4.2 SETTING AND PARTICIPANTS

The particular China Town where the study was undertaken, was established in 2012 in a suburban area within the Cape Metropole. The complex is situated in a working class housing area which also accommodates quite a number of migrant communities, specifically of Congolese, Zimbabwean and Nigerian origin. This, in part, explains why many of the shop assistants in China Town are of migrant origin: they live within walking distance from their place of employment. This is known to the store owners who, during the researcher's observation, actually advertised positions to job-seekers who live within walking distance from the shopping centre (see *figure 4.1* below).

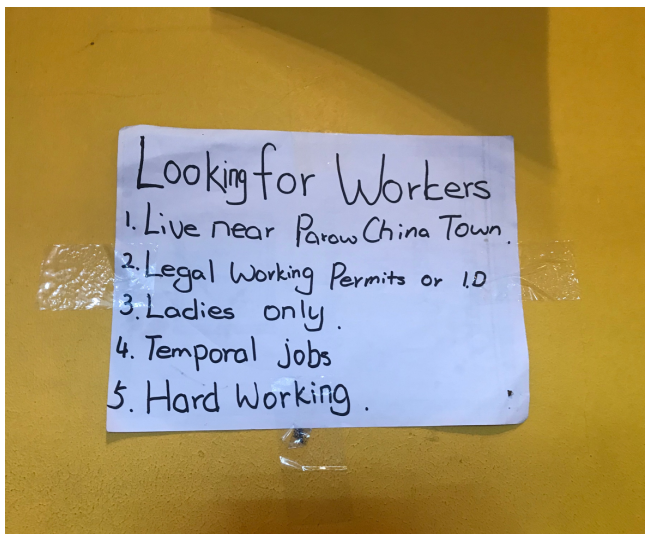


Figure 4.1: *Job advertisement*

As described more elaborately in chapter 2, the research site is a collection of Chinese-owned stores within a larger centre, which is identified as allocated to a Chinese business community, also by means of specially marked and decorated entrances and signage. Images that give an impression of the research site are given below (see *figures 4.2* and *4.3*). Despite a capacity of 60 stores, at the time of data-collection only about 30 stores were actually let and trading. The dissertation is an analysis of data collected by means of recording, interaction and observation in three of the stores, as well as regular observation in all 30 stores. The data to be analysed was collected in stores where the owner and assistants had all agreed to be recorded using lapel microphones during a couple of work days. The observations done in the these participating stores dealt with the interactions that occurred in-store, and noted contextual details of the setting in which the recorded conversations took place. Being present, even if as unobtrusively as possible, allowed me to note regular communicative patterns, as well as when

misunderstandings, disputes, and various interesting spoken activity types (Levinson, 1992) took place. The contextual details around these activity types were recorded in field notes. To understand the larger context, observation also entailed periodic visits to other stores, noting trading conventions across stores and jotting down observations of changes and trends in the stores. These observations occurred beyond the three participating stores, and at times when I was not recording there, as the research required my presence throughout the recording in order to make field notes on the interactions as they occurred.



Figure 4.2: *Entrance to China Town*



Figure 4.3: *Stores in China Town*

As mentioned above, data collection took place across a period of six months, in three phases, the first two spanning two weeks each, and a third for a shorter period in which unstructured interviews were used to complete information that had not come up in the first stages of the

study. The first phase of data collection commenced in October 2016 and ended late November 2016, as I was not permitted to record in December owing to the festive period shopping and the increase in customer traffic. The second data collection phase commenced in February 2017 and was completed in April 2017. Within the six month observation period, I recorded in the participating stores for a total of 25 days. This amounted to 80 hours of recording. Observation of non-participating stores took place on non-consecutive days, across the full period of data-collection; however, notes on these observations cover a total of no more than five hours.

As the shopping centre, and thus also the stores, have different activity patterns depending on the numbers of clients coming and going, it was important to record interactions on different days of the week. For example, Fridays and Saturdays were the busiest days in terms of movement of clients, Sundays were less busy and on Mondays long hours passed with very few, if any, clients entering the store. This, of course, had an effect on the frequency and content of employer and employee interactions, as well as on the interactions among the employees.

Based on directives found in Rampton (2007) and Rampton et al. (2014), when recordings took place I was present in the stores, observing and making notes on contextual circumstances and occurrences. This allowed me the necessary contextual information when analysing the transcriptions, to recognize (e.g.) banter, agreement or discord, the reasons for misunderstanding, debate or laughter, based on non-verbal interaction that elicited certain communicative activities.

The research population for this study is made up of five shop assistants from the migrant community (four of Congolese and one of Nigerian origin), two South African assistants, and the four Chinese owners of three stores, who are also the assistants' employers (detailed in Chapter 2 – section 2.7). The research population thus comprises four store owners and seven shop assistants, totalling 11 participants.

The schematized floorplans given below in *figures 4.4, 4.5 and 4.6* show the layout of each store, where participants were situated, and where I was situated throughout the data collection. It should be noted here that stores are small, ranging approximately between 50-80 square meters on average, compact and densely packed with items, so even when I was seated in a corner, or at the back of the store, I was able to observe all interaction. In Shop 1 I moved around depending on how busy the stores were in terms of customer traffic. On busier days I sat close to the point of sale so as to be as minimally intrusive as possible. On quieter days I would sit closer to the store assistants in their designated sections. In Shop 2, I was seated at

the back of the store, next to the assistant, as this was the only space where customer traffic would not be obstructed. In Shop 3 the shop owner insisted that I sit at the entrance outside of the store.

KEY			
A	Accessories		Stairs
X	Clothing		Point of Sale
Y	Underwear	F	Fitting Room
Z	Shoes	K	Kitchen
T	Toys		Researcher
			Participants

SHOP 1							
Y	Y 		N1	IRE	A	Y	Y
Y							
Y					SAN		x
F	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
A	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
	x	NAT	x	x	x	x	x
	x		x	x	x	x	x
	x	x	x	x		GIN	Z
K					Z	Z	Z
K					Z		Z

Figure 4.4

SHOP 2							
A		F	K	GRA /FAI	X	X	X
X							
X	A	X			X	X	X
X	A	X			X	X	X
X	A	X			X	X	X
	SUZ				X	X	X
					X	X	X

Figure 4.5

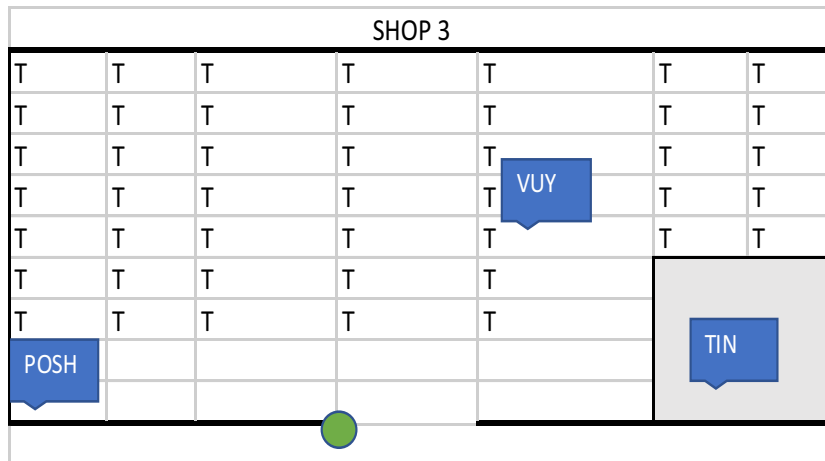


Figure 4.6

4.2.1 The participants

4.2.1.1 Selection of Participants

To start out, I approached the potential participants in the China Town elected as research site, and explained the aims of the study to them. Owing to the informality of the stores, and the issue of migrant citizenship, many tenants in China Town were apprehensive about having their everyday interactions recorded. Many of them were willing to allow observations, provided that no recordings took place. With the kind of data required for this study, drawing on observations alone would not suffice. Finally, research subjects were those willing to accommodate the particular kind of scrutiny that ethnographic data collection requires. Meetings were set up with each in order for them to sign the consent forms (see Appendix B(I), B(II), B(III)) giving permission to use the recordings for this study. Following that, participants were asked to fill in a questionnaire which gives the meta-data (i.e. name [pseudonym], age, gender, nationality), as well as information on their language biographies, such as their personal language repertoire, which would be relevant to the study (see Appendix C(I), C(II), C(III)).

Access to the full complement of participants who eventually joined the study, was obtained through the store where two local South African Xhosa L1 females were employed, Store 3. After explaining the study to them in English, I was granted permission to do recordings, as they had convinced their employer that I was trustworthy. Even so, the store owner set certain conditions: I was not to sit inside the shop, but at the entrance, observing from the outside. Fortunately the store was not big, so it was possible to follow participants' movements and interactions. To my advantage, my presence at the entrance of this store created curiosity among the other shop owners, who frequently visited the store while I was there collecting data. By

the end of that week the neighbouring employers and employees had become accustomed to seeing me seated in the entrance of Shop 3. The owner of the store explained the purpose of my presence to other curious owners, thus informing the surrounding store owners that I was conducting research on language and communication practices. By the time I approached them to request permission to do further data collection in their stores, I was able to refer back to what I had been doing in Shop 3, which subsequently led to the consent to collect data in two more stores. I was allowed to do observation inside the other stores, and store owners also provided me with seating for the duration of recording in the stores.

4.2.1.2 *The site of data collection – three stores*

The first store where data collection took place, *Shop 1*, is a clothing, shoes and accessories shop run by a married couple, Ireen and Number-One (see table below). They manage the store with the help of three Congolese assistants, Gina, Sandra and Nathalie, who appear to be comfortable in their employment and, among the participants observed in this study, have worked with their employers for the longest period, each being employed for more than four years. When data collection commenced, Number-One and Ireen brought their infant daughter to work with them, so that in addition to regular sales-related assignments, certain caretaking duties fell to the shop assistants. Ireen formed part of the first phase of data collection, during which time interaction related to the baby was a marked feature. Upon my return for the second phase three months later, Ireen and the baby had returned to China. This means that in the second phase of data collection there were only four instead of five participants in this store, namely Number-One and the three assistants. When I returned to China Town six weeks later for follow-up visits and observation, Ireen had returned to Cape Town having left her baby with relatives in China, and was back at work in her store.

The second store, *Shop 2* is a lingerie outlet owned by Suzanna, a Chinese woman who, at the commencement of the study worked alongside her assistant, Grace – a young Congolese female. Reportedly, Grace had worked with Suzanna for two years, but after searching for better employment opportunities, had left. She was a participant in the first phase of data collection. When she left, she was replaced by a new shop assistant, Faith, who agreed to participate in the study, and thus formed part of the second data collection phase.

The third store, *Shop 3*, is a small shop that sells themed party items and decorations, as well as some toys and makeup. The owner, Tina is a young female who brings her 18-months-old daughter, Angie, to work every day. Her shop assistants Vuyo and Porsha are South African

Xhosa L1 speakers who come from the Eastern Cape and Johannesburg respectively. Upon my second phase follow-up visit to the store, I found that Tina had taken Angie to China to live with family. The family member who took care of her store in the interim was not comfortable with being recorded, so there was no second phase data for this store. Even though Tina returned to her store, when I went back to collect second-phase data, the two assistants who had formerly consented to participate in the study were absent – one was no longer employed there, and the other had taken a three-month leave of absence following the passing away of a family member. This information emphasises the noted mobility of casual workers, and even of the store owners, in this workplace.

The tables below list the participants according to their stores in China Town, and give a summary of the languages they know.

Table 4.1: Research population

Participants	Shop	Sex	Nature of Business	Country of Origin	English proficiency
Number-One	Shop 1	Male	Clothing, shoes, accessories, underwear	China Fujian Province	Speak, Understand, Read, Write
Ireen		Female		China Fujian Province	Speak, Understand
Sandra		Female		Congo (DRC) Kinshasa	Speak, Understand, Read, Write
Nathalie		Female		Congo (DRC) Lubumbashi	Speak, Understand, Read
Gina		Female		Congo (DRC) Kinshasa	Speak, Understand
Suzanna	Shop 2	Female	Lingerie and accessories	China	Speak, Understand (minimally)
Grace		Female		Congo (DRC) Kinshasa	Speak, Understand, Read, Write
Faith		Female		Nigeria Benin	Speak, Understand, Read, Write
Tina	Shop 3	Female	Themed party items, toys, board games	China	Speak, Understand, Read, Write
Vuyo		Female		South Africa Eastern Cape	Speak, Understand, Read, Write

Participants	Shop	Sex	Nature of Business	Country of Origin	English proficiency
Porsha		Female		South Africa Johannesburg	Speak, Understand, Read, Write

Table 4.2: Languages known

Participants	Shop	Languages known	Country of Origin	Language used to complete the questionnaires
Number-One	Shop 1	Mandarin Chinese, English, isiXhosa	China Fujian Province	Mandarin Chinese and some English
Ireen		Mandarin Chinese, English	China Fujian Province	Mandarin Chinese
Sandra		Swahili, French, Lingala, English, Mandarin Chinese, isiXhosa, Afrikaans	Congo (DRC) Kinshasa	French
Nathalie		Swahili, French, Tshiluba, Lingala, English, Mandarin Chinese, isiXhosa, Afrikaans	Congo (DRC) Lubumbashi	French (the questionnaire was completed by Sandra, as Nathalie dictated)
Gina		Lingala, French, Swahili, English	Congo (DRC) Kinshasa	French (the questionnaire was completed by Sandra, as Gina dictated)
Suzanna	Shop 2	Mandarin Chinese	China	Mandarin Chinese
Grace		English, Lingala, French, Mandarin Chinese, isiXhosa, Afrikaans	Congo (DRC) Kinshasa	English
Faith		English, Edu	Nigeria Benin	English
Tina	Shop 3	Mandarin Chinese, English	China	English and some Mandarin Chinese
Vuyo		English, isiXhosa, isiZulu, Afrikaans	South Africa Eastern Cape	English
Porsha		isiXhosa, English	South Africa Johannesburg	English (completed by Vuyo as Porsha dictated in isiXhosa)

4.3 THE DATA AND INSTRUMENTS

As mentioned in section 4.2 above, various kinds of data were triangulated in this study. Besides the questionnaires providing meta-data and information on participants' language biographies and linguistic repertoires, the data is comprised of recorded conversations that were

supplemented by observation captured in field notes. More detail on how the collection of data using these instruments, will be given in this section.

In order to analyse and describe the communicative practices that occur in a multilingual workplace, this study required transcriptions of recorded interactions between the participants in each store throughout the workday. The recorded data comprised of spontaneous unscripted conversation of employers and employees that were captured using mobile recording devices and lapel microphones. The recordings, i.e. the primary data for this study, were later transcribed, and the transcriptions integrated with the field notes made during observation were then analysed.

4.3.1 Participants' Consent

Prior to the commencement of data collection, consent was requested from both parties in the stores, i.e. store owners as well as assistants (see Appendix B(I), B(II) and B(III) for a copy of the consent forms that were used). Ideally, employers and employees of more than three stores would have been included as participants. However, while most store assistants were willing to participate, many owners felt uncertain about being recorded themselves and having the researcher present as an observer for the extended period that was required for a reliable ethnographic study. Eventually, even in the participating three stores where owners agreed to be part of the study, they consented to situate the recording devices at the point of sale where they are seated throughout the workday, but expressed unease at having the lapel microphones and recording devices attached. The assistants, because they move around in the store as well as in the centre, had the devices attached to their clothing. As a result, their everyday interaction within their own stores, and their interaction in other stores was recorded.

4.3.2 Field notes

In addition to the recordings, field notes were made in a fieldwork journal. These notes entailed not only observational notes that recorded what was seen and heard, but also theoretical notes i.e. preliminary inferences drawn during observation. Methodological and personal notes were also jotted down throughout the data collection. The methodological notes give a record of how the data were collected, as well as notes on what methods are most efficient in certain areas of the data collection site. What this entailed was noting at which times to do observations in certain stores, given customer traffic, and noting for how long I could observe in certain stores before I became too intrusive. I noted which stores were bigger and had heavier customer traffic, and would observe in these stores for longer periods. In smaller stores, owners and

assistants were more aware of my presence, and it also hindered customer traffic due to the lack of space. I also knew to not schedule observations on weekends and at the month-end, since those are the times with higher customer activity, making my presence as a researcher an obstruction.

4.3.3 Questionnaire data

To fully understand the patterns of communication, general biographical and personal linguistic profiles of the various participants was required. Therefore, each participant was requested to complete a questionnaire in which they were prompted to give detail of their linguistic repertoire, relevant educational trajectories, language contact encounters, and their self-assessed proficiency in each of the languages that they know. The information gained by means of the questionnaires therefore gave insight into the languages that participants know/speak/understand, where and when they acquired the language, and in which domains they find each of these languages useful. This questionnaire further asked questions about participants' feelings and experiences working in a specifically multilingual workplace. In addition to the questionnaires, I also conducted unstructured interviews with the participants about their language biographies. This prompted them to think about language, the value and use of the languages they know, both within the workplace and in their everyday life beyond. These discussions resulted in narrative biographic accounts of their experiences with language and how these experiences are situated in the broader social context. The language biographies described in chapter 2.6 are based on this information, which was also helpful in analysing the recorded conversations. The questionnaires enabled an initial glance into the language attitudes and language backgrounds of the participants, as a kind of preview to the recording, transcription and analysis process. An example of the questionnaire is given in Appendix C(I), C(II) and C(III).

To ascertain the necessary level of understanding, the questionnaires were translated into French and Mandarin Chinese i.e. into the L1s of some of the participants. Each participant was then given the choice of which language they preferred for this part of the data collection. Although some of the forms were completed in the participants' first languages, the follow up visits in which they verbally discussed their experiences regarding languages and the language biographies with the researcher, were in English. Of the eleven participants, seven completed the questionnaire forms in languages other than English. The two South African participants completed theirs in English, and Grace, who said that her French reading and writing

proficiency was too limited, completed her form in English. Faith, of course, completed her form in English as well.

4.3.4 Conversational data collected by recordings

As has been mentioned, as a linguistic ethnography, the study relied largely on the recordings of workplace interaction supported and complemented by the researcher's observations and field notes, as well as photos that give an impression of the data collection site. My observation turned attention specifically to the nature of the various interactions and the social processes in evidence among the participants. According to Rampton (2007) Linguistic Ethnography does not assume that the context of interaction is immediately clear; rather, it should be investigated alongside the interactional data. In a broad sense, ethnography enriches a fundamentally linguistic project. This is echoed by Rampton et al. (2014) who posit that community life and the context within which interactions are embedded need to be grasped ethnographically.

For the data to be collected ethnographically, I made notes throughout the workday, as interaction occurred. This was not limited to interaction between participants only, as I also noted the various relationships that participants had with neighbouring colleagues. This kind of observation gave me insight into the kinds of conversation, as well as the types of networks formed in China Town.

By using linguistic ethnography as an analytical approach, I analysed how participants use language and how they drew on their communicative affordances within the context in which conversation occurred. This entailed a close reading of the context, in relation to the communicative event. More importantly I focused on the communicative events as they occurred with a view to how participants interpret one another's turns, and noted these in the field notes. Together with these observational notes I was able to analyse the data with the frameworks given in 4.4.

4.3.4.1 Data collection – doing the recordings

Prior to data collection, I visited the shopping centre as a participant observer, frequenting the stores and making small-talk with the employers and employees. When I returned later to start out with formal consent for data collection, some of the employees with whom I had established rapport earlier, had moved on to work elsewhere.

The data collection was done between 2016 and 2017. Although I visited the centre earlier in 2016, the period of *recording* in stores, started in October of that year, and ended in March

2017. Still, random observations continued into 2018. Follow-up discussions were done where possible and as was required in the data analysis process.

Although data collection and observation occurred in three phases, the recordings took place in two phases – the first phase towards the end of 2016, and the second in the first term of 2017. The first phase entailed data collection for five non-consecutive days per store. In this phase, the store owners requested me not to do data collection over the weekend (Friday to Sunday) due to the increased activity with clients in the stores. Therefore, recordings were done over a period of two weeks per store on week days only. The recordings took place within the stores during working hours, i.e. between 9:00 and 17:30, and I was present throughout the recording period as an observer.

In the second phase of recording I spent more time in the stores, and I was allowed to record on weekends. Recording was done on non-consecutive days, and spanned across two weeks per store. The data collected in 2017 was intended as a means of control, to check whether practices noted in the first round were in fact established, and to track what had changed. Particularly, I was interested in whether the activity types and communicative practices observed and noted in 2016, had remained to the extent that they could count as typical communicative strategies and structures. Going back to the site after a few months to do a second round of data collection, proved to be beneficial in terms of how my presence was received. In 2016 the participants appeared apprehensive and overly conscious of my presence in the stores, but they were significantly more welcoming and relaxed when I returned a few months later. Eventually, the data collection amounted to approximately 80 hours of recording. After transcribing and filtering out non-participating interlocutors, interaction that took place in languages other than English, and filtering out long periods of silence, the amount of usable data was approximately 25 hours.

Although recording was done across a workday of eight hours, the amount of time in which spoken discourse was recorded, was an average of five hours per day. On the days that I recorded, the store owners would tell me at which times I was allowed to do recording for the following days, and would always dismiss me before closing time. For this reason, I was not able to record for the duration of the full workday. In one of the stores, the owners dismissed me thirty minutes before the store closed. Owing to this, I was unable to record interactions that occurred in the mornings when the stores opened, and in the late afternoon when they closed. In the mornings for example, even when I was at the site before the stores opened, the participants would attach the recording devices only after having entered their stores and

greeting one another. Therefore, greetings and possible instructions between employers and employees at the beginning and end of the workday, did not become part of the data. Even so, the kind of data that I obtained during the five hours of recording per day, provided ample material for answering the research questions.

4.3.4.2 *Data Processing – transcribing the recordings*

Once the recorded data had been obtained, the first step in analysing the data was to transcribe all the recorded interactions between the store owners and assistants. The transcription phase of the data processing is significant as speech is evanescent and would not be analysable within a DA or CA framework on the basis simply of the researcher being present as a listener. Even sound recordings, with the electronic functions to stop, pause, rewind or fast forward, are difficult to analyse without the transcription which allows for noting possibly significant features of speech that a single moment of listening cannot capture. Johnstone (2008:20) argues that:

"A great deal of discourse analysis is about non-written discourse. Since we cannot analyse discourse in these modes in real time, as it is taking place – analysis requires much more time and distance than a single viewing or listening provides – we study *records* of discourse" (my emphasis).

With this in mind, I agree with Cameron (2001) that transcription is a permanent record of what the researcher hears, and it gives the researcher the ability to deal with data in ways that one cannot do working with speech only. According to Cameron (2001:131), without a transcript it would be impossible to analyse conversation systematically. By transcribing the recordings of the interactions between the assistants and the store owners, I was able to critically analyse the (now) written text in terms of how the participants communicate, and how they achieve effective workplace interaction despite the language barriers.

The data was transcribed using a desktop programme known as EXMARaLDA, which is an electronic freeware programme that allows one to import the recordings into the interface and transcribe within the same window. As the transcription progressed I used the field notes to annotate the text.

One significant factor in the transcription was the filtering of raw data. As stated in 4.3.1, the recording devices were attached to the shop assistants' clothing, and were fixed at the counter where the owners were seated. This means that quite a bit of interaction with other people than the participants only, was recorded, such as interaction with customers and non-participating shop assistants from other stores. In some instances personal phone calls and video calls were

recorded as well. For this reason, transcription was not a linear process; it required thorough use of the field notes in order to track where exactly the employers and employees interacted, which turned out to be quite infrequent. A large volume of the recording was filled with conversation between participants and people who did not form part of this study, and thus although informative on the *kinds* of conversations that took place during a workday, had to be filtered out as the transcription took place.

A tricky aspect of data processing was to filter conversation that employers or employees had amongst each other. The bulk of the recordings consist of store owners in conversation with other Mandarin speakers, either in person or via their mobile phones, and store assistants speaking Lingala, Swahili or isiXhosa with other assistants. On most days, as with Shop 3, the entire recording would be filled with Vuyo and Porsha speaking isiXhosa and Zulu to colleagues who work within the complex, and with Tina communicating with fellow shop-keepers in Mandarin. On one of the days when I recorded, Vuyo and Tina were very silent in employer-employee conversation, communicating only three times, notably in an instruction sequence with Tina. In Shop 1, Nata, Gina and Sandra were in conversation with each other for most of the day. Often, other Congolese shop assistants from China Town would visit, and they could communicate in-store. All the while, Number-One would largely be engaged on his cell phone, playing mobile games, sending voice messages via instant messaging applications (in Mandarin) as observed, or he would be in conversation with neighbouring shop-keepers who visit him in store. In Shop 2, Suzanna watches series on her mobile device, and often has visitors from fellow shop-keepers. When the store did not have visitors, Grace would stand at the entrance of the store and engage in conversation with passersby. The interaction between employer and employee in this store constitutes the smallest part of the corpus data. This means that the analysis relied a great deal on the field notes taken throughout the data collection sessions. As I had noted the times of verbal interaction between owner and assistant, I could enter the fieldnotes on the comment tier in the transcription, thus showing what happened during times of silence in the oscillogram of the transcription programme.

The transcripts were sorted per store and by date, marked e.g. “Shop 1 – Day 2” or “Shop 2 – Day 4”, etc. In two of the stores, transcription was challenging because there were three different recording devices running at the same time, and in some cases interaction would be missed on one recorder, but picked up on another. In Shop 1, for instance, where there were five participants, I would miss interaction on the shop owner’s recorder when he moved around the store, for example when he was taking a smoking break. It helped that I could still pick up his voice on the devices worn by one of the shop assistants. Multi-way conversations were the

most challenging to process, since it involved listening to three separate recordings and synchronising them in order to obtain a coherent transcription.

4.4 DATA ANALYSIS

Although most of the data analysis took place after the transcription had been completed, primary observations and hypotheses were gleaned from the text as the transcription progressed. In a first step, I listened to recordings and scrutinised the transcriptions in order to become familiar with the data to such an extent that patterns not immediately obvious, were recognised. Secondly, typical structures, speech act sequences and discursive events gradually became obvious. During the process of transcription, having recognised characterising features, extracts that would best illustrate typical features were marked for purposes of illustration. Specifically excerpts that most ostensibly depict the phenomena in question, were selected.

To answer the specific research questions given in Chapter 1, the data was analysed within the theoretical frameworks of Conversation Analysis (Chapter 5) and Discourse Analysis, and where helpful aspects of CDA were also included (Chapter 6). These frameworks have proven to be highly suitable for engaging with the kind of phenomena observed and analysed in a study of spontaneous and unscripted workplace conversation as it occurs in real time (see Rampton, 2014; Schegloff et al., 2002).

Using the transcripts exported from the EXMARaLDA programme, the first analytic framework I used was Conversation Analysis (CA), which focuses on the fine-grained features of interactions. CA specifically allows one to analyse how participants negotiate meaning and come to understand one another in unscripted spoken interactions. This is particularly useful in this study where the overarching research question is to uncover how participants navigate workplace communication where English is a second language for participants who often know various other languages better than English.

4.4.1 Conversation Analysis

This study views ethnography as an epistemological resource in which CA as a method for accessing social processes complements others to give a holistic perspective on the conversations as workplace discourses. CA is seen by Goffman (1955) (cf. also Goffman, 1967) as a theoretical framework which uses empirical data to gain insight into the organization of interaction within the social domain in which it occurs. A linguistic ethnography in this dissertation supplements CA in providing valuable accounts of the organisation of verbal

communication in the workplace (Wooffitt, 2005). CA is an approach to the analysis of conversation, which is methodologically adapted to investigate all forms of talk-in-interaction. In this dissertation, I do CA considering not only the spoken interaction between speakers of different migrant groups, but also the contribution of the context to the communicative encounters within which their interaction takes place. Thus, this framework allows the researcher to describe and explain what happens linguistically as well as socially in the organisation of workplace communication.

As a starting point to analysing the data, I chose instances of interaction where there were longer interactions with more turns. The extracts used for analysis were based on which interactions were noteworthy in real time, i.e. instances of conversation that stood out as I was observing. This means that I knew which data I would use based on the observational notes. This is because conversation between employer and employee was so infrequent that I immediately noted when interaction occurred. With that being said, there was not a large corpus of data to scrutinize and systematically choose excerpts – although I chose the excerpts which are most illustrative of the kinds of conversation that occur in this setting. After choosing the excerpts and transcribing them, I grouped them into activity types such as sequences of giving and responding to instructions, or question and answer sequences. This allowed for the extrapolation of patterns that occurred in the workplace conversation.

4.4.2 Discourse Analysis and Critical Discourse Analysis

Discourse Analysis (DA) is a systematic approach to studying language-in-use, considering the formal and contextual features of spoken (as well as written) communication (cf. Levinson, 1983; Cook, 1989). According to Johnstone (2008:6), DA "sheds light on how speakers indicate their semantic intentions and how hearers interpret what they hear, and on the cognitive abilities that underlie human symbol use". In this dissertation DA enabled me to systematically analyse the transcriptions of spontaneous, unscripted workplace interaction in China Town stores. Using Gumperz's (2001) interactional sociolinguistic approach, DA works with larger units of language than CA, and so has allowed for the analysis of how participants interpret and convey meaning in everyday communicative practices. This analytic framework uses a different contextual approach, and focuses on "situations of speaking" by using ethnographic methods of inquiry (Gumperz, 2001:215).

Although DA and CA developed as two ideologically different approaches, this study deals with everyday human interaction, so that certain aspects of interaction could not be overlooked

in the analysis. Although a description of communicative practices in a language contact situation was done by looking at the structure and organization of turns, the issue of larger communicative strategies signifying power and relationship dynamics, cannot be ignored in this context. DA considers spoken language events, considers speech act types and speech action sequences, and considers on a textual level what the formal and contextual features of a discourse type is. In this case, I looked at and have tried to characterize multilingual workplace interactions between people who have various roles in the particular China Town trading centre.

To analyse the data from a DA perspective, I used Gee's (2011) conceptualisation of language as a way of saying, being and doing. This means that I analysed the conversation with specific questions in mind, namely: what is happening in this interaction? What are participants trying to do with their talk? What identities do they take on in their talk? How do they position themselves through talk? By asking these questions, I was able to recognise and explicate the participants' positions in the data. This led to further analysing the data from a critical perspective, paying particular attention to who initiates conversation, who holds the most and longest turns, as well as who had the power to change or introduce the topics of conversation. As power is an inherent feature of all interpersonal interaction, CDA was also considered. Specifically, this approach looks not only descriptively at formal and contextual features of the discourse, but also at how hierarchical relationships are managed, how power is distributed, and how power is exercised as well as (at times) resisted, even in a context of truncated language proficiencies.

4.7 ETHICAL CLEARANCE AND PERMISSIONS

As the study engages participants from various language communities as respondents and in a context where many are socially vulnerable, ethical considerations were taken into account. The necessary permissions were obtained from Stellenbosch University's Research Ethics Committee (REC). As this study did not engage employees of large public institutions, the participants' own consent was requested. Possible participants were approached, and the aims of the study were explained to them. Those who agreed to take part were requested to give written consent. All participants were given two consent forms to sign – one for the researcher and one copy for themselves. The participant copy clearly details the aim and purpose of the study. As is customary, all potential participants were informed that their participation is voluntary and that they had the option to withdraw from the study at any stage, and/or to ask for certain segments of data they had provided, to be removed from the corpus. Incidentally, none who had given written consent withdrew, nor did any request sections of the data to be

removed. This information was also written in the participants' copy of the consent form. Documents requesting consent were provided in English, as well as the languages preferred by participants – i.e. in Mandarin (for the shopkeepers), and French (where assistants are from the DRC). In addition, the aims and methodology of the study were explained to them.

This research does not require the identities of the participants to be disclosed and therefore their anonymity is assured. While this study focused on the interaction between shop owners and their assistants and not on their interaction with customers, there is awareness of the fact that customers entered and interacted in the stores. In this case as stated in 4.5, their interaction with the participants in this research was filtered out, so that their contributions to conversations are on the undisclosed, protected audio files only, and not in the transcripts.

4.8 CONCLUSION

This chapter has detailed the methods used for data collection and analysis, and has introduced the setting and participants central to this study. Here the kind of data as well as the procedures for data collection have been explained. The analytical frameworks were defined and explained, and its relevance for use in this study was motivated. The ethical permissions and considerations have also been described here.

The following chapter presents the language biographies of the participants in the study. This is followed by the data analysis in the next chapters. Chapter 6 will describe and explain the kinds of conversation and communicative practices that take place between shop owners with significantly different linguistic biographies to the shop assistants whom they appoint and with whom they spend long working hours.

CHAPTER 5

LANGUAGE BIOGRAPHIES

This chapter describes the language biographies of the participants, thus giving the individual linguistic trajectories of each. This is important to understand and analyse the conversations observed and recorded in the various stores. Traditionally, a language biography relies on individual narratives about the emergence of a speaker's language practices and language ideologies (Busch, 2012). The notion of a language biography, or a biographic approach to language (cf. Busch, Jardine & Tjoutuku, 2006; Busch, 2012) has been used in the investigation of multilingual repertoires, specifically in pedagogical settings. The premise however, is relevant for multilingual phenomena in both formal institutions (such as education) as well as informal contexts such as the one of interest in this study. A language biographic approach draws attention to questions of language attitude and language as it is linked to identity (Busch, 2006). Most significantly, Busch (2006:9) states that a language biography provides a view into the experiences of an individual in terms of the language regimes in which the individual develops their language practices. A biographic account also speaks to an individual's ambitions in terms of wanting to be a speaker of a certain language or code (Busch, 2006). This is particularly seen when some of the assistants, express the desire to improve their proficiency in certain languages, as will be further discussed in Chapter 7.

In this study, the language biography questionnaire was a four-page document that the participants were requested to complete. The information presented below is based on not only participants' written biographies, but also on later interviews with them (see Chapter 4.3).

5.1 Number-One

Number-One is a young male Chinese shop owner, aged between 25 and 36 years old, from the Fujian Province in mainland China, who has been in South Africa since 2011. He reports that he was taught English at high school for three years, but that he was not very good at it. This is the only language that he knows other than Mandarin. In the questionnaire he indicated that he is able to speak, understand, read and write in English, although he rated his proficiency as limited (as 3 on a 5-point scale). He reports that he still finds it a challenge to interact in a multilingual environment, stating in reference to interaction with customers that it is a challenge to "speak and can't understand what he or she said". When asked whether he has ever needed an interpreter for workplace communication, he mentioned that he would only need one when

there is a communication breakdown between himself and a customer. In such an event he would not resort to an external or mobile translator (such as Google translate) but would call one of the assistants to mediate. He explains: “I just uh say I don’t understand what ... then you just uh call those, call you see Nata come or call them”. There is no need for interpreting in communicating with his assistants either, who, in follow-up interviews reported that they had learnt some Chinese and were therefore able to follow their employers in as much as they felt they required. When I asked him whether his assistants had acquired his language, Number-One explained: “Me talk with Ireen, say ‘close now’ we are talking Chinese language. Then these people know what to do. Just little little, not too much”. This confirmed that the assistants had picked up certain common phrases, such as “*guanbi shijian*” (closing time). Therefore, when he and Ireen mentioned closing the store in Mandarin, the assistants knew they could start to bring the mannequins and outside display products into the store, because they had learnt to comprehend bits of Mandarin.

5.2 Ireen

Ireen is the co-owner of Shop 1 and is married to Number-One. She is also from the Fujian province, and came to South Africa in 2012, one year after Number-One. Ireen also had three years of English instruction at school; however, she is less proficient than her husband. She cannot read or write English, but is able to speak haltingly and to comprehend the language, provided that the interlocutor does not speak too fast. She often has difficulty communicating with customers, and relies on the assistants to mediate. Mandarin Chinese is her first language, and she uses English only at work when communicating with the assistants and with customers at the point of sale.

5.3 Sandra

Sandra is a 29-year-old female from the Kinshasa region in the Democratic Republic of Congo who has been in South Africa since 2012. Apart from Lingala and Kikongo which are her first languages, she also speaks French fluently as this was the language-of-learning when she was at school, and she still uses it in her personal life. Further, she learned Swahili when she studied in Lubumbashi, and later learned English when she came to South Africa. She uses Lingala and French in most of her every day interactions with her co-workers, i.e. with other Congolese assistants, and at home. At work, she and her co-workers mix Lingala, French, and Swahili. When I asked her what would prompt her to switch from English to another language at work, she explained that it is beneficial in terms of security, especially when there is a suspicious

customer in store, they can warn one another to look out for shop lifting using their shared language without the customer being able to follow them.

She also listed Chinese, isiXhosa and Afrikaans as languages in which she has some proficiency, and she mentioned that her interaction with customers had taught her how to say “Goeie more” (good morning), “kyk hier” (*look here*), “pragtig” (*pretty*), “baie mooi” (*very beautiful*), “kom hierso” (*come here*) in Afrikaans. She proceeded to show her ability to produce coherent (although code mixed) sentences: “*Kyk hier, this one is baie mooi*” (***Look here this one is very beautiful***). She often acts as a language broker between Ireen and Afrikaans speaking customers, and occasionally also when other languages are involved. She illustrated her skill by giving an example of a customer who entered the store and asked Ireen how much the “doekies” (scarves) cost. Ireen did not understand the customer, so she called on Sandra, who immediately knew that the customer was referring to scarves. She then relayed this to Ireen. She concludes that when it comes to communicating with her employers they “understand each other nicely”. She learned Chinese from working in China Town, although her comprehension is considerably better than her ability to speak it. She states that she understands when Number-One and Ireen speak about her or the other assistants, and she understands certain common phrases that are used in store. The most interesting development in her language repertoire however, is her English proficiency. Sandra had no English instruction at school, and learned the language when she came to South Africa in search of career opportunities. Since she arrived here in 2012, she has taught herself to read and write English, although she expresses more confidence in the former: “English I can write no, but I can read it, but to write ...”. Astonishingly, she claims to have learned to read English from the subtitles while watching a popular South African television series, *Generations*. She explains: “I was watching Generations, when I watching Generations I started read it, read it, read it, just like that. But write not nicely. But when I write you can read it, even [if] its not clear, you can understand”. It is evident that Sandra has a dynamic repertoire, and she readily adapts according to the needs in her environment. In discussions during data collection she expressed that she would like to continue learning English and to be a proficient reader and writer.

5.4 Nathalie (Nata)

Nathalie is a 29-year old female from Lubumbashi, in the Democratic Republic of Congo. Her first languages are Swahili and French, and she also speaks Tshiluba, Lingala, and English. She acquired the latter in South Africa. She mentioned that she has full proficiency in Swahili, French, Tshiluba and Lingala, and can read and write a little bit of English. She came to South

Africa in 2011, and lived with her sister and South African brother-in-law in Johannesburg for two years, which is where she learned English. She also lists Chinese, isiXhosa and Afrikaans as languages in her repertoire, as she is exposed to it every day and has since picked up a reasonable vocabulary. She can however, not read and write in the three languages, and speaks it minimally. When asked about her proficiency in these languages, she expressed that if there are customers who speak the language in store she understands “a little bit like [when customers ask] ‘how much’ in their language”. When asked about her exposure to Mandarin, she reported to understanding certain phrases such as “good morning”, “lunch time” or “closing time”. Her comprehension, much like Sandra’s, outweighs her ability to speak these languages. Nathalie was the first of the three assistants to work in Shop 1, and she did not have Lingala in her linguistic repertoire until she met Sandra and Gina. Although she learned it predominantly through workplace communication, she now also uses Lingala with Congolese friends that she has met since living in Cape Town. She acquired Lingala through interaction with Gina and Sandra, and proudly states that she can read and “write Lingala, like nicely, like if I going to school” [meaning she can read and write as though she had received Lingala instruction at school]. Here it is clear that Nathalie is relatively good at informally learning languages that are used in her environment every day. As is the case with Gina and Sandra who grew up speaking Lingala, and who therefore use it in their interaction with each other, Nathalie has since learned the language and speaks it fluently with her co-workers and other Lingala speakers in her work and home environments.

5.5 Gina

Gina is a 30-year-old female from the Kinshasa region in Congo. Her first languages are Lingala and French, with which she grew up and that she uses in the family and work domains. She also reports that she is raising her infant (18-month-old) daughter to speak only English and French, although she still speaks Lingala to her husband. This alludes to her language attitude towards English; even though she is not a fluent speaker she nonetheless realises its value and therefore wants her daughter to speak it as a first language. Gina learned English when she came to South Africa, and understands a little bit of Swahili because of Nata and Sandra who are both fluent speakers of the language. She has picked up on Swahili at work, and has since mixed some words into her interaction with Sandra and Nathalie. Even though Lingala is the most regularly spoken language between Gina, Sandra and Nathalie, they frequently code-mix with French and Swahili. In terms of her English proficiency, she explains that, just like Sandra, she can read a bit of English, which she acquired through being exposed to subtitles in movies. Like Sandra, she wishes to improve on her English proficiency, for herself and her daughter.

5.6 Suzanna

Suzanna is the oldest participant in this study, situated in the age bracket of 46 and older. She is a Mandarin L1 speaker from Shaanxi, China, which is where she completed high school. Being of an older generation Chinese, Suzanna was not taught English at school. Her exposure to the language came about when she moved to South Africa in 2002. Suzanna's daughter is enrolled at one of the local universities. She reports that her daughter is a fluent English speaker, but that they do not use English at all in the family/home domain. Suzanna thus uses a relatively low-proficiency English at work only, when communicating with customers and her assistants. In instances of dispute with a customer, Suzanna would use the translator application on her phone. In extreme situations however, she brings her daughter to mediate and act as a language broker between her and the participant involved.

5.7 Grace

Grace is a 21-year-old female who was born in Kinshasa, DRC, and migrated to South Africa with her family in 2004. Her first language is Lingala, which she identifies as the language she has spoken "since birth". She received most of her schooling in Kinshasa, but completed her secondary school career in South Africa, Western Cape. This was a significant shift for her, since the language of learning in Kinshasa is French, and the schools in the Western Cape use English, and in some cases Afrikaans, as the language of teaching and learning. Even in an English medium school in Cape Town, Afrikaans is taught as a compulsory additional language. Grace has worked in China Town since 2014, which is her first job since completing high school. Since working in China Town she has acquired isiXhosa and Chinese on a comprehension level (i.e. 3 on a 5-point scale) just as the assistants in Shop 1. She categorised her languages according to their domains of use: French, Lingala and English are used in all domains, Afrikaans was used at school when she was required to learn the language as part of the syllabus, and Xhosa and Chinese are used at work. She mentions not liking Afrikaans, and therefore does not use the language, even when there are Afrikaans-speaking customers in the store. She has befriended isiXhosa speakers in China Town, some of whom are employed as security staff, and others who work in the franchise stores within the complex. This means that she speaks a variety of languages in China Town, and uses most of the languages in her multilingual repertoire when communicating with speakers of different languages. When asked whether she ever uses a language other than English when speaking to Suzanna, she states that she will only change the language when she argues with Suzanna and "gets angry"; then she reports switching to Lingala (which Suzanna cannot understand).

5.8 Faith

Faith is a 46-year-old female from Benin City, South Nigeria. Her first language is Edo, and she identifies English as another first language, as it was spoken in her home. English was the language of teaching and learning in school, as well as university where she obtained a BSc degree in Political Science. She was self-employed in Nigeria before she moved to South Africa in October 2016. Although English and Edo are the only two languages that she speaks, she mentions that she is restricted to using only English in South Africa, because no one else can speak her home language. Even other Nigerian people that live in her complex do not speak Edo, as they are from a different region in Nigeria, so she speaks English in all domains in South Africa. She is also the only Nigerian employee in China Town, which she finds to be isolating since she has been unable to befriend the other assistants. The majority of the assistants are Congolese origin, so that a new speaker-community has been established, based on assistants' shared knowledge of similar languages. Faith has not acquired any Chinese, isiXhosa or Afrikaans in the same way as other assistants had indicated, although at the time of data collection she was still newly employed and so the possibility of eventually developing language skills that would be more inclusive, was still open. When I asked her how she gets by with English only, she referred to the use of Google translate: "If we don't understand each other my boss uses her Google translator". This was however never observed during data collection.

5.9 Tina

Tina is a young Chinese female in the age bracket between 26 and 35 years old. She completed the 12th Grade in China and reports that she had English as a school subject. She lists English and Chinese as the only two languages that she knows and can speak, explaining that she only uses English in the work domain. She has been in South Africa since 2008, but only started working in China Town in 2015. She states that she can read, write, and understand English, since she started learning English at the age of 10, in China. Her proficiency is however truncated, as she minimally makes use of English, and clearly (on the researcher's observation) was less proficient than e.g. Number-one. She explained that there are often instances where she would need an interpreter in workplace communication with her employees, and that in such instances she would ask the centre manager to assist her. This, as with Faith and Suzanna, was not observed during data collection, and I would therefore argue that interpretation relying on google-translate is only required in exceptional circumstances.

5.10 Vuyo

Vuyo is a 24-year-old South African Xhosa female. She was born in the Eastern Cape, and attended school there until the 10th Grade. She had English and isiXhosa as languages of learning at school and acquired Afrikaans and isiZulu on a comprehension level at the ages of 23 and 20 respectively. She learnt Afrikaans through exposure to customers who speak the language at work, and Zulu through interaction with friends. She therefore is only fully proficient in isiXhosa and English, and understands Afrikaans and Zulu.

5.11 Porsha

Porsha is a female Xhosa South African from Johannesburg, Gauteng. Like Vuyo, she completed Grade 10 before leaving high school. IsiXhosa is her first language, and she had English as a compulsory school subject. She therefore can understand, speak, read and write in the two languages. Her English is, however, at second language proficiency, and she still experiences some difficulty with reading and writing. She thus uses mostly isiXhosa at work, which she indicates is unproblematic, since she only communicates with Vuyo, and other Xhosa speakers from the nearby franchise stores. During observation, I noted that Porsha and Tina do not communicate with each other often, and that Vuyo frequently acts as a language broker between Tina and Porsha when there is communicative difficulty. Porsha explains that she finds Afrikaans and Chinese to be the most challenging languages in interaction, hence her reluctance to interact with her Chinese-speaking employer. She further concludes that “Xhosa is my language ... English and Xhosa is better language for me”.

CHAPTER 6

CONVERSATION ANALYSIS OF CHINA TOWN WORKPLACE INTERACTION

6.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter will present the analysis of recorded conversations using a CA framework to uncover the characterising features of talk between participants as they negotiate meaning in the particular workplace in focus in this study. The analysis will consider how meaning is created and communicated in interactions between participants who do not share a first language, and English is the lingua franca in the workplace. It will address the following research questions as set out in chapter 1.5:

1. What are the language biographies of the participants and how do they draw on these to negotiate meaning? Which languages make up the linguistic repertoire of shopkeepers and shop assistants in China Town stores? Besides the value of English, which other languages besides English feature in the workplace communication?
2. What are the communicative strategies typically used between the various participants? Which of these appear to be typical of such language contact situations and which appear to be new, i.e. not recorded in previous studies of workplace communication between speakers of mutually unintelligible languages while in a foreign country.
3. How can the conversations between shop owners and shop assistants in the shop as workplace be categorised in generic terms, e.g. discussion of stock, giving and receiving instructions, conversation between owner and assistant on client relations, and the likes?

Regarding the first objective, the analysis in this chapter will refer to the description of participants' language biographies in chapter two. Using a CA framework, responding specifically to objectives two and three, the analysis will trace how participants produced typical speech act sequences, looking at the various structures they used, which languages they relied on, how they managed their own and each other's turns in interaction, and how they enacted understanding in the progression of the conversation. In this chapter, concepts on which CA relies, such as turn-taking and turn-organization, adjacency pairs, action repairs, recipient design, sequence organization, and preference organization (Schegloff et al., 2002; Seedhouse, 2004; Drew, 2005), will be invoked. By applying these concepts in the conversation analysis, I

will elucidate how the participants design their contributions in interaction on a micro-level, i.e., referring to small units of talk, I shall show how these contributions are produced, received and interpreted.

The analysis follows the basic framework proposed by Schegloff and Sacks (1973:5) asking “*why that now?*” This is an approach to analysing the turns in talk according to a scheme that is interested in *what is getting done in that bit of talk, what is achieved by the talk being done in that specific manner, and in just that place?* This framework has been chosen for analysing the data in this dissertation, as the major premise for studying talk-in-interaction is to uncover the strategies for both the construction and understanding of meaning in spoken language which is unscripted and often not presented in full and grammatical sentences. In this study my interest is specifically in such multilingual work place conversation.

According to Schegloff and Sacks (1973), if we are to understand language in its contexts of deployment, we primarily need to understand how and for what it is deployed, and how its deployments are understood by the participants in the interaction. For this reason, the conversations were recorded as part of a linguistic ethnography.

6.2 OVERVIEW OF DATA

The data presented here was captured in the recordings collected in three stores (Shops 1, 2, 3) as has been explained in chapter four. As the analysis will show, the participants in the three stores have apparent differences in their linguistic practices. The kinds of conversation not only portray the linguistic practices of the specific stores, but can also be taken as indicative of the linguistic practices of most stores in this specific China Town. Although recorded data was not collected in the other stores, consistent observation supplements this generalisation of normative interaction in China Town.

The analysis in this chapter will focus on the various activity types (cf. Levinson, 1979, 1992) that occur in the workplace. These activity types comprise unscripted talk, largely characterized by adjacency pairs such as giving and responding to instructions, questions and answers, and giving and receiving information. In such speech activities, the speaker contributions are relatively short; long stretches of conversation between shop keeper and assistant were rare. Although longer, drawn out stretches of conversation were largely absent, between assistants, when they reverted to their L1s, the speaker turns were often longer. The most commonly occurring kind of interaction between the various staff members are analysed here, with specific attention to the events during which ELF was used.

Approximately 80 hours of recorded data was collected; however, the amount of time participants spent speaking, was considerably less. The volume of data obtained from the stores that could be used in analysis, varied based on the activities of the participants in the different stores. In Shop 1, participants spent most of the day speaking in their first languages in employee-employee and employer-employer interactions. Interaction between employer and employee was sporadic, even if notable. Shop 2, in contrast, was occupied by two participants at a time, thus the interaction between employer and employee was more consistent, although much of the workday was spent with each participant being preoccupied with individual tasks and activities. Shop 3 had the least employer-employee communication, and employees spent most of the work day interacting with employees of other shops in China Town. Further they performed their daily tasks in silence. This is a common feature of communication in China Town: employers and employees are engaged in their designated activities, and social exchanges are minimal. For this reason, and due to the fact that in Shop 3 data was only collected in the first period, extracts of conversation presented in this chapter are unevenly distributed, with Shop 3 presenting the least “usable” data for analysis. Nonetheless, the extracts presented and analysed here are illustrative of the kinds of conversation that occur in China Town as workplace, and project a realistic view into the daily activities and interactions of this “speech community” (cf. Gumperz, 1968).

In the following sections the conversational patterns encountered in the three shops will be presented. In the transcribed extracts, a [v] category presents the spoken interaction, and [c] categories provide contextual annotations. The extracts found in this chapter are in the EXMARaLDA transcription format, and are therefore differ from that of conventional CA transcription. This transcription format, however, still shows speech overlap, false starts, simultaneous speech and, specifically useful in this store, three-way conversations in which various participants engage in the same speech act sequence.

6.3 SHOP 1: TYPICALLY OCCURRING CONVERSATION TYPES

The participants in this shop were Number-One and his three employees Nathalie (NAT), Gina (GIN) and Sandra (SAN). The extracts presented here are excerpts from the second phase of data collection, when Ireen was in China. She therefore does not feature in this section. To select the excerpts introduced and analysed in this section, I spent time going through field notes and listening multiple times to the recordings. On the basis of such scrutiny, it was possible to identify five conversation types, namely (i) giving and receiving instructions, (ii) managing disagreement, (iii) requesting, giving and responding to information, (iv) casual,

informal conversation, and (v) banter. All ELF conversation that occurred during working hours in the store could fit into one of these five categories.

I begin this analysis with an interaction that most commonly occurred in this specific shop. It shows the characteristic ways that the participants deal with giving and responding to instructions. Following this, I show typical patterns in managing disagreement specifically with respect to challenges and rebukes. The conversation below is illustrative of the language choices and linguistic structure, as well as the dynamic between participants in Shop 1.

Other kinds of conversation regularly encountered in this shop were casual informal conversation and banter, which included taunting and admonishing. Following the findings of early CA scholars, most of these conversation types involve two or more speakers, and the speech acts are enacted in the form of *adjacency pairs* which are sometimes interrupted by different kinds of *insertion sequences*. Thus, instruction conversation types are enacted by an utterance pair made up of the first speaker giving the instruction and then the second speaker accepting or refusing to accept the instruction. Accepting an instruction, which is the *preferred response*, usually entails less words, and can even be enacted non-verbally. The *dispreferred response* usually requires an explanation, or can follow only after additional information has been requested. This typically comes in the form of an insertion sequence, or an explanation given in a *side sequence* adjacent to the negative response. Similarly, information exchange sequences are produced in the form of the first speaker asking information, and in the case of the preferred response, the speaker giving the required information. A dispreferred response would be refusal to give information, and in polite, face saving events an explanation for the refusal would be given. The next five sections will illustrate each of the conversation types I distinguished.

6.3.1 Giving and receiving instructions

Instruction giving and receiving occurred regularly. Mostly, the owners (either Number-One or Ireen) would give the initial part of the sequence, i.e. addressing an employee and either requesting or demanding some action from the addressee. For example, Number-One (speaker A) would indicate to Gina (speaker B) that empty clothes hangers were to be collected and taken to the storage space upstairs. Gina gives a dispreferred response, refusing by indicating why she cannot immediately follow the instruction. Such dispreferred responses came in different ways: sometimes speaker B would ignore speaker A; sometimes she would answer back, at times even taunting A; or she would give a counter-instruction or an associated request,

and occasionally simply an explanation of the difficulty she had in complying with the instruction. Specifically, *extract 5.1* below displays an instance of first a question-answer sequence, followed by Number-One giving instructions to one assistant, who gets responses from two – both the addressee and a second “overhearing” assistant. The latter not only complies by following the instruction, she also uses the opportunity to admonish Number-One. This excerpt illustrates that although the central verbal action of the exchange is an instruction, various insertion sequences and side sequences co-occur. The main action of instructing opens opportunities for the employees to indirectly issue their own “counter-instructions” (*don’t overexert us; go outside if you are smoking*).

Extract 6.1

NAT [v]		Hey Number-One	What wrong?
N1 [c]	<i>Number-One is coughing continuously</i>	<i>Still coughing</i>	

N1 [v]		Gina. There inside hanger I have more there
GIN [v]	TB! Cigarette!	TB! TB! TB

NAT [v]	To Gina there is more hanger inside there put it upstairs
GIN [v]	
NAT [c]	<i>Repeating N1's instruction to Gina</i>
GIN [c]	

NAT [v]	Let me put it upstairs (...) I'm gonna do it
GIN [v]	Can't you see I'm busy?
N1 [c]	
GIN [c]	<i>Addressing N1</i>

NAT [v]	Number-One if you want to smoke you
N1 [c]	<i>N1 is smoking in the storage section above the store</i>

NAT [v]	must go smoke that side by number 2 shop you know this space is ^eeh eh
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In the extract above, Number-One is smoking a cigarette in the storage space of the store which is located on the second-floor. This space also serves as the staff area where employees take their lunch breaks, as it is out of the customers’ view. As Number-One is smoking, he goes into a fit of coughing, which raises concern from Nathalie. The interaction begins with an initiation of conversation from Nathalie, “Hey Number-One”. This is a first move in an adjacency pair as she calls for his attention, to which Number-One does not respond. Nathalie further prompts, “What wrong?”, which is met with more coughing and no answer from the addressee. In response to Nathalie’s question, Gina interjects from below, remarking that the cause of his

coughing is tuberculosis (TB). She further remarks, “cigarette”, and prolongs her taunts with, “TB! TB!”.

Gina’s entry into the conversation makes her a co-participant in the interaction between Number-One and Nathalie, even though he does not initially provide feedback to Nathalie’s turns. In response to her taunting, Number-One gives Gina an instruction, which marks the first part of an instruction sequence. He directs his turn directly to her, as seen in the beginning of his utterance, “*Gina*. There inside hanger ...”. Number-One’s instruction to Gina indicates that he now regards her a participant in the conversation, and thus she is eligible to receive an instruction. Gina does not confirm or execute the instruction, but further taunts him by exclaiming: “TB!” Number-One’s instruction is reiterated and channelled by Nathalie who is an overhearer of the instruction. She channels the instruction, constructing it as a direct message to Gina from Number-One: “To Gina there is more hanger inside there put it upstairs”.

Nathalie’s repetition of Number-One’s request emphasizes the new topic he introduced, turning attention away from his coughing to work-related duties. The first adjacency pair part is thus given twice. Gina interprets Nathalie’s utterance as intended, and responds directly to Number-One: “Can’t you see I’m busy?” This question, the second adjacency pair part, is characterized as a *dispreferred response* following Seedhouse (2004) who explains that dispreferred responses to instructions are often mitigated and presented as an excuse of some kind. Gina’s refusal to execute the instruction is structured as a curt question which is a *disaffiliative move* – one that does not adhere to the established workplace norms, or the activity type at hand. Noticing Gina’s inappropriate response to Number-One, Nathalie interjects and offers to do it instead, effectively mediating and diffusing the situation. Nathalie’s initial relay of the instruction renders her a ratified side-participant (Goffman, 1981) in the instruction sequence between Number-One and Gina, and as such, her acceptance of the instruction, which was initially directed at Gina, could be regarded a preferred response. Her utterance could therefore be the preferred second adjacency pair part to Number-One’s initial instruction.

After executing Number-One’s instruction, Nathalie introduces a new topic by admonishing him for smoking in the store. She chastises him directly, insisting that if he wants to smoke he “must do it that side by number 2 shop”. He does not respond to her and continues smoking, thus not providing a subsequent preferred action. This kind of interaction was characteristic in this store – employees often initiated a conversational turn in an attempt to engage their employer, but they were often met with silence.

In section 6.3.3 below I will show how Number-One responds to his employees when they initiate interaction, focusing specifically how he responds to rebuke, and how Number-One and the assistants manage disagreement. In the following section a second highly regular conversation type – managing disagreement – will be illustrated.

6.3.2 Managing disagreement: challenge and rebuke

Number-One’s responses to claims for attention from his employees, whether in instructions, reprimands, or exchanging information, exhibit a regular pattern. The extract below of a conversation between Number-One, Sandra and Gina demonstrates this.

Extract 6.2

N1 [v]		^^Yes there I
SAN [v]	Number-One you ^see customer there	
N1 [c]	<i>N1 is preoccupied with his cellphone and ignores the customer who wants to pay</i>	

N1 [v]	see shut up you!		
SAN [v]		Aaawwww!	
GIN [v]			[Insertion in Lingala] 'I see
GIN [c]			<i>laughing while imitating N1</i>
SAN [c]		<i>laughing</i>	

SAN [v]			One day we gonna ^beat you in this shop
GIN [v]	there shut up'	^You!	You see you didn't see but you see 'you see
GIN [c]			

SAN [v]			
GIN [v]	there shut up!'	You ^see you are beezy	You see look at 'there I see

GIN [v]	shut up'	Ooooy ^this man ha ah when's Ireen coming back?
SAN [c]		<i>laughing</i>

GIN [v]	I'm gonna tell Ireen everything No Number-One is not good 'I see shut up' but		
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GIN [v]	you didn't see
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Before the conversation given in the extract above, Number-One was playing games on his mobile phone while a customer was standing at the point of sale, waiting to pay for his items. Sandra addressed the situation by calling to him, using statement form “you see [the] customer there” to ask him whether he is aware of the customer’s presence, while also implying that he is ignoring the customer. Sandra thus opens the conversation by calling Number-One’s attention to the customer. The declarative she uses is not a direct instruction, although her pointing it out

does imply that he should attend to the customer. Number-One's response appears impatient and impolite. He has ostensibly recognized Sandra's remark as a directive for him to put down his mobile phone and attend to the customer. Number-One yells at her, “^^Yes, there I see, shut up you!” This response functions as a second pair part to Sandra's instruction in that he acknowledges that he is aware of the customer. This exchange took place in full view of the customer, who was silently waiting for Number-One to process his purchase. Given the informality of China Town, this exchange did not seem to trouble the customer.⁴ Sandra responds with an exclamation and laughs at his remark, then relays the interaction to her co-workers in Lingala, characterised by sufficient mimicking for me to follow the exchange. In solidarity with Sandra, Gina, who was an overhearer, responds to her in Lingala, and comments on Number-One's outburst. She then enters the conversation verbally, directly addressing Number-One with: “You!” Gina imitates Number-One and tells him that he claims to have seen the customer but he “didn't see”. At the evidence of support from Gina, Sandra utters a threat to her employer, warning him that one day the assistants will beat him up. She includes her co-workers in the threat when she says “we gonna beat you”, even though Number-One's outburst was directed at her only. Gina and Sandra's turns overlap here as Gina addresses Number-One, telling him that he did not see the customer even though he exclaimed, “I see there, shut up”. She extends her turn and again points out that he is preoccupied: “you ^see you are beeezy [*busy*]”. Gina's reference to him being busy supports Sandra's initial reprimand that he should be alert to customers, and help them when they get to his counter.

At this point, Number-One has already concluded the purchase with the customer and quietly continues to play mobile games on his cell phone. This means that the problem Sandra posed in her opening utterance has been resolved. When Gina sees him playing on his cell phone, she remarks once again “you see look at ‘there I see, shut up’”. Here she labels him according to his exclamation “there I see shut up” and treats his hostile utterance as though he personifies the utterance. Throughout Gina's rebuke Sandra is silent, and she laughs as Gina continues to rant: “This man ha ah. When's Ireen coming back?”. Her introduction here “this man, ha-ah”, is a typical cryptic South African English utterance designating a person (“this man” as clear reference to Number-One), and then indicating negative judgement and astonishment with “ha-ah”, an informal alternative to “no” or “not good”. Her immediately following question about when Ireen is coming back, is asked as a means of indicating that Ireen is being missed in the store, that her husband is not doing well on his own. This is probably also meant to provoke

⁴ Very often there are disputes between customers and shop keepers in China Town— often aggressive altercations based on misunderstanding. This exchange between Number-One and Sandra is therefore not uncharacteristic in this context.

him as she asks the question out loud, and then a moment later warns “I’m gonna tell Ireen everything” while repeating her view that it isn’t good to say “I see, shut up” while not attending to things one should see.

When Number-One continues to ignore her, her taunts dissolve into this repetition, also illustrating the condensed kinds of ELF utterances that are produced and apparently also understood in the workplace: “No Number-One, [it] is not good [to say] ‘I see shut up’ but you didn’t see [the customer in front of you]”. This final utterance also counts as a rebuke at his outburst towards Sandra. The mutual support among the employees in Shop 1 is evident in this incident, as it is in the preceding extracts.

Ostensibly, Gina expected a response from Number-One, as each utterance was intended to engage him. Yet, he does not answer, and the more he remains silent, the longer she continues to issue threats and taunts. This is a repercussion of Number-One’s refusal to respond to her reproach. Such silence instead of a second pair part answer, intensifies speaker A’s insistence that he should be accountable, that his behaviour is sanctionable (cf. Seedhouse, 2004). The extracts above have portrayed issues of rebuke, taunting, and other instances of dispreferred responses.

In the workplace, more even than misunderstanding due to mismatching linguistic resources, there are disagreements about what should be done, who should take responsibility, and the likes. The interaction in the extract below is prefaced by a discrepancy in the pricing of a suitcase, after which Sandra rebukes Number-One, arguing that he had misinformed the customers about the price of one of the suitcases. Number-One responds by reprimanding Sandra for not doing the price tagging correctly. Rather than the preferred response of apology or resolution after a rebuke, this interaction plays out with each speaker answering with a counter-reprimand. There is a clear disagreement on who is to blame for the incorrect information that the customer had received, as both Number-One and Sandra are convinced that the other is to blame.

Extract 6.3

SAN [v]	Number-One that suitcase you tell that customer 240 he think like you (...) talking about		
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SAN [v]	that grey one	Grey one	So he show me say you tell
N1 [v]	Which one?		

SAN [v]	them this grey one is 240		
N1 [v]	Its actually the ^big size yeah the ^big size 240		

SAN [v]	But you must you must ^talk them	
N1 [v]		^So now do you not put price on there~ the
SAN [v]		They didn't sss they didn't see the price they just heard you say that
N1 [v]	size is size	
SAN [v]	big is was 240 so they think that 550 also is 240	
N1 [v]		^No I'm talking about why
GIN [v]		You are the boss
N1 [v]	there now no price on there?	
GIN [v]		
SAN [c]		<i>Sandra is telling Gina about the case of the incorrect pricing (in Lingala)</i>

In this extract, Sandra opens the interaction by drawing Number-One's attention to him having given the wrong information to a customer regarding an incorrectly priced suitcase. She gives a series of statements about what Number-One had said, and what the customer gleaned from that, intending the content to be understood as information on a problem that he needs to address. A series of action sequences follows in which their disagreement unfolds. Number-One interrupts Gina's turn and probes for additional information on which items are in question: "which one?" This insertion-question is responded to succinctly with a second pair part, "grey one", in which Sandra identifies the suitcase by its colour. After a moment, Sandra extends her informational turn which is part of her reprimand. She elaborates saying that the customer indicated that Number-One himself gave them the price of the suitcases as R240. According to Ford and Thompson (1996) turn extensions are often used to modify the context for the next speaker's response, which Sandra clearly does here. She wants her co-participant to be aware that he is responsible for the discrepancy at hand, namely that Number-One had given the smaller suitcase's price while the customer had asked about the bigger suitcase. Number-One responds, emphasizing that he had referred to the "big" suitcases when he informed them that the suitcases cost R240: "actually the ^big size yeah the ^big size is 240". Sandra's subsequent response sums up the crux of what she wants to get across: "but you must, you must talk [to] them". This utterance, and the use of "but" renders Number-One's utterance about the cost and the size irrelevant, as the purpose of Sandra's opening utterance was primarily to instruct him to pay attention to the customers. Number-One does not acknowledge her instruction to talk to the customers, instead he introduces a new topic of correct pricing as a response, thereby ignoring her instruction. Number-One wants the price tagging to be so clear that he would not need to name prices. In saying "so now you not put price on there" [You did not put the proper price tag on it] is a scolding which Sandra turns around, insisting that the customers got the

impression of a cheaper suitcase based on what Number-One had told them; how it had been tagged was immaterial. Seedhouse (2004:19) explains that the longer the second part remains absent, the more his accountability is emphasised, and failure to speak makes him sanctionable. Number-One's failure to provide a second pair part, an answer to having verbally given incorrect information, neither accepting nor rejecting the reprimand, makes him sanctionable. When Sandra tells him that the customers were quoting him, he redirects the focus to her negligence in not putting a price on the suitcase. On a second evasion of the topic of his accountability for the incorrect pricing information, Gina interjects and verbally calls him out on his responsibility and accountability: "You are the boss".

From the perspective of preference organization, it is seen throughout this interaction that Number-One responds to Sandra with dispreferred actions and counter-rebuked. Sandra is aiming to achieve a goal of getting Number-One to pay due attention to customers and their needs. Number-One's responses are disaffiliative, not conforming to the norms of the conversation, thus averting achievement of her goal. Hence Gina, who was silent throughout the interaction but is an over-hearer, steps in states that he is the boss, and thus indirectly tells him that as the boss he should know the power of his words and take the responsibility. This utterance from Gina closes the conversation, as Sandra does not respond to Number-One's turn, and he wordlessly steps outside to speak to the customers to remedy the discrepancy. As he does so, Sandra switches to Lingala and discusses the scenario with Gina.

Next, in section 6.3.3 we deal with communicative events in which the participants do more interactive work toward social goals.

6.3.3 Casual conversation

From time to time there was evidence of 'small talk', of casual interaction which did not refer specifically to the work that had to be done, but became more personal and informal. The following extract illustrates this.

Extract 6.4

N1 [v]		Yes I'm not like you	You
SAN [v]	Are you feeling cold Number-One?		
N1 [v]	have more meat		
SAN [v]			'you have more meat'
SAN [c]		<i>Laughs</i>	<i>Speaking in Lingala while telling Nathalie what Number-One said</i>

N1 [v]	^And you have more muscle I don't have man~	
SAN [c]	<i>switches back to Lingala</i>	
SAN [v]	I told you must stop (0.5) er take er cigarette every day you must	
SAN [c]	<i>Laughing</i>	
SAN [v]	drink pap you must eat pap drink cool drink every day eat nice you gonna get fat	
N1 [v]	Ha aah~ I don't want (1.0) I don't want	
SAN [v]	You want only smoke every	
SAN [v]	day and then eat rice only rice no soup (0.7) rice rice rice how can you get fat	

Here Number-One was covering the air conditioning's ventilators with A4 paper to obstruct the cold airflow. Sandra opened the conversation by asking him whether he was "feeling cold", and this unfolded into a casual conversation on the topic of body weight. He responded with a second pair part in the question-answer sequence, first answering "yes", and then elaborating with "I am not like you". This response from Number-One is interesting in that he engaged in the conversation with Sandra, in a different manner to the ways mentioned in the extracts above where he ignored or shut down interaction with the employees. Sandra's opening utterance was a yes/no question which was met with an answer and an elaboration even explaining in which way he felt he was different: "... You have more meat". The latter was offered as a way of explaining why he was feeling cold. This additional information which is categorised as an explanation which also carried a judgement, was more information than the enquirer had initially requested. Sandra laughed at this, and didn't respond. As the second pair part to her question had been provided, the conversation could be considered closed. Sandra then turns to Nathalie and tells her about Number-One's elaborate answer, and his comment that she "has more meat". As they are discussing this in Lingala, Number-One continues his turn, which is a further extension of his previous turn, before Sandra started to speak to Nathalie. This is evident as he begins the turn with a conjunction, "*and* you have more muscle, I don't have, man". Number-One's utterances show how action is both context-shaped and context-renewing (Goodwin & Heritage, 1990). This is seen in the way he picks up on his conversation with Sandra even after she has shifted her attention to Nathalie.

The tone of this utterance is that of a complaint, which is an affective interpersonal feature in the interaction, and the use of "man", a typical informal South African form of address, at the end suggests a companionable move. Arguably Number-One is uncertain whether he has offended Sandra by telling her that she has "more meat". Sandra's discussion of this utterance with Nathalie, in a language that he does not understand, possibly adds to this uncertainty. His

self-repair that she has “more *muscle*” as opposed to “more *meat*” seems to be a more appropriate comment, and in response to this action, Sandra interprets his utterance as an excuse or complaint, and she offers advice, which is the matching pair part to such a contribution. She begins her turn with a declarative: “I told you [you] must stop ...” suggesting that they have had this kind of interaction before. She continues to issue her advice “... stop ... er take er cigarette every day”, which is the first piece of advice. The second piece of advice is that he should change his diet. Sandra selects an inaccurate verb (to drink), self-repairs then as in “you must drink pap, you must eat pap, drink cool drink ...” and continues to tell him that he should eat in excess every day to gain body weight. Number-One responds with a rejection of her advice “ha aah~ I don’t want ... I don’t want”. When she interprets this as a refusal to take her advice she reprimands him for smoking too much and only eating rice, so he should not expect to gain weight with his current diet and lifestyle. Sandra continues that he eats too much rice and no soup, which she deems necessary for weight gain. Observably Number-One once again does not respond to her reprimand, marking the end of the conversation. This interaction depicts the kinds of casual conversation that contribute to the participants’ negotiation of social roles and relationships. The analysis of how these roles and relationships are enacted is presented in more detail in Chapter 7.

As seen through the micro-level analysis, the interaction above was socially motivated and not aimed at achieving work-related goals. Number-One is often observed as disengaged in interactions with his assistants. Yet, what this excerpt illustrates is that he puts in the interactional work through casual conversation, to maintain a degree of rapport with his employees.

6.3.4 Banter

Below is an illustration of the casual banter between Number-One and Vuyo, an assistant from Shop 3. This conversation took place during the first period of data collection in 2016, before Ireen and Baby left for China. On this day specifically, Ireen had taken Baby for her immunisation, and arrived at the store later that day. As mentioned in Chapter two (section 2.4), one of Vuyo’s roles as an assistant was to babysit her employer’s (the owner of Shop 3) daughter. While doing so, she would often assist with babysitting Number-One and Ireen’s daughter. The interaction below provides a view into the relationship between store owners and assistants, which will be further discussed in Chapter 6.

Extract 6.5

VO [v]	Don't listen because you can't understand		
VO [C]	<i>Walks into the store singing</i>		
N1 [v]	And then?	For you?	
VO [v]	I want a donation		It's for my er for my baby
N1 [v]	kuhlazy	Buh-bye	
VO [v]	Same like you		Ha ^ah Number 1 Hayi^
VO [v]	Number 1 give me donation! Tshi!	If you want me help baby I tell can't help	
N1 [v]			Five in rand how ma=
VO [v]	Because you don't want to give me a donation		
N1 [C]	<i>Taking money out of the cash counter</i>		
N1 [v]	how much?		So la la
VO [v]	I don't know even a ten rand it's fine		
VO [C]			<i>Laughing</i>
N1 [C]			<i>Figuring</i>
N1 [v]	la la like ^this?		
VO [v]	You just you just tick like like ^this or like ^this or like		
VO [C]	<i>Showing N1 where to tick boxes on the donation form</i>		
N1 [C]	<i>out how to fill in the donation form</i>		
N1 [v]			Then this money you go out
VO [v]	this or like this	You ^see it's your choice	
VO [C]			
N1 [v]	there you just buy drink buy beer		
VO [v]	Haaaaaaa! You!		I can't buy beer
N1 [v]			^No maaaaaan The many
VO [v]	m^an it's for my baby this one	<i>Tshi!</i>	
N1 [v]	people you see	Oh o only drink whiskey	
VO [v]	I don't drink beer!	I only drink 'drink	No I don't drink whiskey
N1 [v]	Haaa no no no no no	ha no no no no no no	
VO [v]	I don't drink alcohol	Arrrgh! You wena!	I don't
N1 [v]	You know the white man (...) every time every day come here		
VO [v]	drink alcohol		
VO [C]	<i>Laughing</i>		
N1 [C]	<i>Imitating how he reads the donation forms every day</i>		
N1 [v]	take this paper like this 'uh blablablaba' okay I give the one rand two rand then after		
N1 [C]			

N1 [v]	I uh at at likwer shops see saw it buybuy buy beer	Ya^
VO [v]		Nooo not me
N1 [C]		

N1 [v]	you also you both
VO [v]	Nooo

Here Vuyo walks into the store singing an isiXhosa song, and she tells Number-One not to listen to her singing because he does not understand the language. This is a declarative utterance and the first action in the interaction sequence to follow. Her opening turn already sets the course of the conversation, as she does not utter a greeting or a nicety, but begins their conversation with a provocation. He responds, “and then?” as an enquiry to the reason for her visiting his store. This is a request for information, and Vuyo recognises the intention behind his utterance and answers his first pair part by succinctly getting to the point of her visit: “I want a donation”. Number-One asks whether the donation is for personal gain, “for you?” and she replies that the donation is for her baby, most likely for the school which her own son attends. He tells her that she is crazy, and she responds, “same like you”, as a playful counter to his insult. Number-One dismisses her with “buh-bye” as an attempt to close the conversation and asking her to leave, but she refuses to be brushed off. Her response shows that she will not accept his refusal, as seen in her rising intonation: “Ha ^ah Number 1 Hayi^!” These are both South African ways of saying “no”: “ha-ah” is equivalent to a head shake, and “hayi” is the isiXhosa word for “no”. She extends her turn and insists that he give her a donation: “Number-One give me donation!” When he does not respond, she further extends her turn and tells him that the next time he wants her to help with looking after his baby, she won’t be able to: “If you want me [to] help [with your] baby, I tell can't help”, and further elaborates that her inability to assist will be because he does not want to give her a donation. Here she warns him that should he request her assistance with Baby she will be unable, owing to his unwillingness to make a monetary contribution to her son’s cause.

At the mention of her babysitting duties, Number-One immediately opens the cash register and asks her how much she needs: “Five in rand, how ma= how much?” This turn functions as an offer, and Vuyo interprets this as being up for negotiation. She thus hedges as she makes a request for a bigger donation: “I don't know, even a ten rand it's fine”. As she says this she laughs as Number-One hands her the donation. He proceeds to complete the document which notes the amount he has donated, and checks with her that he is doing it correctly: “So la la la la, like ^this?” Upon requesting her assistance, Vuyo shows him how to tick the columns: “You

just, you just tick like ... like this or like this or like this or like this” and further elaborates “you see, its your choice [how you choose to complete the form]”.

As he completes the form, Number-One hints that Vuyo may eventually use the money to purchase liquor, insinuating that she will do so the minute she leaves his store: “Then this money, you go out there, you just buy drink, buy beer”. He starts by suggesting that she will use it to buy a “[cold]drink”, but immediately repairs his utterance and says that she will “buy beer”. This leads to protest from Vuyo: “Haaaaaaaa! You!”. She prolongs her turn and says, “I can’t buy beer m^an it’s for my baby this one”. The use of “man” in this move is similar to Number One’s interaction with Sandra in section 5.3.4, where “man” marks a sociable register. She reiterates that the donation is for her own child, and informs him that she does not drink beer. Number-One continues to tease her: “no maaaaaaan” as though to suggest that she is lying. When Vuyo attempts to tell him that she only drinks cold-drink, he interrupts her as soon as she says, “I only drink ...”, he interjects “o oh only drink whisky”. This is a playful move as he takes her not drinking beer, and intensifies it with a beverage with a higher alcohol percentage: whisky.

As she tries to defend herself and explain that she does not consume alcohol at all, he interrupts as though to suggest that she is lying: “haa no no no no ...”. Vuyo shows her frustration by switching to isiXhosa: “arrgh! You, *wena!* I don’t drink alcohol!” Number One does not persist, and starts telling her about people who come to his store asking for donations. He begins his next turn changing to an enactment of how he treats the people who request donations: “You know the white man (...) every time every day come here take this paper like this 'uh blablablaba' okay I give the one rand, two rand then after I uh at at liquor shops see, saw it buy buy buy beer”. At first glance one would interpret this as Number-One sharing an experience with Vuyo, but she interprets it as an implication that she will do the same. She laughs and says that she will not do that, as she exits she store. Number-One’s final taunt is “ya you both” insisting that he will find her at the liquor store with the donation money.

The extracts that have been analysed all portray the dynamic interaction that takes place between the participants in Shop 1. Here instances of dispute, rebuke, casual conversation, and playfulness have been illustrated. Although this is only a glance into the conversation in this store, the extracts present a range that spans the kinds of conversation that commonly occur in this store. Unlike the other participating stores, three shop assistants are employed here, and they often taunt their employer, or, in solidarity, defend one another in instances of dispute.

This indicates that conversation in this store is not always motivated towards work-related goals, but also towards social goals.

Throughout these extracts, certain features in conversation are apparent. The first is Number-One's responses to his employees when he is addressed in instances of rebuke or teasing. In *extracts 6.1* and *6.2* he ignores most of the turns that are directed at him, responding only to what he deems necessary. In other instances (*extracts 6.2* and *6.3*) he responds to rebuke with impatience and annoyance. The assistants are aware of this and play on what they call his "short temper". This brings to light the second feature, which is the over-hearer's tendency to enter the discourse, and either mediate or diffuse the conversation. This is evident in *extract 6.1* where Nathalie overhears an instruction meant for Gina and offers to do it. *Extract 6.2* shows interjection of a different nature, where Gina enters the conversation in defence of Sandra and admonishes Number-One, urging him to take responsibility for the discrepancies in his store. The most notable display of solidarity however, is when Number-One responds to Sandra by yelling at her and telling her to shut up. Gina immediately comes to Sandra's defence, and threatens (ineffectively) to report him to his wife.

The inclusion of new participants in a conversation is not restricted to issues of dispute and rebuke alone. In *extract 6.4* there is an instance of casual conversation, and even then, Sandra includes Nathalie in the interaction by informing her of the interaction, which they later discuss in a mix of Lingala and Swahili. As noted during observation, this has become normative in this store, regardless of the kind of exchange between Number-One and one of his employees, assistants normatively discuss it amongst each other in their shared L1s.

Overall, participants achieve their interactional goals, and very few overt misunderstandings occur between participants. As will be discussed in Chapter 8, issues of misunderstanding are reported only when there is customer involvement, and rarely occurs between the employer and employee. One could attribute this to the shared understanding between the participants, and their joint inclination towards their interactional goals. Infelicities in language, whether in grammar or pronunciation, are overlooked or "made normal" (Firth, 1996), as seen in the exchange in *extract 6.5*, which contains marked disfluencies and mispronunciations such as "likwer" [liquor] and "kuhlazy" [crazy]. Even Vuyo drops auxiliaries and articles as seen in "give me donation" and "If you want me help baby I tell can't help". These are purposeful omissions and grammatical adaptations on Vuyo's part, who later precedes her nouns with articles "a donation" and "a ten rand", and grammatically sound main clauses as in "... because you don't want to give me a donation". It is therefore shown here that participants who do not

share a first language can use their personal linguistic competencies to do interactional work that imbues talk with “orderly and normal characteristics” (Firth, 1996:256).

The “simplification” of utterances, that is, dropping non-essential articles and auxiliaries appears to be one strategy that is extrapolated to the other participating stores. In the section to follow the analysis focuses on Shop 2, and will show the strategies that employees undertake to ensure shared understanding with their employer.

6.4 SHOP 2: TYPICALLY OCCURRING CONVERSATION TYPES

This section analyses spoken data recorded in Shop 2 with Suzanna and her employees. Conversations involving two assistants, Grace (during the first data collection period) and Faith (during the second data collection period), are analysed here. Interaction in Shop 2 is markedly different to that of Shop 1, due to the size of the store, the kinds of products on sale, the gender and the number of employees engaged in each. However, both stores gave evidence of linguistic assimilation that appears to be related to joint interest in the profitable functioning of the enterprise. Given the differences in ELF proficiency between the shop owners in the two stores (Suzanna being less proficient than Number-One), the assistants in Shop 2 had to put in considerably more effort to achieve mutual understanding. The kinds of conversation, as well as the linguistic codes used in Shop 1 are possibly due to the partial overlap in linguistic repertoires of various participants, and to their relatively equal English speaking proficiencies. In Shop 2 however, the assistants had to adapt to the limited proficiency of their employer, which resulted in creative communicative practices. The extract presented below were selected in a similar way to those demonstrating typical speech act events in Shop 1, i.e. by going through field notes and repeatedly listening to the recordings while comparing them to the transcriptions, in order to identify the types of conversation that characterize workplace communication in this store. Due also to less customer traffic, this was a quieter store with many more hours of silence between owner and employee than in Shop 1. Finally, there were three kinds of conversation that could be identified, namely (i) giving and receiving instructions, (ii) requesting, providing and responding to information, and (iii) casual conversation. Illustrative excerpts analysed and interpreted below show how these types of communication were enacted.

6.4.1 Giving and receiving instructions

As in the first store I had observed, giving and receiving instructions was an important kind of conversation in the second store. The excerpts below give an indication of how instructions

were issued, who gave and who received the instructions, and particularly, which kinds of linguistic and communicative structure embodied the conversations.

Extract 6.6

SUZ [v]	Hello		Go number nineteen in my look ya. it
FAI [v]		Yeah^?	
SUZ [v]	both come to two.. this one.. nineteen		Ya
FAI [v]		Okay	Number
SUZ [c]	<i>points to the rail</i>		
FAI [v]	nineteen?	Okay	
FAI [c]		<i>Walks to shop 19</i>	
SUZ [c]	<i>nods</i>		

The extract above depicts a short instance of instruction and execution between Suzanna and Faith, in which Suzanna opened the conversation by calling for Faith's attention with "Hello". Although "hello" is generally used as a greeting, it does not function as such in this conversation, but rather as a way of getting the hearer's attention and initiating the interaction. This communicative function is also evident in the hearer's response, which was not a return greeting, but an acknowledgement given in question form: "yeah?". Once Faith had shown that she was engaged, Suzanna, in very stunted utterances accompanied by gesturing in pointing out objects and direction, instructed her to go to Shop 19: "Go [to] number nineteen [...] [fetch rails like] this one ... [from shop number] nineteen". As she said "this one" she pointed to the rails, which emphasised the intent of her instruction, that Faith should collect them at Shop 19. Faith acknowledged that she had heard and understood the instruction with an "okay" and Suzanna responds "ya", confirming her instruction. Suzanna's addition of "ya" is a second confirmation, a non-word verbal form which she often used to indicate that they had reached mutual understanding. Faith then double-checked the instruction in short-hand by repeating the store number: "number nineteen?" Suzanna's next confirmation was non-verbal, in the form of a nod, which Faith understood. Her next turn, "okay", functioned as recognition of understanding, as well as agreeing to do as she had been instructed.

Their brief conversation was made up of a few adjacency pairs. It starts with an opening pair in which Suzanna opens the interaction with "hello" and Faith responds with "yeah", showing Suzanna that she is now an active participant in the interaction and awaiting further communication. Next follows an instruction pair in which Suzanna utters an instruction, which

Faith accepts and to which she responds with “okay”, effectively confirming that she understands and accepts the instruction.

Extract 6.7

SUZ [v]	Only 2?		
FAI [v]		Hmmm my see two there	My said check
SUZ [v]			Okay
FAI [v]	check check check my get other one (..) my bring		ya
SUZ [v]	You check	Its finish uh?	
FAI [v]		My see these two (..) my see these two there	
SUZ [v]	hmm		
FAI [v]		My said if check check see arranging sees counting my	
SUZ [v]			Oooh
FAI [v]	check check check (..) my bring another one		Ya
SUZ [v]			You yeah
FAI [v]	So my go there now and see (0.4) My go again		Ya

After Faith had returned from Shop 19 with the rails, a question-answer sequence proceeded in which Suzanna asked, “only two?”. Faith, sensing a reprimand included in the question, instead of giving a direct answer, explained in an insertion sequence that she had initially only seen one rail, and that she had checked thoroughly to find the second one. Suzanna accepted this indirect answer in saying “Okay. You check”. However, after two minutes she started a new sequence that conveyed her dissatisfaction at Faith not having brought more than two rails from the store that was closing down and should have had more to offer. Thus, she asked: “it’s finish, uh?” Faith repeats her earlier statement, using iteration as a marker of intensity, saying that she had “check check check” and counted. This was meant to reassure Suzanna that she had retrieved all the rails that were left. However, when Suzanna, rather than accepting the explanation, responded only with “Ooooh”, Faith undertook to “check again” when she went back for the second rail. This seems to be the preferred response for Suzanna, who replies, “You yeah”. Faith’s closing of this indirect instruction sequence with “ya” is interesting in that she uses the word Suzanna had used before to reinforce her acceptance and understanding of the new agreement. Her answer is then embodied in the action of leaving to retrieve the other rail from Shop 19.

The interaction above shows that even with rudimentary English, meaning is still negotiated between shop keeper and assistant. Although Suzanna's turns are short and at first glance difficult to understand, the interaction ends with the instruction being understood and executed. Faith also appears able to predict what responses Suzanna would prefer. The repetition of "my check check check check check" shows that she wants her employer to know that she was thorough when retrieving the rails, and in judging her responses, offers to check again. Suzanna's responses confirm her approval. The use of the possessive form "my" instead of the object and subject forms "I" and "me", is a characteristic feature of Suzanna's English. "My" replaces most personal pronouns and their possessive form such as me, mine, I, and myself. This is appropriated by Grace and Faith, who mimic her grammar.

Meaning is co-constructed in these interactions. There is no overlap in turns, except when Suzanna interrupts Faith when she asks, "how many?" Further, the conversation between Faith and Suzanna is a sequence of adjacency pairs, thus a speech act sequence in which the employer gives an instruction, the employee accepts and executes it. The employer asks a question, the employee responds. When the employee offers to go back to check a second time, the offer is accepted.

The extract below shows another instance of instruction and negotiation between Suzanna and Faith, regarding the same rails from Shop 19.

Extract 6.8

SUZ [v]	You maybe pack this take off pack this puty inside too much (0.5) you take it		
---------	---	--	--

SUZ [v]	off clean clean (0.3) too many dirty	Okay?	
FAI [v]		Dust	Hmmm
FAI [c]			<i>Faith cleans the rails</i>

FAI [v]	My look shop my not do business again (1.0) might not do		
FAI [c]			

SUZ [v]		Nooo~	
FAI [v]	business again	My see no customeeer no moneeey ohh	

SUZ [v]		No	Put water there my see all
FAI [v]	My don't have other business?		
FAI [c]			<i>Still cleaning the rails</i>

SUZ [v]	there		No water
FAI [v]		Not too dirty	Not too dirty so no put water
FAI [c]			

SUZ [v]			hmmm
FAI [v]	No no put water I remove all this ones		Rack. I cut my hand
SUZ [v]		Too many dirty you see	Too many dirty
FAI [v]	I cut my hand	Hmmm	My
SUZ [v]		pardon?	
FAI [v]	put water (...) might rust		my put water (0.4) rust. No put
SUZ [v]			hmmm
FAI [v]	water it rusts. My paint	Paint	Rust (0.7) rust Hmm I'll find paint

When Faith returns from retrieving the rails, Suzanna instructs her to clean them: “you take it off, clean clean ... too many dirty”. Faith responds with “dust”, rephrasing and thus effectively repairing Suzanna’s intensifying use of “too many”, which Faith understands to mean “very dirty”. Suzanna’s utterance of “okay?” is a prompt, a tracking move to ascertain that Faith understands the instruction. It is not clear whether she was ignoring Faith’s repair, or did not know the word “dust”. Faith accepted the instruction and proceeded to clean the rails. As she was doing this, she initiated casual conversation with Suzanna about Shop 19’s state of business. She introduced a new topic, saying “My look shop, my not do business again ...”. She then self-repairs to “[it] might not do business again”. Suzanna replied with a lengthened empathetic, “Nooo”. Gauging Suzanna’s engagement, Faith further extends her previous turn by informing Suzanna that Shop 19 receives no customers nor money. Suzanna took part with minimal response, simply agreeing by saying “no”. When Faith followed up by asking in the ungrammatical form she used to accommodate to Suzanna, whether the owner of Shop 19 had another business, “My don’t have other business?” Suzanna still answered simply “No”. Faith did not prompt further, with Suzanna’s “no” effectively ending the casual exchange. The interactional work put in by Faith is significant here, and the way she constructs her turns and word selection in a manner that would allow her employer to engage interpersonally, points to socially nuanced interactional work.

Two minutes later, Suzanna instructed Faith to use water when cleaning the rails. “Put water there, my see all there” suggests that Faith’s waterless method of cleaning the rails is ineffective as Suzanna can “see all [the dirt] there”. Faith politely rejects following the instruction by telling her that it’s “not too dirty”. This is identified as a dispreferred response, and when Suzanna does not respond, Faith rephrases and self-repairs her preceding utterance, “not too dirty, so no put water”. Here Faith again mimics Suzanna’s lexical choice by repeating the phrase “put water” instead of “use water” or “clean with water”. Suzanna then repeats, “No water”, as she registers Faith’s response. This is her response to Faith’s rejection of her

instruction, which could also be read as negotiating a disagreement. Faith nonetheless affirmed her stance by reiterating, “No no put water, I remove all this ones”, indicating that she had cleaned many other rails without water. This appears to be the final word regarding the use of water, until Faith complains that she had hurt her hand. Suzanna’s response was not the expected (perhaps preferred) possibility of getting sympathy, advice or assistance with medicating the broken skin. Rather, she returned to the previous issue saying, “Too many dirty you see ... too many dirty”, as though the dirt on the rails had caused Faith’s injury. Suzanna’s comment thus is a repetition of her instruction that Faith should use water. The statement “too many dirty” (i.e. *the rails are very dirty/too dirty*), thus functions as an indirect instruction. It is, in Goodwin and Heritage’s (1990) terms “context shaped” and “context renewing”. This means that Suzanna’s utterance is based on the previous frame of relevance, that is, the initial instruction for Faith to clean the rails with water. Here Suzanna’s reutterance of “too many dirty” emerges from the interpretive field that preceded Faith’s exclamation that she had hurt her hand. Although Suzanna did not physically mention water in her utterance, it being a context renewed utterance, Faith was aware of its relevance within the frame, and again said that she will not use water in cleaning the rail, as it could cause rust. As with “dust” it seems that Suzanna did not understand the word or its relevance, therefore she inserted “pardon?” Faith repeated that if she were to add water the rails would rust. She elaborated by suggesting a solution to the conflict, offering to paint the rails. At this point, Suzanna repeats the word, “rust ... rust”, clearly unsure about what the word means. Faith however, did not clarify or dwell on the issue of the rust, but repeated the proposed solution: “Hmm I’ll find paint”. Ostensibly, Faith and Suzanna are quite restrained in how they deal with difference of opinion, compared with that of Number-One and his assistants. Here Faith and Suzanna are a great deal more constructive in how they negotiate disagreement.

An apparent linguistic strategy in this conversation is the appropriation and repetition of preceding phrases in utterances. Following Suzanna’s instruction for Faith to wash the rails with water, Faith tells her “Not too dirty (...) Not too dirty so no put water”. Suzanna repeats: “No water”, and Faith confirms with another repetition: “No no put water ...”. After a few minutes, she tells Faith “Too many dirty you see (...) Too many dirty” which is a contradicting re-appropriation of Faith’s earlier statement that the rails are “not too dirty”. Faith’s use of the intensifier “too” in “not too dirty” is taken up by Suzanna who uses a double intensifier to argue that it is indeed “too many dirty”. When the conversation seems to falter on the matter of cleaning the rails, Faith’s subtle refusal to use water triggers a series of objections to her dispreferred response. This is evident in Suzanna’s re-introduction of the topic, even after Faith

had attempted to change the topic by declaring that she had hurt her hand, and in Suzanna's repeated instruction rather than showing concern about the. Another illustration of the use of repetition is seen in interaction below. In the extract below Suzanna is inspecting a granadilla, and asks Faith for her opinion on whether it is edible. The appropriation of preceding utterances is a linguistic strategy that is also deployed in the ensuing analysis, which suggests that it is a frequently used strategy in this store.

6.4.2 Requesting, providing and responding to information

The extract below illustrates a second conversation type which is characteristic of the China Town workplace communication, and which was observed in many more than just the three stores that agreed to participate. It was recorded on the first day of data collection, thus in the first phase when Grace (who was later replaced as an assistant by Faith) informed Suzanna that the researcher had been there the previous day when Suzanna's husband had been taking care of the store. In the conversation Grace is replaying the reaction Suzanna's husband had to the researcher's presence.

Extract 6.9

GRA [v]	Yesterday (...) other lady (0.5) other lady come talk your husband
GRA [v]	Why other lady here My talk s^Ame other shop also my only looky looky
GRA [v]	(0.6) English You (...) speak (0.5) English (0.4) fine (..) no buy only looky
GRA [v]	no problem (0.5) no other thing h^eeey! Your husband maybe think other thing
GRA [v]	your husband call other lady 'come you what problem' other lady talk nooo fine no
GRA [v]	problem only my see your people English my go other shop also looky looky maybe
GRA [v]	English h^eeey! your husband
GRA [c]	Haaa ah~ <i>laughing</i>

Here the researcher was referred to as “other lady”, a phrase used by both Grace and Suzanna to refer to females in general, such as neighbouring shop owners and assistants or to female customers as well. Grace's turn in this interaction is structured as a narrative in which she takes a first person narrative format, speaking for the two protagonists, namely the shop owner's husband, and the researcher (*other lady*), in explaining why the researcher was there. Further, she reduces her grammatical structure to fit the very basic L2-form of Suzanna – probably believing that in doing so, Suzanna will follow better. Her aim with the narrative was to relate

what had happened the day before when Suzanna was absent and the researcher's presence was queried by Suzanna's husband. The narrative, can be re-written as follows:

“Yesterday the other lady came, and she talked to your husband.

[He asked me] ‘Why is the other lady is here?’

I said ‘It is the same as in the other shops; she's only looking. [Its about] English, [about how] you speak English. [Its] fine, [she's] not buying [anything], only looking. No problem. There's nothing to it. Hey!’

Your husband maybe suspected something strange. [So,] he called out to the lady ‘Come here, what is the problem?’

The other lady said ‘no, its fine, there's no problem, I'm [here] only to *hear/see* how your people speak English. I'm also going to all the other shops to look at [their] English’.

Heeh! Your husband ...”

Grace uses information about the previous day's events as an opening move to initiate casual conversation. She begins with “Yesterday” and a three-second micropause to evaluate Suzanna's engagement. She then continues “... other lady come talk your husband”. This phrase here contains only the essential information about the researcher being there and speaking to her husband. Noticeably she omits auxiliaries and articles, to provide only the essential content of her turn. She sustains her turn by telling Suzanna not only about her husband's reaction, but also about my response to her husband. She imitates Suzanna's husband, “why other lady here?” which again is communicated without an article or auxiliary. Grace constructs her turns to be content-dense without a number of grammatical elements that would otherwise explicate functions and relationships. As a social actor she made strategic choices for expressing her intentions as is illustrated in how she replays my response to Suzanna's husband in truncated English, “no buy, no problem, only my see people English ...”. To end the narrative she exclaims “heeh! Your husband” which, after a long turn, is a monitoring move to evaluate Suzanna's engagement in the interaction. Eggins and Slade (1997) suggest that monitoring moves also imply a readiness to hand over a turn. Grace's linguistic behaviour here showcase the way, in her own words, she “turns words around” to accommodate her employer.

From a CA perspective, this can be identified as contextualisation in action, which Wei (2002:165) contends denotes “the strategic activities of speakers in varying their communicative behaviour within a socially agreed matrix of conventions”. Suzanna was silent for the duration of Grace's report, and did not take up a turn when it was offered. Throughout Grace's monologue Suzanna was smiling, possibly because she did not completely comprehend

what Grace was telling her. Thus, even though Grace deployed a monitoring move inviting Suzanna to respond, she remained silent. This is a “conversational lapse” (Mushin & Gardner, 2009) in which participants disengage, implicitly expressing the want to terminate the interaction. This is a plausible presumption, as Grace’s turn was longer than most between participants in the stores and contained a considerable amount of information. Nonetheless, in conversational organization, when speaker A offers the floor to speaker B, non-uptake is the dispreferred second part. Suzanna might therefore have understood that I had visited the store the previous day and that her husband had been less than welcoming to my presence. However, the additional information regarding his interaction with me might have been difficult to understand given her limited proficiency. Even Grace’s encoding in what appears to be intended as a linguistic structure that would be easier for her to comprehend, did not convince that the narrative was well understood.

Grace’s report on my visit was pragmatically motivated, as she felt obliged to give an account of an awkward event the day before. After providing the information to Suzanna it was difficult to “loiter linguistically” (Eggins & Slade, 1997:20). This means that when the conversational goal, in this case providing an account, has been achieved, it becomes strenuous for the speaker to prolong a turn. Finally, when Suzanna gave no response to the narrative, without further prolonging the interaction, Grace immediately set to work proceeding to unpack and replenish the shelves. This led to the Grace introducing a new, work related topic, apparently making it informally conversational in a way that required a response from Suzanna.

Extract 6.10

GRA	English h [^] eeeh! your husband	Haaa ah	This colour only
G [c]		<i>laughing</i>	
GRA	one Dee	Only one double Dee	One Dee
SUZ [v]	Dee	There's a wuh	
GRA	Suzanna this colour only one		This colour only one
SUZ [v]		Whuh's it?	
GRA	Too many black		I know this one only
SUZ		No see you see no see	
GRA	one	This long	only one
SUZ		Can't see	You want
SUZ [c]		<i>Gets up to look for more stock</i>	<i>Walking to</i>

GRA [v]	it now?		Only this colour black
GRA [c]			<i>Unpacking the stock</i>
SUZ [v]		You pack (1.0) I'm still checky	
SUZ [c]	<i>Grace with stock</i>	<i>Still looking for the stock that Grace could not find</i>	

GRA [v]	too much		Only one black
GRA [c]			
SUZ [v]		Only one black	

When Grace noticed that Suzanna had not engaged in the introductory conversation, she started to unpack unopened bags of stock and at the same time informatively commented on what she was finding, noting that the items she was unpacking contained only one D-cup size brassiere. She phrased it as “This colour, only one dee”. Suzanna repeated Grace’s last word, as she regularly did in their conversations. This showed that she was engaged in the conversation and had registered Grace’s action. As Suzanna is the employer and thus in charge of purchasing sufficient stock for the store, Grace’s move opening utterance served not only as giving information, but also as presenting a problem. That her reference to the content of the packaging was a first adjacency pair part is evident from the context: Grace was replenishing the shelves and realised that there was only one size in a certain colour. Suzanna’s response, “D”, directly followed the first pair part and showed that she had registered the action. However, it was not a preferred response. Registering moves show that the speaker is engaged, according to Eggins and Slade (1997) often come in the form of speaker B repeating speaker A’s words, and the regular expectation is that the prior speaker will take the next turn. Suzanna’s registering move in this case did not address the problem Grace had posed, which led to Grace reiterating that there was only one size double-D. Suzanna’s reply “there’s a wuh”, could have been the first part of yet another repetition of the previous speaker’s words (“there is one”). Although was an engaging move, it was an unclear, problematic response, which prompted Grace to repeat again that there is only “one Dee”.

Grace’s repetition shows that she is aware that she is dealing with a situation of repair. As Schegloff et al. (2002:6) states, repair is “the major resource for participants displaying that they are dealing with trouble or problems in speaking or understanding the talk”. They let the discussion proceed unresolved as neither of them extend the communication around the limited stock. This interaction relates to the “Let it pass” phenomenon as described in Firth (1996) when he contends that letting the problematic action pass appears to be a commonly deployed resource in lingua franca interactions (Firth, 1996:243). This is one of various strategies of responding to miscommunication, or of proceeding when one participant does not understand

the other's contribution, but proceeds to act as if the turn was understood. This could also be a result of participants judging the specific utterance as 'non-essential' to the overall communicative aim, or the idea that clarification might cost time or effort, or to avoid conflict that might stem from going back to the utterance at that turn.

After Grace and Suzanna let the issue of the D-cup pass, Grace initiates a following information giving sequence with a statement telling Suzanna that among the brassieres she has been unpacking she found only one colour, "Suzanna this colour [is the] only one". Suzanna prompted for clarification with a wh-interrogative, "whuh's it?", and Grace held up the item to show her that the items were all only that one colour. In response to the question, Grace reiterated "this colour [is the] only one". When Suzanna did not respond, Grace self-repaired and rephrased by changing from "this colour only one" to "too many black". Although the information on all items being of only one colour remains the same, her rephrasing of the information is registered by Suzanna, enough to debate the information, suggesting that Grace simply could not see that there were other colours. Suzanna had understood, and, as a way of negating Grace's statement, told her that she had not looked carefully enough, saying "no see, you see no see". This introduces a different problem to the conversation, as the issue now is not the limited colour of items in the new assignment, but that Grace had not looked carefully enough. Grace evaluated Suzanna's utterance and assured her that she knows what stock they have in store and that there is in fact, only one colour of the particular model, "I know this one only one". Further, she showed Suzanna which brassiere she was referring to, "this long", and tells her again that there is only one. She modifies the object and elaborates that it's "this long" item that she's referring to and that there is indeed "only one".

At this affirmation of her knowledge of the stock, Suzanna told her that she couldn't see and got up to look for the rest of the stock. Thus a physical, non-verbal action confirmed the difference of opinion regarding information that Grace had provided. As she did this she handed Grace a different bag of unopened stock in an action that implied an instruction. Grace interpreted it as such and asked Suzanna if she wanted it opened and unpacked immediately, "you want it now?" This simplified way of enquiring constituted a next adjacency pair introduction, namely a yes/no question. Suzanna responded not with "yes" or "no", but with a second pair part instructing her to continue: "You pack". After a short pause, she says in information giving statement that she was still looking for the stock: "I'm still checky". Although Suzanna's turn did not directly answer Grace's question, her response, "you pack", was contextually relevant as both an answer and an instruction. Following Suzanna's turn, this interaction continued sequentially. Grace accepted the instruction, even though her yes/no

question was not responded to as prompted, and executed the task that Suzanna gave her. Still, Grace commented that she knew that Suzanna would not find anything different. As she unpacked the stock she again told Suzanna that “[There is] only this colour – black; too much [of this colour]”. Her manner of phrasing this information evolves over this interaction; from “this colour only one” to “too many black”, to “only one”, and then a merging which results in “only this colour black too much”. “Only one” seems confusing until Grace changes it to “too many” and “too much”. Moving on to her final turn, Suzanna concedes “only one black” and Grace reaffirms, “only one black”. Thus, the disagreement in the process of exchanging information, was resolved by accompanying physical actions of the participants.

The interaction above gives evidence that the linguistic code used between Grace and Suzanna is truncated, yet creatively appropriated by Grace. It consists of repetitions and short phrases. These short phrases and turns are evidently easier to comprehend than the longer turns, judging by Suzanna’s engagement in comparison to her silence after Grace’s longer narrative. The repetition of a sender’s utterance by the receiver is quite common here. Although they are not preferred responses for the adjacency pairs, they function as registering moves, which are meant to provide encouragement for the other speaker to take another turn. For Eggins and Slade (1997) this is a kind of move that is meant to show engagement and interest. In this context though, where there is minimal vocabulary, registering moves also function as tracking moves, which, according to Eggins and Slade “check, confirm, clarify or probe the content of prior moves” (Eggins & Slade, 1997:207). From the interaction between Grace and Suzanna it appears that even though Grace performed an action and set the context for its interpretation, Suzanna’s response was not oriented towards the same schemata. The fact that Suzanna had registered and responded to Grace however, suggests that she was an active participant in the interaction. As Seedhouse (2004:18) explains: “the adjacency pair concept does not claim that second parts are always provided for first parts. Rather, it is a normative frame of reference which provides a framework for understanding actions and providing accountability”.

In the next extracts I shall illustrate how casual conversation between Suzanna and Grace is conducted. Casual conversation is presented in different grammatical shapes and with various functions, which can include sharing information.

6.4.3 Casual conversation

This section will analyse casual conversation of two kinds: first there is an exchange of information partly related to the fact that the store sells lingerie and both participants are

knowledgeable about the goods on sale, and partly conducted as a way of building and maintaining a social relationship between employer and employee. What starts as an informative statement, eventually becomes a complaint to which a solution is found in the form of a suggestion which both participants find acceptable. Second there is an exchange unrelated to the workplace activity, in which the conversation relates to whether the fruit the employer is about to eat, is good or spoiled, and therefore not good.

Extract 6.11

GRA [v]	Today my no put bra		
SUZ [v]			
GRA [v]	My put bra this wire (0.6) t [^] ooo pain		
SUZ [v]	You (0.6) puty this the wuh		
GRA [v]	My puty here	T [^] oo pain today my no puty bra	Maybe my fat
SUZ [v]		Too fat	Too fat
SUZ [c]			<i>laughing</i>
GRA [v]	my my no put bra		My wear 34 maybe take C-cup
SUZ [v]		Maybe 34	

In the extract above Grace opened the conversation by telling Suzanna that she chose not to wear a bra to work, “today my no put bra”. After a minute of silence, she extended and prolonged her turn by adding additional information: “[When] My put bra [on], this wire [gave me] t[^]ooo [much] pain”. Here she told Suzanna that when she put the bra on, the wire hurt her, expressing this intensification as “t[^]ooo pain”. Suzanna engaged with her and pointed towards her bust as she reiterated that Grace: “puty this the wuh [one]”. At this point, Grace used the word “put(y)” in response to Suzanna, “my puty here” and “... my no puty bra”, thus appropriating her linguistic code, even though she started the conversation using the standard form “put” both times: “my no *put* bra” and “my *put* bra”. Suzanna engaged in the conversation and suggested that perhaps Grace had gained weight, or that the bra was a size too small. She said this in the simple phrase “too fat ... too fat”. Grace conceded that she might be too fat, “maybe my fat”, repeating that she was not wearing a bra, “my my no put bra”. Suzanna registered that Grace was presenting this information as a problem, possibly a complaint, and thus responded by offering a solution in the second pair part, saying which size she should try: “maybe 34”. Grace responded to her advice, informing her that she indeed did wear a 34, but she would try a bigger cup size.

This interaction was meant to be casual workplace conversation between employer and employee. Regardless of the difference in English proficiency, these conversations are ostensibly motivated by interpersonal needs. Eggins and Slade (1997) argue that in casual conversation people negotiate social identity and interpersonal relations. This conversation between Grace and Suzanna does not involve workplace matters. These kinds of workplace “chat” that appear insignificant not only show the interactive work that participants put in to maintain relationships, but also how these relationships are constructed through language, however infelicitous the L2 lingua franca is grammatically.

In this store, there are no guarantees of participants understanding one another. However, the appropriation of one truncated repertoire indicates that participants put work into the joint construction of social action. Ultimately, although Grace and Suzanna communicate in this ELF form, the conversation nonetheless adheres to conversational norms. Each speaker’s turn is understood and interpreted, projecting subsequent turns, and holding one another accountable, to produce coherent and intelligible courses of action.

The following extract starts off with Faith telling Suzanna that the granadilla fruit Suzanna wants to eat is spoiled. Suzanna follows a regular pattern of checking that she understands Faith’s input by asking a question, “no eat?”

Extract 6.12

SUZ [v]		No eat?
FAI [v]	You see? Its spoiled. Its not (1.5) this is spoiled	No eat
SUZ [v]	No good?	I know this one no bad this eat you fine eat
FAI [v]	Its spoiled	No good. Spoiled see
SUZ [v]	no no problem	Other people took
FAI [v]	No problem	This this this not English name
SUZ [v]	the one eat don't worry (.) fine	
FAI [v]		fine

This is met by Faith repeating the phrase “no eat”, which is a confirming move. She proceeds with repeating the explanation that “it’s spoiled”. Suzanna evidently does not understand what “spoiled” means, thus she seeks clarification rephrasing and asking whether the fruit is “no good?” Faith repeats “no good” as another confirmation, and again says that it’s “spoiled”, even though Suzanna does not seem to respond to the lexical item “spoiled”. She interrupts Faith and tells her that she knows the fruit and nothing bad will happen if she eats it, “this eat, you fine,

eat no no problem”. Faith repeats “no problem”, as if to acknowledge that Suzanna had convinced her. Suzanna repeats that she knows other people who have eaten it, saying that Faith should not be concerned: “don’t worry(.)fine”. Faith accepts Suzanna’s exhibition of knowledge about the fruit with “fine”. Here the phrases “no eat” “no good” “no problem” and “fine” are uttered by speaker A and repeated as responses by speaker B. Although these are one-word and two-word phrases, they are significant in conveying meaning in this interaction. For example, Suzanna asks questions with “No eat?” and “no good?” checking with Faith whether the fruit is edible and safe to consume. Her subsequent use of “no problem” is a statement informing Faith that indeed it is edible, since she knows people who have eaten it and have experienced “no problems”.

The repetition of preceding utterances can be categorised as a linguistic strategy used by the participants in this store. Repeating parts of utterances can have either a declarative force (as a way of affirming what the speaker had said) or it could be repeated as a question (as a way of questioning the message sent by the speaker). Such repetition is a device not uncommonly used in multilingual spaces, and in this particular case it was a very prominent feature.

These illustrative interactions from Shop 2 show that even where the shared ELF is rudimentary, meaning is still negotiated between shop-keeper and assistant. Faith at times appeared able to predict which responses Suzanna would prefer. These conversations conducted in a reduced and perhaps fossilized form of English had become the norm Shop 2. This confirms Firth’s (1996:238) position that “the ‘normal’ and ‘routine’ appearances of talk are the result of the participants’ ceaseless and contingent application of complex though methodic practices”. These methodic practices were evident in the way the participants did interactional work to achieve a shared understanding of the conversational goals. Most significantly, both Grace and Faith followed and assimilated Suzanna’s grammatical structures, and reduced the grammaticality of their own English to accommodate her linguistic forms. In one explanatory conversation, Faith mentioned that she had worked out how Suzanna uses English pronouns, and that she adapted her speech rather than persisting with her own more advanced variety which is closer to South African English than any of the other participants’. Faith explains:

“... She tries to use English to communicate, but the way she presents her Engliiiiish you know sometimes I have to like 'oh I don't understand'. So so there's a way we now communicate now, if I want to say 'I am talking to you' – '*my talk to you*'. I don't know if you understand. So not 'I am talking to you now' '*my*' means '*I am*'. So 'my want to go' is *myself*. '*My want to buy something*' something like that. I don't know if you understand so that's the only way ...”

Similarly, Grace referred to the way she spoke to Suzanna as “turning [her] words around”, which could refer to the fact that Mandarin is a head-last language (i.e. modifiers precede noun phrases) in comparison to English. The appropriation of Suzanna’s code might therefore appear different syntactically. As Grace was a fluent English speaker, her turn in *extract 6.9* illustrates the way she simplified her code. She used “my” to replace certain pronouns such as “I” “me” and “her” and their possessive forms. She also dropped auxiliary verbs and articles as seen in “my go other shop” and “come you what problem?” Another strategy she used was repetition such as “looky looky” which refers to the continuous observations taking place in participating stores. The repetition of certain action words is also found in conversation with Faith, as seen in *extract 5.7* with “my check check check check”. This is a commonly used device in language contact situations where proficiency in the target language is low. It confirms that speakers in the China Town workplace revert to communicative strategies often encountered between people with mutually unintelligible L1s and no strong shared L2s. The assistants do not draw on their considerably better English proficiency in communicating with the shop owner; rather they accommodate to her ELF/English L2 structures in deferring to her position of control.

6.5 SHOP 3: TYPICALLY OCCURRING CONVERSATION TYPES

In this section, data from Shop 3 is presented. Contrary to what was found in Shop 1 and Shop 2, there was very little interaction between the employer and her employees. Conversation in this shop was minimal, and during the period of observation there were not instances of casual conversation that showed close interpersonal communication between employer and employees. Regular workplace interaction types such as sharing information and giving and receiving instructions, were very rarely elaborate. It appeared that there was unspoken mutual understanding and agreement on what each participant’s role in the store was. Most conversation types were enacted in the form of question-answer sequences, as will be indicated below.

6.5.1 Requesting, providing and responding to information

Extract 6.13

VUY [v]	Where's the flowers Tina^	Where's the flowers those
TIN [v]		What^
VUY [c]	<i>Unpacking stock</i>	

VUY [v]	ones?	Haibo Tina its not ta this here
TIN [v]	**Next in the candle uh box	

VUY [v]	Which side?	Which box now Tina?
TIN [v]	No its uh lɪ:ss side	Long one box
VUY [v]	This one?	
TIN [v]	Ya	

This conversation took place while Vuyo was replenishing stock in store, making sure that goods were unpacked onto the shelves and wanting to display more of the artificial flowers on the shelves. Tina was at her regular position, at the point of sale close to the entrance, streaming Chinese TV on her mobile electronic tablet. Vuyo initiated the conversation by *requesting information*, asking Tina where she would find the flowers. Tina's first response introduced an insertion sequence: asking "what?" she indicated that she had either not heard or was not clear about what Vuyo wanted to know. Therefore, she required the question to be repeated before she could answer it. With this one-word insertion question Tina showed that she had "registered" in the interaction, and showed her engagement in the conversation. Vuyo registered this as a request to be more specific and reiterated her initial question, "Where's the flowers ...", also adding additional information, "... those ones". Tina provided an answer to Vuyo's question, relying on the situational context and informing her that they were near the box with the candles. Although she utters two unrecoverable syllables and is unclear about the exact location in relation to the candle box (** next in ...) Vuyo lets the conversational items that are incomprehensible pass, and proceeds to look in the candle box. After some searching in the candle box she returns to the conversation, making a statement that negates Tina's information. She uses an isiXhosa word, "*Haibo* [no]" Tina it's not this here". This statement also counts as a request for more attention from Tina. She registered this and began her response with "No ..." suggesting that Vuyo is not doing a proper search. In adding "its uh liss side" (where she pronounces the [ð] of "this" as an [l]), she directs Vuyo's attention elsewhere. Vuyo asked for clarification with a further question, "Which side?" Tina's answer comes in the form of more specific information on the location, "long one box". The answer gave rise to yet another question from Vuyo who asked, "Which box now Tina?" When Tina does not respond she again probes, "This one?" Tina's confirmation, "Ya" closes the conversation, and Vuyo gets the flowers from the box and resumes working on the stock display.

The extract above not only illustrates the interactional work participants put into reaching a common communicative goal, but it also shows how participants handle repairs. These seemingly simple question and answer sequences depict issues of turn design i.e. knowing what action their turns will perform. Vuyo's turns in this conversation have specific functions. The

first turn functions as a question requesting information: “Where’s the flowers?”. Another function that is performed is seen in “... its not tha this here” which is a declarative, but so designed as to illicit a response from the interlocutor who provided her with what appeared to be incorrect information on the location of the flowers. Her third action is another inquiry: “Which side?” but the turn is also organised towards a repair, since Tina’s mispronunciation of “uh li:ss side” is problematic for locating the flowers. Tina’s utterance, “long one box”, is an action meant to provide the specific information as to the location of the flowers, but “long one box” is another problematic turn which Vuyo has trouble understanding. She constructs her turn so that Tina can provide her with the preferred response, which is the exact location of the flowers. Her question, “which box now Tina?” is clearly designed for Tina to specify which box the flowers are in. When Tina does not respond, she extends her turn, pointing to “this one?” which is the correct box, as Tina confirms “ya” and the communicative and contextual goal is achieved.

In the following extract another series of question-answer pairs are used to enact an information seeking exchange which also carries an indirect request/instruction in which the employee is trying to coax the employer into making a payment into the employee’s bank account.

Extract 6.14

POS [v]		Tina^		My husband asked me
TIN [v]			Huh?	
POS [v]	... when the account FNB when			
TIN [v]			I don't know (0.5) maybe is next month	
POS [v]	Next week		Next month	Okay
TIN [v]		Next month		

In this extract Porsha initiates conversation with Tina during a quiet time in the store. She opens by addressing Tina by name. Tina registers this call for attention with “huh?”. Porsha takes up her turn and asks Tina a question, phrasing it in statement form with an interpersonal preface “my husband asked me ...”. This is an indirect question directly meant for Tina to answer. Porsha’s turn, at first, may seem to be geared towards casual conversation; however, Tina recognizes it as a relatively loaded question and provides answer even before the question has been fully articulated: “I don’t know ... maybe is next month”. Not only did Tina recognise what Porsha intended with the construction of her turn, she also took up her turn with the intended force. Given the contextual background to this topic, Tina registered that Porsha

wanted to know “when [...] when” payment would be made into the FNB (First National Bank) account. With the minimum of content words, she understood and gave the expected second part of the sequence: and answer to the request for information. Yet, Tina’s gives a hedged response: “I don’t know ... maybe is next month”. Porsha’s rephrases Tina’s answer, clearly indicating displeasure at Tina’s answer, and covertly encouraging the payment to be made earlier: “[You mean] next week?” Tina answers the reproach with a repair “next month”, which Porsha in deference repeats: “Next month ... Okay”. She accepts this and with that the conversation is closed.

The two instances of interaction in Shop 3 illustrate the ways in which participants engaged in situated encounters. Contrary to Shops 1 and 2 where participants interacted with a view to both work-related and social goals, conversation in this store was oriented predominantly towards work-related goals. In this store, as in others that were observed, the physical context is taken into account as it contributes largely to what kinds and how much conversation takes place. There are some factors at play contributing to the scarcity of casual conversation in this store. The first is the fact that Tina was constantly engaged in mobile technologies, either virtually communicating or watching Chinese television series. This is isolating, and closed her off from social niceties. The employees were significantly more forgiving of their employer’s engagement with mobile technology than was the case for the assistants in Shop 1. They used the quiet periods (when there were no customers) to engage in casual conversation with employees from other stores. This is a second interesting observation, that the assistants of this store presented a different form of social workplace interaction. They spent much of their time engaged in lengthy conversations with other South Africans from the neighbouring anchor stores (chapter 2 section 2.5). Regardless of the near-absence of casual conversation recorded in this store, when it came to work-related conversation, participants put in the interactional work to achieve a shared goal. Their talk-in-interaction contributed to the conversational goal, as seen in the sequentially organised turns to adhere to the adjacency pair framework.

6.6 CONCLUSION

This chapter has taken a Linguistic Ethnographic approach to the analysis of the kinds of conversation that occur in three different stores in China Town as an informal workplace. LE has allowed for the context of conversation to be known and analysed integrated with the interactional data (Rampton, 2007a, 2007b, 2014). The knowledge of the context provided a sense of analytical stability within situated encounters, which allowed for minimal contextual “contingencies”. The ethnographic approach to conversation has therefore granted contextual

insight, which is so central to the investigation of situated encounters. According to Gumperz (2001) this kind of insight which is gained through first-hand immersion in the field, allows for the researcher's ability to interpret what participants intend to convey in interactions. This chapter therefore not only analysed simple dialogue and presupposed contextual "probabilities", but has blended together the benefits of ethnography and CA to provide a detailed analysis of the nature of talk in these informal spaces. Using CA as a framework for the micro-analysis of conversation facilitated the explication of the fine-grain of the interaction in which meaning making takes place, and has shed light on the ways that participants draw on resources in their immediate surroundings to negotiate meaning.

By looking at the different activity types, the analysis also investigated how participants transition between different conversational activities, and how these transitions are managed and made sense of in interaction. More significantly, in analysing how speakers orient themselves in the frame of the activity types, and with the supplementation of ethnographic data, CA has allowed for the explication of what the conversational goals are and whether these are met.

The notion of activity types transcends its application to only CA, as it also provides a frame for analysing how encounters fit into larger social structures. Using linguistic ethnography, this analytical chapter moves on from a micro-level analysis, to a larger social analysis which will follow in the next chapter. Using discourse analysis, the second analysis chapter traces how participants construct and take part in larger social discourse, also negotiating power and identity transformation in the workplace.

CHAPTER 7

DISCOURSE ANALYSIS OF CHINA TOWN WORKPLACE INTERACTION

7.1 INTRODUCTION

While chapter five attended to how meaning is negotiated in conversation, this chapter turns to workplace interaction not only as conversation (informal unscripted spoken language), but also as a means of getting work done via discourse. Thus the analysis presented here will focus on the discursive negotiation of workplace relationships, attending to power, identity, and social roles.

Discourse Analysis works with a conception of ‘discourse’ as a unit of communication that is larger than isolated sentences. It is interested in the structure of discourse, how speakers verbally organize spoken or written language to facilitate communication, what is given in the form of the language, and what is contextually added by means of e.g. implication, presupposition, and similar reliance on situational information to elaborate meaning (Levinson 1984; Cook 1989). DA often relies on a distinction of three functions of language as they have been developed in Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL), namely the ideational, interpersonal and textual functions. According to this distinction, discourse functions in carrying and distributing ideas, in creating and maintaining social relations between various interactants, and in achieving its communicative functions by means of a suitably organized text (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004).

Critical Discourse Analysis also relies on the distinctions of metafunctions put forward by SFL, with a particular interest in the social roles and identities that are negotiated in discourses, also in talk-in-interaction. CDA therefore looks at how power relations are established, maintained or challenged through language, and as a field of study has particularly highlighted how ideologies are embedded in institutional contexts such as (e.g.) government, education, social services, the media, as well as in workplaces as institutions (Wodak & Meyer, 2001).

Considering language and communication in the workplace, various studies have reflected on more and less informal trading contexts. Holmes and Stubbe (2015), for example, have drawn attention to workplaces with a flexible chain of command, no rigid organisational structure or hierarchy, as well as informal communicative practices that do not adhere to regular

institutional norms. They refer to how the negotiation of social roles in this context presents findings and phenomena that are not present in established only in institutional workplaces, but in a variety of workplace contexts (Holmes & Stubbe, 2015:19).

This chapter premises that talk-in-interaction is a site of social processes, and that there are contextual resources that enable these processes. With this in mind, the analysis of conversations that occur in China Town stores stretches beyond just meaning-making and how participants understand each other's turns. It is also imperative to investigate the social roles that are dynamically enacted and assigned in various workplace activity types. I follow this proposal in assuming that talk-in-interaction is goal-orientated and centred around activity types, thus in this chapter the focus is on what happens linguistically within these activity types. For this reason, social and interactional significance cannot be excluded from the analysis of communication, not even in communication where linguistic repertoires are limited. Interpersonal and transactional goals are inherent in all linguistic interaction, also in workplace conversations, and to analyse how participants understand each other's turns, while ignoring how they go about negotiating interpersonal, transactional and social goals, would highlight only one dimension of this context of language contact. Finally, from the perspective of talk-in-interaction and how participants orient towards social goals, analysis will also draw on discursive theories of face and politeness. Arundale (2006:193) argues that face and politeness is always relevant in talk-in-interaction, as the social self is maintained or challenged in relationships with others.

The object of study here is informal workplace discourse, and I consider discourse as meaningful symbolic behaviour (Blommaert, 2005). In the analysis of the interactions I use DA to investigate the linguistic and contextual structures by which participants shape and are shaped by the workplace, how they establish and maintain interpersonal relationships, and also how power is negotiated and distributed among those working in China Town stores. The analysis also investigates how speakers indicate their intentions semantically, and how hearers interpret what they hear (Johnstone, 2008). The focus is therefore on what speakers say, how they say it, and why they say it. Contrary to the framework of CA which focuses on the mechanics or the micro-patterns of the conversation as seen in Chapter 5, DA will enable a description of how participants construct and deconstruct their turns, and what they intend to do, be and enact through these turns. In this way, the analysis investigates the discourse critically, referring also to turn-taking in conversation, language-in-use, and its context of use. As part of a linguistic ethnography, taking DA and CDA into consideration, will assist in giving

a multi-dimensional perspective on workplace discourses in this context. Blommaert (2005:14) specifically argues that:

we have to be aware that *language operates differently in different environments*, and that, in order to understand how language works, we need to contextualise it properly, to establish the relations between language usage and the particular purposes for which and under which it operates (original emphasis).

This chapter, in turning to the workplace communication in China Town as discourse, is specifically guided by consideration of research questions four and five set out in chapter 1.5, namely

1. How is functional workplace communication maintained in the China Town store setting? What kinds of misunderstanding or linguistic conflict occur in the communication, how are they recognised, and how are they resolved?
2. How do participants use their linguistic repertoires to assert and contest power in the informal workplace?

7.2 OVERVIEW

The data to be introduced here from Shop 1 and Shop 2, shows firstly how participants draw on different linguistic and communicative resources at different occasions, for specific social goals. Secondly, it attends to how language practices exhibit and shape relationships as well as identities, and how in acting out their various roles, evidence is provided of the way in which creative linguistic practices develop when employers and employees have a shared interest in running a profitable business, but, at the same time, bring different communicative resources to the workplace. Data from Shop 3 is not included in this chapter. As mentioned in chapter 4 (4.2.1.2) I spent the least amount of time collecting data in this store, and conversation was scarce. This chapter does however, feature an extract of interaction with one participant from Shop 3.

The structure of this chapter is similar to the one followed in Chapter 5, with a similar layout of the data. Certain extracts that were analysed in chapter five are revisited here with a view to more attention to the social aspect of interaction. By looking at language use through a social lens, the analysis becomes more critical about what is being done in interaction. It thus moves away from how A understands B and vice versa, towards an analysis of how A and B use

language purposefully, and how language is organised to serve that purpose. In this vein, the analysis commences with how participants use language to manage their roles in the workplace.

7.3 SHOP 1

Following the analysis of discourses in more than 30 different workplaces by Holmes and Stubbe (2015) this study considers how mutual respect and concern for face needs or politeness are enacted in this China Town store. The context here proves that there is a significant difference between formal and informal workplace discourses. Holmes and Stubbe (2015:31) introduce studies showing that instructions and directives can take place in various ways, i.e. top down (superior to subordinate), bottom up (subordinate to superior) and same status (colleagues who are on the same level in the workplace hierarchy). Although this is normative in workplace hierarchies, the power relations in these informal stores are observably more flexible. In the first extract to be analysed below, one of the employees attempts to make small talk with her employer, who quite aggressively reminds her what her role in the workplace is.

7.3.1 Managing workplace and roles

From a Discourse Analytical perspective, there is much to be said regarding Number-One's relationship with his assistants and how this relates to the power hierarchy. Most notably is the issue of who admonishes who, whether reprimands are given directly or indirectly, what the appropriate responses are to these admonishments, and what the effects are in terms of their social identities. Given the informal nature of the stores in China Town as described in Chapter 2, employees have significantly less rights in the workplace as compared to workplaces more directly regulated by labour legislation such as is afforded in the Basic Conditions of Employment Act 75 of 1997. This means that when employers have verbal outbursts as in *extracts 6.1 and 6.3 below*, employees have very limited, if any, recourse to official mediation or legal measures as is provided by e.g. the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration (CCMA). Even so, when employees in Shop 1 are rebuked, they have developed means of expressing their dissatisfaction with the way Number-One responds to them, and often they respond with counter-rebukes as seen below in *extract 6.1*. Even though this suggests a flexible workplace hierarchy where both employer and employee utter rebukes, Number-One still maintains power in several ways. These are evident in his stance, which is either aggressive, indifferent, or in some cases, selectively collegial. These stances are of course based on the activity types at hand, and which social role he wishes to enact based on these activities. In the

following extract Sandra attempts to make small talk, and his response clearly shows his unwillingness to engage on such a level.

7.3.1.1 *Showing respect and demonstrating a flat hierarchy*

Extract 7.1

SAN [v]	Number One how much this jacket in China?	
N1 [v]		Shut up do your job
SAN [v]	I'm just ^asking why you answer me like this?	How much this jacket you
SAN [c]		<i>Sandra is telling Gina about her</i>
SAN [v]	wear in China shut up do your job	Shut up do your job
SAN [c]	<i>interaction with N1. Gina laughs and responds in Lingala</i>	<i>Sandra imitating N1's response to her, laughing</i>

In the extract above, Sandra is unpacking stock, and initiates conversation by asking Number-One how much one of the jackets she is unpacking would cost in China. He responds with “Shut up, do your job”. This can hardly be interpreted as polite or respectful. It is possible that as an L2 speaker, Number-One does not know that “shut up” is a very impolite phrase for asking a person to stop talking. Or, he might not know alternatives that would be euphemistic and more polite. Sandra does not respond as if offended. Rather she questions his response, defending that her question as reasonable and not deserving of such censure. When he does not respond further, she repeats the interaction to Gina, who laughs at the situation. Sandra continues to repeat her employer’s words to Gina, imitating him as she does so. Throughout Sandra’s rebound to Number-One’s action, he remains silent, having said his piece and effectively disengaging from the conversation.

From a discourse analytical perspective, focusing on how social identities are shaped, negotiated and maintained through talk (Holmes & Stubbe, 2015), Sandra opens the interaction with a question as a precursor to small talk. On an interpersonal level she takes on a social role that is more relaxed than the standard employee deferring to the employer. This exchange brings to light the issue of intercultural competence (Wiseman, 2003), as Number-One is clearly aware of the intention behind her question, and elects to deny her small talk by telling her to “shut up” and attend to her job. In reinforcing his role as superior, he also enforces her role as employee, whose purpose is to “do [her] job”, not to engage in casual conversation. In responding with indignance rather than offense, Sandra continues to challenge the employer-employee hierarchy. By repeating Number-One’s words to Gina, Sandra seeks solidarity with her

colleague. Gina does not interject here, but laughs and responds Lingala. In a manner of protest, Sandra imitates her employer when she says “Shut up do your job”, as though to taunt him for his response to her. By imitating him, Sandra also draws the attention of the other assistants, and they collectively show their dissatisfaction with their employer. Even though Gina and Nathalie do not actively come to Sandra’s defence, Gina laughs to diffuse the situation. By repeating the interaction to her colleagues, Sandra also enlists their support, constructing a situation of “us” versus “them”– the assistants versus their employer. Even though they do not directly challenge him, by standing in solidarity and teasing him for his outbursts, they protest his actions and maintain a degree of relative power.

7.3.1.2 *Assistants speaking to power*

The following conversation explicates how directives are managed, and how participants identify with their assigned social roles in the context of conflict with a customer. This extract, already introduced in the preceding chapter (*extract 5.3*), follows the above interaction where Number-One tells Sandra to keep quiet and do her job. The extract above therefore, provides the textual and situational context to the unfolding conversation.

This interaction is prefaced by a discrepancy the assistant noticed in the pricing of a suitcase. Sandra alerts Number-One that he had mistakenly told customers that a suitcase cost R240.00 while the actual price was R550.00. Number-One, rather than apologising or trying to resolve the misunderstanding, responds by reprimanding Sandra for not having tagged the price correctly. Thus, each speaker answers with a counter-reprimand.

Extract 7.2

SAN [v]	Number-One that suitcase you tell that customer 240 he think like you (..) talking about		
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SAN [v]	that grey one	Grey one	So he show me say you tell
N1 [v]	Which one?		

SAN [v]	them this grey one is 240	
N1 [v]		Its actually the ^big size yeah the ^big size 240

SAN [v]	But you must you must ^talk them	
N1 [v]		^So now do you not put price on there~ the

SAN [v]		They didn't sss they didn't see the price they just heard you say that
N1 [v]	size is size	

SAN [v]	big is was 240 so they think that 550 also is 240		
N1 [v]			^No I'm talking about ^why
GIN [v]			You are the boss
N1 [v]	there now no price on there?		
GIN [v]			
SAN [c]		<i>Sandra is telling Gina about the case of the incorrect pricing (in Lingala)</i>	
SAN [v]			How much this one (..)
GIN [v]	Because he's playing phone that one		
SAN [c]	<i>Sandra laughs at Gina's remark</i>		<i>Re-enacting their interaction</i>
SAN [v]	[laughs] in China (..) shut up do your job	Number One (0.5) can I have er	
SAN [c]	<i>laughing</i>	<i>Customer comes back to look at the</i>	
SAN [v]	suitcase key		
N1 [v]			Everything put
SAN [c]	<i>suitcases. Gina needs the key that unlocks the security chains around the suitcases</i>		
N1 [v]	price on there not put sizey size	There you have price on the people don't	
SAN [v]		So you shout at me	
N1 [v]	need ahks the price		What happened for this suitcase
SAN [v]		I don't know Number One (.) you asking me	
N1 [v]	(0.5) why is it broken?		

The discourse thus becomes a dispute about who is to blame for bringing the customer under the wrong impression regarding the price. Sandra issues a directive, “But you must ^talk them”. This can be characterised as a bottom-up instruction, which is rather unusual in workplace interaction. In regular employer-employee communication a person with less power in the hierarchy would be unlikely to give a command with no mitigation. Number-One counters Sandra’s instruction by admonishing her for not having done her job well, thereby assuming his role as the employer. When she retorts that the customers did not get the misinformation from incorrect price tagging, but from Number-One himself, he continues to refer again to the poor tagging. Herewith, the topic changes from the customers being misinformed due to Sandra’s negligence in one case, to a remark about her doing an unsatisfactory job with the pricing in general. In this way the owner avoids accountability for the mistake in giving a price. Another worker, Gina, picks up on the fact that he is shifting blame, and reminds him of his role in the workplace: “You are the boss”. At this juncture, Number-One proceeded to deal with the customers as Sandra initially suggested.

The assistants discussed the scenario in Lingala (characterised by enough English insertions and mimicking for me to follow what the conversation is about), and Gina remarks out loud, “Because he’s playing phone that one”. In indirectly addressing the customers, Gina actually openly criticised the shop owner, which could be interpreted as disrespectful in a similar way as his earlier remark to Sandra. In suggesting that Number-One was distracted when he misinformed the customers because he was playing games on his mobile phone, Sandra affirms a discursive pattern in which employer and employee both are critical of the way the other fulfils his/her role. The assistants, even if reliant on the shop owner for employment, challenge him in verbal exchanges. His response is either to ignore them or to give an impatient rejoinder, reprimanding them not about their impertinence as much as about how they fulfil their jobs in price tagging or keeping the store tidy. The assistants are not inhibited in showing their incredulity and indignation at the employer’s impolite remarks.

When the customers returned to purchase the suitcase, Gina assisted them, and Sandra asked Number-One for the key that unlocks the chain that secured the suitcases. He used this moment to renew the subject of the incorrect pricing, instructing her to price all the suitcases individually while she was outside assisting Gina. In telling her to put prices tags on properly so that customers would see the price without having to bother him, Number-One indirectly acknowledged his mistake. Sandra uses the opportunity to object to him for having raised his voice at her: “So you shout at me”. The exchange of showing up each other’s mistakes continues when Number-One points out that there is a broken suitcase on display and indirectly holds her responsible for the condition of the items displayed inside and outside of the store. Sandra’s response again is one that affirms her identity with the assistant role and her challenge to him as the owner who should take up his role more constructively. With “I don’t know Number-One, [why are] you asking me?” she implies that as the owner he should know what happens to his stock, and also the condition in which it arrived there. From observing the various roles of participants it was clear the owner did not unpack stock or deal with its display in any way. These were assistants’ duties. Even so, the assistants indicated that an owner should be better engaged, that they expected him to know the condition of his stock. The workplace roles were constantly challenged in this conversation. Sandra called on the owner’s role as the employer to talk to the customers, and he called on her role as the subordinate by pointing out his dissatisfaction with her work, and to do as he instructs. Each attempts to emphasise the other’s responsibility in assuring the organisation of the store and properly dealing with customers.

The following extract (discussed above in Chapter 6 as *extract 6.2*), continues the discourse of claiming identities and challenging roles as the shop owner and the assistants.

Extract 7.3

N1 [v]		^^Yes there I
SAN [v]	Number-One you ^see customer there	
N1 [c]	<i>N1 is preoccupied with his mobile phone and ignores the customer who wants to pay</i>	

N1 [v]	see shut up you!		
SAN [v]		Aaawwww!	
GIN [v]			[Switches to Lingala] 'I see
GIN [c]			<i>laughing while imitating N1</i>
SAN [c]		<i>laughing</i>	

SAN [v]			One day we gonna ^beat you in this shop
GIN [v]	there shut up'	^You!	You see you didn't see but you see 'you see
GIN [c]			

SAN [v]			
GIN [v]	there shut up!'	You ^see you are beezy	You see look at 'there I see

GIN [v]	shut up'	Ooooy ^this man ha ah when's Ireen coming back?
SAN [c]		<i>laughing</i>

GIN [v]	I'm gonna tell Ireen everything	No Number-One is not good 'I see shut up' but
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GIN [v]	you didn't see
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This is another instance in which Sandra addresses Number-One, drawing his attention to a customer who needs his attention, and in which he challenges her in return, indicating that he is aware of his position, and directly telling her to keep quiet, while indirectly implying that she should “mind her own business”. This discourse is indicative of an ongoing power struggle in which the assistant takes on an instructor’s role, thus assuming coercive power over the person who is ostensibly in terms of formal job description the more powerful participants. Number-One’s response is one of taking back power, as he tells her that he is aware of the customer, suggesting that he chooses to finish his current activity first. The subsequent “Shut up you!”, is a counter instruction which is uttered loudly in the store, in full view of customers. This is a performance of authority and superiority in the store. Sandra’s exclamation and laughter however, is a protest to show that she will not be silenced. It is at this juncture that Gina, who is an overhearer, interjects and comes to Sandra’s defence. Her defence of Sandra is an endorsement of her protest, as she does not outright threaten or chastise Number-One for his disrespectful way of addressing Sandra. Instead, she mockingly imitates him, “I see there, shut up”, and expresses her dissatisfaction with an emphatic, “You!”

When Sandra realises that she is not alone in her protest, she threatens Number-One with a dramatic warning that the assistants could turn on him and “beat him up” for his unacceptable way of interacting with them. To threaten one’s employer is an unusual and rather bold move in which Sandra’s positions herself as part of a collective – the assistants versus their employer.

Gina supports Sandra, assuming the role of antagonist, challenging his outburst at Sandra by ironically pointing out that he was indeed “busy” and therefore unaware of the customer when Sandra called his attention to him/her. She stresses this saying “You see, you didn’t see, but you [say] ‘see there shut up’... You ^see you are beeezy [busy]”. In the following utterance, when she asks when Ireen will be coming back, Gina is indirectly assessing the owner’s management skills, criticising him for playing games on his mobile phone instead of attending to the shop, finding his behaviour objectionable, and implying that his wife and co-owner of the shop, would be appalled. Number-One’s disengagement and seeming indifference is an enactment of identity of the superior in the workplace. In Bailey’s (2007:348) terms “to speak – or even not to speak in a social encounter – is always an act of identity”. Regarding social roles, those who can choose what to respond to are usually the ones who hold power in the interactions. Number-One’s silences are different to pauses; they are his way of taking back control in a situation where his position as the manager has been contested. This kind of interaction emphasises that there is a relationship of mutual dependency in which the owner relies on his assistants for their work on the shop floor as well as for their communication with customers, and they are at his mercy in terms of staying in positions of paid employment. Even so, the communication style does not speak clearly of appreciation or mutual respect. Interestingly, in the extension of these conversations, the owner as well as the assistants’ behaviour seem to be less harsh than the words would be outside of context. To some extent, there are also elements of fun and endearment in the assistants’ challenges to their “boss”.

7.3.1.3 Standing one’s ground and demanding a reasonable conversation

Of the three assistants, Gina appeared to be the more rebellious to authority. When she engaged with Number-One she almost demands a response, unlike Sandra and Nathalie who do not persist. In the extract below Gina tries to elicit a response from him, enacting various roles as she does so, from being a compliant employee, to becoming an antagonist, and then enacting supplication. Gina enacts these in one conversation.

Extract 7.4

SAN [v]		Gina!	Your boss looking for you
N1 [v]	Where Gina?		
GIN [v]		Yeah^	
SAN [v]		She was helping customer outside	
GIN [v]	Yes?	Number One I'm here	You want to give me
GIN [v]	something?	Number One you finished	Just asking if you
N1 [c]		<i>N1 glares at her</i>	
GIN [v]	finish you say ^yes I'm finish come take it (...) If you are not finish yes Gina I'm		
SAN [v]			Ireen's gonna come
GIN [v]	^not finish	Number Waaaaan (1.5) you are my boss	
SAN [v]	maybe next month		Now you are free you can play
SAN [c]		<i>Giggling as she teases N1</i>	<i>To N1</i>
SAN [v]	game	Number one get angry every time (...) little problem	
GIN [c]		<i>Laughing</i>	
SAN [v]		This one ^mm hmm~	
GIN [v]	Yaa like a small boy	Me also I like this one Number One ^give me	
GIN [c]		<i>Referring to N1's lunch</i>	
GIN [v]		Half (2.5) just to taste	
GIN [c]			

Reflecting on the extract above, I want to focus on how Gina's dynamic enactment of social roles in relation to her employer is discursively achieved. The scenario begins with Number-One asking out loud where Gina is. Sandra hears this and calls Gina to tell her that her "boss" is looking for her. Gina addresses Number-One as she walks towards him and probes with, "Yes?" Sandra and Gina jointly address the owner, pointing out that Gina had been attending to a customer, but was also available to attend to the owners summons. Gina thus gives a polite, deferential response, also suggesting a readiness to accept a directive from her employer, also asking him whether he summoned her is to give her something, perhaps an instruction or items to unpack. When Number-One does not respond, Gina shifts her attention to his lunch, and asks if he's finished, as his bowl is positioned on the counter. He glares at her silently, which completely changes her stance from deferential and open to instructions, to defensive and more assertive. She then defends with "I am just asking if you [have] finish[-ed]; you [should] say 'yes I'm finish[-ed], come [and] take it ... If you are not finish[-ed you say] 'yes Gina, I'm not finish[-ed]". Here she not only expresses her dissatisfaction with his silent response, she also

challenges him, telling him what a polite answer to her offer would have been. Still not getting an acceptable response, Gina continues by drawling his name, “Number-Waaaaaan...” and reminding him of his position as her boss. With this action she also retreats, changing her tone and once again enacting subservience. Throughout this interaction, Number-One is silent. Although he started the exchange by checking on where Gina is, her taking up of the conversation seems to have annoyed him. As it is, he was irritable after she had addressed him while he was preoccupied with his mobile phone and having lunch. The power relations here show a degree of ambiguity in that even though Gina admonishes Number-One and lectures him on what would have been appropriate in the conversation, she hedges a minute later and acknowledges him as her boss. This change in tone effectively changes the mood of the interaction. Once she sees that Number-One is unwilling to respond, Gina re-assesses the interaction and changes her stance.

Sandra is an overhearer in this exchange, but she eventually enters the conversation by saying out loud that Ireen will be returning to the store soon. The topic of Number-One’s wife and co-owner of the store, was often invoked when the assistants wanted to taunt and challenge him. As Sandra mentioned Ireen, she giggled, even though Number-One had not responded to her. She was clearly aware that she was challenging him, remarking also on his freedom to “play game” as long as his wife was absent. When Gina joined in the laughter, Sandra directed her attention at the observing researcher, and told me that Number-One gets angry for the littlest things. Even though she directs this to me as the silent observer, she says it loud enough for Number-One to hear, and she prolongs her turn with an expression of exasperation, “This one mm hmmm”. Gina once again interjects and takes on the role of antagonist, explicitly comparing the store owner to a “small boy” who spends a lot of time playing games and then also being easily upset.

Gina’s stance in this interaction is seemingly fluid and dynamic. She calls him a small boy, when moments before, she told him that he is her boss. She shows solidarity with Sandra, who is complaining about his temper. Five minutes later however, she becomes supplicatory, telling him that she likes the food he is having and would like to try some of it. Gina’s movement between challenging and placating her employer indicates her awareness of the precarious position she has as an employee. Number-One remained aloof throughout the interaction, using silence as a way of maintaining control and distancing himself from frivolous interaction with the assistants. This behaviour illustrates a general discursive pattern in which Number-One initiates conversation when he was giving instructions, when he required information from assistants, or when he admonished them. In doing so, he was saving face, maintaining his

position of power (cf. Brown & Levinson, 1978, 1987). Ting-Toomey and Oetzel (2003:131) assert that face work "is employed to resolve a conflict, exacerbate a conflict, avoid a conflict, threaten or challenge another person's position, protect a person's image, and so on". Number-One frequently withheld linguistic feedback, and in doing so showed his attitudinal orientation towards the interactions with his employees.

7.3.1.4 *Asserting the power of owner and manager*

Contrary to the previous extract, the interaction presented below was initiated by Number-One, who reminded Gina about their arrangement that she would not come to work the following Sunday, and that she should therefore expect a reduced income.

Extract 7.5

N1 [v]	Don't forgot uh this Sunday huh	Your money
GIN [v]	This Sunday what	
N1 [v]	short don't say what why okay	
GIN [v]	So Sunday me I'm not gonna come (2.0)	
N1 [v]		You can leave
GIN [v]	Because I'm tired to see Number One's face	Yeee:s
N1 [v]	Leave this job	You can go now
GIN [v]	Yes	Yaaaa:
SAN [v]		
GIN [v]	We gonna go now	
N1 [c]		

Number-One simply mentions Sunday, Gina takes up the remark asking what the reference is about, giving Number-One the opportunity to remind her of the salary implications. In asserting his decision-making power as to not paying for leave an assistant takes, Number-One is identifying in the role of store owner. Gina responds as an accepting assistant, but also challenging the owner by giving her reason for the announced absence on the next Sunday as being tired of seeing his face. Instead of ignoring her taunt as with the previous interaction, Number-One tells her that she is free to leave. He shows his position of power by the implication that he can get by without her. She responds with a lengthened "yeeees", indicating that she has heard, but does not take his insistence that she "can leave this job" seriously. Here he is challenging her, calling her out on her statement that she is tired of seeing his face and by repeating "you can go now" he takes up threat of leaving, telling her that she can leave

immediately. Still Gina is not silenced and utters another lengthened, “yaaaa”, adding “we gonna go now”. Although she is arguing with Number-One, Gina’s co-workers are present, overhearing, but not taking part so that when she says “we” she includes Sandra and Nathalie, suggesting that her leaving would mean all the assistants would leave. This reinforces the solidarity among the assistants and the basis of the power Gina assumes when she contests the owner’s way of talking down to her. Hereafter a long period silence followed, which in effect gave Gina the last word in the dispute. Number-One’s silence could be his way of conceding this quarrel. Allowing Gina the last word could be interpreted as a face saving move (cf. Brown and Levinson, 1978, 1987). Remaining silent appears to be Number-One’s way of maintaining negative face, that is, the “individual desire of freedom to act from imposition or a focus on self-aspect” (Yuan, 2013:93). Such a negative face need is apparent throughout the interaction between Number-One and his assistants.

7.3.1.5 *Using banter to gain leverage*

The following extract, already introduced in section 6.2.5 (*extract 6.5*) above, will attend to the interaction when Vuyo enters the store singing, telling Number-One that he should not listen because he does not understand her language, and then insists on a donation from him for her son’s school. This conversation between Number-One and Vuyo shows that even in the workplace frivolity and humour still feature in employer-employee interaction. It also demonstrates the social connections that exist between workers of different stores. Although Vuyo works in Shop 3, she is familiar in Shop1 to the extent that she is sometimes called in as babysitter. Also, she is on friendly terms with the assistants in Shop 1 even though she is not from the same L1-community, and in fact is not a foreign migrant within this workplace context. This discourse illustrates further that even in instances of humour, there are still issues of power at play.

Extract 7.6

VO [v]		Don't listen because you can't understand
VO [C]	<i>Walks into the store singing</i>	
NI [v]	And then?	For you?
VO [v]	I want a donation	It's for my er for my baby
NI [v]	kuhlazy	Buh-bye
VO [v]	Same like you	Ha ^ah Number 1 Hayi^
VO [v]	Number 1 give me donation! Tshi!	If you want me help baby I tell can't help

N1 [v]		Five in rand how ma=
VO [v]	Because you don't want to give me a donation	
N1 [C]		<i>Taking money out of the cash counter</i>

N1 [v]	how much?	
VO [v]		I don't know even a ten rand it's fine
VO [C]		<i>Laughing</i>
N1 [C]		

Although Vuyo is not employed by Number-One, the owner of Shop 3, Tina, for whom Vuyo works is related to him. This means that he has power as a shop owner in the China Town centre, and also as a male family member of Vuyo's employer. Yet in this conversation Vuyo shows awareness of the employers' reliance on employees as both shop assistants and babysitters. Tina, who also formed part of the data collection for this study (Shop 3), has an eighteen-month-old daughter who accompanies her to work every day. Babysitting her employer's daughter was a part of Vuyo's duties as a shop assistant. Vuyo brought Tina's daughter to play with Number-One's daughter every day, and would then take his daughter on outings, walking around with her in China Town. This proved a great relief to the shop owners because it allowed them a period of rest, as witnessed during my observation. Vuyo draws on this in her interaction with Number-One when he is reluctant to give her a donation.

When she walked into his store, Vuyo was singing an isiXhosa song as a means of drawing Number-One's attention. When he turned to her, she told him not to listen to her singing because he does not understand isiXhosa. This set the tone for the conversation, as her opening utterance was a playful provocation, not a regular greeting such as "good morning", as one would normally expect. By telling him that because of his inability to understand isiXhosa he should ignore her singing, she was drawing on one of Van Dijk's discourse of the "other" (see Van Dijk 1993b, 2004 on racist discourse). Even though China Town is a centre established by people of Chinese origin to give their "compatriots" business opportunities, and Vuyo represented a minority group in this particular space, she displayed what Chilton (2005:24) refers to as an "exclusionary attitude", i.e. attitudes of social actors who recurrently and selectively ascribe certain attributes to social and ethnic groups in ways that excludes those who are different to their own community. This relates also to what Van Dijk (2004:351) refers to as discourse, specifically racist discourse, being a 'social practice' which occurs in either spoken or written texts. He considers how discourses can be directed *at* 'the Other' in directly objectifying them, or *about* 'the Other' in constructing them to readers/listeners. When Vuyo says that Number-One "can't understand" her language, she draws on Van Dijk's topic class of

difference in racist discourse, emphasising the difference of the “other”, and thus their distance from “us” (Van Dijk, 2004:352). This exclusionary attitude of *difference* is the first step in what Van Dijk (2004:352) calls “in-group–out-group polarization”. Perhaps it should be noted here that these exclusionary attitudes are not held by local shop assistants alone. Ostensibly, in view of how Number-One responds to his employees, and the near-absent interaction between Tina and her employees, this attitude is reciprocated. The topic class of *difference* applies to both role-players, even the assistants in Shop 1 who purposefully exclude the shop owners from their conversation by code-switching. Nevertheless, it is more apparent in Vuyo’s utterance here.

In spite of Vuyo’s provocative greeting, Number-One appears unperturbed and simply probes, “And then?”, as a way of urging her to get to the purpose of her visit. Without hesitation she directly declares, “I want a donation”. When Number-One hears that it is for her baby, he rejects her request by telling her that she is crazy. The flat hierarchy between assistants and employers generally becomes clear in her answering with a counter-insult, “Same like you”. When Number-One dismissed her in an attempt to end the conversation and wanted her to leave his store, he was attempting to assert authority. She did not give in to his instruction, but asserted her role as an employee who knows she has value that gives her bargaining power. Therefore she refused his dismissal and insisted that he give her a donation. She invoked the power of her workplace duty as baby-sitter, and threatened that if he were to withhold a donation, she would be unable to help him with minding their baby. Without verbally acknowledging or challenging her ultimatum, Number-One started with an action that served as an answer. He opened the cash register, and asks her whether five rand would be enough. In succumbing to her threat, Number-One placed himself in a vulnerable position, in spite of his power as the owner of the store. Vuyo continued to emphasize her awareness that Number-One was dependent on her baby-sitting favours, by suggesting that he donate double the amount he offered. She hedges as she does so, feigning timidity: “I don’t know, even a ten rand its fine”. Number-One conceded and gave her the ten rand, after which they proceeded to discuss whether she would use the money for the proper cause (see section 6.2.5).

7.3.1.6 Joint decision-making

The excerpt cited below shows the relationship that Number-One has with his assistants. At times he is aloof, but at other times he puts in the interactional work required to maintain a degree of sociability with them. I want to focus on his relationship with Nathalie, who appeared to be his favourite of the assistants. She was the assistant who had been employed the longest, and she reported that working for Number-One was her first and only occupation since she

arrived in Cape Town in 2011. She was the only assistant allowed to work with money at the cash register, and Number-One often assigned her with taking charge of the point of sale when he left the store. He also asked her opinion when it came to purchasing stock for the store, as seen in *extract 7.7* below. Here Nathalie pointed out that they were running low on a specific blouse, and asked him when he would stock it again.

Extract 7.7

N1 [v]		What's wrong?	Heh?
NAT [v]	Number-One	When will you stock this one?	I like it
N1 [v]		Bring more?	
NAT [v]	this one	^Yaaaa! People ^like it you ask me bring more?	
N1 [v]	Sunday		
NAT [v]			Must I bring it back?
N1 [c]		<i>N1 puts half-eaten bowl of food on the counter</i>	
N1 [v]	I don't want	Give to the that fat ladies	Other two
NAT [v]			I'm gonna give the fat ladies
N1 [c]	<i>pushes bowl towards Nathalie</i>		
NAT [c]			<i>laughing</i>
N1 [v]	fat ladies		Not now!
N1 [c]			
NAT [c]	<i>Nathalie gives the food to Gina and Sandra and they start eating</i>		
N1 [v]		Nata!!	I told you not now!
NAT [v]		Ya?	
N1 [c]	<i>Checks the surveillance camera to see if they're eating</i>		

Nathalie initiated the conversation by addressing Number-One directly. He gave an interesting response to show that he had heard her; rather than neutrally saying “yes?” his answer indicated that he was expecting a complaint about something, thus his answer to Nathalie’s call, was “What’s wrong?”. The question with which Nathalie followed, referred to clothing that had been selling well, and needed to be re-ordered: “when will you stock this one?” Although articulated in question format, this was an indirect upward directive urging the store owner to order more of the items. By asking “when” Number-One would bring more stock, Nathalie implied that it had already been decided, that the only remaining uncertainty was about the timing. As the owner Number-One is free to decide on his own which items to offer in his store. Even so, Number-One encouraged Nathalie’s suggestion with “heh?” and urged her to elaborate. Rather than repeating her question, she gave the reason for her question which was an implied directive, by saying that she liked the the item she had identified. Number-One

understood the nature of the question/directive, thus directly asked whether he should order more. Again, to add motivation to her suggestion she exclaimed that customers liked to this particular blouse. In giving information on customers' preferences, Nathalie identified herself as more than just following instructions, but also as an assistant who took initiative and collaborated in decision making on what items to stock in the shop. She appeared to be perplexed by his unawareness that the customers wanted that item. Number-One then responded to what was directly asked about timing and not to the indirect instruction to order, thus giving a day on which stock will be replenished "Sunday". This answer satisfied Nathalie as it indirectly confirmed that an order had already been placed, and it directly answered her first question about when new stock would be arriving.

This interaction regarding the stock shows firstly that Number-One is, at least to some extent, reliant on the assistants' opinion on which stock to order. One of the assistants' key duties is to deal with the customers and interact with them on a daily basis. Therefore, their employer knew that he could rely on their knowledge of which products were in high demand. Thus, when Nathalie asked him when he would get new stock of that blouse, he immediately asked whether he should "bring more". There are many possible responses to her question, perhaps the more familiar responses like silent glaring, telling her to shut up and do her job, or ignoring her completely. Yet he engaged here, showing that her opinion counted. Nathalie assumed a kind of decision making power here that does not come from her status in the workplace hierarchy, but what Thomas (1995) refers to as "expert" power. This means that Nathalie had the power to define the situation and outcome of this interaction, as well as Number-One's decision whether to act or ignore the fact that she suggested he order more stock. Status is therefore not the only source of power. Holmes and Stubbe (2015:4-5) contend that "relative power needs to be assessed not only in the particular social context in which an interaction takes place, but more particularly in the specific discourse context of any contribution". Nathalie's suggestion on what to order therefore also stressed the notion of accountability and the insight the owner is expected to possess on account of his position. Being more knowledgeable regarding customers' wants and needs than the shop owner, Nathalie's indirect instruction appears to have succeeded. Holmes and Stubbe (2015) state that in workplace communication directives from an employee are typically less direct and are often mitigated. In this informal workplace however, the hierarchy is flexible, and upward directives are common. See *extract 7.2*, for example, where Sandra instructed her employer to talk to the customers regarding the suitcase price.

Besides illustrating the matter of shared decision making, the extract above shows how the shop owner's interaction also establishes a hierarchy amongst the assistants. He gives Nathalie responsibilities that are not afforded the other two. Nathalie accepts Number-One's display of benevolence towards her, but at the same time shows solidarity with her peers. A short exchange regarding the lunch that that Number-One puts had only half eaten, highlights this intermediary position of Nathalie. When Number-One puts down his bowl of food, she offers to return the bowl to the neighbouring café from which he regularly orders meals. Number-One accepts her offer, but also refers to the left-overs and suggests she give the food to Gina and Sandra rather than letting it go to waste. Out of earshot, he amicably refers to the two as "that fat ladies ...". This is the only account of him using such a term in reference to the assistants. The pejorative description of Gina and Sandra is intended to be humorous, and is an extension of the good rapport that had been established between Number-One and Nathalie during the decision making about ordering new stock. Nathalie laughed and repeated that she would indeed "give [it to] the fat ladies". This is a conversational move by Number-One that constructed and affirmed his interpersonal relationship with Nathalie. This kind of engagement in apparent trivia, according to Eggins and Slade (1997), is a disguise for the significant interpersonal work participants put in to confirm social identities and relations. By excluding Gina and Sandra from the interaction and referring to them as "other two fat ladies", Number-One is confirming solidarity with Nathalie. A notable trend in this store was that when Number-One says something offensive, even if in jest, the assistants would repeat his words, either amongst one another or in giving it back to him. Here Nathalie repeated Number-One's remark about them to Gina and Sandra as she handed them the food. They laughed, but they did not address him or otherwise respond to his remark. Instead they retreated to their work stations and started eating. Number-One's regulation about meals is that even though he takes his meals at the sales point, assistants are not allowed to eat outside of their assigned lunch breaks. He therefore reprimands them with "not now!" while checking the live surveillance footage and repeating to Nathalie "I told you not now!" This restores the established hierarchy in which the assistants do not dispute basic working agreements, but leave the food and resume their duties. Number-One's utterance "I told you not now" is an indirect instruction for the assistants to get back to work. In this way, he again assumes his role as the superior who instructs and enforces rules, and moves away from his role as the benevolent and interpersonally motivated social actor.

Throughout the discourse in Shop 1 Number-One's silence or lack of response to his assistants is apparent. Bailey (2007) contends that a delay in producing a response can signal disagreement or something else problematic about the phenomenon or stance invoked by the

prior turn. More significantly, and perhaps more applicable to Number-One and the assistants, is Bailey's (2007:348) position that a longer silence (re)constitutes specific relationships among those who are present, and could display stances toward widely recognized social categories. In the workplace, an institutional context, relationships are relatively fixed, with clearly defined roles. In this informal workplace, participants put in more work to establish their roles, as these roles are often challenged.

One of the most notable features of conversation in Shop 1 is the solidarity of the assistants, which is demonstrated in the way they defend one another, or interject when Number-One is showing irritability. Interestingly, whenever there is an instance of teasing or joking, the assistants switch to Lingala and remark amongst each other, then switch back to English. In this store, language choice is symbolic. A switch from English to French, Lingala or Swahili signals when the activity type changes. English is associated with duties and workplace discourse, but a switch to their first language signals a change in who is allowed in the conversation, and what the conversation is about. In a study on Portuguese factory workers, Goldstein (1997) cited in Roberts (2007) argues that language choice, specifically in instances of code-switching, helps maintain and navigate boundaries. With the assistants in Shop 1, Lingala is the language of friendship and survival on the shop floor. In this context, Lingala, Swahili and French are the languages the assistants use to gossip, to discuss those who do not know their language, and, as Sandra pointed out, to alert one another when potentially deviant customers enter the store (see 5.3). When it comes to their employer however, they blatantly code-switch and discuss their dissatisfaction or irritation with him in a language he does not understand.

The section below investigates how workplace roles are managed and negotiated in Shop 2.

7.4 SHOP 2

The data presented here shows how workplace roles and relationships are maintained in Shop 2 between Suzanna and her assistants. As already mentioned, interaction in this store is different to that of Shop1 in terms of ELF proficiencies of the participants, but this does not hinder the participants in this store from signalling their interpersonal agendas and power orientations. Although there are no instances of taunting or banter as with Shop 1, there are instances of power struggles, which are manifested in the language use.

7.4.1 Managing workplace roles: Suzanna and Faith

Although the relationship between store owners and assistants are clearly defined in terms of roles in the workplace, there are also instances where there are bids for power which manifests in their language use, albeit in truncated repertoires. As the shop owner, Suzanna is in a powerful position – she decides who will be employed and what kind of payment the assistant will get. Although the assistants in China Town act towards the owners with a degree of deference, their side-talk often indicates an awareness of the power they themselves wield, due to their greater communicative agility within the store, and particularly in winning over clients and clinching sales. As the more proficient one in ELF Faith wields communicative power – she is responsible for all the sales talk in the shop. This makes for an interesting power hierarchy: Faith does not want to lose her job, and so needs to assure the shop owner of her loyalty and dedication to the work. She puts in considerable effort to follow and appropriate Suzanna’s truncated English, by reducing the grammaticality of her own English to accommodate to Suzanna’s forms.

7.4.1.1 Establishing and checking roles

Extract 7.8

SUZ [v] FAI [C]	<i>Faith is assisting a customer who is showing her a picture of a blouse on her phone</i>	What?
FAI [v] FAI [C]	Uhh (0.5) My looking for (1.0) top (0.3) but we dont have it	
SUZ [v] FAI [v] SUZ [C] FAI [C]	What's wrong? <i>referring to the customer who exited the store</i> <i>Customer in store browsing</i>	No nothing (0.4) she
SUZ [v] FAI [v]	Just look just checked	

The extract above illustrates how the roles that the employer and employees enact in the store are defined. Suzanna was sitting at the point of sale knitting, while Faith assisted the customers who entered the store. Suzanna remained disengaged from customer interaction up until the point of purchase, as it is Faith’s job to assist with customer questions and sales. This already indexes who holds power in this store. In the extract above the interaction is preceded by a customer who walked into the store and showed Faith a picture of a blouse that she wanted, but

Faith informed her that they did not have such an item in stock. After the customer had left, Suzanna enquired about the interaction with the client by a one-word question: “What?” This was an enquiry into what the customer was looking for, as well as why she left without purchasing anything. Faith understood exactly what Suzanna was requesting, and she fully explained that the customer was “looking for top ... but we don’t have it”. This seemed to be sufficient information for Suzanna, who wordlessly accepted it and continued to knit. Moments later, another customer entered the store and was browsing, without interacting with Faith or Suzanna. When she left without saying a word, Suzanna again asked Faith “What’s wrong?” This shows how Suzanna, even without explicit instruction, is set on their aim in the shop – to make sales. Faith assures her “no nothing [is wrong] ... she just checked”. Suzanna indicates her understanding that some customers “Just look”.

As Faith’s job is, in principle, to interact with customers and assure that sales are made, Suzanna’s primary role in the store is to handle the money, and to oversee Faith’s work. When Faith’s first interaction with the customer does not end in a sale, Suzanna questions this as her superior. Faith, in awareness of her duties, reported on the missed sale, telling her employer that they did not have what the customer wanted. Although observably more than capable in her job, Faith does not respond with impatience or agitation that her employer is questioning her customer relations.

In addition to her role as sales assistant, Faith is also the language broker between Suzanna and customers. In instances of customer disputes where they want to speak to Suzanna, Faith assists with interpreting. However, Suzanna does not only use Faith’s knowledge of English for workplace activities, as will be discovered in the extract below. She also requires Faith’s knowledge for issues that aren’t necessarily work-related.

7.4.1.2 *Talk that is not sales talk – using a formal register*

In the extract below Faith and Suzanna discuss whether Suzanna should eat a granadilla fruit. The extract begins with Suzanna summoning Faith to the point of sale where she is seated with her mobile phone. Faith immediately attends to her.

Extract 7.9

SUZ [v]	Come come quickly come	
FAI [v]		You want to find the
FAI [c]		
SUZ [c]	<i>Calls Faith to assist with something on her phone</i>	<i>Suzanna looking up granadilla</i>

FAI [v]	meaning or wha? (3.5) gre. na . da	Granadilla I believe this could be the
SUZ [c]	<i>fruit on her phone</i>	
SUZ [v]	Gra nah	Nah dilla Okay. (...) There
FAI [v]	botanical name	Granadilla
SUZ [c]		<i>Proceeds to pronounce the word</i>
SUZ [v]	Ay	This is a Ee?
FAI [v]	Dilla . Ay	Hmm
SUZ [v]	Ee Ee eL .. two L?	This is two L
FAI [v]	Two L	That could be it is botanical
FAI [v]	name that could that could be the botanical thats ^science name for it	
SUZ [v]	This the wuh	This no English
FAI [v]	It's not English name	No this not English name this South Africa
SUZ [v]	You see this the wuh took other one long to soft you can eat	
FAI [v]	It is soft (1.5) My no know this	
SUZ [v]		No eat?
FAI [v]	You see? Its spoiled. Its not (1.5) this is spoiled	No eat
SUZ [v]	No good?	I know this one no bad this eat you fine eat
FAI [v]	Its spoiled	No good. Spoiled see
SUZ [v]	no no problem	Other people took
FAI [v]	No problem	This this this not English name
SUZ [v]	the wuh eat don't worry (...) fine	
FAI [v]		fine

This interaction was initiated by Suzanna who was conducting a Google search on her phone to research the properties of the granadilla fruit. She called Faith to assist her, to which Faith responded and then saw that Suzanna was trying to spell the word “granadilla” in the search bar. She asked whether Suzanna was trying to search the meaning of the name, and then told her that “granadilla” might be the botanical name for the fruit. Suzanna ignored this utterance as they proceeded to type it into Suzanna’s phone, while Faith assisted her with the spelling. Once Suzanna had activated the search engine, Faith again repeated, “That ... that could be the botanical that’s ^science name for it”. Suzanna appeared to have difficulty understanding, as she responds rather unclearly with “this the wuh”. Faith matter-of-factly states that granadilla is not the English name for the fruit. Suzanna accepted this as true and repeated, “This no

English”. The discussion, limited as Suzanna’s vocabulary is, became one about the etymology of the word ‘granadilla’ as the South African not the British name for the fruit, and further turned to when it was good to eat. Even though she was not familiar with the granadilla/passion fruit, Faith behaved as though she had “expert knowledge” (Thomas 1995). Here it appears she wanted to prolong her role as the more knowledgeable regarding the spelling of the word and where it comes from.

There appears to be a bid for power from Faith as soon as Suzanna showed that she possesses limited knowledge of a subject. She required assistance with spelling of an English word, which shifted power towards Faith. Suzanna was clearly at a disadvantage and entirely reliant on her assistance. Faith, who usually adapted her English to accommodate her employer, in this instance switched to a formal register when she mentioned the botanical or scientific name for it. Faith’s use of the formal register continued when she used the term “spoiled”. Suzanna was evidently not interested in the origins of the word, but in whether the fruit was edible. Faith again suggests that she has expert knowledge, “You see? Its spoiled. Its not (1.5) this is spoiled”. When Suzanna seeks clarification, and says, “no eat?” Faith repeats “No eat ... its spoiled”, even though Suzanna shows no recognition of the word. This is evident as she again probes for clarification “no good?”. Faith affirms, yet continues to use a register with which Suzanna is unfamiliar: “It’s spoiled [...] Spoiled see”. Suzanna eventually interrupts and in her ELF variety asserts what she knows, namely that “... this one no bad, this eat (you), [it’s] fine [to] eat [it] – no, no problem”. Although Faith concedes “no problem”, she attempts once again to discuss the naming of the fruit in telling Suzanna that it’s not the English name for it. Suzanna continues with the matter of the fruit being edible, invoking “other people’ who “don’t worry ... [because it’s] fine”. Here Suzanna contradicts Faith’s assertion that the fruit should not be eaten. As an observer, it was clear to me that the fruit was not spoiled, but that Faith who was unfamiliar with its appearance when it is ripe, was convinced that it was spoiled. Suzanna thus told her that she knows the fruit and that its wrinkled skin was not a problem: “I know this one, [it’s] no[t] bad.

In this interaction we find many interruptions and overlapping turns, even though this was otherwise unusual in the workplace discourse in Shop 2. As this turned out to be a discussion on a topic unrelated to the division of labour in the store, Faith took on and persisted in portraying an expert identity. Eventually, Suzanna challenged Faith’s ‘expertise’, showing no deference to her implied knowledge of English or of the granadilla.

7.4.2 Managing workplace roles: Suzanna and Grace

Extract 7.10

GRA [c] SUZ [v]	You go to Stellenbosch uh the one you	
GRA [v] SUZ [v]	You you pick my money my go	Where my give you money ^you! the
GRA [v] GRA [c] SUZ [v] SUZ [c]	Suzanna my ^noooo one your father	My oh my onl <i>laughing</i> My daughter is uh the one study this uh my pay <i>laughing</i>
GRA [v] SUZ [v]	My also know my go Stellenbosch my study I know Your one father only buy house the one no gave you	
GRA [v] GRA [c] SUZ [v]	^Heey Suzanna leave me alone <i>laughing</i> money is the one	You study is good
GRA [v] SUZ [v]	Ya my uh the one it's maybe you working the wuh earn money you up up up	
GRA [v] SUZ [v]	know You know?	Yees! You know know study you go you
GRA [v] SUZ [v]	go UNISA study is uh the wuh no too much money	Okay my go to UNISA Hmmm
GRA [v] SUZ [v]	study my finish study my come my sit there Hmmm	Yeah

The extract above follows a discussion Suzanna had with me regarding university, and the duration of Ph.D. studies. Suzanna, still occupied with the topic of advanced study, addressed Grace, urging her to pursue a degree at Stellenbosch University. Bearing in mind that this a workplace with clearly defined roles, specifically in this store, Suzanna's raising of the topic of Grace's education was unexpected. As Grace's primary role in the store was to assist customers to the point of a successful sale, Suzanna should want her to remain employed in her store. The tone of this conversation was casual, developing a discussion on Grace's future endeavours. Not only did Suzanna's role change from employer to advisor or mentor; she actually indicated an awareness of Grace's advanced ELF skills and indirectly acknowledged that Grace is better skilled than to remain in the position of a shop assistant. This is, of course, not a normative workplace conversation, but is indicative of how flexible social roles are in this context. Grace

picks up on this shift in Suzanna's social position, and pushes the boundary by suggesting that Suzanna should provide her with the money to go to university: "You pick my money, my go". Suzanna rejected this proposition, reminding Grace that it was not her duty to pay for her tuition, but her father's. She further added that her own daughter was studying, and as the parent this is her role: "my daughter is uh the one study[ing], this uh my pay". Grace does not further pursue the matter of tuition fees, and changes the topic to the fact that she knows she should study: "... my go Stellenbosch my study I know". Suzanna reiterated that Grace's father should be responsible for her tuition. This becomes a discourse on the roles of parents, and the value of further education. To emphasize the belief about upward mobility that studying can afford, Suzanna persists: "[If] you study, [it] is good ... maybe you ... [will be able to earn [enough] money [to take] you up up up". This explicated that Suzanna was aware that being an assistant in China Town had limited prospects of upward progression, and Grace agreed. Awareness of the hierarchy in the store, is illustrated again when Grace lightly states that she will go to UNISA, attend classes, and go back to work to "sit there", pointing to the station where Suzanna is seated in the store. This seems to please Suzanna, as it implies that she is well-educated and holds a desirable position.

The most significant observation in Shop 2 is the way Suzanna and her assistants are able to have meaningful conversations where there is such limited proficiency on Suzanna's part. Even when Faith and Grace adapt to her truncated linguistic code, they get things done in conversation.

Faith adapted to a reduced grammar and vocabulary to accommodate her employer. This is particularly interesting because Faith could speak English fluently, and had completed a Bachelor of Political Science degree through medium of English. Rather than being annoyed about the communicative effort, Faith altered her linguistic code to match that of Suzanna's. Her doing so, I would argue, is a function of the power difference between them. Such active participation in co-constructed meaning, illustrates a policy in which not the person with the higher proficiency, but rather the one with the greater deal of institutional power, dictates the communicative structures. In side talk with me, Faith explained how she had come to understand and accommodate Suzanna's ELF: "I come up with that if she wants to say 'I am' she uses 'my'. So I'm come I'm come to understand as she wants to say 'I am' so I now understand certain things that she's saying. So when I tried to use the same language back to her 'mine' she understood that I'm talking about me, you know, so I saw her using that kind of thing which, ya".

Faith stated that she had come to understand Suzanna's use of English and that it was her idea to "use the same language back to her", and this proved effective for encoding and decoding utterances. In the excerpts of interaction that were analysed in this chapter, I presented instances that illustrated the effectiveness of this truncated linguistic code that Faith and Suzanna have appropriated. Citing Blommaert (2005), Scollo emphasises that "people...are not entirely "free" when they communicate, they are constrained by the range and structure of their repertoires, and the distribution of elements of the repertoires in any society is unequal" (Scollo, 2011:2) Even though Faith and Suzanna had different reasons for using this a very reduced ELF grammar and vocabulary, in that one was limited in her proficiency and the other adapted to this proficiency, neither participant appeared to be unsatisfied with the success of their interactions. The same could be said for conversation between Grace and Suzanna, who used a similar linguistic code.

7.5 COERCIVE VERSUS COLLABORATIVE POWER

The most notable difference between discourses in Shop 1 and Shop 2 was in the different ways that the employers negotiated power. For Number-One, coercive power took precedence, and he was forthright about his stance and position in his store. He told his assistants to "shut up" and to "do [their] job", and ignored them when they attempted to make small talk. In the event that he did make small talk, it occurred on his terms, and he decided the course of the conversation. The only person who was able to challenge him and influence his behaviour was Vuyo. This was due to multiple factors, the first being that she did not work for him and therefore did not depend on him for a salary. Second, she wielded power by offering to assist with babysitting duties, for which she did not get paid. Third, Vuyo exhibited an attitude of ethnolinguistic superiority, candidly making him aware of the fact that he does not speak her language and therefore should not attempt to engage her when she sings in isiXhosa.

Number-One's assistants, on the other hand, were not as free to challenge him as Vuyo was. Although there was a sense of mutual dependence when it came to owners and assistants in China Town, the assistants were dependent on him for a salary. Therefore, when he responded to them with aggression or bluntness, their protests were subdued and they never reciprocated his rudeness. Instead, they found solidarity in one another, expressing their dissatisfaction to one another, and rarely directly to him. When they did address him, it was within earshot of bystanders who could offer support and reinforcement, as seen in *extract 7.3*.

The data show not only a creative use of language from the participants, but also important cultural elements that underpin interaction between them. This was much more the case in Shop 1, where Number-One often maintained a negative face and chose to remain unimpeded. His employees interpreted this as a flaw in his temper as seen in Sandra's account in *extract 7.4*: "Number-One get angry every time little problem". Another example is seen in *extract 7.3* where Sandra told him that he should attend to the customer, and he again displayed the need to act freely, free of imposition by telling her to "shut up". With this in mind, Number-One's alleged "short temper" could also be characterised as the negotiation of his face needs, and his need to maintain a stance of coercive power.

Suzanna did not present the same need for maintaining a negative face. On the contrary, her stance in the workplace was not nearly as exclusionary as Number-One's. Although her role as the employer is clearly marked in the workplace activities, i.e. keeping herself entertained with movies, knitting, or engaging with other store owners, she still portrayed a sincere interest in her employees. This is seen in *extract 7.8* where she supervises Faith and her interaction with the customers, instead of remaining aloof and preoccupied with her mobile phone. By checking in with Faith when there were customers, she displayed collaborative power. Similarly, in *extract 7.10*, Suzanna introduced the topic of tertiary education and suggested that her employee enrol in a degree programme. Her interest in the well-being of her assistants is sharply contrasted with Number-One's stance towards his assistants. Yet both employers had and maintained power, although they negotiated it differently, and wielded it for different social goals.

7.6 CONCLUSION

This chapter has investigated discourses that used various pragmatic means to articulate social identity, different personal roles and the distribution of power as it is negotiated in workplace conversation. It explicated the kind of social negotiation that occurs when people who, in terms of their linguistic repertoires and personal biographies differ culturally, socially and linguistically, interact in the workplace. This chapter has shown how, in such interactions negotiations take place not only linguistically; interlocutors also show a consciousness of the differences between speakers at all social levels.

The analysis has further illustrated that even when there is a mismatch in linguistic repertoires, and speakers have to put in significantly more work in order to understand one another in talk, as in Shop 2, social underpinnings and power enactments are inherent in all sites of encounter.

Rampton (2015:163) emphasises this, and maintains that there is an ongoing enactment and reproduction of these underpinnings, and that to understand them, “we need to examine situated encounters where people struggle over who is up and who is down, who’s out and who’s in and where the lines are drawn”. In order to examine these encounters, this chapter relied on observations done through Linguistic Ethnography. LE thus facilitated the examination of these situated encounters, and allowed for the investigation of the immediate context that produced the workplace discourses analysed in this chapter.

In chapter 8 the findings of Chapter 6 and 7 will be synthesized. I shall discuss the overall findings of the communicative patterns as they were uncovered in the analysis. Also, I shall address the research questions set out in Chapter 1, and will discuss the findings in relation to each research question.

CHAPTER 8

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

8.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter synthesises the findings and overall conclusions that have been drawn from the data analysis and observations, and the dissertation in its entirety. It commences firstly with a discussion of the common linguistic strategies that were observed and recorded as ones on which participants typically relied. Secondly, this chapter revisits the research aims and objectives in view of the analysed data, and addresses each research question as it was set out in Chapter 1. Thirdly, it addresses the findings that emerged from the data analysis chapters and observations. The analysis chapters focused on micro-specifics of language and how participants come to make sense of each other's conversational contributions and spoken turns (Chapter 6), as well as on how they structure discourse with direct and indirect language use, by choosing certain linguistic forms and drawing on contextual features, and finally how they manage and negotiate power in their interaction (Chapter 7). This chapter will therefore draw together these findings, referring to extracts analysed in chapters 6 and 7, but also introducing shorter supportive excerpts of the recorded conversations not introduced before to emphasize that the examples of the foregoing chapters were not isolated instances of given structures, strategies or devices. The observations of how the participants in China Town navigate workplace interaction will be added to the evidence from the recorded data. Finally, the chapter concludes with the overall accomplishments of the study and a discussion of the limitations of the research.

8.2 INITIAL OBSERVATIONAL FINDINGS

Initial observations in China Town showed a common trend in the logistic arrangement of the shop that coincided with the division of labour in each store: the store owners are standardly seated at the point of sale, either at the back of the store with surveillance technology to oversee all movement in the shop, or at the entrance with a good view onto people that enter and leave the shop. The assistants do the groundwork on the shop floor in that they move around between shelves and rails, working with stock or assisting customers. This division in positioning of owners and assistants led to an early observation that not a great deal of communication takes place between shop owner and assistant during the workday. In most stores, when there were

only a few customers, extremely long periods of silence were observed. Store owners gave instructions on a need-to basis, but often shop assistants were autonomous in performing their duties. In all observed venues the store owners spent long hours throughout the day occupied with their mobile phones, watching Chinese TV-series online, playing games, and sending voice messages on social media applications. In the larger store the shop owner also spent time monitoring the surveillance footage. In two of the three shops the owners brought their infants to work, themselves taking care of their children, or handing them to an assistant for care during the workday.

Store owners and assistants largely kept to themselves and remained occupied with their assigned tasks. This meant that when communication took place, it occurred for specific purposes. Communication was centred on work-related duties, and casual conversation was kept to a minimum. This is specifically illustrated in the instance of Shop 3 where little to no casual conversation took place. There was no small talk, only basic instructions from Tina, the shop owner, such as “*give me a big bag*”, “*help customer*” or “*fetch stock outside*”.

For the participants in this store (Shop 3), communication was cumbersome, as expressed by Vuyo below when she was asked what she found most challenging about working in a multilingual environment:

“Yoor to speak to the Chinese it’s the most ... Because you see sometimes when you uh you see when you ask something she didn’t understand / it’s difficult for ... to to to make her to understand, you see, its difficult. Seriously. Because now when you when you talk with her / maybe sometimes customer want something and then she didn’t know and then sometimes I can’t ek- I can’t explain it because she didn’t understand proper English you see”.

In Shop 1, regarding the use of *English as a lingua franca*, communication was not as burdensome. The participants did not struggle linguistically to the same extent as in Shops 2 and 3. However, observations clearly showed that even with better ELF proficiency the shop owner preferred to remain unimpeded and disengaged from casual conversation. This indicates that his unwillingness to communicate is not a matter of proficiency, but rather one of “face” (Brown & Levinson, 1978). His reluctance to interact was not limited to participation in casual conversation, as Sandra expresses below. Her employer often became annoyed when he was called on to deal with customer- and work-related issues. Sandra explains:

“You know, Number One like[s] playing game[s the] whole day. He don’t want someone to disturb [him], even [if] you ask, you asking the question about the customer or something, [he’s] gonna answer you badly because he want[s] to play.

So this one you give to him, it's like a big job for him, he's angry. So now anything you gonna ask, he [will] only answer you badly”.

In Shop 2 on the other hand, where the store owner's ELF proficiency was observationally particularly weak, a great deal of interactive work was required in order for communicative goals to be achieved. Still, the predominant observational finding in this store was that things still got done – tasks were issued and executed efficiently. As will be elaborated below, participants in this context avoided communicative difficulties by following normative workplace rules to achieve mutual understanding and contribute towards successful workplace relationships. Grace referred to the way she and Suzanna spoke to one another as “turning their words around”, which seems a necessary step towards avoiding communicative difficulties and striving towards mutual understanding. The extract below illustrates how Grace adapted to the ELF structure that Suzanna used.

Extract 8.1

GRA [v] your husband call other lady 'come you what problem' other lady talk nooo fine no

GRA [v] problem only my see your people english my go other shop also looky looky maybe

Grace is a fluent English speaker who could speak in utterances that would correlate with full grammatical sentences. Even so, she simplified her code and “turned her words around” as in using “my” generically to replace distinct pronouns such as subject form “I”, object forms “me” or “her” and their possessive forms “my”. She also dropped auxiliary verbs, prepositions and articles as seen in “my go other shop” [*I am going to the other shop*] and “come you what problem?” [*why do you come, what is the problem?*] Although Grace consciously chooses to simplify her language, much of the reduction is an unconscious repetition of the forms she assumes Suzanna would be using. A first impression therefore is that good ELF proficiency of the various participants does not necessarily correlate with felicitous communication; in fact, with a shared ideal in terms of running the business well, the limitations of very poor ELF proficiency appear to be easily managed and overcome.

8.3 ADDRESSING THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Overall the study intended to describe and explain how communication or language-in-interaction is performed or socially produced in the informal workplace where participants do

not have a common first language and English is the lingua franca. As such, the central research objective was to investigate how meaning is created and communicated in interactions between Chinese shopkeepers and African shop assistants. This study's five key questions are each revisited below to explicate how the observations and data analysis assisted in achieving them. The aims of the study as articulated in chapter 1.5 were the following:

1. What are the language biographies of the participants and how do they draw on these to negotiate meaning? Which languages make up the linguistic repertoire of shopkeepers and shop assistants in China Town stores? Besides the value of English, which other languages besides English feature in the workplace communication?
2. What are the communicative strategies typically used between the various participants? Which of these appear to be typical of such language contact situations and which appear to be new, i.e. not recorded in previous studies of workplace communication between speakers of mutually unintelligible languages while in a foreign country.
3. How can the conversations between shop owners and shop assistants in the shop as workplace be categorised in generic terms, e.g. discussion of stock, giving and receiving instructions, conversation between owner and assistant on client relations, and the likes?
4. How is functional workplace communication maintained in the China Town store setting? What kinds of misunderstanding or linguistic conflict occur in the communication, how are they recognised, and how are they resolved?
5. How do participants use their linguistic repertoires to assert and contest power in the informal workplace?

8.3.1 Research question 1: Regarding the language biographies of the participants and how they draw on these to negotiate meaning, and considering which languages make up the linguistic repertoire of shopkeepers and shop assistants in China Town stores. Besides the value of English, the value of other languages besides English that feature in the workplace communication is assessed.

The language biographies of the participants as discussed in Chapter 5, have given the following information on the participants who are all non-native speakers of English, and of whom the majority are recently migrated people of Chinese or African origin, all making a living in the China Town that was the research site for this study. To summarize, this study collected the biographies of 11 participants – who presented with the following languages in their repertoire:

English, isiXhosa, isiZulu, Mandarin, Edu, DRC French, Lingala, Swahili, Tshiluba, and Afrikaans. Each participant in this study knows more than one language, comprising their L1s and English, and additional L2s. The participants with the most languages in their repertoires are the shop assistants from DRC Congo, namely Grace, Sandra, Gina, and Nathalie. Most of the participants placed significant value on English – and the shop assistants in Shop 1 specifically emphasized their desire to improve their reading and writing proficiency. Even Porsha who was observably less proficient in English and needed assistance from Vuyo to complete the questionnaire, expressed that “English [was] the better language for her”.

Knowing and speaking a variety of languages, the participants viewed and accepted English as the language of wider communication in South Africa, as well as language of the workplace – not only in employer-employee communication, but also in communication with customers.

Initial expectations were that speakers would be code-switching between their L1s and English, even from time to time accommodating to the L1 of the other in such a multilingual workplace. However, this hardly ever occurred. In Shops 2 and 3, the employer-employee interaction was in ELF only. Employers would speak Chinese to other shop owners, but not in any conversation with employees. Employees would speak English to the employers, and at times also among themselves. However, if they were communicating with each other, they would at times switch to their L1 (e.g. isiXhosa in Shop 3) or to another lingua franca they share (e.g. Lingala or DRC-French, in Shop 1). The participants would typically use the languages in their repertoire, different languages for different functions (e.g. assistants using ELF in talking to the owner of Shop 1, and Lingala when talking to one another about their employer). In Shop 1 the three Congolese assistants share three languages (French, Lingala, English) and used them interchangeably in casual conversation. Nevertheless, the general pattern was that the Chinese store owners and their African shop assistants do not mix their languages in interaction with one another.

The study has thus shown that participants do not often draw on their various languages very often in employer-employee interactions. There are of course instances of well-known phrases, such as “bon appétit” (*enjoy your meal*), which Sandra often says to Number-One when his lunch arrives. Similarly, because the assistants in Shop 1 have picked up bits of Mandarin Chinese, they would often elect to say simple phrases like “xièxiè” (*thank you*) and “guanbi shíjian” (*closing time*).

While participants did not regularly code-mix and code-switch as a meaning-making strategy as was initially expected, they did draw on their linguistic repertoires in other profound ways. Blommaert and Backus (2012) define the repertoire as all the means that people know *how* and *why* to use while they communicate. Taking this definition into account, all the participants in this study at different times drew on their full repertoires, doing so in creative and adaptive ways. Besides still actively using languages that are not indigenous South African languages, at times in the workplace, and reportedly also beyond, most had to a greater or lesser extent acquired new languages since starting to work in China Town. The assistants in Shop 1 had only really learnt English after arriving in South Africa, and Suzanna from Shop 2 was still learning English informally through the contact situation in her shop. Assistants had also picked up a few Chinese words and phrases. Thus, one finds evidence that “people and linguistic resources are mobile” (Blommaert & Backus, 2012:11), that in the workplace all participants had come across bits of languages not in their personal repertoires, and were learning to use them in particular ways.

The analyses from Chapters 6 and 7 provided the following insight as to how participants draw on their repertoires to negotiate meaning.

The assistants were highly aware of which language varieties are appropriate in given contexts. In Shop 2 for example, Grace and Faith used a local variety of English in interaction with customers. When they interacted with Suzanna however, they accommodated her reduced variety of English, simultaneously decoding her utterances and producing their own in interaction. In Shop 1, the assistants used the languages of their countries of origin for purposes that were more social than pragmatic. They did not only use different language varieties, but also various social means of speaking. This is illustrated in Chapter 7, where participants used language to negotiate social roles of ownership, challenging the owner, offering assistance, and so on. They also enacted various identities through language, e.g. an identity as worker brokering for a customer who is not being attended to, identity as a co-worker who supports a colleague who has been addressed impolitely, identity as a childminder or as a mother collecting funding for her child’s school, and so on.

Typically, ELF speakers drawing on their linguistic repertoires rely on the structure of their L1 in producing utterances in their L2. This is possibly what happens when Suzanna produces one-word utterances, or utterances with hardly any function words such as articles and prepositions. In an utterance such as, “You hungry, eat you what?” where the question word is placed in sentence final position, Grace appears to be following a syntactic pattern that Suzanna has

appropriated in her ELF. A similar structure applies when Grace wants to know what a customer had discussed with Suzanna at the point of sale, saying “Suzanna, other lady ask you what?”.

Extract 8.2

GRA [v]	Yoh it's one o clock now	Suzanna other lady ask you what?
GRA [v] SUZ [v]	What?	Other lady (0.9) Talk you what?

In Shop 1 Number-One’s language use also showed word order which is non-standard in L1 English. After Nathalie asked him for money to purchase an energy drink he had requested, note, for example, his placement of the adverb “later” in “Go for me and say later I’m going to pay”, where in L1 English, the expected order would be “... say I’m going to pay later”.

Extract 8.3

NAT [v]	Can I buy water?	Give me the money so you just
N1 [v]	Score	Go for me and say later I'm going to pay

The structure that Number-One and Suzanna used are illustrative of the variety of ELF forms that occur in multilingual contact situations in that they do not resemble an L1 version of English, but are still interpretable. One can assume that one way or another their L1s determine the structure of their ELF. However, a much more systematic study than this one would be required to confirm the influence of various L1s on the exact structure of various ELF varieties.

Faith, whose home language is Edu, rarely has any opportunity to use it as there were no other assistants of Nigerian origin in the centre at the time of her employment. However, her L1 knowledge of English enabled her to show multi-dialectal skills in speaking different varieties of English in the workplace. First was the colloquial English she used with the researcher and other English-speaking customers. Second was the variety she had adopted following Suzanna, and third was the standard variety which she used in bidding for power, as seen in section 7.4.1.2 where she informed Suzanna about the granadilla fruit, where the word came from and whether the fruit was spoiled or not. Similarly, Grace who hails from the DRC had spoken colloquial English to customers and assistants in other stores with whom she did not share an L1, a variety similar to that of her employer, as well as Lingala with fellow assistants from the DRC, like the assistants of Shop 1. In using their home language in China Town, the assistants established micro-communities based on shared languages. This illustrates one way in which

home languages are used for social means in the workplace. Other purposes, according to Sandra, for which assistants used their home languages included warning co-workers of potentially deviant customers, or excluding their employers from personal conversations.

8.3.2 Research question 2: The communicative strategies typically used between the various participants, and which of these appear to be typical of such language contact situations.

All three stores gave interesting information on strategies used by the various employers and employees in the workplace. All participants knew and used more than one language in their everyday lives – to them multilingualism is the norm. The language most widely used was indeed English, an L2 for all participants, even for Faith who mentioned it as an L1 due to having had her schooling through medium of English. Therefore, using ELF is a first strategy to have a uniform medium of workplace interaction.

Due to the variety of L1 backgrounds of employers and employees, different communicative strategies were encountered in the different stores. The overall communicative strategies identified across all stores are summarised as follows:

1. *Meaning extension* (discussed in 8.3.2 above): Certain lexical items and phrases that often already have more than one meaning, are used to fulfil new functions, thus their meanings become extended beyond its standard use.
2. *Repetition of words and phrases* (discussed in 8.3.2): This is seen specifically in Shop 2 where the participants would repeat prior utterances in functions of registering, emphasising, probing, and confirming moves.
3. *Assimilating grammatical structures*: This is a strategy used in situations where the assistants appear to have assimilated their employer's grammatical forms, and would simplify their talk to what they assume would be easier for her/him to comprehend.
4. *Work-related adjacency pairs*: This refers to pairs such as question-answer, or giving and accepting (or countering) instructions. Such pairs that facilitate “getting the work done” were noted across all stores, and were limited to brief conversation or work-talk. Interactants used a limited number of conversational topics, the adjacency pairs were direct with occasional insertions to clarify, and instructions were often executed rather than being given a verbal response. This assisted in minimizing misunderstanding.

5. *Mediating and diffusing*: This occurred in Shop 1 where the overhearer's tendency to enter the discourse (usually in solidarity and through humour) often diffused what could potentially have been problematic workplace conversation.
6. *"Let it pass" and "make it normal"*: This language contact phenomenon refers to overlooking the infelicities and inaccuracies in language, whether in grammar or pronunciation. If a participant does not hear or understand well, they "let it pass" in the belief that it is either unimportant, or will become clear as the conversation progresses. Such interactional work imbues talk with "orderly and normal characteristics" (Firth, 1996:256). This is seen in chapter 6.3.5 where speakers mispronounce words, but it is treated as inconsequential to the greater context of the interaction.

In this study, the linguistic strategies used by participants partially differed across the three stores, and partially overlapped. Chapter 6 categorized these strategies, finding that in Shop 1 more kinds of conversation had been used than in Shop 2 or Shop 3. The conversation types identified *in Shop 1* were (i) giving and receiving instructions, (ii) requesting, giving and responding to information, (iii) managing disagreement in terms of challenge and rebuke, (iv) casual, informal conversation, and (v) banter. *In Shop 2* the conversation types identified were (i) giving and receiving instructions, (ii) requesting, giving and responding to information, and (iii) casual conversation. *In Shop 3* employer-employee conversations were restricted to requesting, giving and responding to information. Overall, the conversation type most commonly used across all three stores therefore was giving and receiving instructions. And the two conversation types that were used in Shop 1 only, possibly due to the fact that it was a larger store which employed more assistants, were managing disagreement and banter. The basic conversational structures were adjacency pairs such as questions and answers, giving instructions and executing or refusing to execute the instructions, giving and accepting or rejecting advice, giving and responding to rebuke, and so on.

Considering the finding of communicating in ELF that disclosed various levels of English language proficiency across the three stores, certain patterns emerged on how a relatively small vocabulary is used to articulate quite a wide content range. Specifically, across the various kinds of workplace conversation, I found that certain lexical items occur in what I have termed '*repetition and overuse*', and '*meaning extension*' of a given set of words and phrases.

Regarding *repetition and overuse*, examples from Shop 1 (*extract 6.2*) and from Shop 2 (*extracts 6.9 and 6.10*) illustrate this.

In Shop 1 the assistants reprimanded Number-One for “not seeing” a customer, implying also that he was not paying proper attention to a client. Number-One responded to the reprimand by saying that he had noticed the customer but for the moment was busy, using the same phrase “I see”. Gina, in communicating her perception that while Number-One says he has noticed the client, he in fact is lying – she believes he had not noticed the person at the counter and she mimicks his rebuttal of their reprimand, using the verb “see” ten times in the course of a short series of utterances, as in:

“You see, you didn’t see, but ‘you see there, shut up’”,

meaning

“You say you have seen the customer, but actually you didn’t see him, and then you tell us “you, I have seen him, shut up!”

In Shop 2 when Grace relayed to Suzanna how her husband was puzzled by the researcher’s presence, she repeated how she tried to convince him that the visitor to the store was “just looking” and not looking at goods to buy, but rather at how people were communicating. To emphasize the singularity of the researcher’s interest she repeated “looky” and “only looky looky” three times over. In a later conversation when Grace advised the shop owner on the need to order more sizes of a garment in a particular colour, she repeated the phrase “only one” seven times in an attempt to get across that “there is only one left” and the owner needs to order more.

Regarding meaning extension two examples from Shop 1 will illustrate a regularly occurring linguistic strategy participants used in performing the particular kinds of conversational actions.

In Shop 1, when Vuyo who worked in Shop 3 entered the store with Angela, her owner’s 18-month-old daughter, Ireen called out:

“No, bring back, bring back”.

This was a directive to take Angela back to Tina’s store, as she would wake Ireen’s baby who was asleep at the time. Similarly, in *extract 7.7* in the conversation between Number-One and Nathalie, Nathalie asked Number-One when he will stock more blouses. He asked her

“Bring more?” and she responded

“Yaaa! People like it you ask me bring more!”

In these utterances “bring” is used in discussing the ordering and receiving of stock.

Shortly after, Number-One put his unfinished lunch on the counter and Nathalie asked

“Must I bring back?”

This time the word “bring” has a similar meaning to Ireen’s use regarding taking the baby back to her mother. A single word is used to convey movement to and from a destination: *bring here* vs *take away*. This extends the regular meaning and use of the verb “bring”, illustrating how a single word is used in an extended set of related meanings, to make up for the speakers’ limited vocabulary.

8.3.3 Research question 3: Categorizing the conversations between shop owners and shop assistants in the workplace in generic terms, e.g. as discussion of stock, giving and receiving instructions, conversation between owner and assistant on client relations, and the likes.

As discussed in 8.3.3, the most common types of conversation that occurred across all three stores was giving and receiving information. This information of course also included instructions from the employers to employees. As China Town is essentially a workplace for the participants here, it was to be expected that giving, receiving and responding to information was the most prevalent conversation type.

Further categories that occurred in the shops need to be discussed individually, as the generic interactions are dealt with differently in each store. In Shop 1, conversations between shop owner and shop assistants had their tensions. As found in chapters 6 and 7, Number-One did not often engage in casual conversation with his assistants. Even issues of customer relations were, from the owner’s perspective, unwelcome interactions. The assistants were aware of this, and because they find solidarity in the fact that they are a group of three versus one employer, they made light of his temper and impatient responses. As chapters 6 and 7 have shown, in Shop 1 the employer often ignored his employees when they spoke to him, and on other occasions he responded to them aggressively with responses such as: “Shut up do your job”, or when Sandra drew his attention to a customer, “I see there shut up you”. In instances where he did initiate conversation, they were instructions issued to the assistants, and he would not loiter linguistically – he gave the instruction and disengaged from the interaction immediately. This is seen in the first extract in Chapter 6, where he went into a fit of coughing and the assistants questioned and teased him, to which he did not respond. He took one turn to give Gina an instruction, and even when she refused it, he did not engage her or reprimand her for her dispreferred response.

In terms of dealing with stock, when Number-One discussed stock with his assistants, it was a brief interaction. This is seen in the analysis in Chapter 7 where Nathalie asks him when he would buy in more of an item. He simply repeated her question, “Bring more?”, and when she exclaimed that people like it he succinctly uttered, “Sunday”.

Extract 8.4

N1 [v]		What's wrong?	Heh?
NAT [v]	Number-One	When will you stock this one?	I like it
N1 [v]		Bring more?	
NAT [v]	this one	^Yaaaa! People ^like it you ask me bring more?	
N1 [v]	Sunday		
NAT [v]			
N1 [c]			

On the other hand, there were instances of casual conversation in this store, in which Number-One elected to put in interactive work to maintain social relations with his employers. Even so, this was brief, and he maintained power throughout these conversations, as he initiated these interactions and decided on the topics, as well as choosing what not to respond to and disengaging from the interaction when he sees fit.

In terms of giving and responding to instructions, Number-One’s directives were often met with dispreferred responses such as, “Can’t you see I’m busy?”. In the same vein, Number-One did not respond well to directives from his employees, even when they related to customers. For example, when Sandra indirectly told him to assist the customer, he responded, “I see there shut up you”. The conclusion for the way the participants deal with these activity types is that they have more leeway with language. Because their proficiency was developed almost simultaneously, upon entering South Africa and working in China Town, they did not anticipate linguistic difficulties of the other, nor felt the need to simplify their language to avoid misunderstanding. Unlike in Shop 2 (illustrated below), where participants worked consistently towards achieving workplace goals and avoiding communication breakdown, there was more room for banter, conflict, teasing and dealing with dispreferred responses in Shop 1.

As mentioned above, in Shop 2 participants needed to put in more interactive work to achieve workplace goals. Besides the creative and adaptive use of language, assistants dealt with directives in an efficient way, and in some instances, anticipated the needs of their employer. This is seen in the extract below, where Faith brought Suzanna the racks that she had been sent

to retrieve from Shop 19. Suzanna appeared dissatisfied with the fact that Faith retrieved only two racks. Faith became aware of this, and after explaining that she had done a thorough check for more racks “my check check check” she eventually said that she would go back to find more: “So my go there now and see (...) My go again”, knowing that this was what her employer wanted.

Extract 8.5

SUZ [v]	Only 2?		
FAI [v]		Hmmm my see two there	My said check
SUZ [v]			Okay
FAI [v]	check check check my get other one (..) my bring		ya
SUZ [v]	You check	Its finish uh?	
FAI [v]		My see these two (..) my see these two there	
SUZ [v]	hmm		
FAI [v]		My said if check check see arranging sees counting my	
SUZ [v]			Oooh
FAI [v]	check check check (..) my bring another one		Ya
SUZ [v]			You yeah
FAI [v]	So my go there now and see (0.4) My go again		Ya

In Shop 3, directives were received without the hearer giving confirmation of understanding. For example, when Tina says, “Fetch Angela bottle”, Vuyo or Porsha would execute the task without verbally acknowledging it. They do as they are told, but without verbal confirmation that they have heard or accept the instruction. Furthermore, the assistants are autonomous in their duties. When they arrive at work in the mornings, they perform routine tasks without the instruction of Tina, who is often preoccupied with taking care of Angela. Vuyo would, for example, sweep the store every two hours, and replenish the stock where she sees that there are gaps in the display. When the instructions are given for her to fetch the new stock that has been delivered, she would collect it and immediately unpack and display the new items without a directive from Tina to do the unpacking. Throughout the day, they assist customers, and visit their peer from neighbouring stores to make the time pass, and assist with caretaking the babies from neighbouring stores like Shop 1. Communication in this store is therefore the most highly representative of the dynamic of other stores observed in China town. The autonomy of the assistants, the carrying out of daily tasks and socialising with other assistants who speak the

same languages as they do, is what governs the daily routine of the owners and assistants in China Town.

8.3.4 Research question 4: Maintaining functional workplace communication in the China Town store setting, attending to the kinds of misunderstandings that occur, considering how they are recognised and resolved.

The final research question deals with the possibility of misunderstanding in the context of language contact in a multilingual workplace. Initial expectations were that a great deal of misunderstanding occurs due to the mismatch in linguistic repertoires and varying proficiency among the participants. Instances of misunderstanding were not prevalent in the data; however, particular kinds of misunderstanding could be divided into two categories.

The first kind of misunderstanding was when participants did not understand one another on a linguistic level, i.e. A did not understand what B was trying to communicate. In Shop 2 participants put in a great deal of effort to minimise such misunderstanding, and in instances of misunderstanding that were deemed non-essential, they “let it pass”. Firth’s notions of *let it pass* and *make it normal* are not only language contact phenomena, but also strategies to avoid communicative breakdown and keep the interaction flowing without disruption. This was seen in *extract 6.9* where Grace told Suzanna about my visit to the store the previous day. Suzanna did not understand Grace’s report, but did not probe or seek clarification. Another example is in *extract 7.9* where Faith used the words “spoilt” and “botanical” in conversation, which Suzanna did not comprehend. Yet, Suzanna let these “problematic” utterances pass as inconsequential to the overall communicative goal.

The second kind of misunderstanding was where the employer did not understand the employee’s motivation in performing a given speech act. This was found in Shop 2, in *extract 6.8* where Suzanna insisted that Faith should clean the racks with water. Here Faith explained to Suzanna that using water would cause the racks to rust, but Suzanna did not understand the word “rust”, and therefore misunderstood Faith’s motivation for refusing to use water to clean the racks. Faith then introduced a different option rather than lingering on the possibility of rust – offering to paint the racks instead.

Although most instances of misunderstanding were observed in Shop 2, throughout the data analysis general misunderstanding rarely occurred. This is not unheard of in lingua franca interaction. As Mauranen (2006:123-124) posits, while misunderstanding in language contact situations such as these are to be expected,

it is perhaps equally plausible that not much is misunderstood, since interlocutors tend to maximize simplicity in their expression, because their command of the vehicular language is far from perfect, and because they can expect the same from their interlocutors.

The strategies of avoiding misunderstanding are discussed in 8.3.4. In line with Mauranen (2006) it has been shown that participants evaluate the level of input necessary to navigate successful communication. Where participants have relatively similar proficiency in the language of the workplace (as in Shop 1), minimal misunderstanding occurs. When there are instances of communicative breakdown, these are resolved amongst the assistants who would come to the aid of the interlocutors in question.

Regarding possible *communication breakdown*, the conversations in Shop 2 are most illustrative, as in this store Suzanna often had to find ways of overcoming the difficulties arising from her limited ELF proficiency. To start out I assumed that the interaction between Faith, who is fluent in English, and Suzanna would be strained and limited, especially because Faith had only just commenced her employment there. On the contrary, she appeared to have adapted to her employer's use of English, and could easily explain the linguistic code to me. She however, mentioned that they initially had had difficulties in understanding one another, and that Suzanna would often use a translator application on her cell phone that translates between English and Chinese. From my discussion with Faith regarding the use of "Google translate":

F: "So it's my boss that I always(.) sometimes when we communicate we don't really understand ourselves that much so she has to use her phone to interpret. Soooo.

M: How have you found that, does it work for you?

F: Yaaa to some extent. Ya we had to struggle so she had to like, I would like to make her understand 'this is what I'm trying to say' then she would, she went to write it through the phone so that the phone can interpret. Then I would now understand what she's trying to communicate to me.

Upon observation and follow-up visits to the store, I never saw Faith and Suzanna use the mobile translator application, except for the instance of the granadilla fruit. Instead they made use of the truncated linguistic code discussed in section 6.4 that appears to work for them in avoiding misunderstanding. She described one of the ways she adapted her English to make communication smoother:

"So so there's a way we now communicate now, if I want to say 'I am talking to you' 'my talk to you'. I don't know if you understand. So not 'I am talking to you now', 'my' means 'I am'. So 'my want to go' is myself 'my want to buy something' something like that. I don't know if you understand so that's the only way ..."

In this extract Faith explained how she had come to understand Suzanna’s use of English and that it was her idea to “use the same language back to her”, and this proved effective for encoding and decoding utterances. In the excerpts of interaction that were analysed in this chapters 6 and 7 I presented instances that illustrated the effectiveness of this rudimentary linguistic code that Faith and Suzanna, and Grace and Suzanna had appropriated. Faith and Suzanna used this particular ELF structure for different reasons, the one due to her proficiency and the other to adapt to her employer’s proficiency. Even so, neither participants appeared to be dissatisfied with the success of their interactions.

Faith’s account of the work that they put in, in order for minimal misunderstanding and successful communication to occur depicts a significant language contact phenomenon. Faith had identified and adapted to Suzanna’s linguistic code, and elected to use it “back to her” to ensure that there is a greater chance of communicative success. The same could be said for conversation between Grace and Suzanna, who used similar linguistic code. Grace also appropriated her employer’s linguistic code, despite being a proficient English speaker. By simplifying their language, they seemed to overcome possible misunderstanding. However, it has to be said that the topics on which they conversed were largely limited to in-store arrangements and dealing with customers, so that a limited range in terms of vocabulary and idiomatic phrases was required.

In Shop 3, communication was also kept simple, yet there was no evidence of pidgin-like forms similar to the ones found in Shop 2. Misunderstanding and communicative breakdown was avoided by being direct with instructions and declaratives. Tina, for example, used basic clauses with a subject-verb-object formation. For example, some of her instructions were as follows: “Vuyo! Help customer”, “Fetch stock outside”, “Fetch Angela bottle”. Or there are fixed phrases regularly used, as in saying “Leave it”. It was found that in Shop 1 “Leave it” was used when employers wanted the employees to cease their current activities in the shop, or e.g. to stop playing with the baby. In this extract given below, Vuyo’s use of “leave it” was when she decided that she would do a particular task without the assistance of her employer as the latter was occupied in serving a customer.

Extract 8.6

VUY [v]	Tina?	This one?		Tinaaa^	Tinnaaa^
TIN [v]			Ya		
VUY [c]				Stacking boxes	

VUY [v]	Can you come help me here? Okay its fine.. leave it
TIN [v]	Ya?
TIN [c]	<i>Assisting a customer</i>

Regarding how participants dealt with *conflict*, Shop 1 gives the best illustration. This was a workplace in which the owner appeared reluctant to engage with assistants on a personal, light conversational level. Also he was prone to impatience. The assistants, due also to the power division between owners and assistants, often dealt with conflict and communication breakdown by incorporating humour and banter into the interaction to let the offensive comment become a matter of laughter (*extract 8.6* below). Specifically, in instances of dispute, the shop assistants would show employee-solidarity and collectively address the situation. When conflict arose, it was between the shop owner and one of the assistants. In all the observed and recorded cases they would come to one another's defence, as is also illustrated in the *extracts 6.3* and *7.2* analysed in Chapters 6 and 7, as well as *extract 8.5* below. To re-iterate here, Number-One's rude outburst towards Sandra after she called his attention to a customer waiting for his attention, was an instant problematic utterance, and a cause for conflict and weakening of social relationships. Immediately Gina stepped in to diffuse the situation and to offer support to Sandra. This is predominantly how participants in Shop 1 dealt with conflict and communicative breakdown. The solidarity amongst the assistants provides an outlet and cushioning for what might otherwise have transmuted into a hostile work environment.

Extract 8.7

N1 [v]	^^Yes there I	
SAN [v]	Number-One you ^see customer there	
N1 [c]	<i>N1 is preoccupied with his mobile phone and ignores the customer who wants to pay</i>	

N1 [v]	see shut up you!	
SAN [v]	Aaawwww!	
GIN [v]		[Switches to Lingala] 'I see
GIN [c]		<i>laughing while imitating N1</i>
SAN [c]	<i>laughing</i>	

SAN [v]		One day we gonna ^beat you in this shop
GIN [v]	there shut up'	^You!
GIN [c]		You see you didn't see but you see 'you see

Extract 8.8

SAN [v]	Number One how much this jacket in China?	
N1 [v]		Shut up do your job

SAN [v]	I'm just ^asking why you answer me like this?	How much this jacket you
SAN [c]		<i>Sandra is telling Gina about her</i>

SAN [v]	wear in China shut up do your job	Shut up do your job
SAN [c]	<i>interaction with N1. Gina laughs and responds in Lingala</i>	<i>Sandra imitating/mimicking N1's response to her, laughing</i>

8.3.4 Research question 5: How participants use their linguistic repertoires to assert and contest power in the informal workplace.

In chapter 6 specific attention went to the interpersonal function of language according to which language is used to construct and maintain identities and relationships in discourse. This is an interesting theme in workplace communication as typically there are institutional hierarchies which determine that managers have power over other workers, so that suitable divisions of power in achieving the institutional objectives such as making a living through organising a shop and selling goods, have to be found.

In China Town the shop owners were also the managers and employers, thus they were in a powerful position in relation to assistants in any case. However, no store could function well without the assistance of employees who would e.g. work with stock, keep the store tidy and interact with customers, encouraging them to buy what the store offered. The reliance of shop owners on linguistically and communicatively proficient assistants afforded the latter a considerable degree of bargaining power, and assured a relatively flat power hierarchy. The effect was that in some instances the shop owners found it difficult to assert power, and that assistants were in a position to challenge unreasonable treatment, even if they had to do so with due discretion.

Specific events that illustrate the negotiation of role, identity and power are found in chapter 7, where it was shown how participants, through their communicative practices enact and challenge power. In *extract 7.4* where Gina negotiated various roles and made bids for power in her interaction with Number-One. In a single conversation she admonished him for his lack of response to her and lectured him on his dispreferred response. This is also seen as a challenge to his power, as Gina is subordinate in the workplace hierarchy. After evaluating his response (or lack thereof) she assumed the less powerful role, and in subservience told him “Number Waaaaaan ... you are my boss”. In her follow-up turn she compared him to a “small boy”. In *extract 7.5* Number-One fully asserted his power as employer and owner of the store by insisting that she leave his store and find a different job: “You can go [...] leave this job”. In response to this Gina threatened his challenge, stating that if she should leave, the other

assistants would follow suit: “we gonna go now”. In stating that she is part of a collective, Gina negotiated not only her identity as part of the micro-community of assistants from DRC, but also invoked the notion of “us” vs “them”, thereby taking an ideological stance in the workplace.

8.4 FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION

The study focused on the communication between migrant groups of differing origin and how they draw on their language repertoires in their interactions using English as lingua franca. To answer the specific research questions given in 8.3 above, the data were analysed within the theoretical frameworks of Conversation Analysis, Discourse Analysis and Critical Discourse Analysis, taking a Linguistic Ethnographic approach. Findings showed that the notion of “just enough English to get by” was evident in all three stores, but more so in Shop 2 and Shop 3, where interaction could be deemed successful despite the obvious gaps in lexicon and differences in syntactic structure. This was more so in Shop 2 where Suzanna’s utterances may seem difficult to understand to the observer, but her employees understood the intended message behind the utterances. Shop 1 presented a similar finding, where in some instances Number-One’s utterances were obscured to the observer as in *extract 6.3* “so now do you not put price on there the size is size”- was still met with a relevant response from Sandra. The fact that participants have developed an understanding for each other’s English proficiency resonated throughout the analysis of the interactional data.

Findings also showed that participants signalled their power and negotiated social roles even when the linguistic code was truncated. Meaning was negotiated successfully most of the time, and instructions and directives were interpreted as they have been implied. Although instructions were often challenged in Shop 1, the intended meaning behind utterances were still inferred, and participants were able to respond accordingly. Participants displayed a great deal more communicative competence than what they let on, as they construed not only what was said, but also the subtleties and indirectness that were present in interaction. In Shop 2 however, participants were more aware of the fragilities of meaningful interaction, and seldom deviated from the expected turn-by-turn adjacency pairs by means of metaphorical and indirect language use.

The data showed not only a creative and adaptive use of language from the participants, but also the cultural elements that underpin interaction between them. This much more so in the case of Shop 1, where Number-One often maintained a negative face and chose to remain

unimpeded. This was interpreted by his employees as a flaw in his temper as seen in Sandra's account: "Number-One get angry every time little problem".

On the other hand, in Shop 2 face negotiation was not as significant as the interactive work participants invested for successful communication. This was particularly evident given the fact that Faith and Suzanna have created their own linguistic code. Faith is a fluent English speaker yet she adapted her way of speaking to accommodate her employer's level of proficiency. This could be argued to be illustrative of the power difference between them, given that Faith altered her linguistic code to match that of Suzanna even though she is a fluent English speaker. She was therefore an active participant in the co-constructed process of meaning making.

Overall, the desire to improve their English proficiency was expressed by all the assistants in Shop 1. Even though the store owners would benefit from increasing their proficiency in terms of customer interaction, the need to learn English appears to be tied to the basic survival of the assistants. By the same token, English proficiency is related to job security due to the need for customer interaction in these stores. This is an issue that is of course not unique to the migrant community of China Town alone. In their study on language and participation in the South African economy, Deumert and Mabandla (2009) found that even in local contexts, language is indispensable in Cape Town's economy. Participants in their study indicated that English and Afrikaans are paramount to employment in Cape Town. They state that "negotiating pay, carrying out one's duties, and ensuring continuation of employment rely on the employee's ability to communicate in the language of the employer" (Deumert and Mabandla, 2009:420). In referring to the language used at work, a participant in their study referred to English as their "bread and butter" (Deumert and Mabandla, 2009:420). In the context of this study, the employees do not have to "communicate in the language of the employer", but rather that of the customer. With English being the lingua franca in South Africa, English is tied to carrying out their duties.

Even though participants in this study speak a variety of languages and have various language repertoires, the value that English holds in South Africa and also globally is apparent. In this context of mobility then, there are clearly changing regimes of value for linguistic resources. In comparison to what Han (2013) found in Africa Town where there was a development of grassroots multilingualism and expanded repertoires, the participants in China Town have opted to focus on English predominantly. While the assistants alluded to some proficiency in Afrikaans, isiXhosa and Mandarin (see chapter 5), they did not express a desire to improve their competence in these languages. For Han (2013:83) it was clear that being multilingual, or

speaking more than one language was essential for economic survival and prosperity. In the context of this dissertation, English seems to be the only language essential for survival and prosperity in the workplace. This speaks to the value that is placed on English in South Africa, and how this filters into the informal workplace.

8.5 CONCLUSION

This study has shown how multilingualism is a new linguistic dispensation, and should be seen as the norm and not the exception. The most remarkable aspect of this study is the variety of different backgrounds and language biographies of the participants, and how, despite such a diverse multilingual context, they successfully conduct workplace communication in the immediate context of language and cultural diversity. In the same vein, what is striking is the participants' intercultural competence. Not only do they creatively adapt their communicative practices according to the interactional goals, but are also cognisant of intercultural differences. The conclusions drawn from this study moreover have shown how, from a sociolinguistic perspective, functioning micro-communities are established in the midst of sociocultural and linguistic diversity. This attests to earlier conceptualisations of transnationalism and deterritorialisation, which argue that to understand the everyday experiences of transnational individuals requires an analytical shift that moves away from essentialist perceptions of communities and social practices.

Given the relatively small number of participants in this study it has to be characterised as qualitative, thus the aim of the dissertation could not be to extrapolate the data and generalise that these practices are common in all Chinese stores. Rather, I intended to investigate the development of creative practices that emerge in a context where participants of migrant origin meet in the workplace. The aim was to uncover the linguistic practices that emerge in the context of the informal workplace, not to generalise the practices.

Even though observations were not enough or consistent enough across stores to allow wide generalisation, the extended period of this ethnographic study allowed for gaining good impression on what kinds of interaction were evident in non-participating stores. Where note-taking took place during observations, the spoken interaction in non-participating stores of course was not recorded. Probably the greatest limitation in this study is the small number of participating stores, ascribed to the difficulty in gaining access and permissions to collect data.

Nevertheless, this dissertation has rendered insights into an informal multilingual workplace where communicative success as well as functioning of the businesses is largely dependent on

the input of interlocutors. The extracts presented and analysed throughout this study have provided a view into the kinds of communication that occur in a workplace where various languages and varieties exist and are maintained in different ways. These also show how, even when there is a vast difference in the languages spoken between interlocutors, the need for a common trade language has resulted in the creative and yet effective use of English as the *lingua franca*.

Finally, as the study formed part of a larger research interest in the languages of migrant communities and how these feature in speakers' integration into the community, feedback to the community of China Town and role-players in similar multilingual workplaces would reflect on the creative and adaptive use of English as a *lingua franca*. Further feedback would suggest that the success of such businesses is not dependent on "native speaker" forms of English, but that multilingualism is a valuable and sufficient resource; and with a shared ideal of maintaining successful business, varying levels of English proficiency are easily overcome. In conclusion, findings obtained from this study are also applicable in areas of language ideology, language variation, migration, contemporary globalisation, and critical sociolinguistics. Further studies that could develop from investigation of this context include language policy and planning, linguistic landscapes, as well as migrant literacies and education.

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APPENDIX A: TRANSCRIPTION KEY

^	rising intonation
^^	high pitch
<u>lined</u>	Underlined letter/word indicates emphasis
(.)	Parentheses with a full stop indicates a slight pause one tenth of a second. Each full stop indicates a tenth of a second
(0.4)	Parentheses with numbers indicate the precise duration of a pause when it is longer than 0.3 seconds.
Bold	Code switching
**	Unrecoverable speech
:	Lengthened vowel
[Word]	Standard English translation

APPENDIX B(I): CONSENT FORM (ENGLISH)



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CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

Multilingualism in the workplace: communicative practices between store owners and assistants in Chinese shops in Cape Town

You are asked to participate in a research project conducted by Ms. Miché Thompson, a researcher in the Department of General Linguistics at Stellenbosch University. The results of this study will be used for writing a PhD dissertation in General Linguistics. You were selected as a possible participant in this study because it focuses on workplace communication between Chinese shopowners and their shop assistants in a place where English (not the first language of any participant) is used as the language of the workplace.

1. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

This study is about the communicative practices of shopkeepers and shop assistants in a marketplace where shop owners of Chinese origin and workers of African (migrant) origin meet. The participants all speak various languages but they do not know the same range of languages. They don't understand each others' first languages (L1s) and therefore use English (a language of wider communication in South Africa) when they speak to one another as well as when they communicate with customers. This study aims to record the different ways in which English is used in the workplace in China Town stores. It will help the researcher to understand how communication between participants of different cultural backgrounds works in such circumstances, and it could help in giving advice on how communication is most likely to succeed when speakers use a "third language" (i.e. not the first language of any participant) in communication.

2. PROCEDURES

If you volunteer to participate in this study, you will be asked to give general information on your linguistic background (i.e. which languages you speak, when and where you learnt them), after which you will be asked (i) to allow voice recording of your workplace communication over a period of 4 days by means of a small microphone, and (ii) to allow video-recording of a few hours only on the last day of voice recordings so that body language can also be studied. The researcher will be present as an observer during the recorded time, although she will keep a low profile.

3. POTENTIAL RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS

Participation in this study will not hold any risks or discomfort you in any way. If at any stage you do feel uneasy, you may request information to be removed, or you may yourself withdraw your participation.

4. POTENTIAL BENEFITS TO SUBJECTS AND/OR TO SOCIETY

You will not benefit directly from this research in terms of material gain. The indirect benefit may be in (i) creating a better awareness of the important function of language in workplace interaction, and (ii) the findings of this study could potentially be used for further research

5. PAYMENT FOR PARTICIPATION

This exercise is voluntary, and as such there will be no remuneration for participation.

6. CONFIDENTIALITY

Any information that is obtained in connection with this study will remain confidential. Your names and other personal details will be removed and replaced by a code name (pseudonym). All data will be handled by myself and my supervisor, and will be made anonymous before it is used in the research. I will keep all recordings in a safe place. If you wish to review them at any time, that is allowed. The data will be used for academic purposes only.

7. PARTICIPATION AND WITHDRAWAL

Taking part in this project is entirely voluntary. You are allowed to withdraw at any time, or ask some recordings to be removed even if you still stay in the study.

8. IDENTIFICATION OF RESEARCHERS

If you have any questions or concerns about the research, please feel free to contact Ms Miché Thompson, researcher, on 0727799940, e-mail: thompson.michechanelle@gmail.com and Prof. C. Anthonissen, supervisor, at ca5@sun.ac.za (Stellenbosch University).

9. RIGHTS OF RESEARCH SUBJECTS

You are not waiving any legal claims, rights or remedies because of your participation in this research project. If you have questions regarding your rights as a research subject, contact Ms Maléne Fouché [mfouche@sun.ac.za; 021 808 4622] at the Division for Research Development, Stellenbosch University.

SIGNATURE OF RESEARCH SUBJECT

The information above was explained to *me* by Ms Miché Thompson in English and I am in command of this language. Ms Thompson was assisted by an interpreter who is in command of my first language, to assist with conversion from English to my first language. I was given the opportunity to ask questions and these questions were answered to my satisfaction.

I hereby consent voluntarily to participate in this study. I have been given a copy of this form in both English and my first language.

.....
NAME OF SUBJECT/PARTICIPANT

.....
SIGNATURE OF SUBJECT/PARTICIPANT

.....
DATE

SIGNATURE OF INVESTIGATOR

I declare that I explained the information given in this document to _____ [*name of the participant*]. He/she was encouraged and given ample time to ask me any questions. This conversation was conducted in English. An interpreter was at hand to assist.

.....
SIGNATURE OF INVESTIGATOR

.....
DATE

APPENDIX B(II): CONSENT FORM (MANDARIN)



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CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

斯坦陵布什大学

参加研究的同意书

Multilingualism in the workplace: communicative practices between store owners and assistants in Chinese shops in Cape Town

在工作场所的多种语言情况：开普敦的中国商店里的老板和店员之间的交流方式。

You are asked to participate in a research project conducted by Ms. Miché Thompson, a researcher in the Department of General Linguistics at Stellenbosch University. The results of this study will be used for writing a PhD dissertation in **General Linguistics**. You were selected as a possible participant in this study because it focuses on workplace communication between Chinese shop owners and their shop assistants in a place where English (not the first language of any participant) is used as the language of the workplace. 你被请求参加这个研究项目，这个项目是斯坦陵布什大学语言学系的 Miché Thompson 博士进行的。这项研究的结果将用于她写常规语言的博士论文。你可能会被选定作为这项研究的一个参与者，因为我们想更多了解在工作场所中的店主和店员之间的交流方式

1. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY 研究宗旨

This study is about the communicative practices of shopkeepers and shop assistants in a marketplace where shop owners of Chinese origin and workers of African (migrant) origin meet. The participants are all speak various languages but they do not know the same range of languages. They don't understand each others' first languages (L1s) and therefore use English (a language of wider communication in South Africa) when they speak to one another as well as when they communicate with customers. This study aims to record the different ways in which English is used in the workplace in China Town stores. It will help the researcher to understand how communication between participants of difference cultural backgrounds works in such circumstances, and it could help in giving advice on how communication is most likely to succeed when speakers use a "third language" (i.e. not the first language of any participant) in communication.

这项研究是关于在市场工作的华人店主和来自非洲不同国家当店员的农民工之间的交流方式。研究参与者都会说不同的语言，但他们不知道同一语系的语言。他们两方不明白彼此的第一语言（L1），因此当他们相互讲话以及与客户沟通的时候，会选择使用南非官方语言：英语。在唐人街商店的工作场所中，本研究想了解英语使用的方式。这将有助于研究人员了解不同的文化背景的参与者如何在这样的情况下进行沟通。本研究还能给我们重要的建议：说“第三语言”的人（非母语者）如何成功地去互相交流。

2. PROCEDURES 研究步骤

If you volunteer to participate in this study, you will be asked to give general information on your linguistic background (i.e. which languages you speak, when and where you learnt them), after which you will be asked (i) to allow voice recording of your workplace communication over a period of 4 days by means of a small microphone, and (ii) to allow video-recording of a few hours only on the last day of voice recordings so that body language can also be studied. The researcher will be present as an observer during the recorded time, although she will keep a low profile. 如果您自愿参加这项研究，你会被要求提供你的基本个人信息，如：你的语言背景，你会说的语言，你何时何地学到的。在4天之内，我们希望（1）用一个小麦克风把你工作时交流的语言进行录制，（2）在第四天，做几个小时的视频录制，以便研究者可以观察到你的身体语言。录制时，研究者会在场观察，可是她会保持低调。

3. POTENTIAL RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS 潜在的风险和不适

Participation in this study will not hold any risks or discomfort you in any way. If at any stage you do feel uneasy, you may request information to be removed, or you may yourself withdraw your participation. 参与这项研究将不会给你带来任何风险或不适。如果在任何阶段感到不舒服，您可以要求信息被删除，或者你可以自己停止参与。

4. POTENTIAL BENEFITS TO SUBJECTS AND/OR TO SOCIETY 对于参与者以及社会的潜在利益

You will not benefit directly from this research in terms of material gain. The indirect benefit may be in (i) creating a better awareness of the important function of language in workplace interaction, and (ii) the findings of this study could potentially be used for further research. 您不会通过这项研究直接收到收益，（如：物质收益），可是会得到一些间接的好处，如：（1）了解工作场所中语言的重要性（2）

研究结果有可能会用于将来的研究。

5. PAYMENT FOR PARTICIPATION 参与者的支付

This exercise is voluntary, and as such there will be no remuneration for participation. 参与者是自愿参与这个活动，没有报酬。

6. CONFIDENTIALITY 保密

Any information that is obtained in connection with this study will remain confidential. Your names and other personal details will be removed and replaced by a code name (pseudonym). All data will be handled by myself and my supervisor, and will be made anonymous before it is used in the research. I will keep all recordings in a safe place. If you wish to review them at any time, that is allowed. The data will be used for academic purposes only. 在本研究中取得（获取）的任何信息将会严格保密。您

的姓名和其他个人信息将会被隐藏，被一个代号（化名）替换。所有数据都是我自己和我导师进行处理的。在用于研究之前，所有数据都会先做成匿名的。我将把所有的记录都保留在安全的地方。您任何时间都可以来看记录（研究）。这些信息（研究）只会用于学术目的。

7. PARTICIPATION AND WITHDRAWAL 参与和退出

Taking part in this project is entirely voluntary. You are allowed to withdraw at any time, or ask some recordings to be removed even if you still stay in the study. 参与这个项目是完全自愿的，你被允许在任何时候退出。你可以随时要求删除一些记录，即使你仍然在参与。

8. IDENTIFICATION OF RESEARCHERS 研究人员的身份

If you have any questions or concerns about the research, please feel free to contact Ms Miché Thompson, researcher, on 0727799940, e-mail: thompson.michechanelle@gmail.com and Prof. C. Anthonissen, supervisor, at ca5@sun.ac.za (Stellenbosch University).

如果您对该研究有任何问题或疑虑，请随时联系研究员 Ms Miché Thompson（0727799940、电子邮件：thompson.michechanelle@gmail.com）和 C.Anthonissen 博士（教授以及导师）：ca5@sun.ac.za（斯坦陵布什大学）。

9. RIGHTS OF RESEARCH SUBJECTS 研究对象权利

You are not waiving any legal claims, rights or remedies because of your participation in this research project. If you have questions regarding your rights as a research subject, contact Ms Maléne Fouché [mfouche@sun.ac.za; 021 808 4622] at the Division for Research Development, Stellenbosch University. 你不会因为参与这个研究项目带来任何法律索赔、放弃合法权利或放弃补救措施的损失。如果你对参与者的权利有任何疑问，请联系斯坦陵布什大学研究发展系的 Ms Maléne Fouché [mfouche@sun.ac.za; 021 808 4622]。

SIGNATURE OF RESEARCH SUBJECT 研究对象的签名

The information above was explained to me by Ms Miché Thompson in English and I am in command of this language. I was given the opportunity to ask questions and these questions were answered to my satisfaction.

以上信息来自 Ms Miché Thompson 的解释，而且我英语能力足够听懂她的话。一位了解我母语的翻译者来帮助 Ms Miché Thompson 做翻译工作。我有足够的机会来问问题，而且对我来说这些问题的答案都是令人满意的。

I hereby consent voluntarily to participate in this study. I have been given a copy of this form in both English and my first language. 在此我同意自愿参与这项研究。我收到本文档的两件副本，一件是英语的，一件是我母语的。

.....
NAME OF SUBJECT/PARTICIPANT 参与者

.....
SIGNATURE OF SUBJECT/PARTICIPANT 参与者签名

.....
DATE 日期

SIGNATURE OF INVESTIGATOR 研究者签名

I declare that I explained the information given in this document to _____ [*name of the participant*]. He/she was encouraged and given ample time to ask me any questions. This conversation was conducted in English. An interpreter was at hand to assist.

我声明，我已经给_____ [参与者的名称]解释了这个文件的内容。他/她被告知并给予充足的时间来问我任何问题。这次谈话是用英语进行的，而且翻译就在旁边。

.....
SIGNATURE OF INVESTIGATOR 研究者签名

.....
Date 日期

APPENDIX B(III): CONSENT FORM (FRENCH)



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CONSENTEMENT À PARTICIPER À LA RECHERCHE

Le multilinguisme dans le lieu de travail : les pratiques communicatives entre les propriétaires des magasins et les assistants aux magasins chinois au Cap.

On vous demande de participer à un projet de recherche menée par Mlle Miché Thompson, une chercheuse du département de la linguistique générale à l'université de Stellenbosch. Les résultats de cette étude seront utilisés pour écrire une thèse de doctorat de linguistique générale. Vous étiez sélectionné comme participant possible dans cette étude parce qu'elle concentre sur les interactions du lieu de travail entre les propriétaires chinois et leurs assistants dans un environnement où l'anglais (qui n'est pas la langue maternelle d'aucun des deux groupes) est utilisé comme la langue du lieu de travail.

1. LE BUT DE CETTE ÉTUDE

Cette étude s'agit des pratiques communicatives des propriétaires des magasins et leurs assistants à un marché où les propriétaires de l'origine chinoise et les ouvriers de l'origine africain se rencontrent. Les participants parlent tous une variété de langues, mais ils ne parlent pas particulièrement les mêmes langues. Ils ne comprennent pas la langue maternelle (L1) de l'autre groupe et par conséquent, ils utilisent l'anglais (une langue de communication élargie en Afrique du Sud) quand ils se parlent et quand ils communiquent avec les clients. Cette étude vise à renseigner les différentes manières dans laquelle l'anglais est utilisé dans le lieu de travail aux magasins à China Town. Cela aidera la chercheuse de comprendre les circonstances autour desquelles la communication marche entre les participants qui viennent des différentes origines culturelles. L'information conseillera pour trouver le succès de communication quand les locuteurs utilisent une « troisième » langue (c.-à-d. aucune langue maternelle des participants en question) pendant leurs interactions.

2. LE PROCESSUS

Si vous êtes volontaire pour participer à cette étude, on vous demandera de fournir de l'information générale sur votre milieu linguistique (c.-à-d. quelle langue que vous parlez, où et quand vous les avez apprises), puis on vous demandera (i) de permettre des enregistrements vocaux de votre communication dans votre lieu de travail pour la durée de 4 ou 5 jours au moyen d'un petit microphone, et (ii) de permettre un enregistrement vidéo de vous pour quelques heures au dernier jour des enregistrements vocaux pour que la langue corporelle peut aussi être étudiée. La chercheuse sera présente comme observatrice pendant le temps des enregistrements, pourtant elle fera un profil bas et ne vous gênera pas.

3. LES RISQUES ET LES INCONFORTS POTENTIELS

La participation à cette étude n'aura aucuns risques ou elle ne vous donnera pas d'inconforts. Si, à tout moment, vous sentez mal à l'aise, vous pouvez demander que votre information doive être supprimée, ou vous pouvez retirer votre participation.

4. LES AVANTAGES AUX SUJETS ET/OU À LA SOCIÉTÉ

Vous ne profiterez pas directement de cette recherche en termes de profit matériel. L'avantage indirecte peut être (i) une meilleure connaissance de l'importance des langues dans les interactions aux lieux de travail, et (ii) que les résultats de cette étude peuvent potentiellement être utilisés pour les autres recherches.

5. LE PAIEMENT DE PARTICIPATION

Ce processus est volontaire, donc il n'y aura pas de rémunération pour la participation.

6. LA CONFIDENTIALITÉ

Toute l'information qui est obtenue pendant cette étude restera confidentielle. Vos noms et autres informations personnelles sera enlevés et remplacés par un pseudonyme. Toutes les données ne seront traitées que moi-même et ma directrice de thèse, et elles seront anonymes avant de les utiliser dans les recherches. Je garderai tous les enregistrements dans un endroit sûr. Si vous souhaitez de les réviser, c'est permis. Les données seront utilisées pour les fins académiques.

7. PARTICIPATION ET RETRAIT

La participation à ce projet est complètement volontaire. Vous êtes permis de vous retirer à tout moment si vous voulez, ou de demander l'enlèvement de quelques enregistrements, même si vous continuez de faire partie de cette étude.

8. L'IDENTIFICATION DES CHERCHEURS

Si vous avez des questions ou des problèmes de la recherche, veuillez me contacter :

Mlle Miché Thompson, chercheuse, à 0727799940, par email : thompson.michechanelle@gmail.com et Prof. C. Anthonissen, directrice de thèse, à ca5@sun.ac.za (L'université de Stellenbosch).

9. LES DROITS DES PARTICIPANTS DE L'ÉTUDE

Vous ne renoncez pas de réclamations juridiques, de droits ou de recours à cause de votre participation à ce projet de recherche. Si vous avez des questions concernant vos droits comme sujet de recherche, contactez Mlle Maléne Fouché [mfouche@sun.ac.za; 021 808 4622] à la division du développement de recherche, l'université de Stellenbosch.

SIGNATURE DU PARTICIPANT

L'information au-dessus m'a été expliquée en anglais par Mlle Miché Thompson et je suis compétent dans cette langue. Mlle Thompson a été aidée par un interprète qui est compétent dans ma langue maternelle pour aider avec la conversion de l'anglais à ma langue maternelle. J'ai reçu l'occasion de demander des questions et ces questions ont été répondues à ma satisfaction.

Je consens volontairement par la présente de participer dans cette étude. Une copie de cette forme m'a été donnée en anglais et aussi dans ma langue maternelle.

.....
NOM DU SUJET/PARTICIPANT

.....
SIGNATURE DU SUJET/PARTICIPANT

.....
DATE

SIGNATURE D'ENQUÊTEUR

Je déclare que j'ai expliqué l'information qui est présente dans ce document à _____ [nom du participant]. Il/Elle était réconforté(e) et il y avait assez de temps pour lui/elle de demander des questions. La conversation a été faite en anglais. Un interprète était proche pour aider.

.....
SIGNATURE D'ENQUÊTEUR/ENQUÊTRICE

.....
DATE

APPENDIX C(I): QUESTIONNAIRE (ENGLISH)

Multilingualism in the workplace: communicative practices between store owners and assistants in Chinese shops in Cape Town

Please fill in the following as completely and accurately as possible. There are no right or wrong answers – this is a survey from which the researcher wishes to draw an accurate profile of the multilingual skills and how they are used among a particular group of participants working in a shop in China Town.

You are requested to answer the questions in the spaces provided or to tick a box where applicable.

SECTION A: Metadata

Personal information

Surname, Name:

Preferred pseudonym:

Gender:

Male Age bracket: 18 – 25 yrs old 36 – 45 yrs old
 Female 26 – 35 yrs old 46 yrs and older

1. Country and Place of birth
2. Secondary school completed at
3. Which school grade completed on leaving
4. English as school subject? YES or NO
5. Any qualifications obtained after high school:
6. Did you have any language other than English as *language-of-learning*? If so, which one?
7. Employment history:

	Place	Facility	Dates
	(e.g. Bulowayo	primary school teacher	2001 – 2005)
.....			
.....			
8. In South Africa since

SECTION B: Participant’s knowledge and use of languages

9. Please list all the languages you know, even if you are not very proficient. Mark your first language as such. For each language, rate your ability in the language for the skills listed in columns (ii) to (v) (understanding the spoken form, speaking, reading, writing) on a scale of 1 to 5, where 5 is excellent and 1 is poor.

i	ii	iii	iv	v
Languages	understand	speak	read	write
English				

10. This question has to do with where and when you learnt the languages you listed in question 9. Please complete the table below for each language you listed. In column (i) fill in the name of the language; in column (ii) give the age at which you learnt it; in column (iii) give the place and setting in which you learnt it; in column (iv) state whether and where you currently use the language.

i	ii	iii	iv
Languages	Age of acquisition	Place/context of acquisition	Current use
English			

SECTION C Language in the workplace

11. Which of the languages that you listed in questions 9 to 10 do you use

(i) at home.....

(ii) at work.....

12. If at times you use other languages than English at work, explain the circumstances:

.....

13. Do you ever need an interpreter in workplace communication with your assistant / manager?

If yes, please explain who does the interpreting.

.....
.....

- 14. Have you encountered a situation in which you use one language (e.g. English) and your assistant/manager uses another (e.g. Chinese), and you actually get by? If yes, please explain the circumstances.

.....
.....

- 15. Does language at times pose a barrier in communication with colleagues in the workplace? If yes, please explain the circumstances.

.....
.....

- 16. Please explain what would make you switch from one language to another in an interaction with your colleague?

.....
.....

- 17. You are a multilingual person working in a multilingual community.

- (a) What do you find **most challenging** about knowing, using and encountering a variety of languages in everyday life?

.....
.....

- (b) What do you find **most advantageous** about knowing, using and encountering a variety of languages in everyday life?

.....
.....

18. Please give any other information on your experience in communicating across languages and cultures in the workplace which you would find relevant to this study.

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APPENDIX C(II): QUESTIONNAIRE (MANDARIN)

Multilingualism in the workplace: communicative practices between store owners and assistants in Chinese shops in Cape Town 工作场所的多语言情况：位于开普敦的店主和店员之间的交流方法

Please fill in the following as completely and accurately as possible. There are no right or wrong answers – this is a survey from which the researcher wishes to draw an accurate profile of the multilingual skills and how they are used among a particular group of participants working in a shop in China Town. 请在下面尽可能完整地以及准确地填写本调查表，答案没有对错之分。这是一个调查，通过这个调查研究者希望了解到一组在唐人街工作的参与者，而且做出一个准确的个人资料，包括他们具备的多语言技巧和他们如何使用这些技巧。

You are requested to answer the questions in the spaces provided or to tick a box where applicable.

在下面，你被请求回答这些问题，或者在所提供的空间填写答案，或者勾选您的选择。

SECTION A: Metadata A 部分：元数据

Personal information 个人信息

Name:姓名

Preferred pseudonym:首选化名

Gender: Male Age bracket: 18 – 25 yrs old 36 – 45 yrs old
Female 26 – 35 yrs old 46 yrs and older

性别：男 年龄范围： 18 – 25 岁 36 – 45 岁
女 26 – 35 岁 46 岁及以上

1. Country and Place of birth

.....

国家和出生地 :

2. Secondary school completed at

高中毕业的学校 :

3. Which school grade completed on leaving

高中毕业总分：

4. English as school subject? YES or NO.....

英语是你的一个学校科目？【是/否】

5. Any qualifications obtained after high school:

.....

高中毕业后获得的资格有哪些？

6. Did you have any language other than English as *language-of-learning*? If so, which one?

.....

除了英语以外，你还学过哪些语言？

7. Employment history: **Place** **Facility** **Dates**

工作经历： 地方 工厂 日期

(e.g. Bulowayo primary school teacher 2001 – 2005)

(如：布拉瓦约 小学教师 2001 至 2005 年)

.....

8. In South Africa since

你从什么时候开始在南非的:

SECTION B: Participant's knowledge and use of languages**B 部分：参与者的语言知识和使用能力**

9. Please list all the languages you know, even if you are not very proficient. Mark your first language as such. For each language, rate your ability in the language for the skills listed in columns (ii) to (v) (understanding the spoken form, speaking, reading, writing) on a scale of 1 to 5, where 5 is excellent and 1 is poor. 请列出你所有知道的语言，即使不是很精通的，并标出你的第一语言。对于每种语言，请评价你的语言能力在下面的列中：从(ii)至(v)（会听懂，会说，会读懂，会写），打分范围为1到5，其中5是最优的，1是最差的。

i	ii	iii	iv	v
Languages 语言	Understand 会听懂	Speak 会说	Read 会读	Write 会写
English 英语				

10. This question has to do with where and when you learnt the languages you listed in question 9. Please complete the table below for each language you listed. In column (i) fill in the name of the language; in column (ii) give the age at which you learnt it; in column (iii) give the place and setting in which you learnt it; in column (iv) state whether and where you currently use the language. 这个问题与问题 9 中你列出的语言在哪里学的、什么时候学的有关。请为你列出的每种语言完成下面表格的填写。在第一列填写这种语言、在第二列填写你学该语言时的年龄、在第三列填写你学该语言的地点和状况、在第四列请列出你当前是否和在哪儿使用这种语言。

I 一	Ii 二	Iii 三	Iv 四
Languages 语言	Age of acquisition 语言习得的年龄	Place/context of acquisition 语言习得地点/环境	Current use 语言应用
English 英语			

SECTION C Language in the workplace

C 部分：工作场所中应用的语言

11. Which of the languages that you listed in questions 9 to 10 do you use

你用到哪些语言（第九、十题说过的）？

(i) at home 在家

(ii) at work 在工作地点

12. If at times you use other languages than English at work, explain the circumstances:

如果你在工作场所还应用到英语以外的其他语言，请说明一下情况：

.....

13. Do you ever need an interpreter in workplace communication with your assistant / manager?

If yes, please explain who does the interpreting. 在工作场所，你通常需要翻译者帮助你跟店员（助理）或经理沟通吗？如果是，请解释谁来翻译。

.....

14. Have you encountered a situation in which you use one language (e.g. English) and your assistant/manager uses another (e.g. Chinese), and you actually get by? If yes, please

explain the circumstances. 你有没有遇到过这样的情况：即使你使用的语言跟你店员或店主使用的语言是不一样的，你还是觉得工作进行很顺利吗？如果同意，请描述情况。

.....

15. Does language at times pose a barrier in communication with colleagues in the workplace? If yes, please explain the circumstances. 在你工作场所下，你有没有遇到过语言障碍？如果遇到过，请给我们解释一下。

.....

16. Please explain what would make you switch from one language to another in an interaction with your colleague? 请说，你跟同事聊天儿时，什么因素会使你换到另外的语言？

.....

17. You are a multilingual person working in a multilingual community.

(a) What do you find **most challenging** about knowing, using and encountering a variety of languages in everyday life?

由于居住在南非，你就是一个多种语言的的人以及多文化的人，也是住在一个多语言社区工作。

- (a) 你每天的日常生活会理解到、用到和接触到很多种语言。对你来说，你认为什么方面最有挑战性（最难）？

.....

- (b) What do you find **most advantageous** about knowing, using and encountering a variety of languages in everyday life? 你每天的日常生活会理解到、用到和接触到很多种语言。对你来说，你认为什么方面最有利的？

.....

APPENDIX C(III): QUESTIONNAIRE (FRENCH)

Le multilinguisme dans les lieux de travail : les pratiques communicatives entre les propriétaires de magasins et les assistants aux magasins chinois au Cap

Veillez remplir les questions suivantes complètement et précisément que possible. Il n'y a pas de réponse correcte ou incorrecte – ceci est une étude de laquelle la chercheuse souhaite de former un profil précis des compétences multilingues et comment elles sont utilisées parmi un groupe particulier de participants qui travaille dans un magasin à China Town.

On vous demande de répondre aux questions dans les espaces prévus ou de cocher la case où c'est nécessaire.

SECTION A : Metadata :

L'information personnelle :

Nom :

Pseudonyme préféré :

Sexe : Homme	<input type="checkbox"/>	Âge : 18 - 25 ans	<input type="checkbox"/>	36 - 45 ans	<input type="checkbox"/>
Femme	<input type="checkbox"/>	26 - 35 ans	<input type="checkbox"/>	46 ans et plus	<input type="checkbox"/>

1. Le pays et le lieu de naissance :

2. École secondaire terminée à :

3. Quel niveau scolaire terminé au départ :

4. L'anglais comme sujet scolaire ? OUI ou NON :

5. Quelles qualifications obtenues après de quitter votre lycée :

6. Avez-vous eu une langue, autre que l'anglais, utilisée comme un moyen d'éducation ? Si oui, quelle langue ?

7. Historique d'emploi :

Lieu	Profession	Dates
(p.e. Bulowayo	enseignant primaire	2001-2005)

.....

.....

.....

.....

8. En Afrique du Sud depuis :

Section B : La connaissance du participant et l'usage des langues :

9. Veuillez lister toutes les langues que vous connaissez/utilisez, même si vous n'êtes pas assez compétent dans la langue en question. Indiquez laquelle est votre langue maternelle. Classez votre capacité pour chaque langue listée aux colonnes (ii) à (v) (en termes de compréhension de la parole, la forme parlée, la lecture, l'écriture), et sur l'échelle de 1 à 5, jugez votre compétence dans la langue si 5 est considéré excellent et 1 est pauvre.

i	ii	iii	iv	v
Langues	Compréhension	Parole	Lecture	Écriture
Anglais				

10. Cette question s'agit d'où et quand vous avez appris les langues mentionnées à la question 9. Veuillez remplir la table au-dessous pour chaque langue déjà mentionnée. A la colonne (i), remplissez le nom de la langue ; à la colonne (ii), donnez l'âge auquel vous l'avez appris ; à la colonne (iii), indiquez le lieu et l'environnement dans lesquels vous l'avez appris ; à la colonne (iv), indiquez si et où vous utilisez la langue en question.

i	ii	iii	iv
Langues	Age d'acquisition	Lieu/Contexte d'acquisition	L'usage courant
Anglais			

Section C : Les langues dans le lieu de travail :

11. Quelle langue mentionnée au-dessus utilisez-vous
- i. Chez vous/ à votre maison
 - ii. Au travail
12. Si vous utilisez parfois des langues autres que l'anglais au travail, expliquez les circonstances
-
-
13. Au travail, faut-il parfois avoir un interprète pendant une interaction avec votre assistant/manager ? Si oui, veuillez expliquer qui fait l'interprétation.
-
-
14. Avez-vous rencontré une situation dans laquelle vous utilisez une langue (p.ex. l'anglais) et votre assistant/manager utilise une autre (p.ex. le chinois) et vous vous comprennent ? Si oui, veuillez décrire les circonstances.
-
-
15. Les langues créent-elles parfois une barrière de communication avec des collègues dans le lieu de travail ? Si oui, veuillez décrire les circonstances.
-
-
16. Veuillez expliquer ce que vous fait changer votre langue à une autre dans une interaction avec votre collègue ?
-
-
17. Vous êtes une personne multilingue qui travaille dans une communauté multilingue.
- a) Que trouvez-vous le plus difficile de la connaissance, l'usage, et la rencontre d'une variété de langues dans votre vie quotidienne ?
-
-
-
- b) Que trouvez-vous le plus avantageux de la connaissance, l'usage et la rencontre d'une variété de langues dans votre vie quotidienne ?

.....
.....
.....

18. Veuillez donner toute autre information sur votre expérience de communication à travers des langues et des cultures dans le lieu du travail que vous trouvez relevant à cette étude.

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