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TEN PERSONS IN A DIALOGUE
A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION PATTERNS
BETWEEN CHINESE AND NORTH AMERICAN CULTURES

BY

Binbin Chang

A thesis submitted to
the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research
through the Department of Communication Studies
in partial fulfilment
of the requirements for the degree of
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at the
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ABSTRACT

Adopting the perspective of symbolic interactionism, this study probed into the cultural differences in the patterns of interpersonal communications across cultures.

As everyone's own image of himself or herself, from a symbolic interactionist point of view, is necessarily a configuration of the images of him or her that others have represented to him or her, this study proposed that one in effect interacts with a host of images while engaged in a dialogue. A model of what I call "ten persons in a dialogue" was developed, in which a dialogue between any two people becomes a conversation among eight images. These eight images, along with the two physical beings, constitute the ten "persons" that are constantly talking with and among one another. Cultural differences in interpersonal communications were seen in this study as the different patterns of relatedness between and among those images.

On the basis of the "ten persons in a dialogue" model, interpersonal communications patterns are compared between Chinese culture and North American culture. The expected differences were boiled down to the question of face saving (concern for one's own image or face) and face giving (concern for another's image or face) in face-to-face dialogues. A test was conducted with twenty-four collaborators, twelve Chinese and twelve Canadian. The results indicate that North
Americans tend to put more emphasis on gaining face for themselves whereas the Chinese would pay more attention to giving others face.
Dedication

To my husband  He Qing Quan
who always stands beside
Acknowledgements

The completion of this project marks a milestone in a trying period of my life. It would not have been possible without the seasoned guidance of my thesis committee. So my thanks first go to the three committee members, Dr. Chris King, Dr. Tom Carney, and Dr. Vito Signorile for their myriad comments, suggestions, and corrections. Special thanks are due to Dr. King, who has gone far beyond the call of duty to help me every step of the way.

Thanks also go to the dozens of collaborators who participated in the test and contributed their thoughts on the dialogues. I regret that their names are too many to mention individually here.

Further thanks are owed to Dr. Marlene Cuthbert, Dr. Stanley Cunningham, Dr. Steward Selby, Dr. Amir Hassanpour, and others for their kind encouragement and warm concerns that they have offered me generously in the past two years and a half.
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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this thesis is to highlight some cultural differences by contrasting the interpersonal communication patterns of Chinese with those of North Americans. Communication patterns and culture of course bear upon each other. The culture from which individuals come affects the way they communicate, and the way individuals communicate can change the culture they share (Gudykunst & Ting-Toomey, 1988: 17). In this thesis, I will seek to discover how people in these two different cultures construct their social selves, and how culture-specific differences in self-construction influence patterns of interpersonal communication.

There is of course a world of difference between Chinese and North American culture. Admittedly, each of them also contains multitudes of divergences. But scholars from across disciplines have agreed on one point: North Americans have an individualistic culture while Chinese have a collectivistic culture (Bellah, Madsen, Sullivan, Swidler, & Tipton, 1985; Hsu, 1983; Hui & Triandis, 1986; Kluckhohn & Strodtbeck, 1961; Lebra, 1976; Marsella, Devos, & Hsu, 1985). This individualism versus collectivism dichotomy identifies a major dimension of culture, namely, the psychological orientation of each individual member in terms of his or her relationship with the group and other group members (Steward 1972: 25). Because of its wide acceptance in academic writings, this
dichotomy will be taken as a given and used as basis for
discussions on interpersonal communication patterns.

Comparative cultural studies have been done for many
years, especially since the 1960s as the ‘global village’
shrank and economic and political ties among nations
multiplied and strengthened. These studies have looked into
cultural differences and their influence on interpersonal
communication, and have reached a number of conclusions, some
of the most relevant of which are discussed below.

Hofstede, a communication studies scholar, initiated a
research project in 1980 and drew four major dimensions of
cultural variability empirically from a study of multinational
corporations in 53 countries and three regions. The final
report came out in 1983. The four dimensions which he
isolated are "power distance," "uncertainty avoidance,"
"individualism," and "masculinity." The Chinese scored lower
in individualism, which suggests that the Chinese belong to a
collectivist culture. Hofstede’s data on Chinese culture was
collected from Hong Kong, which, given its different political
and economic structures, may not be completely applicable to
Chinese culture at large. Nonetheless, Hofstede’s contention
that Chinese culture in general is collectivistically oriented
has never been questioned. This is so for a good reason: if
Hong Kong, the most Westernized portion of the Chinese
cultural entity, remains essentially collectivistic, Chinese
culture in general must be so too (1983).
Since Hofstede's theory of cultural variability was developed from a Western social science point of view, its validity had to be tested under a different setting. In order to do so, the Chinese Culture Connection, a private agency set up to promote studies into Chinese culture, applied the dimensions with a Chinese bias. A scale of 40 important Chinese values was constructed and administered to samples of at least 100 Chinese students in 22 different countries. In conclusion, the authors wrote, "We propose that this underlying dimension be called collectivism in that each of the value groupings pits the maintaining of group integrity against narrowly defined self-seeking" (1987: 185).

In 1987, William B. Gudykunst and his associates completed a research project entitled "The Influence of Individualism-collectivism on Perception of Communication in in-group and out-group Relationships." Their studies drew upon H. C. Triandis, an eminent scholar of comparative cultural studies, whose refined conceptualization of individualism-collectivism provides a cross-culturally generalized definition of these two concepts. Triandis proposes that interpersonal communication is systematically related to perceptions of in-group and out-group relationships. While in-group and out-group relationships are treated basically as the same in a typically individualistic culture, they are clearly discriminated in a typically collectivistic culture. Starting from this proposition,
Gudykunst and his colleagues made predictions regarding the influence of cultural differences on the degree of personalization, synchronization, and difficulty that occurs in interpersonal relationships. These predictions were tested on university students, who were asked to complete carefully designed questionnaires that assessed their perceptions of communication with strangers (out-group) and with classmates (in-group). The results confirmed Triandis' proposition by clearly showing that the more individualistic a culture is, the less distinction is made between in-group and out-group relationships, and vice versa. Many other cross-cultural studies have produced similar results.

Later, Hui and Triandis published "Individualism-Collectivism: A Study of Cross-Cultural Research." Using data based on answers to questionnaires distributed among anthropologists and sociologists in different countries, they used seven aspects to define collectivism from the Chinese point of view, which can be summarized by the term "concern." Among the seven were self-representation and facework. They wrote:

Some people are very concerned with gaining the approval of the collective and feel ashamed if they fail to get it. This is typical of a collectivist culture. An individualist's behaviour is less motivated by shame than by guilt, and is answerable to the self (conscience) or some superordinate entities (government, God, and so on). Goffman's ... notion of face is also relevant to the conceptualization of collectivism. Individualists do not care much about loss of face; to them, being accepted by a certain group of people is not the major purpose of life (Hui & Triandis, 1986: 225).
1 Topic Area

My research seeks to answer questions that flow from the above. They include: how people in a collectivistic culture achieve harmony, and in which way they are concerned about others and how all these affect their communication patterns. The main thrust of this study will concern the differences between individualistic and collectivistic cultures in the construction of social selves and perceptions of others, and how such perceptions shape their communication patterns. This thesis, therefore, will study variations in patterns of interpersonal communication across cultures, not communication between people who are members of different cultures. The latter is part of intercultural communication studies, while this project falls within the boundaries of cross-cultural communication studies. Such a study is important because the individualistic versus collectivistic dimension of culture is a powerful and an interesting theoretical variable vis-a-vis interpersonal communication. There is a tremendous variety of interpersonal interaction in different cultures that is not considered when doing research in only one culture. Therefore, comparative studies will help us become more capable of understanding the differences between two cultures, which in turn will help us understand the given cultures better. It will also help smooth communications between people of different cultural backgrounds. So, good cross-
cultural studies will make a solid foundation for studying intercultural communication.

Specifically, this study will, in contrast to previous studies, demonstrate in more detail, and hopefully with more accuracy, some basic cultural differences in interpersonal communication. These differences in communication patterns are so fundamental that they penetrate into almost all interpersonal interactions. So the understanding of these differences will deepen our understanding of both cultures.

2. Theoretical Framework

Symbolic interactionism maintains that reality, as socially constructed, is highly dependent on what we think it is. We human beings are born as social beings, relying on society for the satisfaction of all our basic needs. Therefore, we have to interact with our surroundings, not just act on them. In the course of doing so, we have to "define the situation," which can only be done in terms of some social criteria. All these definitions, a result of our socialization, form our reality, which exists only in our minds (Becker, 1953: 243).

According to symbolic interactionism, human beings form their reality through, and only through, social interactions in accordance with certain social criteria. These criteria, which vary from culture to culture, shape the way we perceive the information and the way we construct our reality (Charon,
Human interactions, therefore, are as much what happens within people as what happens between them. In the course of such interactions, one objectifies one's self, making that self as much a social object as anything outside one's self, and then communicates with that self as well as with others. According to Mead, one of the founding fathers of symbolic interactionism, the self-concept is really made of two selves, the "me" and the "I." While the "me" is a social object that arises through interaction, the "I" is the individual as the subject (Mead, 1934: 177).

This very important cognitive ability of seeing one's self objectively enables one to look at oneself the way others do, and thus makes self-control and self-direction possible. This human quality, which symbolic interactionists refer to as "taking the role of the other," (role-taking) allows us to understand others, and also makes our complex social interactions possible (Mead, 1934: 158).

Charles H. Cooley emphasizes this aspect of interaction in his description of the "looking-glass self." He states:

A self-judgment has three principal elements: the imagination of our appearance to the other person; the imagination of his judgment of that appearance; and some sort of self-feeling, such as pride or mortification (1970: 56).

In everyday conversation, when we deal with others, we inevitably engage in a self-interaction that attempts to assess the other's image of us and how we are acting in relation to the other. Simultaneously, we find ourselves
obliged to be concerned about the image of others about themselves, and act accordingly.

3. Methodology

According to the symbolic interactionists, the central principle of research is that we can understand what is going on only if we understand what the actors themselves believe about their world. Therefore they are critical of traditional social science, which is characterized by mechanical models of causation and the use of scientific methodology to study human behaviour. They regard the processionary model, a careful description of human interaction, as the goal of social science.

In this thesis, the "documentary method of interpretation" will be applied. The method, derived from "reality reconstruction theory" (see below) is employed to study the observed phenomena to discover the underlying patterns, which will in turn be used to interpret the phenomena. In other words, the observed phenomena and the underlying patterns are each used to interpret and elaborate the nature of the other. In fact, this is a method that we commonly use in everyday conversations to get the meanings of what others say. Everybody can have a different interpretation of the same conversation by putting it under a different light or in a different perspective (Blee & Bilings, 1986: 443).
This we call reconstruction of reality, which is in effect a construction of meaning. As is evident, this is a highly interpretive process, which involves either primarily "raw materials" or primarily secondary materials or both. In a two-way face-to-face conversation, for example, we are interpreting various forms of raw materials. If the conversation is transcribed into minutes or texts, and we try to construct some meaning by analysing the texts, we will then be interpreting secondary materials. This is what we call "secondary interpretation" (Ibid).

A secondary interpretation is an effort to construct the reality of how others have constructed reality.¹ We try to penetrate others' minds to see how they see the world and themselves by analysing whatever written materials that those individuals produce, such as diaries, letters, or literary writings. Such materials are representative of the life and thinking of the given person at given time, and hence contain a boundless reservoir of meanings. One symbolic interactionist put it well: "The meaning of a literary work is never exhausted by the intentions of its author; as the work passes from one cultural or historical context to another, new meanings may be culled from it which were perhaps never anticipated by its author or the contemporary audience" (Eagleton, 1983: 71). The 'truth' of a text is always a truth

¹ Geertz's "thick description" research technique is quite similar to this; both emphasize close observation and careful description in research.
for a particular reader and always open to further meaning reconstruction.

Drawing the text from literature requires that the social life reflected in the literature be reconceptualized as a form of discourse preserved in the text. When we use it as research data, we have to remember that three levels of textual interpretation are involved (Lonergan, 1970: 579). The primary text is the meaning-order of social action as it is lived. Literature is a "secondary" reading or observational interpretation of the theoretical interpretations that actors give to their own actions. A tertiary order of analysis is the rereading and critique of the "second-order" interpretation of meaning-contextualized social action (Apel, 1977: 309). At each level, assumptions must be identified and interpretive concepts, along with their surrounding theoretical frameworks, must be critiqued so that observed social relations may again be made visible.

I am confident that both Chinese and Canadian realistic fiction reflects typical Chinese and Canadian life in a real setting. As Joan Rockwell states, "fiction can give us two types of information about society: first, in a descriptive way, facts about the state of technology, laws, customs, social structure and institutions; second, more subtle and less easily obtained information about values and attitudes" (1974:4).
Therefore, in doing this research I first chose some dialogues from novels, dialogues exemplifying Chinese and North American communication patterns, which in effect constitute my interpretation of the meaning of those dialogues. Then I tested those conversations on Chinese and North American collaborators. If their interpretation of the conversations should agree with mine, then I can conclude that my expectations are supported.

So the first step was to select twenty dialogues, ten from Chinese novels and another ten from a Canadian one. The ten Chinese dialogues suggest that Chinese are more concerned about "face giving" (saving the face of the other), and the ten Canadian dialogues suggest that Canadians are more concerned about "face saving" (presenting their own image). Two groups of collaborators, one Chinese and one Canadian, twelve of each, six male and six female, read these dialogues. They were presented in two versions, one in Chinese and the other in English. The Chinese group read the Chinese version, and the Canadian group read the English version. I attempted to remove any hints that might betray their sources, including names and settings. The collaborators were asked to read these dialogues, and then to answer the questions provided in a separate instruction sheet (see Appendix).

The collaborators were asked to choose ten dialogues from these twenty to show certain communication patterns, and then were further asked to justify their choices and to give
explanations of the underlying patterns in the conversations. Finally, I analyzed these explanations to see if they were in tune with my expectations. Should my expectations be correct, these answer sheets would indicate that Chinese are more concerned with the face of others, or "face giving," and North Americans more about their own face or "face saving." If the correspondence turns out significant, then my expectations about the difference of communication patterns between Chinese and North Americans would be supported. A pre-test was constructed based on this method to check the every detail of method.

4. "Ten Persons in a Dialogue"

Cultural variability does not directly bear upon communication patterns. It does so in a rather indirect way, through mediating processes (Gudykunst & Ting-Toomey, 1988: 35). Among them, self-conception is probably the most important mediating process. It is a process that necessarily occurs in interpersonal communications. As symbolic interactionists consistently maintain, people understand themselves through interactions with others, and understand others through their performances (Charon, 1989: 64).

William W. Wilmot has developed a model of the "cyclic process" (1979: 47). He states that in dyadic communication, the self-concepts of both participants grow out of the communicative process, in which they are constantly modified
and remodeled. For purposes of illustration, suppose person A and person B are talking to each other (assuming that A is a female and B a male). The following perceptions will be operating in their on-going transactions:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Person A</th>
<th>Person B</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$A_1$: I perceive my self.</td>
<td>$B_1$: I perceive my self.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$A_4$: I perceive B perceiving himself.</td>
<td>$B_4$: I perceive A perceiving her self. (^{2})</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As Wilmot suggests, one understands others by making sense of their performance, which always generates a certain image. When people meet each other, they manifest themselves by maintaining certain images. For instance, A (female) and B (male) are talking. They not only interact with each other but also with several images. A's mind has a set of images: 1) her self-image, that is A's view of A herself ($A_1$); 2) A's view of B ($A_2$); 3) A’s view of B’s view of A ($A_3$); 4) and A’s view of B’s view of B himself ($A_4$). Of course, B has a corresponding set of images. Including the two physical beings, there are thus altogether ten persons who participate in the dialogue (see Diagram 1). During the communication

\(^{2}\) A4 and B4 are my logical expansions of Wilmot' ideas.
process, they are always interpreting and responding to all of these "persons" as we all do.

I call this model the "ten persons in a dialogue" model. It can be illustrated by movement around a circle. In the communication process, we all travel around this circle to arrive at a redefined image of ourselves (see Diagram 2). In a dyadic communication process involving again, a female A and a male B, the sequence goes like this: 1) A behaves in accordance with A's self-concept (A₁: A's view of A) to impress B, that is, to present an image of herself (A₁ (p): A presents a view of A). When B observes A's performance, he receives A's image (B₂: B's view of A), and he will say something or do something to present his view of A (B₂ (p): B presents a view of A). Meanwhile, he gets an idea of A's self image (B₄: B's view of A's view of A) and reacts to A according to it (B₄ (p): B presents B's view of A's view of A). Finally, through B's performance, A receives an idea of how B views A herself (A₃: A's view of B's view of A). This is only half a circle.

Next we move to the other half of the circle. The other half is the same as above, but in reverse. When the communication first starts, B has his self-image in his mind (B₁: B's view of B), and as soon as the conversation begins, B presents his self-image to impress A, that is, to present an image of herself, (B₁ (p): B presents B's view of B). When A observes B's performance, she receives B's image (A₂: A's view
of B), and she will say something or do something to present
her view of B (A₂ (p): A presents a view of B). Meanwhile,
she gets an idea of B's self-image (A₃: A's view of B's view
of B) and reacts to B according to it (A₄ (p): A presents A's
view of B's view of B). Finally, through A's performance, B
receives an idea of how A views B himself (B₁: B's view of A's
view of B). As communication is nonstop process, the circle
will continue indefinitely.

We can only understand others through their performance,
and we can only understand how others think of us by
interpreting their reactions to our performance. We shape and
reshape our self-image by analysing how people treat us.
Thus, our self-concept, which is grounded in our self-image,
necessarily takes into account others' views of ourselves.
This cyclic trajectory first takes us from "I" to "others,"
with the emphasis on our performance. It then takes us from
"others" back to "I," with the emphasis on the interpretation
of others' image of ourselves (see Diagram 2).

Usually the view of self (A₁) is closely related to the
view of the other's view of self (B₂), and the view of the
other (A₂) is related to the view of the other's view of his
self (B₃). And each is influenced by each other (see Diagram
3).

Generally speaking B's image of himself influences A's
image of B by way of A's perception of B's image of himself,
and thus shapes the way A treats B. B's image of A influences
A's image of herself by way of A's perception of B's image of A (see Diagram 4).

The cultural differences in terms of individualism versus collectivism have a fundamental impact on this "cyclic model," because individuals have very different positions within their own culture. The English language contains at least four terms, i.e., "me," "myself," "my," and "mine," associated with the self "I," indicating the dichotomies of North American and all other individualistic cultures—the distinction between the self and other. For people in such a culture, the world is divided into two parts, myself and the outside. In China and all other collectivistic cultures, people accept the distinction between the self and the other to be the same kind of distance as that between any two others (Stewart 1972: 25). Therefore, people in different cultures place different emphases on the image of self or the image of others. Because people in different cultures have different relationships between the self and others, it follows that, they have different performances in the communication process.

This research is expected to support the generalizations described above about the differences between Chinese and North Americans in terms of their interpersonal communication patterns. As the cultural variability theory indicates, the pattern of human relationships differs between individualistic and collectivistic cultures, something necessarily reflected in the way people communicate, and resulting in different
patterns of interpersonal communication in the two cultures. To be more specific, I mean to suggest that Chinese will be found to be much more concerned about how "the other" would feel, and usually take care not to hurt the feelings of the other person, while Westerners will be found to be much more expressive of and concerned with themselves, not caring as much about the consequences of their words or actions to the other person (Triandis, 1987: 245).

It must, however, be pointed out that the difference between Chinese and North Americans is by no means absolute. As the research may suggest, not all North Americans are one way and all Chinese the other. There are more collectively-minded North Americans, just as there are more individually-minded Chinese. And most people in both cultures concern themselves with both the collective and their individual selves; the difference is mostly one of degree.

5. Expected Findings

I expect to find that in the communication process, Chinese concentrate more on Image (2) and Image (4), while North Americans tend to focus more on Image (1) and Image (3) (See Diagram 1).

I expect that this can be observed in two aspects: First, in the Chinese situation, A's presentation of B's image usually takes into account B's image of himself, and is stretched, as much as possible, to match B's own image of
himself. That is, Chinese try to make \((A_2)\) equal to \((B_2)\) (see Diagram 1). This is, in everyday parlance, called "taking care of the other's face." B would gain "face" if A presents a better image of B than B has of himself, and would lose "face" if A presents a poorer face than B has of himself. If A's image of B and B's image of B match each other, we would say that B has "face" (See Diagram 5). Therefore, I suggest that Chinese often put more emphasis on the second half of the circle (see Diagram 2).

Second, in a North American situation, the scale tilts towards the opposite direction. A takes care to present a good image of himself, and in doing so, A is very concerned about his image in the mind of others. That is, North Americans try to make \((A_2)\) equal to \((B_2)\). A is not so much concerned about how his image of B influences B's image of himself as he is concerned about how his own image (A's image) appears in B's mind (see Diagram 5). Therefore, I suggest that the North Americans often put more emphasis on the first half of the circle (see Diagram 2).

To test these two halves of the circles, I will use the following criteria to analyze the contextual materials: First: how does a person view himself or herself, how is his or her performance fulfilling this self-concept and in what way and how is this expected performance perceived by the counterpart? Second: how is this image perceived by the counterpart, how does he or she react in accordance with that
perception, and how has this action been interpreted by him or her? Third: what is his or her real concern, when he or she presents his or her image; is it how people will look at him or her, or how he or she feels internally? What does he or she think, when he or she reacts to the other's words? How would he think about me, and how would he or she think about himself or herself, if I should say a particular thing? Finally: what does he or she consider as sorrow or happiness? How is he or she motivated and by what? What is his or her ideal self? What is his or her ideal relationship with others?
CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

Since the 1960s, the emergence of a 'global village' as the result of the rapid development of communication technologies and growing interdependence among various cultures, has brought about an increased interest in the study of intercultural communication. Practically, these studies were needed to facilitate and smooth communication between people of different cultures. By and large, these studies have enhanced understanding between cultures and broadened previous Western scholarship. The progress made is best represented by the recognition of the close ties between culture and communication. To put it briefly, culture is seen as having a defining influence with respect to both communication formalities and communication contents.

Academically, there is another reason for these studies. Academic conclusions in the social sciences are usually first reached in a given culture, and their validity cannot be safely assumed unless tested and proven in other cultures. Nowhere is this more apparent than in the field of communication studies, a field in which there are always people seeking to establish universal laws like those found in the natural sciences. Since there is tremendous variability in interpersonal processes across cultures, all of the social science disciplines can be involved. These studies will
provide a boundless reservoir of information for us to better understand both our own culture and that of others.

1. Three Approaches to Cross-cultural Studies

Research in cross-cultural and intercultural interpersonal communication has been intense and the resulting literature extensive. To review all of this--no matter how briefly--would be impossible. Instead, we will discuss works which deal explicitly with cultural differences in communication patterns, especially those between Asian and Western societies. These works can be classified into three major categories in correspondence with the three major theoretical frameworks they each subscribe to (Gudykunst, 1983: 34).

First are those which use communication theories in general to explain intercultural communications. Some examples are: "rules theory," (Pearce & Wiseman, 1983), "cultural communication" (Philipsen, 1975), and "uncertainty reduction theory" (Gudykunst, 1983), to name a few.

Second are those which borrow theories from other disciplines involving isomorphous social processes. Among others we find: "attribution theory" (Jaspars & Hewstone, 1982), "constructivism" (Applegate & Sypher, 1983), "equity theory" (Caddick, 1980), and "expectation states theory" (Berger & Zelditch, 1985).
Finally come those which rest on new frameworks based on specific research in socio-cultural variability and communication, for example, "intercultural adaptation" (Ellingsworth, 1983), and "cultural convergence" (Barnett & Kincaid, 1983). In addition, many other studies combine elements of any two or all three categories.

These three perspectives or three points of view which originate from the field of communication studies, other disciplines, and intercultural comparative studies, respectively, can all be used to highlight cultural differences in interpersonal communication processes. Their common assumption is that cultural variability does not directly impact on communication per se, but rather indirectly through other mediating factors, such as situational influences, social cognition, affective processes, and habits, all of which have been singled out by studies from either communication theories or other disciplines (Gudykunst & Ting-Toomey, 1988: 35).

2. Individualism versus Collectivism

Many studies done under these three frameworks by theorists from several disciplines point to individualism-collectivism as a major dimension of cultural variability (e.g., Bellah, Madsen, Sullivan, Swidler, and Tipton, 1985; Hsu, 1981; Hui & Triandis, 1986; Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck, 1961; Lebra, 1976; Marsella, Devos, and Hsu, 1985). Within
this dimension, the major difference between individualistic and collectivistic cultures is that individualistic cultures emphasize individual goals, while collectivistic cultures stress group goals. Waterman (1984), for example, argues that individualistic cultures promote "self-realization" for their members:

Each person is viewed as having a unique set of talents and potentials. The translation of these potentials into actuality is considered the highest purpose to which one can devote one's life. The striving for self-realization is accompanied by a subjective sense of rightness and personal well-being (35).

Saleh and Gufwoli (1982), in contrast, illustrate collectivistic values in their discussion of management in Kenya, a collectivistic culture:

In this system group activities are dominant, responsibility is shared and accountability is collective ... Because of the emphasis on collectivism, harmony and cooperation among the group tend to be emphasized more than individual function and responsibility (327).

In individualistic cultures, "people are supposed to look after themselves and their immediate family only," while in collectivistic cultures, "people belong to ingroups or collectives which are supposed to look after them in exchange for loyalty" (Hofstede & Bond, 1984: 419). The emphasis in individualistic societies is on individual initiative and achievement, but in collectivistic societies on belonging to groups. People in individualistic cultures theoretically tend to apply the same value standards to all. People in collectivistic cultures, in contrast, tend to be
particularistic and therefore to apply different value standards to members of their ingroups as opposed to members of outgroups.

In an individualistic culture there is a clear distinction between the self and the other. For most North Americans, the world seems to be divided into two parts, myself and the outside. In a collectivistic culture, people view the distinction between the self and the other as roughly the same as that between any two others (Stewart, 1972). This difference between two kinds of cultures is fundamental and significant because it pervades all aspects of the culture including communication patterns, in which people in collectivistic cultures show more concern about their relationship with others than those in individualistic cultures.

3. High-Context Cultures versus Low-Context Cultures

Related to this differentiation of the individualistic and the collectivistic is a further division of cultures into high-context and low-context. In high-context cultures, most information is either in the physical context or internalized in the person, while very little is in the coded, explicit, transmitted part of communication messages (Hall, 1976: 79). In low-context cultures, in contrast, "the mass of information is vested in the explicit code" (Ibid). Although no culture exists at the extremes of the low-high-context continuum, the
United States falls toward the low-context end, while most Asian cultures, such as the Chinese, Japanese, and Korean, fall toward the high-context end of the continuum.

This high-context and low-context division of cultures naturally translates into another perspective on different communication patterns. In a high-context culture, people understand and expect others to understand more than they verbalize, while in a low-context culture, people have to and expect others to put everything into words. Accordingly, their communication patterns are very different.

4. Facework

Logically, the high-and-low context classification runs parallel to the individualistic versus collectivistic division. A collectivistic culture like China is necessarily high-context, since the absence of excessive coding of communication messages entails broad and intensive interpersonal interactions and thus draws people close to one another, while an individualistic culture like the United States is necessarily low-context, since the profusion of coding magnifies mediated communication and helps minimize interpersonal contacts. This further suggests that different cultures have very different strategies in interpersonal communication, which means that self-image protection is also handled differently across cultures.
"Facework" is one concept scholars use to describe these strategies, and it has been defined as "a psychological image that can be granted and lost and fought for and presented as a gift" (Yutang, 1968: 199) or as "the public self-image that every member of a society wants to claim for himself or herself" (Brown & Levinson, 1978: 66). In other words, in interpersonal communication, selfhood projected in public life is known as "face." It differs from culture to culture, in accordance with the differing cultural orientations toward the conceptualization of selfhood.

Ting-Toomey (1988) has developed a theory on culture and facework. She argues that in individualistic cultures maintaining consistency between the private self-image and a public self-image is of paramount importance. The public self-presentation of "face" should correspond to an invariant "core self" within an individual.

In collectivistic cultures, such as the Chinese, however, things are different. Here, the self is defined through an intersecting web of social and personal relationships. Tu, a Chinese-born American scholar, asserts that selfhood and otherness in the Confucian tradition compose an ever-deepening and broadening awareness of the presence of the other in one's self-cultivation (1985). This is perhaps the single most important reason why the Confucian idea of the self as a centre of relationships is an open system, in which the self closely relates to others (Ibid: 232).
Based on the preceding analysis, Ting-Toomey (1988) has put forth the following propositions:

Proposition 1: Members of individualistic, low-context cultures express a greater degree of self-face maintenance than members of collectivistic, high-context cultures.

Proposition 2: Members of collectivistic, high-context cultures express a greater degree of mutual-face or other-face maintenance than members of individualistic, low-context cultures.

Proposition 3: Members of individualistic, low-context cultures use more autonomy-preserving strategies (negative-face need) than members of collectivistic, high-context cultures.

Proposition 4: Members of collectivistic, high-context cultures use more approval-seeking strategies (positive-face need) than members in individualistic, low-context cultures.

Proposition 5: Members of individualistic, low-context cultures use more self-concern positive-face (SPF) and self-concern negative-face (SNF) suprastrategies than members of collectivistic, high-context cultures.

Proposition 6: Members of collectivistic, high-context cultures use more other-concern positive-face (OPF) and other-concern negative-face (ONF) suprastrategies than members of individualistic, low-context cultures (383).

In summary of Ting-Toomey’s analysis above, we can say that while privacy and autonomy are the trademarks of individualistic, low-context cultures, interdependence and inclusion are the hallmarks of collectivistic, high-context cultures. In other words, concern for self in the communication process characterizes individualistic cultures, and concern for others characterizes collectivistic cultures.
5. Social Cognition in Individualistic and Collectivistic Cultures

Hofstede, a communication studies scholar, found four major dimensions of cultural variability in an empirical study of multinational corporations in 53 countries (1983). Namely, "power distance," "uncertainty avoidance," "individualism," and "masculinity." The Chinese scored lower in individualism, which placed them in the group of collectivist cultures. Hofstede’s data on Chinese culture was collected from Hong Kong, which, given its different political and economic structures, may not be completely representative of Chinese culture as a whole. Nevertheless, Hofstede’s contention that Chinese culture is collectivistically oriented has never been questioned, and with good reason. If Hong Kong, the most Westernized portion of Chinese society, remains collectivistic, then Chinese culture overall must still be collectivistic too.

Since Hofstede’s theory of cultural variability came from a Western social science point of view, it needed be tested for its validity from a different point of view. In order to do so, the Chinese Culture Connection, a private agency set up in Taiwan to promote Chinese cultural studies, carried out a similar study, but with a Chinese bias. A scale of 40 important Chinese values was constructed and administered to samples of at least 100 Chinese students in 22 different countries. In conclusion, the report’s authors wrote: "We
propose that this underlying dimension be called collectivism in that each of the value groupings pits the maintaining of group integrity against narrowly defined self-seeking" (155, 185).

In a recent study, drawing on H. C. Triandis' refined conceptualization of individualism-collectivism, predictions were made regarding the influence of cultural differences on the degree of personalization, synchronization, and difficulty that occurs in interpersonal relationships (Gudykunst, 1987). Individualism-collectivism was found to be systematically related to perceptions of communication in ingroup and outgroup relationships, and its results were consistent with those of many other cross-cultural studies comparing these two kinds of cultures: they showed that the more collectivistic the culture, the greater the difference between ingroup and outgroup relationships. This indicates that in collectivistic cultures, people tend to apply different values to ingroup and outgroup relationships.

In another recent study, the patterns of inferred information, information gain, and topic placement for Chinese and American respondents were compared (Alexander et alia, 1986: 66). Based on pilot interviews and existing literature, four hypotheses were formed, the first of which was the most important: Chinese respondents inferred more information about others when they were introduced for the first time. It was also found that Chinese respondents displaced topics later in
time and categorized more messages as prohibited. These results suggest that differences between message content and information gain exist between Chinese and North Americans. They also suggest that in interpersonal interactions, Chinese tend to put more emphasis on others.

Very recently, two Chinese-American communication scholars analyzed interviews with Chinese in Taiwan. They demonstrated that the Confucian principle of kuan-hsi (relations) undergirds the functional aspects of Chinese interpersonal relationships. Confucianism, one of the most influential streams of philosophy in Chinese history, has put great emphasis on personal relationships as the proper forum for one to learn humanity. As Chan (1963) points out: "...to Confucianists, the virtue of humanity is meaningless unless it involves actual human relationships" (104). As is evident in the Confucian classics, such as The Great Learning and The Middle Way (Ibid), this harmonious interaction among people in different relationships serves as the basis of society. But this is only an ideal. When this ideal is put into practice, the Chinese use different ways of interacting with people in different relationships to achieve social harmony, and also perceive anyone who shares close relationships as someone special.

In examining interpersonal relationships and the role of these relationships in communications, Chan's study notes three areas of difference. First comes the centre of
attention in building up interpersonal relationships. While in North American culture the **individual** is treated as the centre of attention, more often than not in Chinese culture the **relationship** between individuals is thought of as the focus.

Second comes the strategic nature of communication in establishing interpersonal relationships. Here the Chinese have developed a great variety of verbal strategies, such as compliments, greeting rituals, and so on to maintain **social** harmony and good interpersonal relationships (Yang, 1988). Similar strategies in the West, however, have become the means to achieve **individual** goals.

Third comes the distinction between distant and close relationships. Chinese and North Americans have very different concepts of family and friendship. While family relationships and friendship are valued in both cultures, they are much more valued among the Chinese than among North Americans. Also families and circles of friends are perhaps much more exclusive in Chinese culture than in North American culture. Interactions between closely related people are usually different from those between distantly related people.

Chan’s study gives us a very important insight: Chinese society is not simply "collective." The collectivistic nature of Chinese culture does not mean that individual goals are less important than social harmony. It means rather that harmony is sought as the best way through which individual
goals can be achieved. Individuals and society are like two sides of a coin, and each side has to exist for the other side as well as for itself. A society cannot possibly be totally "collectivistic" or "individualistic." It is only that different societies have different emphases. This is a very important conclusion since it presents a Chinese view of interpersonal relationships. In effect, it supports commonly held assumptions among involved scholars about the differences between Asian and Western societies.

In 1986, Hui and Triandis published a study based on data from answers to questionnaires distributed among anthropologists and sociologists in different countries. They used seven aspects to define collectivism from the Chinese point of view, among which the fifth was self-representation and facework. They concluded:

Some people are very concerned with gaining the approval of the collective and feel ashamed if they fail to get it. This is typical of a collectivist. An individualist’s behaviour is less motivated by shame than by guilt, and is answerable to the self (conscience) or some superordinate entities (government, God, and so on). Goffman’s (1959) notion of face is also relevant to the conceptualization of collectivism. Individualists do not care much about loss of face; to them, being accepted by a certain group of people is not a major purpose of life (3).

All these studies indicate that in collectivistic and high-context cultures, people have more concern about others, which not only aids in achieving social harmony, but also in reaching individual goals.
CHAPTER THREE: Theoretical Framework

1. Reality as Socially Constructed

Reality, from the point of view of symbolic interactionists, is not what is really out there, as is commonly assumed. What it is depends greatly on what we think it is and on how it is socially constructed. We human beings are born as social beings, relying on society for the satisfaction of all our basic needs. We therefore have to interact with our surroundings, not just act on them. In the course of doing so, we have to "define the situation," (Thomas & Thomas, 1928: 572) which can only be done in terms of some social criteria. This definition is our reality, which exists only in our minds. So the reality of human beings is largely socially constructed (Becker, 1953:243).

To begin with, we must consider the assumption that a physical reality exists objectively, independent of our minds, and that from this derives "the situation as it exists" (Charon, 1989: 37). Though some social scientists reject this assumption, many symbolic interactionists accept it. The thing is that we do not capture this reality directly and in the raw. We capture it only by defining it. Everyday we encounter countless events and physical objects. To make sense out of them, we must isolate, identify, catalogue, interpret, and assign meaning to them (Ibid). The way we organize these events and objects is the way we construct our
reality, which is always done according to certain criteria. Symbolic interactionists emphasize that these criteria are socially developed, i.e., highly influenced by the interactions among members of the given society (Blumer, 1969: 68).

Two conclusions can be drawn here. First, because reality is subjectively defined in our minds, everybody necessarily sees the world in a unique way and everybody has his or her own reality (Charon, 1989: 36). Second, as one’s interpretation of reality shapes and is shaped by the social interactions they are involved in, that interpretation necessarily forms part of the reality for those around them (Ibid: 39).

The formation of reality in our minds may be best described as a stream, continuous and constant, which never ends except when we die. This stream of reality is "complex, manifold, multiplex" (Ibid: 117). As Warriner puts it, "it is full of many aspects, characteristics, features, dimensions, and interconnections" (1970: 15). We cannot cut it off at any given time to see it. When we try to pick up one element from this stream, we interfere with it and distort it, and this very action forms yet another part of it. Any kind of analysis of it leads to distortion to a certain extent.

This stream of reality has several characteristics. First, like a stream, reality in human minds changes its direction constantly. This is because our lives change
direction constantly, in more or less significant ways. As we encounter new situations, or as new factors enter our lives, our lives change.

Second, human beings are active in the stream, in the sense that they are always responding to their surroundings and making decisions (Mead, 1934: 99). We evaluate situations in accordance with our established goals, and we make frequent improvements on decisions already made. We always face various choices. When we interact with others, we perform role-taking and interpret others’ actions. Human beings are not passive or helpless in their own reality. They can make a difference if they want. Any change depends on decisions we make in the given situation (Charon, 1989: 120).

Third, our reality is continuous. In every case many decisions have to be made in a stream of reality to lead us one way rather than another. My reality becomes whatever it is because of whole series of decisions that reaffirm, slightly alter, or completely change decisions made earlier (Mead, 1934: 100).

2. Reality as Formed through Interaction

As everyone lives in a given society, one’s reality is never entirely self-made, but always encompasses people or events outside oneself. One person’s behaviour is also another’s experience, and each person’s actions necessarily form part of other people’s reality. In the final analysis,
we are all peopled by others. Therefore, I am not just an isolated and passive receiver in my own world; my actions are also part of reality for all the others around me. These others are not simply objects in the world, but rather centres of reorientation to the objective universe (Laing, Philipson, and Lee, 1966:3). From my point of view, the others are you, him, her, them, etc., but from their point of view, these others are simply other I’s.

The transformation of one’s behaviour into another’s experience is through, and can only be through social interactions. A social animal, a human being cannot uncommunicate, un-interact as long as they are alive. Interactions, verbal or nonverbal, make up every cell of human reality (Ibid: 9).

One's behaviour does not of itself automatically become others' experience, but must first be perceived and interpreted by those others. When we are engaged in interactions, we define the situation we are in, interpret the message we get from the conversation, and make sense out of the interaction, all according to some criteria (Charon, 1989:37). As criteria vary from place to place, the very same action could be viewed as friendly in one situation and as insulting in another. All these criteria are insinuated into our minds by way of socialization as we grow up. These criteria shape the way we perceive information and construct our reality (Ibid).
In order for others’ behaviour to become part of one’s own experience, one must perceive and interpret it in conformity with some conventions, and these conventions must be congruous to the particular criteria of the given culture. More important, one must share these criteria with others in the same culture (Shibutani, 1955: 564). Human beings learn how to structure their perceptions as subsystems interlocking with their own subcultures, related institutions and larger cultural systems (Charon, 1989: 56).

3. Interactions with Oneself

    Human interactions are as much what happens within people as what happens between people. In the course of such interactions, one objectifies one’s self, making that self as much a social object as anything external, and then communicates with that self as well as with others (Mead, 1934: 138). As long as this happens, people are defining and redefining both the situation they are in and themselves. Thus, by interacting with others, they alter and refine their self-judgments and constantly come up with new definitions and redefinitions of their "selves." In a sense, all that we do everyday is just reacting to our definitions of the world and our definitions of our "selves" (Berger, 1963: 106). All these definitions stem from our self-judgment which is shaped in our interactions with others.
The objectified self is commonly referred to as the self-concept. Rosenberg (1981: 593) describes the self-concept as the "totality of the individual's thought and feelings with reference to himself as an object." It is what we see as we look at ourselves. It is our "picture" of ourselves. This picture of self is on the one hand stable over time and across situations, and on the other hand, situational and subject to changes; stable because it has been built up over a long period of time, and situational because it is also a "shifting, adjustable process of self-presentation in social interaction" (Ibid: 594).

Some symbolic interactionists take the self solely as an object. But others, including the philosopher whose theories formed the basis of symbolic interactionism, George H. Mead, see the self as both an object and a subject. The second view, in my judgement, holds more strength. The self is certainly an object to be perceived, interpreted and appraised. But all this must be done by a cognitive being, which is none other than the self. In other words, the self is both the subject performing the cognition and the object for cognition. It perceives and conceives, but also is being perceived and conceived. As some symbolic interactionists would put it, the person acts, sometimes toward the environment out there, sometimes toward his or her internal environment, the "self" (Mead 1934: 595).
Several things follow from this approach. First, the self is a social object. When we say that the self is a social object, we are saying first of all that an individual comes to see his "self" in interactions with others. One's self, like all else, is defined socially. The individual comes to see his "self" as a distinct object only in social interactions. The self, if it is there, remains invisible unless being activated by coming into contact with others. So we understand our "selves" by understanding how others understand ourselves. Thus, individuals become objects to themselves because of others.

Mead emphasized the social nature of the self in Mind, Self and Society. He asked:

How can an individual get outside of himself experientially in such a way as to become an object to himself? ... [It is through] the process of social conduct or activity in which the given person or individual is implicated... The individual experiences himself as such, not directly, but only indirectly, from the particular standpoints of other individual members of the same social group ... [He] becomes the social object to himself just as other individuals are objects to him or in his experience ... It is impossible to conceive of a self arising outside of social experience (1934: 138).

Second, self-concept is dynamic rather than static, as the self is defined and redefined in social interactions. The self, after it evolves in social interactions, will keep on changing, becoming defined and redefined over and over again in interaction. One's self always gets altered, modified, adjusted, or remodelled. It is really a process like all other social objects, constantly changing as the individual
interacts with others. As Peter Berger points out, the self as conceived in social interaction "is no longer a solid, given entity that moves from one situation to another. It is rather a process, continuously created and recreated in each social situation that one enters" (1963: 106).

Third, according to Mead, the self-concept is really made up of two selves, the "me" and the "I." While "me" is the self as the social object that arises in interaction, the "I" is the individual as the subject. While "me" is something to act or react towards, "I" is very much the actor, embodying the active nature of a human being. "I" is the aspect of a given person that gives propulsion to acts. Mead captured the "I" when he wrote: "The 'I' is something that is, so to speak, responding to a social situation that is within the experience of the individual" (1934: 177).

The objectification of the self serves very important functions. Actually, one of its central functions is to operate as both a subject and an object of symbolic interaction, meaning that one can communicate with oneself. Thus, the self objectified makes it possible for us human beings to think, to point things out, and to interpret the situation. As Mead notes, "The essence of the self ... is cognitive; it lies in the internalized conversation of gestures which constitutes thinking, or in terms of which thought or reflection proceeds" (1934: 173). In other words
the self-concept functions as the basis for us to communicate in a vast variety of ways with all other human beings.

The cognitive ability of the self, as Mead strongly emphasizes, makes it possible for one to get outside oneself and take up the perspectives of others, enabling one to look at oneself the way others do. When we deal with others, such as in a conversation, we need to engage in a self-interaction that attempts to assess the other’s image of us and how we are acting in relation to them. Also we need to be concerned about the image of the others about themselves, and act accordingly (Goffman, 1959: 2). As I hold my loved one close to me, I try to assess not only his or her activity but my own activity. I have to consider if, for example, my action in relation to him or her is appropriate, what image I am conveying, if this action is tender, or rude, and so on. My assessment of each of these points will lead me to adjust my acts. We can call such assessment self-judgment.

Self-judgment is an important aspect of the self-concept. We might say that self-judgment is in fact self-esteem. Charles Cooley emphasizes this aspect of the self in his description of the "looking-glass self." He states:

As we see our face, figure, and dress in the glass, and are interested in them because they are ours, and pleased or otherwise with them according as they do or do not answer to what we should like them to be; so in imagination we perceive in another’s mind some thought of our appearance, manners, aims, deeds, character, friends, and so on, and we are variously affected by it.

A self-idea of this sort seems to have three principal elements: the imagination of our appearance to other person; the imagination of his judgment of that
appearance; and some sort of self-feeling, such as pride or mortification (1970: 184).

Sometimes the judgments of these others are highly consistent and lead the individual to totally reject self or fully love self. More often, significant others and reference groups are inconsistent and the judgment of the self is to some extent a continuously changing process. Like other meanings, sentiments toward oneself are formed and reinforced in the regularized responses of other people. For example, through role-taking a proud man is able to visualize himself as an object toward which others have feelings of respect, admiration, or even awe (Charon, 1989: 67).

The self-concept also involves identity. Our identities are simply the names that we call our selves to identify and classify them in a world of a multitude of social objects. Gregory Stone describes identity as the perceived social location of the individual: where one is "situated" in relation to others, who one tells the self one is, what one "announces" to others that one is (1962:93). Identity, Peter Berger (1963: 98) says, is "socially bestowed, socially maintained, and socially transformed." Thus, defining the self is carried out in interaction with others. As others label me, so I come to label myself. These labels become central to our identity over time as our social interaction confirms and reconfirms them. "Identities are meanings a
person attributes to the self," writes Burke, and "are a source of motivation" (1980: 18).

That individuals have selves is important because this concept as a concept provides the starting point in their efforts to order, control, and direct themselves. That is what we mean by "self-control," or "self-direction." The individual in this sense does not passively respond to commands but holds back action, considers options, hesitates, acts aggressively or quietly, guides acts according to a set of morals learned in other times and in other places, changes lines of action, and so on (Charon, 1989: 73).

It is through this self-direction and self-control that active human beings become a reality. In a very basic sense, to possess a self that the actor can direct in situations is a prerequisite for freedom. As Herbert Blumer emphasizes:

> With the mechanism of self-interaction the human being ceases to be a responding organism whose behaviour is a product of what plays upon him from the outside, the inside, or both. Instead, he acts toward his world, interpreting what confronts him and organizing his action on the basis of the interpretation (1966: 536).

4. Symbolic Interaction

Interactions between human beings differ from those between animals because of their symbolic nature. Our complex group life is possible precisely because of our massive use of symbols, without which we would not be human. A symbol, according to Joel Charon, is a social object used for
communication to the self or for communication to the self and to others (1989: 40). It is an object used to represent something else. Moreover, symbols are social. That is, their use and definition are generally shared in the given community. Symbols are meaningful, and the users know what they stand for. Symbols are significant, that is, they carry or suggest intended, not random, meanings for all users. And finally, symbols are arbitrary. That is, their association with the objects they represent is not inherent but designated by the people who use them, leaving a great deal of room for misunderstandings and different interpretations (Ibid: 41).

It is through symbols that individuals are socialized, coming to share the culture of the group and coming to understand their roles in relation to others. We all have been taught how to act through symbols and thus have become part of society through the use of symbols.

Symbols are related to the function of naming, memorization, and categorizing. A symbol serves as a tool for the individual to make order out of experience, and to discriminate, to generalize, to make ever so subtle distinctions in one’s environment. Moreover, thinking, the most important human behaviour, can be conceptualized as symbolic interaction with one’s self. Human beings use language and symbols to talk to themselves. It is through thinking that each individual is able to create his or her own world beyond the immediately physical world, develop highly
individual interpretations of reality and respond uniquely to that reality (Charon, 1989: 40).

Symbols allow individuals to transcend space and time, to recall the past they are unable to see again, to see the future before it occurs, and to integrate past, present, and future at one point of time. The individual is guided in social situations by recalling the past and looking to the future and also by immediate and distant stimuli (Ibid: 128).

Not only do symbols allow individuals to leave the immediate space-time environment, but also to leave their own bodies, to get out of their own selves and to imagine the world from the perspectives of others. This very important human quality, which symbolic interactionists refer to as "taking the role of the other," (role-taking) allows us to understand others, to sympathize with them, to love them (Ibid: 106). The more we are able to see things from the perspective of the people with whom we communicate, the more we are able to truly "see" what other people are saying.

5. Role Playing and Role Taking

Role playing is the process of fulfilling our identity. Identity, as Gregory Stone (1962: 93) describes it, is the perceived social location of the individual. In the process of communication we act like an actor playing a role. Identities are relational, social, placed in a context of interaction, and they "are a source of motivation" (Burke,
1980:18). As long as we have an identity, we control and direct ourselves accordingly.

Role taking is one of the central concepts in symbolic interactionism, because it is intimately associated with every other concept in this perspective. Role taking puts us in other people's shoes, enables us to better understand others, and to direct our own behaviour accordingly. Since it is absolutely central to the development of selfhood, it is probably the most important mind activity, and is necessary for both the acquisition and the use of symbols.

First, role taking is important to the emergence of the self. Mead makes this point clearly:

The individual experiences himself as such, not directly, but only indirectly, from the particular standpoints of other individual members of the same social group, or from the generalized standpoint of the social group as a whole to which he belongs ... and he becomes an object to himself only by taking the attitudes of other individuals toward himself within a social environment or context of experience and behaviour in which both he and they are involved (1934:158).

Second, role taking is important for the self to cope with all situations. In everyday life, we take the role of the other in all situations and converse with our self and direct our action accordingly. We direct ourselves, at least in part, according to what we think others will think of our acts (Charon, 1989:81). In practice, all social controls involve role taking. Even more, one way of influencing people's actions is to cast them into a role that we want so that they think of themselves in that manner and behave in the
way we want. If we are unable to or fail to perform role-taking, how can we put others into that role?

Third, role taking is the basis for human symbolic communication. To understand others demands role taking in order to understand where they are "coming from," i.e., to see the meaning of their words and acts, because meaning is obtained through determining what a word and act represents. Indeed, Mead's whole definition of the symbol, which is the basis of human communication, is dependent on the concept of role-taking. He points out:

It becomes communication when the individual indicating the object takes also the attitude of the individual to whom he is indicating it plus that of his response, while the individual to whom the object is indicated takes the attitude of him who is indicating (Mead, 1938: 51).

In other words, without role-taking, no communication would be possible.
CHAPTER FOUR: METHODOLOGY

George H. Mead, one of the founders of symbolic interactionism, argued forcefully for the understanding of human beings through the study of their actions. Actions can be both overt and covert. As individuals identify themselves and relate to others through these actions, whether covert or overt, these actions always take on meanings. According to the symbolic interactionism perspective, it is these "meaningful actions" that should constitute the first and foremost materials for the study of human behaviour (Charon, 1989: 40). But these actions have often been left out of traditional scientific methodology which has formed the paradigm for much social science research. Preoccupied with the determination of causal relationships, traditional scientific methods borrowed by the social sciences have proven inadequate in uncovering the meaning of elusive actions such as self-communication, self-judgment, and self-direction (Ibid: 80).

Although there has always been disagreement over the meaning and purpose of science, almost all researchers seem to agree that science is a method of discovery, a method which relies on empirically gathered evidence, and emphasizes a systematic and objective approach to the accumulation and analysis of that evidence. It seeks to better understand its subject matter by establishing causal relationships through testing carefully crafted hypotheses.
But this traditional scientific method, when used in the realm of social sciences to study human beings, is at odds with the symbolic interactionist perspective. Directly adopted from natural sciences, this method treats human beings the same as natural objects, and thus overlooks the symbolic nature of human behaviour, and therefore cannot possibly study covert human activity in an adequate manner. In this traditional scientific scheme, the actor's "definition of the situation," for symbolic interactionists the cause of all human behaviour, is not considered important, recordable, or measurable, and therefore cannot and need not be studied. The symbolic interactionists, in contrast, put self-communication, self-judgment, and self-direction on centre stage in their studies of human behaviour.

Mechanical models of research which search for single variables inevitably lead to certain outcomes. The job of the traditional social scientist adopting this method has been "to identify the specific antecedent factors which under certain specified conditions produce specific subsequent kinds of observable outcomes" (Athens, 1984: 241). On the other hand, symbolic interactionists believe in procedural models, which emphasize the process, that is, a string of developing factors, "whose initial stages do not automatically determine their later ones" (Athens, 1984: 249). Thus, to them, "the job of the scientist is to discover the stages which are
necessary for a given phenomenon to come into existence and
for one in existence to sustain itself" (Ibid).

By moving away from traditional social scientific
methods, we will be able to develop empirical techniques which
take into account the central qualities of human behaviour,
including self-communication, self-judgment, and self-
direction. Science, according to symbolic interactionists,
must understand how humans define situations, how they act in
the present by applying past experiences and future plans, and
how they solve problems that they themselves are confronting
in the present. This means that scientists must recognize
that past events alone do not cause present action without an
active person defining the situation and directing the self in
the present.

In place of the traditional scientific methods in social
science, symbolic interactionists call for a different
research direction. They believe that "the central principle
of symbolic interactionism is that we can understand what is
going on only if we understand what the actors themselves
believe about their world" (Charon, 1989: 182). What the
researcher must do is to try to reconstruct their reality, to
understand from their point of view what they think matters,
to capture what influences them to act as they do. Therefore,
we have to know their vocabulary, their ways of perceiving,
and their sense of what is important. Blumer, another
important symbolic interactionist, makes this point clearly:
The contention that people act on the basis of the meaning of their objects have profound methodological implications. It signifies immediately that if the scholar wishes to understand the actions of people, it is necessary to see their objects as they see them. Failure to see their objects as they see them, or a substitution of meanings of the objects for their meanings, is the gravest kind of error that the social scientist can commit. Simply put, people act toward things on the basis of the meaning that these things have for them, not on the basis of the meaning that these things have for the outside scholar (1969: 50-51).

Based on this conception, symbolic interactionists consider it important to gather data through observing people in real situations. Research on people, therefore, should describe people in real settings, and how they deal with real situations. This should not be impressionistic and journalistic, but rather as careful, critical, systematic, and objective as possible.

1. Three Research Methods

There are basically three symbolic interactionism methods to study human reality. The first is observation. Observation can take different forms, namely, "participating observation" and "non-participating observation," both in real life settings. Using the former technique, researchers may ask collaborators to play roles in given relationships, also participate themselves, and then study the interaction of the collaborators. Psychiatric clinics have been studied in this way. Using the latter technique, researchers observe what is going on as detached and uninvolved persons (Schwartz & Jacobs, 1979: 179).
The second method is the interview, both unconstrained and constructed. The former, an in-depth and non-directed interview, can elicit and reveal unique material about the life history of individuals, or the hidden reasons behind events. The later gives the researcher control over what the conversation will concern and where it will lead; it provides results for further analysis. Although the researchers here need to lead the collaborators to concentrate on the topic under discussion, they should take care not to lead too much, so that the collaborators can air their own opinions (Charon, 1989:182).

The third method is nonreactive techniques for studying groups or individuals. This derives from "reality reconstruction theory" which states that reality is constructed by given people at a given time, and that it can be reconstructed by others. What we call the reconstruction of reality is in fact a construction of meaning, and it is therefore a highly interpretive process, which involves either primarily "raw materials," which are directly from life, or primarily secondary materials, which are materials about the original materials, or both. In a two-way face-to-face conversation, for example, we are interpreting various forms of raw materials. If the conversation is transcribed into minutes or texts, and we try to construct some meaning by analyzing the texts, we will then be interpreting secondary
materials. This is what we call "secondary interpretation" (Blee & Bilings, 1986: 443).

This kind of interpretation is employed to find patterns underlying observed phenomena so as to interpret these phenomena. In other words, the observed phenomena and the underlying patterns are each used to interpret or elaborate the nature of the other. In fact, this is a method that we commonly use in everyday conversations to comprehend the meanings of what others say. Everyone can have a different interpretation of the same conversation by putting it under a different light or a different perspective. We each draw upon our own knowledge and judgment to dissect what we hear from the other person.

This secondary interpretation is an effort to reconstruct others' constructed reality.¹ We try to penetrate others' minds to see how they see themselves and the world by analyzing whatever written materials they produce, such as diaries, letters, or literary writings. Such materials are representative of the life and thinking of a given person at a given time, and hence contain a boundless reservoir of meanings. One symbolic interactionist put it well: "The meaning of a literary work is never exhausted by the intentions of its author; as the work passes from one cultural or historical context to another, new meanings may be culled

¹ Geertz's "thick description" research technique is quite similar to this, since it also emphasizes close observation and careful description in the research.
from it which were perhaps never anticipated by its author or the contemporary audience" (Eagleton: 1983: 71). The 'truth' of a text is always a truth for a particular reader and always open to further reconstruction of meanings.

2. Literature and Research

To draw a text from literature requires that the social life reflected in the literature be reconceptualized as a form of discourse preserved in the text. The text should not only provide a way of seeing but also a way of not seeing, because every text must necessarily include some things and exclude others. When we use texts as research data, we have to remember that three levels of interpretation are involved (Lonergan 1970: 579). The primary text is the meaning-order of social action as it is lived. Literature is a secondary reading or observational interpretation of the theoretical interpretations that actors give to their own actions. A tertiary order of analysis is the rereading and critique of the "second-order" interpretation of meaning-contextualized social actions (Apel, 1977: 367). At each level, assumptions must be identified and interpretive concepts, along with their surrounding theoretical frameworks, must be critiqued so that observed social relations may again be made visible.

We are interested here in the secondary and tertiary interpretations. They both proceed through two stages: concept-critique and validation. The concept-critique makes
it clear that the second-order accounts of life in fiction are ideological constructions of historical reality. The challenge of the concept-critique is to deconstruct social reality from the ideological presuppositions within which they are reconstructed. In this approach, the validation has both internal and external components. Internal validation relies on a "logic of probability" (Ricoeur, 1971: 330). On the level of internal validation, prediction is impossible since meaning systems are changeable and interpretation cannot be exact. Thus, "making sense" rather than statistical prediction is the criterion of interpretative success. In many cases, however, observational accounts must be supplemented by additional data from standard social-historical sources (Ibid).

I am confident that realistic Chinese and Canadian fiction reflects typical Chinese and Canadian lives in real settings. As Joan Rockwell notes, fiction can give us two types of information about society: first, in a descriptive way, facts about the state of technology, laws, customs, social structure and institutions; second, more subtle and less easily obtained information about values and attitudes (1974: 4). The second kind of information is what we need here.
3. The Methods of This Study

In this research project, I have applied a mixture of the last two methods: nonreactive techniques and the interview. First I chose some dialogues from novels, dialogues exemplifying Chinese and Canadian communication patterns. This has in effect constituted my interpretation of the meaning of these dialogues, and can be considered a nonreactive technique for studying groups or individuals.

Admittedly, the possibility of a discrepancy between fiction and reality cannot be entirely ruled out in a study that is solely based on novels. In other words, the validity of such a study cannot be affirmed without further support. This has been done in this project through constructed interviews with the Chinese and Canadian collaborators. The dialogues culled from the novels have been used to question them. To the extent that their interpretations of these dialogues have generally agreed with mine, we can conclude that my expectations have been supported.

The first step of my project was to select twenty dialogues as texts, ten from Chinese novels and another ten from a Canadian one, which were presented to two groups of twelve collaborators, one Chinese and one Canadian, with six males and six females in each. These dialogues suggested that Chinese were more concerned with "saving the face of others," and North Americans more with "presenting their own images." In other words, the Chinese have a propensity for "face
giving," and North Americans have a propensity for "face saving." Those dialogues were rendered in two versions, one in Chinese to be presented to the Chinese group and the other in English to be presented to the Canadian group. The texts were modified in an attempt to remove culture-specific expressions such as proper nouns so that nothing would remain in terms of wording to readily betray their sources. The collaborators were asked to read these dialogues, and then worked according to a separate instruction sheet (see Appendix). Next the collaborators were asked to separate the dialogues into two groups on the basis of their communication patterns. After this, they were asked to explain the underlying patterns behind the dialogues, to give the reasons why they divided the dialogues as they did, and to elaborate on what really made sense to them. The collaborators provided their interpretation of the dialogues, saying what they thought was going on between the two speakers. I assumed that the way they defined situations and the way they communicated with others in real life definitely affected their interpretation of the dialogues.

In this process, each of the Chinese and the North American groups of collaborators were further divided into two sub-groups with three males and three females each. In an attempt to get more reliable answers, Instructions Part 1 were given to two subgroups, and one Chinese and one Canadian, and Part 2 to the other two subgroups. This was meant to prevent
the same collaborator from working on both Part 1 and Part 2, which might well give clues to the whole study and thereby vitiate its purpose.

My analysis began by comparing the dialogues chosen by the Chinese and Canadian groups, and continued by comparing the responses of all the subgroups, to see what their respective emphases were. Then, after summarizing interpretations they produced, I analyzed the results to see if they supported my expectations that Chinese pay more attention to "saving the face of the other" and North Americans to "presenting their own images." A pre-test was constructed based on this method. The research units were the "dialogues," most of which were dyadic, and some of which involved three persons. I used only those dialogues that included at least three rounds of actions and reactions. Moreover, the collaborators answered the questions provided on the instruction sheet, and the researcher did not talk to the collaborators directly, to avoid any possible leading or directing.
CHAPTER FIVE: "TEN PERSONS IN A DIALOGUE"

1. The Relationship between Culture and Communication

Generally speaking, culture and communication are interdependent. On the one hand, cultural rules define the meaning and understanding of communication; on the other hand, the particular ways in which people communicate help to determine their cultures. Because culture and communication each influence the other, we can consider both to be variables, and can hope to partly explain each in terms of the other.

From a symbolic interactionist point of view, people live in a socially constructed reality, which they construct through interaction with others in the given culture (Charon, 1989). We can say that culture is the way members of a particular society construct their reality, something like a "consensus" of that particular group of people, who share a language and various rules that govern their actions (Ibid). Shibutani describes culture as a group's perspective or its frame of reference toward reality. Each person "who takes on the perspective perceives, thinks, forms judgments, and controls himself according to the frame of reference of the group in which he is participating" (1955: 45). Culture thus becomes the principal guide for individuals and definitions of the situation.
Mead used the phrase "generalized other" to describe the shared culture of the group. Whereas "perspective" implies that culture means a shared reality, "generalized other" suggests that culture means a shared body of rules (Mead, 1934). The generalized other is the law which must be obeyed, the system which must be learned, the conscience which individuals must follow in interaction. Meaningful social interactions can happen only with people who share a common definition of reality and a common view of the generalized other (Ibid).

Let us now turn to the relationship between culture and communication, which will lay the groundwork for our analysis of cultural influences on communication patterns. Since culture and communication are intertwined with each other, cultural variations must be reflected in variations of communication patterns across cultures, and vice versa. Culture and communication do not directly bear upon each other, however, but rather affect each other through mediating processes. According to Gudykunst and Ting-Toomey, these mediating processes include social cognitive processes such as information processing, persuasive strategy selection, conflict management styles, personality, social relations, and self-perceptions. Of these, self-perception is probably one of the major mediating processes between cultural variability and communication (Gudykunst & Ting-toomey, 1988: 35). Through recognition of the performance of self and others, people
construct the image of self and others and build the self-concept. It is on this basis that people can share the understanding of the meaning of communication within a given culture. Symbolic interactionists believe that through interaction with each other and with themselves, people make sense of the world around them, and construct their reality. We share culture by considering the self-presentation of others in the communication process, and by using the cues culled therefrom as guidelines for monitoring our own self-presentation (Snyder, 1974: 528). The image of others and the self established through the observation of communication performance forms the basis for further communication. Therefore, the self, the image of the self and others, and the communication performance all bear upon each another, that is, each influences the others. Moreover, all of this contributes to the impact of cultural variability on communication patterns (Gudykunst and Ting-Toomey, 1988: 35). Now let us turn to a conceptualization of self, image, and communication performance, and an examination of their relationships with each other.

2. Self, Image and Communication Performance

As we have discussed above, cultural variability does not directly affect communication patterns, but does so in a rather indirect way, through mediating processes. Among these, self conception is probably the most important
mediating process. It is a process that necessarily occurs in interpersonal communications. As symbolic interactionists consistently maintain, people understand themselves through interactions with others, and understand others through observations of their performance (Charon, 1989: 64); hence the mutual influences of self, image and performance form a process of externalization.

Johnson (1985) defines self as a unitary phenomenon, which he uses to refer to a particular, individual person. It is not a "personality" or an aggregate of factors which "add up" to a person, but rather the meaning that a person attributes to his or her self. It is our "picture" of ourselves. Rosenbery (1979: ix) describes that self-concept as a "totality of the individual's thought and feelings with reference to himself as an object." It is what we see as we look at ourselves. This idea is suggested in many writings (e.g., Mith and Stranse, 1956: 428; Rose, 1962: 11) and it implies that self is a system being constantly formed and reformed. In this forming and reforming process, the concept of self is necessarily divided into a nominative self-as-subject ("I"), and an accusative self-as-object ("me"), which represent respectively the idea of self as social object to others and that of self as a social (and psychological) object in itself (Charon, 1989: 65).

Self, as both object and subject, is formed and reformed through people's interactions with themselves and others. To
interact with themselves, people watch, direct, and control themselves as social objects; to interact with others, people perceive and interpret the information they get. In other words, the self is both the subject performing the cognition and the object for cognition. It perceives and conceives, but also is being perceived and conceived.

The objectification of the self serves very important functions. Actually, this unique ability makes it possible for human beings to think, to point things out, and to interpret the situation. Therefore, we can say that it is this unique ability which sets human beings apart from other animals, and makes the complicated social life of human beings possible. As Mead contends, human communication would have no basis without it.

But the self-concept is also a psychological phenomenon, and in everyday life, it is only suggested by the performance of self. Symbolic interactionists believe that people understand themselves through the interaction with others and with themselves. In other words, individuals come to see their "selves" as a distinct objects by getting, symbolically, outside themselves to take up the perspectives of others, and looking at themselves the way others do (Charon, 1989: 104).

To put it another way, when any kind of communication starts, such as a conversation, we need to engage in a self-interaction that attempts to assess others' image of us and how we are acting in relation to others. We also need to be
concerned about the image of the others about themselves, and act accordingly.

We may think of self meaning in the sense in which Osgood et alia (1957) made the term popular, i.e., as a "representational mediation process." This self meaning comes to be known and understood by people through interaction with others in situations in which those others respond to the perceived role that they are taking. In fact, people learn the meaning of the self because others expect them to have behaviours appropriate to particular roles. Such responses provide clues for appropriate performance and, by implication, to appropriate self-assessment. In this fashion, one's actions develop meaning through the reactions of others, and over time, gradually call up a self-concept in the person. Thus one's actions, words, and appearances become significant symbols (Mead, 1934: 136).

In summary, people on the one hand express themselves through actions, words, and appearances, all of which form certain images, and on the other hand, they understand the performance of others also through similar images. When people meet each other, they communicate with others as well as with themselves, and they do this only through the mediation of images (Mead, 1934: 137, 140).

This is a very important aspect of the symbolic interactionist perspective. The question remains, however, as to what is exactly meant by reflexivity of the self. Mead
suggests it means two things. One is "the individual experiences himself as such, not directly, but only indirectly, from the particular standpoints of other individual members of the same social group..." (Mead, 1934: 138). The other is that individuals use images and symbols as the media to respond to themselves as others respond to them (Ibid: 144).

As Charles Cooley states:

A self-judgment has three principal elements: the imagination of our appearance to the other person; the imagination of his judgment of that appearance to other persons; and some sort of self-feeling, such as pride or mortification (1978).

People experience themselves through others' eyes, and they adjust and readjust their actions in response to the perceived images.

Turner's discussion (1968) supports this observation. He proposes that role influences role performance only indirectly through the construction of self images and that it is the self-image which directly influences performance (c.f. Schwartz and Jacobs, 1979). Now let us turn to look at the link between (1) image and self and (2) image and performance.

2.1 Image and self:

Image was first conceptualized as the "current working copy" of the self-concept. As a "working" copy, it is subject to constant change, e.g., revising, editing, and updating, as its functions vary in different situations. For this reason, it can not really be considered a copy of the self-concept. Although self-concept is not stationary, it is much more
stable than the image. While the self can be represented at a given point, the image is perhaps best represented as a probability of a given self at that point. This probability can be greater or lesser and at certain point tapers off and becomes essentially zero, as the individual would (almost) never construct an image departing that much from that individual's self.

This conceptualization suggests that a self-concept is a kind idealized picture of the self in a given role which provides the motivation for performance (Foote, 1951: 35). Lack of realization of this idealized picture would thus lie in the contingencies and exigencies of the situation in which the individual was interacting. Therefore, it is the image, not the self-concept, which does the work in guiding moment-to-moment interactions.

2.2 Image and performance:

Competent performance in an interactional setting requires some sort of mental guide. Roles cannot be good guides since they are too temporally stable. The idea proposed here is that the image as constructed in a particular situation is a good guide for constructing interactions. It has the flexibility to act as a map for role-playing or role-taking as well as a guide in role construction (Charon, 1989: 104). Performance is thus the externalization of the image in

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the sense that the meaning of the behaviours in the performance is the meaning of the self contained in the image.

We should note that the self-concept is a psychological phenomenon, not visible to others in everyday life. What we do is to make good guesses of others' self-concepts through understanding their performances. In this process, the role they are playing becomes the most important consulting system for us to check the performance (Ibid: 132). Most of time we are all playing roles; only in a few circumstances can we be free from them in modern times.

People's roles may change from moment to moment. We are mothers, wives, workers, siblings, and friends. Some roles are different from others because of different situations; our performances differ from one situation to another. But self-concept changes slowly, and exhibits a trend towards coherence. Most of us define our self-concepts in terms of lasting personality characteristics. Therefore, the performance changes the fastest, roles more slowly, and self-concept the slowest of all.

When people enter the presence of others, they cultivate images in the situation. To present themselves or to bring into play information about themselves, they construct their images in accordance with the roles they are playing. They will, for example, present their general social-economic status, their self-conceptions, and their attitude toward counterparts. Although some of these items seem to be sought
almost as an end in themselves, there are usually quite practical reasons for presenting them. Information about oneself helps others to define the situation, enabling them to know in advance what they can expect of one and what one can expect of them. And at the same time, one’s counterpart makes the same representation. Both parties are informed in these ways, and each will know how best to act in order to call forth a desired response from the other (Gudykunst and Ting-Toomey, 1988: 81). Although people accept some performances as conventions, the individuals will have to act so that they intentionally or unintentionally express themselves, and others in turn are impressed in some way by them. There is always enough room to construct images in a given situation.

To round out this picture, we may note that not only is there a small effect of performance directly on the image which allows feedback to keep performance consistent with the image, there is also an indirect feedback which is more important. That is, one’s performance has implications for the self-images of other interactors, and these images influence their performances, which in turn influence the image of self. So in this way, people have self-concepts in their minds, and then when they perform given roles, they have to fulfil some images according to these roles and use the image as map to design their performance. One side in communication interaction understands the other side through
performance, consulting the role as reference, and makes a best guess of the other side's self-concept.

3. "Ten persons in a Dialogue"

From the discussion above, we can see that when people converse with each other they do not just converse with the people that are physically in front of them, but also with various images. This point is demonstrated exactly in William W. Wilmot's model of the "cyclic process" (1979: 47). He states that in dyadic communication the self-concepts of both participants grow out of a communicative process in which they are constantly modified and remodeled. For purposes of illustration let us suppose again that two friends A (female) and B (male) are talking to each other. The following perceptions will be operating in their on-going transactions:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Person A</th>
<th>Person B</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A₄: I perceive B perceiving himself.</td>
<td>B₄: I perceive A perceiving herself.¹</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹4 is my idea logically expanded from Wilmot.
This table represents the flow of images that flashes through the "brain screen" of the two speakers. Every one of the images is stored in the databank in their minds to become an underpinning for the images that come later in the sequence; to have meaningful communication, the process is repeated over and over again. But first we need to explain the difference between the images in their minds and images they actually present in the communication process. This distinction is parallel to that between the "public self" and the "private self" or that between the "self-concept" and the "presentation of the self-concept." The private self is the self-concept that only the individual is aware of, while the public self is the self that the individual presents to be known to others. The two could be the same, but most of the time they are not. Sometimes they can be the opposite to each other since people tend to intentionally mask themselves for various reasons.

The "ten persons in a dialogue" model is a visualized description of the images in the communication process. It illustrates that when we talk we keep in mind the image of ourselves, the image of others, the image of ourselves perceived by others, and the image of others perceived by themselves. Including the two physical beings, there are altogether ten persons who participate in the dialogue. During the communication process, we are always interpreting and responding to these "persons."
In a two-person conversation, say, between a female A and a male B, conceptually, still ten persons get involved. A, for example, does not just react to the man. She actually reacts to a number of images, which include: A's image of herself (A₁), A's image of B (A₂), A's image of B's view of A (A₃), and A's image of B's view of B himself (A₄). Of course, B has an equivalent set of images (see Diagram 1). During the communication process, the two persons are always interpreting and responding to all of these images (see Diagram 1).

These images are either perceived or conceived by both parties. Thus, A's image of herself (A₁) is her own image as conceived by herself; A's image of B (A₂) is the image that she conceives of the man; A's image of B's view of A (A₃) is the image she perceives as having been conceived by the man of her; and A's image of B's view of B himself (A₄) is the image she perceives as having been conceived by the man of himself (A₄). The man, in turn, reacts to a corresponding set of images.

What is the Image (A₁)? It is the perception that I have of myself. It is a sort of visualization of who I think I am. When I move from event to event in daily life, I always have subjective feelings of myself as the same person. This is the private self as previously discussed. Image (A₁) can be conceptualized as a system of self-schemata, "cognitive structures of organized prior knowledge, abstracted experience with specific instances" (Fiske & Linville, 1980).
Image \(A_2\) is a similar system, but for the other person. After we have met a person, we tend to hold a coherent picture of that person. This image may or may not accurately represent that person, but if we meet him or her again, we communicate with this image. It can be changed, but usually only in a gradual manner, and it influences our interpretation of the messages that we receive from him or her.

Image \(A_3\) is the self I think I am in your mind. If you criticize me too often, I assume that in your mind I am not a good person. I may think I am a good person, but I may also think that you do not agree. People interpret messages that they receive from the other person largely according to this self perception; this is the public self. If I have a "good self-conception," I will interpret a question about my health as a demonstration of kind concern or consideration; on the contrary, if I do not have a good self-conception, that is, if I think I do not have a good image in your mind, I may interpret the same kind of question as suggesting that I look very ill, and that you are happy about it.

Image \(A_4\) is who I suppose you think you are in your mind. For example: "You think you are an important person in this group, so you feel you can boss me around." This image often helps us to understand certain messages, and to deal with surprising or unexpected situations. Again, this is sometimes a false representation, and sometimes a correct one. In the communication process, all these images are not in a
static state, but rather in a dynamic one. Every interaction between two persons changes these images to a certain extent, and this makes the interaction meaningful and interesting. For instance, when we get into a conversation we each have images of our counterpart in our minds already, and during the interaction, new images replace old ones or new elements are added to old images. When these new images are established in our minds, we change our response accordingly.

Actually, when people meet each other, they usually present themselves by maintaining certain images. In the communication process, we all travel a circle to arrive at a redefined image of ourselves (see Diagram 2). In a dyadic conversation, involving a female A and a male B, A behaves in accordance with A's self-concept ($A_1$: A's view of A) to impress B, that is, to present an image of herself ($A_1(p)$: A presents a view of A). When B observes A's performance, he gets A's image ($B_2$: B's view of A), and he will say something or do something to present his view of A ($B_2(p)$: B presents a view of A). At the same time, he gets an idea of A's self-image ($B_4$: B's view of A's view of A) and reacts to A according to his perception of it ($B_4(p)$: B presents B's view of A' view of A). Finally, through B's performance, A gets an idea how B views her ($A_2$: A's view of B's view of A). This is only half of the circle (see Diagram 2).

Next we move to the other half of the circle (see Diagram 2), which is essentially the same as the first one, but
revolves around the image of B. As soon as the conversation (or other form of interaction) begins, B behaves in accordance with B’s self-concept \( (B_i: \text{B's view of } B) \) to impress A, that is, to present an image of himself \( (B_i(p): \text{B presents a view of } B) \). When A observes B’s performance, she gets B’s image \( (A_2: \text{A's view of } B) \), and she will say something or do something to present her view of B \( (A_2(p): \text{A presents a view of } B) \). At same time, she gets an idea of B’s self-image \( (A_4: \text{A's view of B’s view of } B) \) and reacts to B according to her perception of it \( (A_4(p): \text{A presents A’s view of B’ view of } B) \). Finally, through A’s performance, B gets an idea of how A views himself \( (B_j: \text{B’s view of A’s view of } B) \) (see Diagram 2).

This process goes on and on, as the communication between the two persons unfolds. They constantly take in new pieces of information and interpret them as long as the conversation flows, and accordingly these images on the brain screen are always changing too. \( (A_i) \) always appears first and \( (A_i(p)) \) comes thereafter. This is the way people make sense of themselves, and this is the way people construct their reality.

Usually the image of self \( (A_i) \) is closely related to the image of the other’s view of self \( (B_i) \), and the image of the other \( (A_2) \) is likewise related to the image of the other’s view of his self \( (B_j) \); both pairs are influenced by each other (see Diagram 3).
The most important thing during this interaction is that both pairs develop Images (A_j) and (A_i). Each guesses the image of himself or herself in the other's mind and responds to it accordingly, and each also guesses the other person's conception of the self in the other's mind. It is through these guesses that the other's performance influences the images of ourselves. At this point, we can say that, (A_j) and (A_i), especially (A_j(p)) (A_i(p)) are the 'joints' in the process of coding and decoding messages, both verbally and nonverbally.

These images influence each other and change continuously. An image of ourselves (A_i) is influenced by the other's view of ourselves (B_j) via an image of other's view of ourselves (A_j). In the same way, an image of others (A_j) is influenced by the others' view of themselves (B_i) via the image of others' view of themselves (A_i) (see Diagram 4).

This "ten persons in a dialogue" model has some important characteristics: First, these eight images in Diagram 1 appear on the "brain screen" only one at a time, irregularly, flexibly, and they change constantly. Therefore, we have to clarify the relationship between the self-concept and the presentation of self, (A_i) and (A_i(p)), and personal self and public self. These three pairs represent virtually the same dichotomy and have several characteristics in common.

Second, we perceive and interpret the information we have received according to a certain set of criteria—the images of
ourselves and others. It is often important that we have an imaginative image of ourselves in the other’s minds, since the other’s actions stem from it and our self-control is obtained through it too. In other words, we respond to the information mediated by the images we have in our minds.

Third, understanding between two people depends on how well the images in one person’s mind overlap with their corresponding images in the other’s mind. If Image \((A_i)\) in person A versus Image \((B_i)\) in person B, Image \((A_j)\) in person A versus Image \((B_j)\) in person B, and so on are largely similar (see Diagram 2), we can expect good mutual understanding.

In this way, Image \(B_2\) is linked to Image \(A_j\) and then to Image \(A_i\); likewise, Image \(B_j\) is linked to Image \(A_i\) and then to Image \(A_2\). Any person in the shoes of A thus gains understanding of B. This is important since we as members of the human world must communicate with others and we cannot not communicate with others as long as we are alive. Therefore, "I" is never just a passive receiver in his or her own world, because "my action" necessarily forms a part of the reality of "your world." What I do influences your reality, and what you do is a part of my reality too. "Others" are not simple objects in the world, because they are centres of reorientation to the objective universe. In my eyes, you are another, but in your eyes, I am another too. Moreover, others are not simply other I’s, since they are you, him, her, them, etc.
The transformation of one's behaviour into another's experience does not happen automatically, though. It first has to be perceived and interpreted by those others. And the way we perceive and interpret the information that we receive in the communication process is confined by cultural boundaries. In order for others' behaviour to become part of one's own experience, one must perceive and interpret it in conformity with some conventions, and these conventions must be congruous to the criteria set in the given culture. It is those criteria that distinguish one culture from another.

4. The Self in Different Cultures

Cultural differences in terms of individualism versus collectivism have a fundamental impact on this "ten persons in a dialogue" model. Because individuals are related to each other very differently from culture to culture, they also have very different ways of constructing their social selves.

4.1 Self in individualistic cultures:

The terms describing the self in individualistic cultures, such as the North American culture, imply that the self is conceived as an entity in and of itself and has existence apart from the groups to which an individual belongs. Geertz (1975) illustrates this view when he describes the conception of the person in individualistic (our term; he uses "Western") cultures "as a bounded, unique, more
or less integrated motivational and cognitive universe, a dynamic centre of awareness, emotion, judgment, and action organized into a distinctive whole and set contrastively both against other such wholes and against a social and natural background" (Geertz, 1975: 48).

Self-actualization and or self-realization are viewed as important goals for individuals to pursue in individualistic cultures. When this is carried to an extreme, however, it leads to the "pathological" condition of narcissism (Lasch, 1979) and the decline of concern for others (Bellah et alia, 1985). Self-esteem in individualistic cultures depends on how well the person can stand on his or her own feet. The inner self of people in individualistic cultures provides definition and guidance (Hsu, 1985).

The English language contains several terms, e.g. "me" and "my," associated with the self, suggesting a great dichotomy in North American culture—the distinction between the self and other. For North Americans the world is divided into two parts, myself and the outside; for the Chinese, however, the world is divided otherwise. The distinction between the self and the other is not much different from the distinction between any two members of the culture (Stewart, 1972). This difference between North Americans and Chinese is fundamental and significant because it pervades all aspects of the culture. It is, of course, reflected in the communication patterns.
4.2 Self in collectivistic cultures:

Members of collectivistic cultures conceive of the self differently. In his analysis of culture and the self, Hsu (1985) suggests using the Chinese word *jen* to replace "personality," though his conceptualization also includes what Western writers normally label "self." He goes on to say:

I suggest the term *jen* advisedly because the Chinese conception of [hu] man (also shared by the Japanese who pronounce the same Chinese word *jin*) is based on the individual's transactions with his [or her] fellow human beings. When Chinese say of so-and-so *"ta pu shin jen"* (he or she is not a *jen*), they do not mean that this person is not a human animal; instead they mean that his [or her] behaviour in relation to other human beings is not acceptable. Consequently terms like *"hao jen"* (good *jen*), *"huai jen"* (bad *jen*), etc., follow the same line of meaning (32-33).

Self-esteem for members of collectivistic cultures is, therefore, linked to their relationships with other human beings and does not emerge from the individual alone, as it tends to in individualistic cultures. Being successful in collectivistic cultures generally requires the establishment of interdependency with others in society.

The relationship of one person to others is so important in collectivistic cultures that members of these cultures may deny the importance of the self. Minami (1971) and Doi (1973; 1986), for example, point out that Japanese deny their own self-importance, particularly in interactions with those of higher social status. Such a view is the antithesis of the self-promotion that occurs in individualistic cultures. Minami also points out that the value of people in this
culture "does not reside in themselves as individuals or persons; it is dependent on the position they occupy within a system of inter-personal and inter-group relationships" (Minami, 1971: 250).

Such differences in self-conception certainly impact on the self-image in the different cultures; people in different cultures place different emphases on different parts of their eight images. Hence they have different performances in the communication process. To communicate with others' images is often like putting one's own feet into others' shoes. This ability enables us to objectify our self-concepts and to generate images. We can say that all the human beings communicate with the "ten persons" whenever they communicate with any other human being. Although we all have the same set of images, we put different emphases on them, and we treat them very differently. Such differences stem from different cultural norms and set cultures apart from one another.

5. Self, Image and Performance in Different Cultures (Expected Findings)

This research is expected to support the observations made above about the differences between Chinese and North Americans in terms of their interpersonal communication patterns. As is suggested in the cultural variety theory, the pattern of human relationships differs between individualistic and collectivistic cultures, something necessarily reflected
in the way people communicate, and thus creates different patterns of interpersonal communications between the two cultures. In my research I expect to find that the Chinese are much more concerned about how "the other" would feel, and usually take care not to hurt the feelings of the other person, and try to make sense from the other person's point of view. I also expect to find that North Americans are much more expressive and representative of themselves, and to not show as much concern about the consequences of their words or actions for the other person (Triandis, 1987: 245).

It must, however, be pointed out that the difference between Chinese and North Americans is by no means absolute. As my research indicates, not all North Americans are one way and all Chinese the other. There are primarily collectively-minded North Americans, just as there are primarily individually-minded Chinese. Additionally most people in both cultures concern themselves with both the collective and their individual selves. The difference is mostly one of degree.

I believe that in the communication process, Chinese tend to concentrate more on Image (A₁) and Image (A₄), while North Americans tend to focus more on Image (A₁) and (A₄) (see Diagram 1). This can be seen as follows: First, in a Chinese situation, A's presentation of B's image usually takes into account B's image of himself, and is stretched, as much as possible, to match B's own image of himself. This is, in everyday parlance, called "taking care of the other's face."
B gains "face" if A presents a better image of B than B has of himself, and loses "face" if A presents a poorer image of B than B has of himself. If A's image of B and B's image of B match each other, we say that B has "face."

Chinese are usually more concerned about the effect of $(A_2(p): A_pvb)$ on $(B_1: B_{vb})$ via $(B_2: B_{va}(vb))$, and they like to stretch $(A_2(p): A_pvb)$ to match $(B_1(p): B_{pvb})$, although sometimes this sometimes causes discrepancy between $(A_2: A_{vb})$ and $(A_2(p): A_pvb)$ (see Diagram 5). In order to do this, they must keep $(A_4: A_{vb}(vb))$ in mind and make a good guess about $(A_4: A_{vb}(vb))$, through $(A_4(p): A_pvb(vb))$ (see Diagram 5). Therefore, Chinese often put more emphasis on the second half of the circle (see Diagram 2).

Second, in a North American situation, the scale tilts towards the opposite direction. A takes care to present a good image of himself, and in doing so, he is very concerned about his image in the mind of others. A is not so much concerned about how his image of B influences B's image of himself as he is concerned about how his own image (A's image) is in B's mind.

North Americans are more concerned about the influence of $(A_1(2): A_{pva})$ on $(B_2: B_{va})$, and they like to stretch $(A_1(2): A_{pva})$ to match $(A_1: A_{vb}(va))$, although sometimes this results in $(A_1(2): A_{pva})$ having too much distance from $(A_1: A_{va})$. In order to do this, they must be more sensitive about $(B_2(2): B_{pva}(va))$ (see Diagram 5). Therefore, North Americans often
put more emphasis on the first half of the circle (see Diagram 2).

In carrying at this research, I have used the following criteria to analyze the contextual materials. First: how does a person view himself or herself, how is his or her performance fulfilling this self-concept and in what way and how is this expected performance perceived by the counterpart? Second: how is this image perceived by the counterpart, how does he or she react in accordance with that perception, and how has this action been interpreted by him or her? Third: what is his or her real concern, when he or she presents his or her image; is it how people will look at him or her, or how he or she feels internally? What does he or she think, when he or she reacts to the other's words? How would he think about me, and how would he or she think about himself or herself, if I should say a particular thing? Finally: what does he or she consider as sorrow or happiness? How is he or she motivated and by what? What is his or her ideal self? What is his or her ideal relationship with others?
CHAPTER SIX: SUMMARY OF THE RESULTS OF THE TEST

Overall, the results of the test support my expected findings. What I did first was to select twenty dialogues as texts, ten from Chinese novels and another ten from a Canadian one, which were presented to two groups of twelve collaborators, one Chinese and one Canadian, with six males and six females in each. These dialogues suggested that Chinese were more concerned with "saving the face of others," and North Americans more with "presenting their own images." They were rendered in two versions, one in Chinese to be presented to the Chinese group and the other in English to be presented to the Canadian group. The collaborators were asked to read these dialogues, and then worked according to a separate instruction sheet (see Appendix). Next the collaborators were asked to separate the dialogues into two groups, 'Yes' pile and 'No' pile, on the basis of their communication patterns. After this, they were asked to explain the underlying pattern behind the dialogues, to give the reasons why they divided the dialogues as they did, and to elaborate on what really made sense to them. The collaborators provided their interpretations of the dialogues, saying what they thought was going on between the two speakers. All the collaborators were divided into four subgroups: Canadian Part 1 group, Canadian Part 2 group, Chinese Part 1 group and Chinese Part 2 group. My comparison

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will based on these subgroups. In Part 1 of the test, the Canadian groups, both male and female, chose more dialogues from the Canadian novel than from the Chinese novels (see Table 1). In contrast, in Part 2, the Chinese groups, both male and female, chose more dialogues from Chinese novels than from the Canadian novel (see Table 2). This showed that the Chinese were more familiar with the Chinese patterns, and the Canadians with Canadian patterns, because these two groups of dialogues were each loaded with the communication patterns of their culture of origin. More important, the results also demonstrated that the Canadians and the Chinese understood these dialogues very differently, as their interpretations of these dialogues consistently differed. In their interpretations, the Canadian groups talked more about "concern for one's own face," or what I have chosen to call "face saving," while the Chinese groups talked more about "concern for the other's face," or what I have chosen to call "face giving." This indicates that in the same situation and the same relationship, the Canadians and the Chinese would use significantly different strategies in understanding and defining the situation and thus in obtaining their goals. Therefore, the test supported my expectations that in interpersonal communications the Chinese would concentrate more on Images (A₂) and (A₄), while North Americans would tend to focus more on Images (A₁) and (A₃) (see Diagram 1).
In Part 1, the difference between the Chinese and Canadian groups was not significant, although it still existed. Out of the sixty dialogues chosen by the six Canadian collaborators to answer 'Yes' for the first question (whether the people in the dialogues were concerned with protecting their images or not), Thirty-one were from the Canadian novel, while the corresponding Chinese group chose twenty-nine (see Table 3). While these figures differed only slightly, the two groups' respective justifications for their choices differed somewhat more. In their explanations, the Canadians cited much more frequently the issue of "self-presentation" (or "face-saving") as the reason for their choices. Of the six collaborators in the Canadian group, three of them mentioned "self-presentation" or synonymous words, such as "boasting about herself" or "building his image," eight times, one mentioned it five times, another four, and the last three. Altogether, they mentioned "self-presentation" thirty-six times (see Table 4). The Chinese group mentioned the issue of "self-presentation" with less frequency than the Canadians. One of them mentioned it seven times, another six, three of them mentioned it five times, and the last three times, for a total of thirty-one times (see Table 5).

In Part 2, the Canadian group in general paid much less attention to the "saving of the other's face" or ("face giving"). Out of the sixty dialogues they chose to answer
'Yes' for the first question (whether the people in the dialogues show consideration to each other or not), twenty-six were from Chinese novels, while thirty-eight of those chosen by the Chinese were from Chinese novels (see Table 1). The difference between the two groups, however, did not just lie in numbers, but more importantly, in their justification of their choices. The Chinese cited much more frequently the concern for saving the other's face as the reason for their choices. Of the six collaborators in the Canadian group, one mentioned "saving the other's face" four times, one three times, two twice, and another two not at all, for a total of eleven times (see Table 7). This figure differed significantly from that of the Chinese. Of the six collaborators in the Chinese group, one mentioned "saving the other's face" ten times, another nine, and four mentioned it eight times, for a combined total of fifty-one times (see Table 8). While the Canadian collaborators found little concern for the other's face ("face giving") in either the Chinese dialogues or the Canadian dialogues, the Chinese collaborators found the presence of "face giving" pervasive in both. All these figures show that the Chinese were more sensitive to "face saving" or concern for the other's face than the Canadians, while the Canadians tended to focus more on "face saving" or concern for one's own image than the Chinese.
1. Part 1 of the Test

Canadian collaborators choosing Canadian dialogues

In Part 1, the Canadians chose more dialogues from the Canadian novel and mentioned the issue of "self presentation" or "face-giving" more frequently than the Chinese did.

Some of the Canadian collaborators stated in general how they understood the term "image" that appeared in the instructions, although this was not explicitly requested. One wrote: "I defined 'image' as consistency in one's self concept/respect in the community, and therefore selected 10 examples which conformed to this 'image definition'" (Can: P1,3).¹ His definition implied that image was the "self-concept" meeting the "social-self." Although this was more or less a universal understanding of the term, his choices of the dialogues made it very clear that he belonged distinctively to the North American culture, since for him, "one's self concept" came first, and then the "public self," and the way to bridge the gap between the private "self-concept" and "public self" was for the individual to present one's image in communication with others according to one's self-concept.

For example, he chose Dialogue 3 as the first of the 'Yes' pile. In that dialogue the main speaker is especially attentive to "image." This collaborator wrote of the speaker

¹ Can: P1,3 stands for the Canadian Part 1 group, person number 3. The Canadian Part 1 group had six persons, three males (Numbers 1-3) and three females (Numbers 4-6).
as being "proud of the work he has done as treasurer in
turning the theatre around; status, and pride" (Can: P1,3).
He also chose Dialogue 5, in which the speaker, wrote the
collaborator, "talks about what he wants of life, how hard it
was for his own father--status + image" (Can: P1,3). His
other choices and explanations followed along the same lines.
As he was born and raised a Canadian, his ready recognition of
these dialogues as Canadian reveals that, despite his almost
generic definition of the term, both he and the speakers in
the dialogues that he chose have distinctly North American
cultural instincts.

Equipped with similar perspectives, most of my other
Canadian collaborators displayed a similar frame of mind. The
dialogues that they chose were mostly those from the Canadian
novel, though culture-specific wording or diction had been
almost entirely removed. The characters were usually
considered to be polishing their images for their own
purposes, which in turn was considered normal and acceptable.
For example, one collaborator wrote: "Cobble speaks of being
poor/crazy in a positive way (i.e. he won’t get money.)" (Can:
P1,5). She also wrote, "Cobble wants to project an image of
a leader in the world of music, someone who is respected +
must call the shots, as well as decide who is worth enough to
work with him" (Can: P1,4). That indicates that even in this
dialogue, in which a lot of other things were said, the image-
boosting part did not escape the attention of my Canadian
collaborators, who picked that part up and made a point about the character's self-representation.

One of the things that struck me with my Canadian collaborators' answers is that they believed that the characters in the dialogues were not only very conscious of image polishing, but also paid special attention to the value their roles represented. The characters tried not only to boost their self-image but also what they believed in. For instance, one Canadian collaborator wrote that, for Dialogue 1, "Image is concerned with professional attitude and practice" (Can: P1,1). For him, the character's representation of his own value may be more important than the presentation of his own image. Presumably, when one's value is asserted, one's image is boosted. Another example was with Dialogue 5. The collaborator wrote: "Image is concerned with duty and experience" (Can: P1,1). Since the character in the dialogue tried to say that he would fulfil his duty of supporting his mother, but he would do it in his own way, he was boosting his value to enhance his image. About Dialogue 6, one Canadian collaborator wrote: "Cobble suggests that he won't compromise his values; he values music & won't let anyone undermine that" (Can: P1,2).

Canadian collaborators choosing Chinese dialogues

The way my Canadian collaborators explained the dialogues from the Chinese novels also showed that they tended to focus
on "self-presentation." In the Chinese dialogues, the characters often go to great lengths to downgrade themselves. Of this, one Canadian collaborator wrote, "By deflating oneself in effect one draws attention to oneself and is thus concerned about self-image" (Can: P1,6). In other words, those who try to deflate themselves are in fact taking care of their self-image, perhaps just in a clever way. This is a very good example of a cross-cultural difference. While "deprecat[ing oneself]" was being modest to the Chinese, it was a way of "drawing attention" in the eyes of the Canadians. This collaborator gave other examples to support her point. In Dialogue 19, Mr. Smart says that he is no good at handwriting, while he in fact is. To explain this, my collaborator wrote, "He is fishing for compliments" (Can: P1,6). In Dialogue 17, the main character says, "With the ability I have I can't really accomplish anything without your support." My collaborator wrote, "This man is putting forth a helpless image to motivate others to help out" (Can: P1,6).

One Canadian collaborator wrote, "Those who seemed to be concerned about others' well-being are less concerned about their own self-image, probably because they are secure in who they are" (Can: P1,6). As a matter of fact, what she said may be true. But from the Chinese point of view, people save the other's face just for the sake of "face," or for the harmony among members of the community. It may have nothing to do with feeling secure in who they are or who they are not.
About a similar situation in Dialogue 11, another collaborator wrote: "The family is concerned with appearing sympathetic and supportive, since the woman was being noble, saying now there was 'one mouth' fewer to feed" (Can: P1,2). In his view, the woman beggar went begging just to let her family have one mouth fewer to feed. She now faced a very awkward situation, and she was ashamed and embarrassed in the dialogue. None of my Chinese collaborators mentioned that she intended to present the image of "being noble," and I believe that Chinese would not even think about it. This is a good indication of North Americans putting more emphasis on "self presentation."

The same kind of explanations appeared again and again from my Canadian collaborators. For Dialogue 16, one Canadian collaborator wrote: "Mr. Buck's image of himself is that he doesn't really care about what others think of him, because he believes in Dante's Motto" ² (Can: P1,2). For Dialogue 17, another Canadian collaborator wrote: "Jack is creating an image of comrade[ship] + togetherness in a group of workers, to motivate them to work as a team" (Can: P1,4). In Dialogue 16, the woman says she does not like to be treated only as the mayor's wife, so the man says he will take her as a friend. To one Canadian collaborator, what was actually said was not really important. The important thing was that they "talk[ed]

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² Dante's Motto says: Go your own way, and let people say what they want.
about the status of [the woman] being the mayor's wife" (Can: P1,3).

Chinese collaborators choosing Canadian dialogues

The Chinese, unlike the Canadian collaborators, generally chose fewer dialogues from the Canadian novel and mentioned the issue of "self presentation" less frequently than the Canadians did. But still some of them recognized that the characters in the Canadian dialogues were trying to make a better representation of themselves for their own purposes. For example, for Dialogue 1, one Chinese collaborator wrote: "'I am young, but I am not silly.' The young man here is quite confident about his ability, and he was bragging about it to muster support" (Chi: P1,2). For Dialogue 7, another Chinese collaborator wrote: "The man felt quite proud of himself, because he said that, although he had not got a lot of education, people needed him, which means that at least he believed in his worthiness. He thus elevated his status" (Chi: P1,4). For Dialogue 6, another collaborator wrote: "'My whole life is moved by the conviction that music is the most important thing in life, second only to peace.' After saying this, he stated that Old Snairey never attacked anything that he would dignify with the name of music. He is boasting of

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1 Chi: P1,2 stands for the Chinese Part 1 group, person number 2. The Chinese Part 1 group had six persons, three males (number 1-3) and three females (number 4-6). All quotations in this section are translations from the Chinese.
his loyalty to music" (Chi: Pl,1). For Dialogue 4, one Chinese collaborator wrote: "Solly said that she was beautiful, but she not only thought herself beautiful but also felt ‘quite calm and collected most of the time.’ This is more than beautiful, and she thus got a quite good self-image and did not feel ashamed to speak about it" (Chi: Pl,3). Here, some of the Chinese collaborators recognized the representation of self-image and the purpose of doing so very much in the way that the Canadians did with the same Canadian dialogues.

On the other hand, some of them did not seem to think that this was a good way to enhance one's own image. One of them commented on Cobble in Dialogue 1, saying, "I don’t think this is going to work" (Chi: Pl,5) while another even thought of Cobble’s words as "disgusting" (Chi: Pl,6). It is my opinion that boosting one’s self-image is not a virtue in Chinese culture; people normally would not do it unless they felt cornered and had to fight back.

One of the Chinese collaborators stated: "Foreigners [meaning Westerners] would like to enhance their own images by saying all kinds of good things about themselves, or by never saying anything bad about themselves. On the contrary, Chinese customarily deprecate themselves. You almost never hear a foreign student say ‘I am only a student, and you’re a professor, so never mind what I said,’ but this is quite
common in a conversation between teacher and student in a Chinese context" (Chi: P1,4).

One thing which struck me about this test, was that it seemed that the Chinese collaborators understand Canadian communication patterns better than Canadian understood Chinese patterns. This is mainly because all the Chinese collaborators for my test had been in Canada for at least two years, spoke quite good English, and had considerable familiarity with Canadian communication patterns. On the other hand, none of my Canadian collaborators had been ever been to China, and none of them spoke more than a few words of Chinese. Lacking Chinese experience, they sometimes had a different perspective of the Chinese dialogues.

Chinese collaborators choosing Chinese dialogues

In Part 1, the Chinese, as said earlier, did choose more Chinese dialogues than Canadian ones. But their explanations did not have a single theme in common. Some of them appeared to focus on self-presentation, others mentioned the "saving of the other's face," and still others did not have any focus whatsoever. In Dialogue 17, the young man says that rebuilding a wall is not an easy task, and that he cannot accomplish anything without others' support. One of my Chinese collaborators wrote, "He was pretending to be modest, but as a matter of fact he was showing off his ability and he did it in a natural manner" (Chi: P1,3). About the same
Dialogue, another collaborator, however, had a very different understanding that sounds much more Chinese. He wrote: "The young man said that 'I can't really accomplish anything without your support. It will be really up to you folks.' The man deflated himself, saying that he could not achieve anything without the other guys, which must sound very flattering and motivating to the construction workers" (Chi: P1,5). Indeed, in my experience, self-deprecation is a Chinese custom.

The Chinese tendency to self-deprecation goes hand in hand with their flattering of others. One collaborator gave a very good example: "In Dialogue 16, the man waves his arms in a whole circle, as if a whole world of sorrow is encircling them, and as if he were the only person who knew the secret of marriage and love. But he asks: 'Tell me, among all the people you know--you certainly know a great many of them--how many couples have fused their love and marriage completely together?' It seems that the woman is the only one who can possibly understand his profound 'theory.' This is to ensure that the woman's face will be saved" (Chi: P1,5). Indeed, I believe this is quite typical of Chinese in conversation; they routinely flatter others a little bit before they flatter themselves. A similar example is Dialogue 15, for which the same collaborator explained, "The young man said: 'You are the boss, adored by everybody in the company. I am just a damned driver. You are an elder, and I am just a young man.}
And you've got so many years more seniority. Of course you'll forgive my stupidity.' The young man was being sarcastic, of course, but it is a Chinese type of sarcasm, with the accuser piling nice words on the accused" (Chi: P1,5). Concerning Dialogue 19, another Chinese collaborator wrote: "The man says that the inscriptions which are hanging everywhere are from the secretary. This is direct praise not only for good handwriting but also for his position of secretary" (Chi: P1,2).

2. Part 2 of the Test

   Chinese collaborators choosing Chinese dialogues

   In Part 2, the question was whether the people in the dialogues show consideration to each other or not. My Chinese collaborators showed more concern about "the other" than my Canadian collaborators did; the difference was really striking.

   The Chinese collaborators proved much more sensitive about the issue of "being concerned about other's face." In his general comments, one of them put it aptly: "My understanding is that 'saving face' means different things in different cultures. In other words, cultural differences are reflected in how 'face' is saved. While North Americans put more emphasis on equality, the Chinese put more emphasis on harmony. The harmony among the Chinese banks on an order that is based on a set of dichotomies, which include the elder
versus the younger, the superior versus the inferior, and the stronger versus the weaker, with both sides shouldering their own responsibilities. While an elder may have more privileges, he or she is also supposed to take care of the younger. So in China, the concept 'saving face' is meant to protect the inferior and give respect to the superior and thus maintain the social order. Compared with the Chinese, Westerners fight for equality. Since everybody is born equal, the concept of 'protecting image' is much simpler" (Chi: P2,1).

His comment brought out the important fact that Chinese culture is marked by mutual consideration in social interactions. He used Dialogue 20 as an illustration. He wrote: "In that dialogue, Hod knows what the old man has in mind, and speaks it out for him. After saying it, he laughs, pretending that he has just made a joke at his expense, and this helps the conversation carry on. I think this is a typical Chinese way to save the other's face" (Chi: P2,1). In Dialogue 20, George is under attack, and thus looks weaker. So Hod just laughs off his awkwardness and saves George's face.

The general comments another Chinese collaborator gave, alluded to another strategy of face saving. He wrote: "I made these choices based on whether the dialogue contains any covert or overt flattering. If yes, it belongs to the 'Yes' group, and otherwise, it goes into the 'No' group, because
flattering is usually a way of 'giving face’" (Chi: P2,5). By this, the collaborator meant first that the Chinese tend to be more concerned about how others feel about themselves, and they would stretch their own view of the other to match the other’s self-image. He also meant that the image projected through flattering is not always the image that one has in mind about the other person.

In the answers given by the Chinese collaborators, there seemed to be a consensus that one should take care of the other’s face, indicating that this is a common practice among the Chinese. In Dialogue 19, one collaborator wrote: "'You had special training in it, didn’t you? We all know that you are the real author of…' This is really flattery, just to make the other feel better about himself. Often, you can not take it at its face value" (Chi: P2,4). About this Dialogue, another collaborator wrote: "The man praised the secretary, because the secretary was then in a powerful position" (Chi: P2,3). Another collaborator shared the same perspective. About Dialogue 16, he wrote: "'I feel you are quite a personality in this city. You know, most women here are just one or another version of "Emma," not much worth talking to.' By this sentence, the man showed his special appreciation of the woman, and created an atmosphere in which misunderstandings can be easily glossed over. Now the conversation can carry on in a good atmosphere" (Chi: P2,2).
Another Chinese collaborator's general comments probed into the motivation behind the flatteries. He wrote: "Sometimes taking care of the other's face indicates one is concerned about the other's feelings, but other times it is just a means to manipulate others. Therefore, the same words could be motivated by different intentions" (Chi: P2,4).

Another Chinese collaborator had the same insight about the relationship between boss and employee. He wrote: "The young man asked for help: 'We really need your help. We cannot do it without you.' The flattering here is meant to motivate others for a specific purpose, and that is all" (Chi: P2,4).

Another example is quite similar to the one above. About Dialogue 14, one of the Chinese collaborators wrote: "Mary said: 'What can I as a secretary do?' The man gave a clever answer. He said: 'Those who don't occupy positions of power are often more resourceful than those who do. Why does everyone call you "Super Spider"? This was obviously very flattering to Mary and made it difficult for Mary to refuse the subsequent request for a favour" (Chi: P2,2).

These general comments touch upon some of the most commonly used strategies of saving the other's face (face saving) in China. While few of my Canadian collaborators suspected the presence of these strategies, each of the strategies was recognized by a majority of the Chinese collaborators, exhibiting a common thread in their thinking
that was strikingly different from that of the Westerners. Some dialogues were mentioned again and again, to indicate how they thought about saving the face of the other.

Dialogue 11 is a very good example; all the Chinese collaborators put this into the 'Yes' group, and gave quite similar interpretations. They pointed out that the old man tried to show sympathy and make the woman feel better, and thus save her face. One collaborator wrote: "'In 1975, I begged too, and so did my wife.' The same experience drew them closer and thus gave them the same feeling and understanding. After this sentence, the woman would feel a lot more comfortable" (Chi: P2,2). Another collaborator explained, "The old man said, 'Don't feel ashamed. You're not to blame. In 1975, I begged too, and so did my wife. What can you do when bad luck hits you.' By this, especially the sentence about him and his wife both begging, he really put the conversation on an equal basis" (Chi: P2,1). The collaborator pointed out that the sentence "Don't be ashamed, you are not to blame" is a "good example for demonstrating that the stronger side is taking care of the weaker side's feelings, revealing the will to protect the weaker" (Chi: P2,4). He even said that this is a example of the Chinese penchant for taking care of others. Other explanations showed a similar understanding.

Five of six persons put Dialogues 2, 4, 9, and 16, in the 'Yes' group. In Dialogue 16, a male-female pair thinks that
the woman’s status as the first lady of the city could be affecting their relationship. One Chinese explanation went: "The woman is not comfortable with being treated only as the mayor’s wife, so the man says that he is considering her as just a friend, to save her face" (Chi: P2,1).

Dialogue 15 is an interesting one. A young driver is quarrelling with his boss. He says: "You are the boss, adored by everybody in the company. I am just a god damned driver. You are an elder, and I am just a young man. You have got so many years more seniority. Of course, you’ll forgive my stupidity." The Chinese collaborators gave typically Chinese comments, which all touched upon the sarcastic nature of the young man’s outburst of words. One of them wrote: "This is an example of one speaker’s concern about the face of the other in an hostile situation. The young man is accusing his boss, but a trace of involuntary deference is still unmistakably there" (Chi: P2,3). A second collaborator wrote: "The young man uses what could be his boss’s weapon, namely his higher status, to attack him. The young man is really saying that, 'If you think I am stupid, you as boss should at least know better.' Instead of vilifying the boss in the quarrel, the young man carps at him by actually burying his boss with ostensibly nice words" (Chi: P2,2). A third collaborator wrote straightforwardly: "The young man’s reasoning is that a boss should know better, and someone in the position of boss should not be quarrelling with him" (Chi: P2,1). All of these
examples show that the Chinese and Canadians showed significant differences in approaching the conversations and relationships in the same situations.

Chinese collaborators choosing Canadian dialogues

The Chinese group chose quite a few dialogues from Canadian novels to answer 'Yes' for Question One. But their understanding of those dialogues comes from a distinctly Chinese perspective.

For Dialogue 2, one Chinese collaborator's explanation was quite interesting. He wrote, "The Little Theatre made the girl ask her father if he'd let them do the play in his garden in exchange for a leading part for his daughter. But the girl told her father: 'You don't have to say yes because of me.' But afterwards, she explained that she was actually quite a good actress, indicating that she really wanted that part. But she is still willing to sacrifice her own interests for her father, at least on the basis of her words. She is keen to protect her father's and her own 'face'" (Chi: P2,3).

About Dialogue 3, another collaborator wrote: "The theatre treasurer wanted to play a part as an actor, and wanted it at once. But he did not ask the boss for it directly. Instead he said that he had got a job offer somewhere else, and that, should the theatre have no part for him now, he would prefer to take the other job. Since an outright demand might cause his boss to lose face, the
treasurer just hinted at his request and expected his boss to pick up the clue" (Chi: P2,1).

In Dialogue 4, the girl says to the boy, "I'm an oddity. I suppose, just like you." My Chinese collaborators typically thought that, by saying this, the girl was implicitly rejecting an offer of love, but did it in a diplomatic way to save the boy's face. The boy may still think, as one collaborator wrote, "even if he cannot be her lover, he is still quite special" (Chi: P2,1). While five Chinese collaborators thought the two might be in love, none of my Canadian collaborators appeared to think that there was anything special between them.

It was, however, not impossible for a Chinese to give a Canadian dialogue a Canadian interpretation. In Dialogue 9, one male character has tried to commit suicide, but has been saved. When he meets the girl for whose sake he made his attempt, she says: "I'd feel dreadful if you did, you know. Because of me." One Chinese collaborator wrote: "Hector has tried to commit suicide because of this girl, so the girl says that she feels dreadful. She says it to protect her own image. If she were to feel nothing under this condition, others might look at her as if she were cold-blooded" (Chi: P2,4). This interpretation appeared very Canadian, although such interpretations were the exception rather than the rule.

While the Canadian collaborators found little concern for face in either the Chinese dialogues or the Canadian
dialogues, the Chinese collaborators in general found the presence of face concerns pervasive in both.

Canadians collaborators choosing dialogues from Chinese novels

Although some of the dialogues that the Canadian group chose were from Chinese novels, it does not mean that they harboured any identification with Chinese culture. Their explanations for these dialogues varied wildly and did not share a common theme, suggesting that their selections were rather arbitrary. Take Dialogue 13 as an example. Considering this dialogue, one Canadian collaborator wrote, "Mr. Svenden tries to protect his own image [and] tries to prevent himself from appearing cruel by showing concern about the other person's health [and by] speaking softly" (Can: P2,4). This understanding is very much situated in a Western perspective. Another example is Dialogue 16. The same Canadian wrote: "Mr. Buck is trying to protect his image as important even though he must now speak to the mayor’s wife... 'Most woman here are just one or another version of "Emma," not much worth talking to’" (Can: P2,4). This too indicates a Canadian understanding of a Chinese situation.

Some of their explanations could sound strange to Chinese ears just as some of the Chinese explanations could sound strange to Canadian ears. For Dialogue 19, a Canadian collaborator wrote, "Mr. Smart is protecting his image by
commenting on Mr. Green's handwriting. He knows his talents will come to light. 'Where did you hear it from... I'm no good at it'" (Can: P2,4). For Dialogue 19, another Canadian collaborator wrote that Mr. Smart was "trying to put down his own image to get flattery from the other man (Mr. Smart pretends to be humble)" (Can: P2,5). So what seemed to the Chinese to be concern for the face of others or face saving, seemed to the Canadians to be concern for one's own image or face saving.

The Canadian collaborators also chose a few other Chinese dialogues for the 'Yes' pile and gave them seemingly Chinese explanations, indicating that being sensitive to "the other" is not a Chinese monopoly. Just as there are Chinese who do not normally show concern for others' images, there are Westerners who show concern for others' face, although this does not by any means change the dominant tendency. One Canadian collaborator wrote this for the Dialogue 11: "Home owners try to protect beggar's feeling by stating that they were once in her shoes" (Can: P2,5). One of their explanations for Dialogue 20 showed that some Canadians were indeed sensitive to the protection of the other's image. One of Canadian collaborators wrote, "By laughing and pretending he was joking, the old man protected George's image" (Can: P2,6). About Dialogue 14, the same collaborator wrote, "[The man] is protecting the other person's image by saying how resourceful she must be and by calling her 'super spider'"
(Can: P2,6). About Dialogue 11, still this collaborator wrote: "[When] Charles (the uncle) was saying: 'Don't feel ashamed, etc. etc.,' he was trying to make the woman feel better" (Can: P2,6). About Dialogue 4, another collaborator wrote: "Both [were] interested in boosting the other's image" (Can: P2,1).

Canadian collaborators choosing Canadian dialogues

The Canadian preoccupation with self-representation was even more apparent in their explanations of those dialogues culled from Canadian literature. One Canadian wrote this for Dialogue 4: "Solly is protecting her image [by] comparing herself to this person. 'I am an oddity, I suppose, like you''" (Can: P2,4). Another wrote this for Dialogue 8: "The one who is trying to get in tries to protect his own image by answering that he (and other artists) are allowed anywhere. The other person is worried about his image if he shows up with an uninvited person--so he says no" (Can: P2,1). Another wrote this for Dialogue 1: "This person makes a point by saying he has a 'professional attitude' and has read all about wine, vinegar" (Can: P2,3). The same person wrote this for Dialogue 7: "Cobber is obviously not shy about his abilities and tells his friend that he has "an exceptional soprano voice" (Can: P2,3). These and other similar comments by the Canadian collaborators signify that Canadians indeed readily
identify with the spirit of self-representation found in the Canadian literature.

Among the Canadian collaborators, only two provided general comments. One said: "[In the] 'Yes' pile, people [are] more emotional in their wordage than [in] the 'No' pile. People in [the] 'Yes' pile were more intent on self-presentation" (Can: P2,5). Using the Dialogue 9 as an illustration, she wrote that the man "tries to protect his image in front of her in the hospital, [is] overcome by the presence of the woman, [and the] woman tries to make an attempt at letting him know that she wasn't that serious with the other man" (Can: P2,5).

Another general comment set out an understanding of image protection that is reconcilable with a typically Chinese understanding. The collaborator wrote, "Protecting image [means] either maintaining the self-image a person has built for himself, or maintaining another person's image they've built for themselves" (Can: P2,5). Significantly, this understanding includes not only maintaining one's own self-image, but also maintaining another person's image, the latter point of which is supposed to be a Chinese trait.

General comments on the test

What we call Chinese patterns and North American patterns are in fact practised everywhere, in both China and the West. Yet the different emphasis and tendency are still there and
unmistakable. The real differences might be even greater due to the following reasons.

First, all my Chinese collaborators had been living in Canada for more than two years, and most of them had postgraduate education. So they not only spoke quite good English, but were also familiar with North American culture and its communication patterns. In a sense, they had been Westernized to a certain extent, and were therefore not so much Chinese as those who have never lived abroad and do not speak a foreign language. This is probably why the Chinese group got somewhat higher-than-expected scores in Part 1, and why the difference between the Chinese and Canadian answers is not great.

Second, all my Canadian collaborators were from the Communication Studies Department of the University of Windsor. They all had no Chinese experience except with Chinese students in the same school. Presumably, they as students of communication studies were more versed in communication patterns of other cultures than average Canadians or other Westerners. This probably explains in part why we had some ostensibly Chinese comments from Canadian collaborators.

Third, one of the students among our Canadian collaborators was originally from Central America. By choosing six Chinese dialogues for the 'Yes' pile in Part 2 of the test, he made himself the most Chinese-like Canadian collaborator in this project. I suspect that he was not as
representative of the Canadian communication patterns as the others.

Fourth, although the collaborators were divided into subgroups in accordance with their gender, and the test did show some differences between gender, these were neither significant, nor systematic.

These factors have undoubtedly impacted on the results of the test. But since these factors do not affect the strength of my findings, they should not be considered in any way to negate my conclusions, which generally agree with my expectations.
CHAPTER SEVEN: CONCLUSIONS

Adopting the perspective of symbolic interactionism, this study probed into a major aspect of cross-cultural communication, namely, the different patterns of interpersonal communications across cultures.

As symbolic interactionists maintain that human reality is formed through human interactions, this study is conducted on the basis of a fundamental symbolic interactionistic proposition that we as human beings see ourselves by seeing how others see us. Since everyone's own image of himself or herself is necessarily a configuration of the images of him or her that others have represented to him or her, this study assumes that one in effect interacts with a host of images while engaged in a dialogue.

To facilitate research, I have developed a model of what I call "ten persons in a dialogue," in which a dialogue between any two people becomes a conversation among eight images. As illustrated in Diagram 1, a dialogue between a woman and a man thus turns into a conversation among his image of himself, his image of her, her image of him as he perceives it, her image of herself as he perceives it, her image of herself, her image of him, his image of her as she perceives it, and his image of himself as she perceives it. These eight images, along with the two physical beings, constitute the ten "persons" that are constantly talking with and among one another.
As Diagram 2 shows, a conversation goes on among four images in each speaker's mind throughout the duration of the dialogue, and at the same time, as Diagram 3 shows, all the images in both speakers' minds also "talk" to each other. As is shown in Diagram 4, the "talking" among the images means that they are constantly interpreting and reinterpreting one another in a process that modifies and remodifies each and every one of them. These images, or "persons" can be and in fact are related to each other in a multitude of ways, and cultural differences, especially the differences in interpersonal communications, can be seen as the different patterns of relatedness between and among those images. Diagram 5 shows the presumed differences in terms of these images between Chinese culture and North American culture. As a matter of operationalization, the study boiled these differences down to the question of face saving (concern for one's own image or face) and face giving (concern for another's image or face) in face-to-face dialogues in these two dramatically different cultures.

As North American culture is generally recognized as individualistic, we assumed that Americans and Canadians care about enhancing their own self-esteem and the images they present of themselves, and as the Chinese culture is generally recognized as collectivistic, we assumed that the Chinese tend to give more consideration to others' self-respect and try to represent the best possible images of others before them. In
other words, North Americans would tend to put more emphasis on gaining face for themselves whereas the Chinese would pay more attention to giving others face. In terms of the diagrams, North American individuals would attach more importance to Images (1) and (3) (see Diagram 1), which are respectively the image of themselves and the image of others' view of themselves, while Chinese individuals would attach more importance to Images (2) and (4), which are respectively one's image of others and one's image of others' view of themselves.

On the basis of these propositions, an empirical test was performed to see whether people in different cultures indeed have different priorities in terms of their ultimate concerns in the process of interpersonal interactions. The test compared how Chinese individuals and North American individuals each responded and related to two sets of fictional dialogues culled respectively from Chinese and Canadian novels.

The test results turned out to be in general agreement with the expected findings. As is shown in Table 1, Canadian collaborators chose more Canadian dialogues than Chinese ones, indicating that Canadians identified more readily with Canadian dialogues and the Canadian communication patterns embodied therein; likewise, Chinese collaborators chose more Chinese dialogues, indicating that the Chinese identified more
with the Chinese dialogues and the Chinese communication patterns embodied therein.

Their respective interpretations of the dialogues went even further, in conforming to our expectations. It was not uncommon for the Chinese to find face giving applied where the Canadians found face saving at work, or for the Canadians to ignore face giving where the Chinese thought it was obvious. Table 2 shows that Canadian collaborators recognized face saving in 32 per cent of all the dialogues while the Chinese collaborators recognized it in 27 per cent of them. More significantly, the Chinese collaborators identified face giving in 43 per cent of all the dialogues while Canadians recognized it in only 0.9 per cent of them. This indicates that Canadians are more sensitive to how one presents his or her image and the Chinese more aware of how he or she projects the images of others. In other words, people in the collectivistic Chinese culture show more care or concern about others' "face" and use "face giving" techniques more often than those in North American culture. By the same token, people in the individualistic North American culture show more concern about self-presentation and use "face saving."

Since the fictional dialogues loaded with Chinese communication patterns were more readily recognized by a majority of my Chinese collaborators as Chinese and those dialogues loaded with North American communication patterns were more readily recognized by my Canadian collaborators as
North American, we can conclude that the Chinese are indeed more familiar with the Chinese patterns and the Canadians more familiar with the North American patterns.

As the dialogues were doctored in an attempt to remove all tangible hints of their cultural origins, such as culture-specific proper nouns, though a few clues did unfortunately remain in several dialogues, we can be fairly confident that both Canadian and Chinese collaborators made their different choices and gave their different explanations the way they did largely because of the cultural training that they carried with them. As both groups of collaborators recognized and vocalized, either directly or indirectly, that one forms his or her self-image on the basis of a self-concept which necessarily takes into account one's image that one sees as conceived by others, we can reasonably say that someone whose self-concept banks more on others' images of him or her, (i.e., Chinese) belongs to a culture different from that of someone whose self-concept relies more on his or her own self-image (i.e., North American). And in the same vein, someone who tries to project a good image of others to the others (i.e., Chinese) belongs to a culture different from that of someone who does not bother much to do so (i.e., North American).

That cultural differences are inevitably mirrored in communication patterns and performance, is a basic assumption in this study, and the test results have gone some way to
substantiate it. Although cultural hints could still be defected in the doctored dialogues by discerning experts, there was little indication that my collaborators paid much attention to them. This, however, is not to say that the inferences drawn from the test results can be regarded as conclusive. That will require a closer look at the methodology used for the test.

Problems of the written word were manifest in the process of translation, which might have compromised the authenticity of the results. Exactly half of the dialogues came from Chinese novels and had to be translated into English by ourselves. Although we took efforts to ensure faithfulness, we cannot say that the translations are entirely accurate. In the process, some meanings might have been lost as much as others might have been added. The structures of the dialogues and the communication patterns loaded therein might very well have been altered to an unknown extent.

Another weakness of the study is that the test results do not seem to cover all the details that I set out in my theoretical background and my expected findings. A possible reason is that some of the concepts were not sufficiently operationalized. For example, there was not a standardized measure for collaborators to judge how one character in a dialogue guesses about his or her image in the other's mind, and my analysis therefore sometimes smacks of guesswork about guesses. One other possible reason was rooted in the process
of giving the test in which I sometimes felt in an awkward situation. The collaborators often did not go into as much detail as expected, but I could not violate the rule against leading and tell them what to do. Alternative methods should be explored to open up more details for analysis.

As has become obvious, the study involved many complexities. As much as culture is important in shaping communication patterns, other factors such as class, gender, age and education undoubtedly also exert various degrees of influence on the way communication is conducted. Within the same culture, differences of communication patterns caused by class and gender might be regarded as subcultural phenomena and be studied as such. But what about class and gender across cultures? From this study, we can not have sufficient knowledge, for example, of whether people of similar class backgrounds in different cultures in fact share similar ultimate concerns and similar communication patterns. If so, we have yet to find out which is more significant, the class differences or the cultural differences. The test in this study matched the gender ratios and made education levels comparable between the two groups of collaborators, and so we can say that gender and education have been accounted for in the test results. But we cannot say for sure what effect the absence of class, gender and other considerations have had on the study.
The "ten persons in a dialogue" model that I have developed could be a useful starting point for further research, however prototypical it might look. It could be employed as a viable vehicle for conceptualizing communication processes.

Other researchers might want to research into the differences in communication patterns between other cultures, such as Muslim culture and Christian culture, or between different classes such as the working class and the intellectuals, or between any other groups of people with visibly different backgrounds.

Research could also be done along the same lines as I followed to probe further into the different patterns of interpersonal communication between the Chinese and the North American cultures with a different form of operationalization. The operationalization in this study of image concerns into face saving and face giving may not be the best possible, which is in fact at least part of the reason why the test results did not cover all the expected findings.

As the inferences drawn in this study cannot be regarded as really conclusive partly due to some of the weaknesses in the methodology and partly due to the interpretive nature of the qualitative methodology itself, other studies may be contemplated to crosscheck conclusions derived by using other methodologies.
As our 'global village' shrinks by the day, intercultural communication is increasing at the same pace. Within Canada, the cultural and racial fabric of the Canadian population is becoming literally more colourful every year. Different peoples that hardly heard of each other before now have to co-exist and cooperate in everyday life. It is imperative that people with different backgrounds understand and appreciate each other, and such understanding and appreciation can only come after each side gains knowledge of the other's values, beliefs, and, yes, communication patterns. In view of this, cross-cultural communication research is an important area of learning, and it gives me immense satisfaction to be able to contribute to it. May the torch be carried on.
Ten Persons in a Dialogue
Diagram 1

A₁. A's view of A

A₂. A's view of B

A₃. A's view of B's view of A

A₄. A's view of B's view of B

B₁. B's view of B

B₂. B's view of A

B₃. B's view of A's view of B

B₄. B's view of A's view of A

"A" and "B" represent two persons engaged in a dialogue, and "v" means the view. So "Ava" means A's view of A, "Avb(va)" means A's view of A's view of B, and so on.
"A" and "B" represent two persons engaged in a dialogue, and "v" means the view. So "Ava" means A's view of A, "Avb(vb)" means A's view of B's view of B, and so on. "p" here means presented. So "Bpva" stands for B’s presented image of A.

As the differently shaded boxes signify, the image one harbours of either oneself or someone else are usually not the same as the presented image, but the real image and the presented image usually overlap each other.
"A" and "B" represent two persons engaged in a dialogue, and "v" means the view. So "Ava" means A’s view of A, “Avb(vb)” means A’s view of A, “Avb(vb)” means A’s view of B’s view of B, and so on.

Each image in one speaker’s mind “talks" to an image in the other’s mind. The arrows here indicate who talks to whom.

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The arrows here indicate which image gets influenced by which image through which other image.

The arrows here signify which image is related to which image through which other image. A₁ - A₂ - B₂ is how images play out in interpersonal communications in North American culture, and A₂ - A₄ - B₁ is how images play out in interpersonal communications in Chinese culture.
Table 1. TEST RESULTS, (Part 1)

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<th>Selections from Ten Chinese Dialogues*</th>
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* Total possible selections = 30  
** Total possible selections = 60

TEST RESULTS, (Part 2)

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* Total possible selections = 30  
** Total possible selections = 60
Table 2. TEST RESULTS, (Part 1)

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* Total possible discussions = 30  
** Total possible discussions = 60

TEST RESULTS, (Part 2)

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* Total possible discussions = 30  
** Total possible discussions = 60

126
Table 3. TEST RESULTS, (Part 1)
Canadian Collaborators: (Can. P1.1-6)

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Female group:

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|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| 4 |   |   |   |   | * |   |   | * | *   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |
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| 6 | * |   |   |   |   |   |   | * |   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |

Chinese collaborators: (Chi. P1.1-6)

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Dialogues 1 - 10 are from Canadian novel, 11 - 20 from Chinese ones.
"*" means hereafter in all table entries that the collaborator chose the ten dialogues for Question 2.

127
Table 1. TEST RESULTS, (Part 1)

Canadian Collaborators: (Can. Pl.1-6)

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"+" means hereafter in all table entries that the collaborator mentioned "self-presentation" in his or her explanation of this dialogue.
Table 5. TEST RESULTS, (Part 1)

Chinese Collaborators: (Chi. Pl.1-6)

| Male group: | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 |
|-------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| 1 | * | + |   |   | * | + | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | + |   | + | * |
| 2 | * | * |   | + |   | * |   | + |   | * |   | + | * |   | * |   | * | + |   | * |
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Table 6. TEST RESULTS, (Part 2)

Canadian Collaborators: (Can. P2.1--6)

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Female group:

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|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| 4 | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * |
| 5 | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * |
| 6 | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * |

Chinese Collaborators: (Chi. P2.1--6)

| Male group:          | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 |
|----------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| 1                    | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * |
| 2                    | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * |
| 3                    | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * |

Female group:

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| 4 | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * |
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| 6 | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * |
Table 7. TEST RESULTS (Past: 2)

Canadian Collaborators: (Can. P2.1-6)

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"-" means hereafter in all table entries that the collaborator mentioned "saving face of the other side" in his or her explanations of these dialogues.

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Table 8. TEST RESULTS, (Part 2)

Chinese Collaborators: (Chi. P2.1--6)

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INSTRUCTION SHEET

Part 1

Instructions to collaborators:

1) Analyze these twenty dialogues on the basis of whether the people in them are concerned with protecting their image or not.

2) Choose any ten which allow you to do this most easily.

3) Why did you choose these ten?

Part 2

Instruction to collaborators:

1) Analyze these twenty dialogues on the basis of whether the people in them show consideration to each other or not.

2) Choose any ten which allow you to do this most easily.

3) Why did you choose these ten?
"I couldn't be Tom Wester if I'd married," said Freddy practically; "I'd be Tom something else. Tom, you couldn't understand how serious I am. I really mean it. I'm not just paying. I really have a very professional attitude about the whole thing. I have read books about wine chemistry, and books about vintages, and everything about wine I can get my hands on. I know I'm young, but I'm not being silly, really I'm not. And if you let me down I don't know what I'll do, for there's not a soul I can really trust. Criselda wouldn't understand; she has no brains anyway, and when it comes to wine she simply hasn't a clue. And Daddy will have to be shown. Please be a sport, Tom, and don't go grow-up on me."
Dialogue 2

The approach which Griselda used might have surprised the meeting. It took this form.

"Daddy, have any shakes been after you for the garden this year?"

"Two or three. I said I'd think about it."

"The little Theatre has put me up to asking you if you'd let them do the play here. They thought I didn't see through them, but I did. They asked a few time first, and pretended there is no place to go unless you kicked through. You don't have to say yes because of me."

"Do you want to have it here?"

"Well, there's no denying that it would be nice."

"Was that why they hinted about giving you a leading part?"

"Probably. But they wrought better than they knew. I'm really quite a good actress. And I'm not what you'd call plain. At least, not what you'd call plain when you consider that the only other possible person is Pearl Vambrace, who has rather a moustache. I'll be quite good even if we do it on Old Ma Bumford's little hanky of a weedy lawn, with half the audience sitting in the road."

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Dialogue 3

"I had thought of that myself," said he. "I have been treasurer of the Little Theatre for the past six years. When I took it over its books were in a mess; now they are in perfect order and we have a substantial sum in the bank. During the years when I worked in the box office I have often wondered what it would be like to be with those of you who were enjoying the fun behind the footlights. And if there is a part which I could play in The Tempest, I should like to have it."

"Why not wait until next year?" said Nellie. "We're sure to be doing something which would have a part in it for you. You know, something good. A detective, or a policeman, or something."

"I may not be here next autumn," said Hector.

"Not here?" Nellie was horrified at the thought a new treasurer would have to be found.

"No. I have been offered some work by the Department which would take me out of town. If I accepted, it will mean beginning work at once. But of course, if I am offered a part in The Tempest I should turn down the Department's offer for the present, and would be here next season."

Even Nellie could see what that meant.

"Had you a special part in mind?"
"You know you are beautiful, don't you?" said Solly. "It's more than your looks. You have the air of one who wants rather special things, and special people."

"Of course I do. But I also want all sorts of things and all sorts of people."

"Me among them? Thanks."

"You are very special."

"Oh? Well, thanks, again."

"Don't be difficult, Solly. I have to be myself. I suppose that by all the rules of what people expect I should be a loud-laughing, bug-eyed, silly little mutt at eighteen, but I'm not. I fell quite calm and collected most of time. I am an oddity, I suppose. Like you."
Dialogue 5

"You never knew my father," said Hector. "I don't think anything was easy for him. And I am telling you now that I will not be a minister. I will do my own life and make my own way, and it will be not in the church. I have told you I'd make up my mind."

"Have you no consideration whatever for your mother?"

"Yes, I'm going to support her. It is my duty, and I will do it. But I will do it as a schoolteacher."

"I see that it is a waste of time to argue with you while you are in this frame of mind," said Mr. Mckinnon. "I shall leave you with your mother, and if you have a spark of manhood in you, her tears, if not her arguments, will prevail with you."
"My dear fellow," said Cobbler, "my whole life is moved by the principle that the one thing which is more important than peace is music. It is because I believe that I am poor. It is because I believe that many people suppose that I am crazy. It is because I believe that I have just said that I will take care of the music for your play. I shall get no money out of it, and my experience of theatre groups leads me to think that I shall get little thanks for it. If, as you suggest, I get along with old Snairey for the sake of peace, it would be your peace, not mine. I have not often heard him attack anything which I would dignify with the name of music, but when I have done so, that music has been royally—indeed imperially and even papally—bitches. I shall have nothing to do with him, in any circumstances whatever."

"That creates rather a situation," said Solly.

"If I'm to be captain of music I must be allowed to pick my own team."

"Yes, I see that, of course."
Upstairs in the attic sitting-room three of the four men were talking animatedly and Humphrey Cobbler was holding forth to Hector on education.

"Of formal education," said he, "I have had but little. When I was a lad I was sent to a choir school. I had, if I may be permitted to say so, an exceptional soprano voice. They needed me, Mackilwraith; they needed me. And if there is one thing which utterly destroys a boy's character, it is to be needed. Boys are unendurable unless they are wholly expendable."
In front of the gate of a house where a splendid night ball is being held, the conversation was being carried on.
1 "Listen, how would it be if I came with you?"
2 "No."
1 "I've got a dress suit."
2 "You have no invitation."
1 "A formality. We artists are welcome at all doors."
2 "No, it wouldn't do."
1 "I could carry a fiddle case; pretend I belonged to the orchestra."
2 "No."
1 "Don't you think you're being just a teeny-weeny tinge snobbish and class-conscious?"
2 "No."
1 "Very well, then; sweep on in your carriage over the faces of humble poor. There'll come a day... You don't want to reconsider?"
2 "No."
1 "Can you say anything but no?"
2 "No."
1 "Very well then. Go ahead; plunge into a maelstrom of gaiety. And God forbid that, when the vevel is at its height, your merriment should be dampened by thought of me, crouched over a dead fire in my sordid home, crinking gin out of a cracked cup."
2 "God forbid, indeed."
1 "In poverty, hunger and dirt."
2 "As you say."
1 "Well-Good-bye."
2 "Good-bye."
Hector has tried unsuccessfully to commit suicide because of a girl. After is saved, the girl comes to see him. For the first time Hector saw that she was not much more than a child. At last she spoke.

"You shouldn’t have done it, you know."
"No, I shouldn’t."
"You must promise not to do it again."
"I won’t."

Another pause, and Griselda was now very red. She suddenly sat down on the bed and took his hand.

"I’d feel dreadful if you did, you know. Because of me."
So she knew. Well, he didn’t care. He was too happy.
"What make you think it would help?"
"I can’t remember, now."

She said no more. He felt that he must say something.
"Griselda."
"Yes?"
"You are too good for Tasset. Don’t let him spoil you."
"I don’t care about him at all. Did you think I did?"
"Yes."
"And it was because of that."
"Yes."
"I never knew that you cared about me at all."
"I did."
"But you don’t any more?"
"Not the same way; now that I know you’re safe."
"What are you going to do?"
"I’m going away from Salterton. I’ve had an offer of a job in the Department. A very good job, really; quite a step up."
"How wonderful."

Another pause. At last Griselda spoke.
"I’d better go now. But I don’t want you to think I don’t know what a lot of trouble I’ve made for you."
"It was nothing."
"But I couldn't know, you see."
"Of course not. You couldn't know."
"And it wouldn't really have done, would it?"
"No, I see that now. It wouldn't have done at all."
"Well, good-night, Mr. Mackilwraith."
Dialogue 10

"Of course he was a charming man. A delightful person. Who has ever questioned it? But not a great magician."
"By what standard do you judge?"
"Myself. Who else?"
"You consider yourself a greater magician than Robert Houdin?"
"Certainly. He was a fine illusionist. But what is that? A man who depends on a lot of contraptions--mechanical devices, clockwork, mirrors, and such things. Haven't we been working with that sort of rubbish for almost a week? Who made it? Who reproduced that Patissier du Palais-Royal we've been fiddling about with all day. I did. I'm the only man in the world who could do it. The more I see of it the more I despise it."
"But it is delightful! When the little baker brings out his bonbons, his patisserie, his croissants, his glasses of port and Marsala, all at the word of command, I almost weep with pleasure! It is the most moving reminiscence of the spirit of the age of Louis Philip! And you admit that you have reproduced it precisely as it was first made by Robert Houdin. If he was not a great magician, who do you call a great magician?"
Dialogue 11

Just when they were about to cook the second time, the door was pushed open, and in came Tom, who lived at the end of the road. "Oh, now I see why you were still not out for the plough. You have got a guest."

"This is ...," Joe stuttered, blushing uncontrollably. "A beggar. I'm cooking something for her. She'll be on her way when she finishes."

Tom said: "Ah--poor creature, a woman out begging." squatting on the threshold, he took out a cigarette. "They always say 'restoration' means oppression and suffering all over again. The way I see things, it's already restoration, and we are already suffering oppression again. Where do you come from? Do you still have a family there?"

"Yeah, quite far away. My two children and my two parents-in-law are still over there." The woman answered, shyly, with her head drooping.

"Don't feel ashamed. You're not to blame. In the year 1975, I begged too, and so did my wife. What can you do when bad luck hits you. How is the family?"

"Our commune hands out half a pound of grain to each person each day. With me out, the family had fewer mouths to feed, and I can thus save something for the others."
Dialogue 12

Using the two pencils as illustration, he said: "Suppose this one represents love, and the other one marriage. If they fuse into one, you'll both have a happy life in store for you. If they just overlap each other, look, like this, you'll be happy for some of the time in your life. If they just cross each other at one point, look, just like this, you will still feel happy, but only very briefly. If they are detached, like this, you'll find no happiness at all; it'll all be sorrow." He waved his arms a whole circle, as if a whole world of sorrow was encircling them. "Now, tell me, among all the people you know—you certainly know a great many—how many couples have fused their love and marriage completely together like this?"
Dialogue 13

Unable to answer the question, Mr. Svenden said, "In any case, we must get the goods rejected by our client, and we must get them back now. You don’t feel too well today, do you?" He spoke softly, trying to avoid an outright refusal. "But we really need you for help. We can’t do it without you. Ha..."

Mr. Svenden had had many years of education, but he had been working mainly in and out of factories. He was by nature a kind man, incapable of cruelties. But he had certainly learned how to be shameless.

"I’ve had it. Don’t try to flatter me and then use me. Mr. Svenden, you’d better stay out of this matter."
"With a three-bedroom house, how can you say you are poor?" Mary said, giggling.

"Well, you've got to consider how hard I work."

"But what can I as a secretary do? I'm in no position to buy you a house."

"Those who don't have positions are often more resourceful than those who do. Why does everyone call you 'Super Spider'? You've got all the connections, and I'm sure you are in a position to help."
Tom stood firm, checking off the few clerks. Their supervisor Mr. Crook saw it and came over.

"You've got to get your attitude straight, young man. Otherwise we won't deal with you any more."

"What! Now you are talking about my attitude. You no longer want to talk about your terms? What's wrong with my attitude."

"What the hell are you yelling for?"

"Is it me yelling or you? Think, how could I dare yell, especially to you." Tom twitched his mouth, as if to oil his tongue. "You are the boss, adored by everybody in the company. I'm just a god damned driver. You're much older, and I'm just a very young man. And you've got so many years more seniority. Of course you'll forgive my stupidity."
She thought for a moment, and then said in a joking voice: "Well, isn't it because I was the mayor's wife that you refused to talk to me last time? Why would you now want me to talk to you as the mayor's wife?"

She displayed a broad smile as she said this.

Mr. Buck smiled too, as he put down the books on the desk. "The other day I was really too busy. Besides, I don't want to create a controversy for you. I don't really care about myself. I believe in Dante's motto: Go your own way, and let people say what they want. I'm asking you to give me anything--this is not a formal interview. I just want to talk to you as a friend. I feel you're quite a personality in this city. You know, most women here are just one or another version of 'Emma,' not much worth talking to.

*Emma: Emma is a selfish woman in the same novel.
"The wall around the compound collapsed," Jack said. "The authorities assigned me to manage the rebuilding effort. But rebuilding such a wall is not an easy task. With my abilities, I can't really accomplish anything without your support. It'll really be up to you folks."

The foreman scratched his head and said, "We can't do much either. All we know is how to lay the bricks."

Jack smiled. "That's very good. Laying bricks for such a wall is no joking matter. The compound, you know, is built for an engineering company, and the surrounding wall is like its advertisement to the public."
Dialogue 18

George was just about to eat, when somebody from the next table engaged him in conversation.

"How many coffins have you made so far in your life?"

"Sorry, I really don't know. Seventy or eighty, perhaps."

"In this town, everybody that dies before you dies lucky."

"What do you mean ...?"

"What better luck can one have than to be buried in a coffin that you've made."

They both burst into laughter.
"Good calligraphy, Mr Green."

"Oh, this is nothing." He stood up from the desk. "I used to practise handwriting just for fun when I was unemployed. You can’t really call it calligraphy. But I’ve heard that you’re good at it. Could you write for us something as a keepsake?"

"Where did you hear that?" Mr. Smart said, all smiles. "I’m really not good at it."

"You had special training in it, didn’t you? We know that you’re the real author of all those inscriptions of Mr. Gallant’s that are now hanging everywhere. Come on, you don’t have to be so modest ...."
Dialogue 20

To catch a glance of him, the old man raised his head, displaying a square-shaped jaw bristling with whiskers. His lips moved, as if ready to speak. But he did not. Biting his tongue, he restrained his speech, letting out only a subdued groan. Hod knew what the old man had in mind and spoke for him. "George, you can't always be so snobbish." With that, he laughed, pretending that he was just joking.
Bibliography


Vita Auctoris

Bin Bin Chang was born in Beijing, China. When fifteen years old, she published her first short story. In 1978, she entered the People's University, Department of Journalism, while continuing to write poems and short stories. After graduation, she became an active reporter with the Beijing Evening News, and then a columnist. During this time, she accompanied an expedition through the Dacalamag Desert, the second largest desert in the world. While studying in Canada at Concordia University, she worked at Radio Canada International and wrote for the Montreal News (Chinese newspaper).