

CHAPTER 6: ANALYSIS OF THE STRUCTURED INTERVIEW

6.0 Introduction

Chapter Six analyzes the communicative patterns of subjects' responses to a series of stimulus contained in a second interview which is henceforth referred to as Interview 2 or Structured Interview. As indicated in Chapter 4, section 4.6.2.3, the Structured Interview consists of a set of questions with a variety of stimuli. Subjects were allowed to view the questions and related stimuli before their responses were audio-recorded. Findings from Interview 1 or the Narrative Interview will be complemented and/or corroborated by the findings from the Structured Interview at the conclusion to ascertain if the patterns used by both groups of subjects indicate their cultural orientation and world view.

6.1. Aspect 1: Centrality of Family

Stimulus 1: Your sister is in deep financial crisis, would you invite your sister and her family to stay with you and your family to alleviate their financial problems?

The following patterns of communication - use of pronouns as markers of identity, direct and indirect modes of communication, use of explanations and categorical organization of information - have been used as indices of the subjects' orientation to the core concept of family. The percentages indicate the number of speakers and not the frequency of occurrences in the patterns of communication. Refer to Table 6.1 for more details.

Table 6.1: Patterns of communication for the aspect of centrality of family among Group 1 and Group 2 subjects

Patterns of communication	Group 1 (N=15)	%	Group 2 (N=15)	%
1. Use of Pronouns as identity markers				
i. Singular pronoun "I" and its related forms as markers of self-identity.	4 (MC3, MC4, MC9, MC12)	26.7	15 All	100
ii. Singular pronoun "I" and its related forms as markers of group identity.	10 (MC1, MC2, MC3, MC5, MC6, MC8, MC10, MC11, MC14, MC15)	66.7	0	0
iii. Plural pronoun "We" and its related forms as markers of collective or group identity	10 (MC1, MC2, MC3, MC6, MC7, MC8, MC10, MC11, MC14, MC15)	66.7	2 (ME6, ME13)	13.3

Table 6.1, continued.

Patterns of communication	Group 1 (N=15)	%	Group 2 (N=15)	%
2. Explanation				
i. Chinese cultural norms and practices	9 (MC1, MC2,MC5,MC6, MC7, MC10, MC11, MC14, MC15),	60	1 (ME13)	6.7
ii. Chinese sayings and proverbs.	3 (MC2,MC11,MC15)	20	1 (ME13)	6.7
Explanation Total (N= i +ii)	9 (MC1, MC2, MC5, MC6, MC7, MC10, MC11, MC14, MC15)	60	1 (ME13)	6.7
3. Direct and indirect modes of communication				
i. Expression of feelings	4 (MC1, MC4,MC6, MC12)	26.7	8 (ME1,ME2,ME5, ME8,ME9,ME10, ME11, ME14)	53.3
ii. Expression of views- expectations, preferences and arrangements	2 (MC4,MC12)	13.3	10 (ME1,ME2, ME4, ME5, ME7, ME8, ME10, ME11, ME14,ME15)	66.7
iii. Indirect modes of communication	2 (MC1, MC5, MC9)	13.3	0	0
Direct modes of communication Total (N= I + ii+ iii)	4 (MC1,MC4, MC6, MC12)	26.7	11 (ME1,ME2, ME4, ME5, ME7, ME8, ME9, ME10, ME11, ME14, ME15)	73.3
4. Organization of information				
i. use of conditionals	0	0	4 (ME5, ME10, ME11, ME14)	26.7
ii. Topical organization	3 (MC1, MC2, MC4)	20	4 (ME1,ME2,ME4, ME5)	26.7
Organization of information Total (N= i+ii)	3 (MC1,MC2, MC4)	20	7 (ME1, ME2, ME4, ME5, ME10, ME11, ME14)	46.7

6.1.1 Use of pronouns as identity markers

In the discussion of the above, two areas are highlighted: use of the singular pronoun “I” and the plural pronoun “we” as identity markers. Use of the collective pronoun, “we” and its related pronouns such as use of the possessive determiner “our” or the objective case of the plural pronoun, “us” is discussed in accordance to identification with the family or community and the achievement of group goals.

On the other hand, use of the singular pronoun “I” to indicate an individualistic identity is discussed in accordance to Goffman’s (1990) reference to the ‘ego identity’ which focusses on one’s subjective feelings about oneself, one’s uniqueness and distinctiveness. It

encompasses the authority to direct one's behaviour such as in the shaping of one's social roles and the interpretation of the expectation of these roles. Thus, the Western conception of the individual as "bounded, unique...a dynamic centre of awareness and emotion, judgment and action..." is also reiterated in Geertz's (1983:59) reference to the Western view of the self.

However, the individual is not always viewed to be "an encapsulated unit" with a distinct identity across social settings (Nisbett, 2003). Use of the singular pronoun "I" and its related forms is also discussed in accordance to Rosemont's view (cited in Nisbett 2003:5) of Chinese traditional thought where the individual is not considered in isolation from others as he or she lives in relation to specific others. Hence, the singular pronoun "I" and its related forms are viewed to be part of the "we" of the collective as it is not considered as a separate or distinct entity by itself.

6.1.1.1 Group 2 subjects' use of singular pronouns as markers of self-identity

In the discussion of the hypothetical situation of a sibling in dire need, use of the singular personal pronoun "I" was significant in the responses of 15 or 100% of Group 2 subjects. Other related pronouns such as the use of the objective case singular pronoun, "me" and the possessive determiner "my," were also utilized. "I" and the "other" in accordance to Goffman's definition mentioned above is quite clearly in evidence in all the contexts in which "I" was used by Group 2 subjects. In the instance of ME1, she stated that she would help her sister if she is in dire need. However, she also stated her preference for privacy and space. Abundant use of the singular pronoun "I" by ME2 indicated her personal response, preferences and expectations. It also suggests that she is very much in control as she is also laying the conditions for rendering help to her sibling.

On the other hand, use of the singular pronoun "I" by ME3 indicated what she personally would do for her sister. Although ME4 conveyed readily her intention to help her sibling, she qualified her intention by indicating her firm stand about the need to discuss crucial

areas through her, “I strongly believe,” statement of position. Similarly, ME5 discussed her personal reaction to the idea of providing accommodation to her sister and family. Use of the singular pronoun “I” by ME5 indicated her personal views and stand on the issue of inviting a sibling over to stay in her home. Below are some excerpts of their responses.

For additional examples, refer to Appendix D.

ME1: (1).. I think I would lah if she is really in desperate need... (3)But it'll be better if you do not stay together... privacy and space is of utmost importance to **me** lah.

ME2: (1)Mm: ok: aa: now I have to say it would depend on the circumstances... (3)But if they have no necessity for shifting house, I may help them financially... (4)yes, I would offer them my home, but I would also make it clear that it would be temporary...(5) But I would also tell her mm: what are some of the things I would expect from her if she lives under my roof...

ME3: (2)But of course, if I have a little bit more money, I wouldn't mind getting a house for her, you know... I have not qualms about it.

ME4: (1)... I would extend my full aa: help and assistance in whatever way I can to my sister and her family. (2)However, I strongly believe that before we can come together and live as a family, I need to discuss aa: certain prime areas ...

ME5: (1) Er: **my** first reaction would be “No” if she has her own family... (3)And if I had the means, I will rather that I would rent a room for her family to stay. And if she is in a very bad financial crisis I would probably try as much to help. (4)But the last thing I would do is to invite the family to come over...

[emphasis by the researcher]

6.1.1.2 Group 1 subjects' use of singular pronouns as markers of self identity

On the other hand, 4 subjects or 26.7% of Group 1 subjects indicated their individualistic identity through the use of the singular pronoun “I” and its related forms. MC3 talked about his personal response such as in his expression of certainty in welcoming his sibling to stay in his house, “I would definitely invite them.” He demonstrated his distinct identity by relating that he would not subscribe to the Chinese cultural norm of viewing a female as an outsider to the family once they are married. On the other hand, MC4 discussed about her willingness to invite her sibling but she indicated the need for certain issues to be addressed. For instance, she placed importance on the maintenance of her “own timetable” and her preference for cleanliness. Similarly, MC6 discussed about helping her sibling out of “sympathy” and hoping that her sibling would respect her privacy and “not interrupt” in her daily life nor provide unnecessary “comments.” For MC12, he indicated a strong individual identity through his statement of what he would do, his personal preferences as well as his personal feelings with regard to privacy. This difference in the

pattern of usage among Group 1 subjects also occurred in Interview 1 (See chapter 5 section 5.5.1.1) and will be discussed in section 6.5.3. Following are excerpts of their responses:

MC3: (1)I would definitely invite them and welcome them to come in to stay... I think that is no problem... (3)Aa: and er: if that is- that is my sister I would look at her as one of the family member regardless of you know, what the Chinese thought that she is now married off to one of the family and follow the surname of the husband. Er: to me, there is no er: line drawn between the in-laws.

MC4: (1)okay, er: I think I would- I would invite them to my- to my er: to stay with me. But er: of course, certain issues [I] have to- have to er lay down (2)This is simply Its like er: er e-easier for for me lah in a way. Because If lets say they were to stay in the house, and then er my own time table I won't want them to alter that table, and then what time I wake up or what time I use the-the-the toilet and so on... (3)But for me, things must be kept clean and all these things lah.

MC9: (1)Um: um: due to my sympathy to her, I'll invite her to my house to live but only for a short period. (2)After the financial problem has been er: solved, I think I would advise her to move out because er: um: and as long as during the period of stay I also hope that she will just aa: aa: she will not aa: interrupt with my daily life and will not comment so much.

MC12: Probably I would er: advise him or her to do something else lah about it. Umm: of course, I would also have some time frame for them to solve their problems. (3) So its not that I wouldn't like but ...((vocalic sounds)). I think privacy is very important to me lah. I don't like people to: just intrude my privacy. But of course to solve their problems, I would do it short term lah.

6.1.1.3 Group 1 subjects' use of singular pronouns as markers of collective identity

Ten other Group 1 subjects also used the singular pronoun "I" and its related forms in their verbalizations. However, use of the mentioned pronouns is in accordance to Rosemont's (cited in Nisbett 2003) view of the individual being part of the collective. Thus, Group 1 subjects spoke of themselves as being part of the family or society and concepts such as obligations and responsibilities feature dominantly in their verbalization and presentation of views. For example, MC1 spoke about what he himself would do as a member of the family, working in cooperation with the family to help his sibling, "I ...with the help of my other family members, we discuss..." Thus, MC1 used the singular pronoun "I" to indicate himself as being part of the family or the larger collective as represented by the use of "we," and functioning together with the collective and its goals. MC1 referred to the singular "I" which was later subsumed under the "we" of the family. This was also observed in the verbalization of other Group 1 subjects. MC3 spoke of personally inviting his sibling to stay as represented in the use of "I" for the reason that "as a family, we must come

together...” MC5 spoke of traditional Chinese prioritizing on the family. In prioritizing on the family, the individual is not free to act as he or she wishes but is expected to put the family first even in the face of difficulties. She concluded by stating that she would do likewise, “even though I may face a lot of problems...I will do it definitely.” MC6 stated that, “I will invite them” because “they are my close people.” Her use of “I” is related to “they” as she sees herself as being a member of the family. Likewise MC10 stated that she as represented by the singular pronoun “I” would help her sister as she sees herself as being part of the “we” which forms the family. The same is seen in the verbalization of MC14 and MC15. Excerpts of their verbalizations are given below:

MC1:(5)But **I** would not just stay like that. **I** would invite them or with the help of my other family members, **we** discuss and find ways to help her solve this problem. (6)Maybe financially or any other ways. For sure **we** are going to help because they are part of my family members.

MC2: (1) yes, **I will invite** my sister to –and: her family to come over and stay with my family. Because in Chinese aa: **we** believe, ok since the: small, **our** family bring up, aa **we** need to er: to live together as a big family and then **we** need to help each other.

MC3: (1)**I would** definitely invite them and welcome them to come in to stay. At least er for a period of time, say a year or two. **I** think that is no problem. (2)Em: **I think as a family, we** must come together to help each other to go through a crisis or a problem. (4)...Aa: and er: if that is- that is my sister I would look at her as one of the family member regardless of you know, what the Chinese thought that she is now married off to one of the family and follow the surname of the husband.

MC5: (1)Mm: **I think** that this type of situation if happen in the olden days, aa:m most Chinese they will definitely help their sister and try whatever way they can, to really-no matter how difficult it is and to try to help their sister... (5)Even though I may face a lot of problems probably from my er own member of er my own family, **I will** do it definitely.

MC6: (1)If my sister or brother is in deep financial crisis aa: I think: **I will invite** them to stay with me aa: because they are my sister and brother. (2)They are my close people and people who can be trust. So, sure **I must** help them when they are in trouble.

MC10: (1)Aa: Yes, definitely. **I-I will do** that. Because: aa:m first, she's my sister. (2)I see that **we we we** as a family, **I should** help her.

MC8: (1)Sure, **I will** because aa: even if he is our good friend, **we** will do like this. Even more [so] he is our brother or sister, our own family member.

MC11: (1)As a brother, I should help her but er: it is only for a short time when she is financially stable she and her family will have to find their own place to live loh. (2)You know, in Chinese, we have this phrase, “sek chou yan?” as a brother, I must “sek chou yan!” have a sense of duty as a person

MC14: (1)Yes. **I-I will do** it lah, ya? If **for me**, because for me, as I say lah, because the Chinese place great importance on family life lah. So: for me, **we** have to help our-our sister or brother because if they really have problems, they cannot be avoided lah. (2)May be our: my-my wife may not be happy ((laughs)) but I cannot-I still have to help them lah.

MC15: (1)Ok, if my brother is in deep financial crisis, **I think lah**, my family or I will try my-our best to overcome the problem they are facing. (2)Because aa: when **they** do the wrong thing, the people will think, this family aa: their teachings are very bad, their teaching very lousy and then will involve all the family members.

[emphasis by the researcher]

6.1.1.4 Group 1 subjects' use of plural pronouns as markers of collective identity

The dominant note in Group 1 subjects' verbalizations indicate their collective identification. As discussed in section 6.1.1.3, even when singular pronouns were used, a majority of Group 1 subjects used them in relation to identity to the family and/or society. It is observed in MC1's attestation, "we are going to help," and to do that, "we discuss and find ways," to render help to his sibling. Moreover, when he stated that, "they are part of my family members," it clearly reflects his identification with the collective. Thus, MC1 indicated that help is a collective rather than an individualistic issue. Furthermore, the reason for help to be given is the priority and the recognition of the central role of the family. This was also seen in MC2's use of "we" and "our," in indicating group identification with regard to the family and in reference to Chinese belief. MC2's reference to the phrase, "In Chinese, we believe," reflects MC2's identification with the Chinese and their beliefs. Thus, the plural pronoun "we," as well as the plural possessive determiner, "our" features repeatedly in her verbalizations such as, "we believe..." "our family..." "we need to live..." "we need to help..." "we still need to meet." Similarly, MC11 provided a similar reasoning by referring to the Chinese phrase, "in Chinese, we have this phrase, "sek zou yan?" [know your human role and obligation]. His identification with the Chinese and their thinking indicates his collective identification.

In the same vein, MC14 refers to the Chinese as a base for his stand. His use of "because" to substantiate his stand regarding the "Chinese" and his identification with them and their view on family life, causes him to adopt the following view, "we have to help our-our sister or brother." Meanwhile MC15 demonstrated collective identification when he indicates his membership with the family by stating, "my family or I will try my-our best to overcome the problem..." in order to defend the family honour. A wrong doing by a member of the family is often viewed by the Chinese community as inadequacy in domestic teaching and is therefore a hindrance to good citizenship (Gateway of Chinese culture, 2003). Thus,

mention of “family teachings” is in line with the Chinese cultural practice of empowering the family to train its members to accord respect to people and be exemplary citizens.

MC6’s reference to “Chinese who don’t help their siblings,” is followed by “Chinese society...will talk about us,” which is followed later by, “we have no choice,” indicating her identification of herself first, as a member of the Chinese family and second, as a member of the Chinese society and the obligations that come with it. Likewise, MC7 also takes a collective stance as a member of a family or society, rather than “me” as an individual. MC7 uses a lot of “we” in her reference to herself as being part of the Chinese family, “if we don’t do that,” “we may also find problems,” “there is no reason that we don’t do that,” “we need our sister’s help,” “usually we quarrel and we get together again,” “after sometimes we will still you know, remember each other.” Similarly, MC8 used “our” and “we” to indicate his identity as a member of the family. Thus, his reference to “our sister” followed by, “our own family” is indicative of his orientation towards his sister. She belongs to the larger group such as the family of which he is a member, and thus their welfare are seen as inextricably intertwined.

The above orientation was also seen in MC10’s responses. MC10’s response of, “first, she’s my sister” with the particular stress on the word, “she’s” which indicated the priority given to the fact that the person mentioned was her sister and therefore part of her family. This was followed by the use of the plural pronoun to refer to the family, “we as a family” to indicate her view that her sister was part of this family spoken about. Similarly, MC3’s reference, “as a family,” indicated his membership and identity as being part of the family as well as the focus on the central role of the family. This was closely followed by the use of “we” to reinforce again his membership in the family. Relevant excerpts of their narratives not given in section 6.1.1.3 are given below:

MC6: (5)Even aa:: even if **Chinese** don’t help our sister or brother the Chinese society will also talk, will talk about us ... (6)So: sometimes **we** have-we have no choice. @@**We** need to do@@ this type of things lah.

MC7: (1) O.K., as a sister there is no reason that **we** don’t do that, you see. Um: one day **we** may also find problems and **we** need our sisters’ help...(7)But, family members aa this will

seldom happen. Usually **we** quarrel and **we** get together again. Aa, no matter how -how much aa: problems happen amongst us, aa: after sometimes **we** will still you know, remember each other or or get together with each other.

MC11: (2) You know, in Chinese we have this phrase, "sek zou yan?" as a brother, I must "sek zou yan!" have a sense of my duties as a person...

[emphasis by the researcher]

6.1.1.5 Group 2 subjects' use of plural pronouns as markers of collective identity

With the exception of ME6, ME7 and ME13, most Group 2 subjects did not indicate identification with the group:

ME7: (5)... But we need to set rules that's the important thing. We have a standard even between siblings em: I do set rules. (6) We need to know how long you are planning to stay because we want to make sure that I don't disrespect her and she doesn't disrespect me,

ME13: (4) But on my part, if my sister is in deep financial crisis of course, I will extend my hand to help her and invite her to stay with me. Because after all, we are Chinese, blood is thicker than water.

See, for instance, ME7's response. In stating, "we need to set rules...we have a standard even between siblings," ME7 was in fact referring to his identity with the family. ME13, however, also spoke of her identity as a Chinese. This was observed in subject ME13's use of the plural pronoun "we" to indicate membership and solidarity which is demonstrated in her affirmation of being part of the larger community at large, the Chinese community. Reference to the saying, "blood is thicker than water" is an often quoted Chinese saying which emphasizes the idea of the importance placed on blood relationship by the Chinese.

A similar idea of being part of the set up of the family is seen in the responses of ME6 who reasoned that the aid provided to her sister was because, "she's my sister," conveying the idea of her sister belonging or relating to herself, thus indicating that her sister was part of the family. This was followed by her attestation that, "they are my close people," which reinforces the idea that the sister or sisters are her people; in short, her family. Excerpts of her responses are given below:

ME6: (1) Well if the financial problem is bad enough, I will do that. She's **my** sister, somebody have to do that. Why not me? (2) They are my close people and people who can be trust.

With the exception of ME13, none of Group 2 subjects indicated any overt identification with the Chinese society at large. Even when ME9 mentioned Chinese practices, reference

was made to “the Chinese,” rather than “we, Chinese”:

ME9: (2)Umm: **to the Chinese, to the Chinese**, aa: if a sibling is in financial crisis, the rest of the brothers and sisters are required to help alleviate the problems lah.
[emphasis by the researcher]

The evidence in the use of pronouns by Group 1 and Group 2 subjects would seem to show a clear difference: Group 1 subjects identified with the collective such as the family and society while Group 2 subjects identified with the self which indicate their individualistic identity. Thus, in the use of singular pronouns, a majority of Group 1 subjects indicate their use in relation to the group or collective. In contrast to the “ego identity” discussed by Goffman (1990) or as a distinct identity across social settings (Nisbett, 2003), a majority of Group 1 subjects’ indicate that singular pronouns were used to indicate indistinctiveness as the individual is expected to live in relation to specific others. Thus, Chinese society is marked by collectivism as great emphasis is placed on obedience and loyalty to family (Salili, 1996). In brief, in the use of singular pronouns such as “I,” focus is not on personal distinctiveness or agency but on collective agency. Group 2 subjects on the other hand, view the self to be independent and unique. Thus, focus was on personal agency and goals.

6.1.2 Use of Explanations

Another pattern of communication which was distinct in Group 1’s responses was what counted as “explanations” of each subject’s cause of action. In response to the question posed, a number of Group 1 subjects explained referring to Chinese cultural practices related to the family. In so doing, they seem to indicate that they are sanctioning or defending the view or practice. Two sub-patterns have been identified under the above pattern and they are: reference to Chinese culture and practices and use of Chinese sayings and proverbs.

6.1.2.1 Reference to Chinese culture and practices by Group 1 subjects

In giving their responses, 9 or 60% of Group 1 subjects used as warrants, Chinese cultural

practices and adherence to Chinese way of life and thinking. For instance, MC2 stated that helping members of the family was in keeping with the Chinese way of life and upbringing and adherence to the value of harmony:

MC2: (1) yes, I will invite my sister to –and: her family to come over and stay with my family. Because in Chinese aa: we believe, ok since the: small... aa we need to er: to live together as a big family and then we need to help each other... (2)And then the second point is: that: aa family harmony is the fundamental aa I would say, teaching in a Chinese family.

MC2 also indicated her compliance with Chinese societal norms by explaining the fundamental beliefs which form the basis of her world and everyday life. MC2 stated that they were enculturated with the beliefs “since...small,” such as how they are to live and what they are to do as members of Chinese society. Her verbalization indicated conformity to the traditional endorsement of social order such as disciplining and training members to conform to societal norms and requirements for collective harmony as seen in the reference to “live together as a big family” and to “help each other.”

Explanations about past cultural practices have also been utilized by Group 1 subjects to support their views. MC5 talked about what the Chinese person used to do in the past:

MC5: (1)Mm: I think that this type of situation if happen in the olden days, aa:m most Chinese they will definitely help their sister and try whatever way they can...

Although it was clear that MC6 felt obligated to help her sibling, a greater or weightier reason given was about being censured by Chinese society if they fail to do so:

MC6: (3)Even aa:: even if Chinese don't help our sister or brother the Chinese society will also talk, will talk about us, at behind lah. Because they will talk, “Why-why you don't want to help your sister and brother when they are in crisis?” (4)So: sometimes we have-we have no choice. @@We need to do@@ this type of things lah.

Thus, MC6 remarked that, “we have no choice,” therefore she concluded, “we need to do this type of things lah.” Through her explanations and laughter, she indicated compliance and conformity to the expectations and obligations delineated by society.

Similarly, compliance to societal norms is observed in the verbalization of MC7:

MC7: Um: one day we may also find problems and we need our sisters' help. And we also know that if you get quarrel with friend, you will have no more friends. Friends normally won't reunion anymore. Um: reunited to become reconcile. (2)But, family members aa this

will seldom happen. Usually we quarrel and we get together again. Aa, no matter how - how much aa: problems happen amongst us, aa: after sometimes we will still you know, remember each other or or get together with each other.

In explaining about his stand and in particular his role, “as a brother...” MC11 was in fact indicating his membership in the family. Therefore, in his words, there is a need for him to “have a sense of my duties as a person,” which also indicates his compliance with societal norms:

MC11: (2)You know, in Chinese we have this phrase, “sek zou yan?” as a brother, I must “sek zou yan!” have a sense of my duties as a person

MC14 spoke of the responsibility and obligation of the members towards the family which were in keeping with Chinese cultural norms and practices. Thus, he explained that as a Chinese and a member of the family, he has to comply with the cultural practice of providing support to one’s family. MC15 also spoke about “people” who will criticize those who do not help their family members. In referring to “people” he was in fact alluding to the people who constitute the Chinese community who might think that it was the family teachings which was problematic, “this family aa: their teaching very lousy,” thus reflecting badly on the family as seen in his reference, “then will involve all the family members.”

Below are excerpts of their responses:

MC14: If for me, because for me, as I say lah, because the Chinese place great importance on family life lah. So: for me, we have to help our-our sister or brother because if they really have problems, they cannot be avoided lah.

MC15: (1)Ok, if my brother is in deep financial crisis, I think lah, my family or I will try my-our best to overcome the problem they are facing. (2)Because aa: when they do the wrong thing, the people will think, this family aa: their teachings are very bad, their teaching very lousy and then will involve all the family members. So: if –when the family fall, one member facing the: problem right? I think all the family members will try their best to overcome the problem.

Indirect allusions to familial ties are observed in MC7 and MC10’s responses. MC7 explained familial ties through her reference to, “as a sister,” and her reference to “reunion.” In the former reference, she indicated her compliance to the role as well as her identity as a sister. However, the latter reference brings to mind the Chinese practice of the reunion dinner where members congregate to have a meal once a year to renew

familial ties. Thus, MC7 was explaining the Chinese practice of prioritizing on the family and its members:

MC7: (1) O.K., as a sister there is no reason that we don't do that, you see...And we also know that if you get quarrel with friend, you will have no more friends. Friends normally won't reunion anymore. Um: reunited to become reconcile. (2)But, family members aa this will seldom happen. Usually we quarrel and we get together again.

Similarly, MC10's responses indicate what she felt to be appropriate with regard to the familial tie. She explained that, "as a family" she is under obligation to help her sibling, Therefore, MC10 stated that even if her help was not sought for, she felt the compulsion to go a further mile:

MC10: (1)Aa: Yes, definitely... (2)I see that we we we as a family, I should help her. Aa:m even though she did not come to ask me for help, but I should go and er: extend my hand to: to help her.

6.1.2.2 Reference to Chinese proverbs, phrases and sayings

Another sub-pattern which is observable in the use of explanation is the use of proverbs or Chinese phrases or sayings to support their views or position. According to Yen Mah (2003), proverbs are powerful tools for shaping the behaviour and opinions of the Chinese.

Below are examples of excerpts of subjects' responses:

MC2: (2) In Chinese, we say the word, "gang ga" it means its not nice to meet each other. If lets say, they ask for help and then we never help them, so in order aa aa to make it the situation to the the family be harmony we need to offer the help to them.

MC11: (2)You know, in Chinese we have this phrase, "sek zou yan?" as a brother, I must "sek zou yan!" have a sense of my duties as a person...

MC15: (3)...they will think-they will say, the last time, this grandpa do the wrong thing so you see lah, now the grandson lah aa: aa: aa, do the same thing also, hoh? They say,"bao ying..." (4)What the grandpa do the wrong thing, the grandpa dead already, the children-the son or grandson, the further generation facing the same-the problem loh-the problem loh. (5)So mm: I think, all the family will think like me, er: their member do the wrong thing, they will think, "sia sueh," [bring shame] you know.

Interestingly, ME13 from Group 2 did not quote a well-known Chinese saying directly but translated it into English to explain her views and stand.

ME13: (2)But on my part, if my sister is in deep financial crisis of course, I will extend my hand to help her and invite her to stay with me. Because after all, we are Chinese, "blood is thicker than water."

On the whole, with the exception of four Group 1 subjects' such as MC1, MC4, MC9 and MC12, most Group 1 subjects indicated their willingness to invite their sibling over to stay

with them in the event of a financial crisis. Except for the dissenting few discussed, the reasons given by the rest of Group 1 subjects were consistent with what is sanctioned and approved of by Chinese society. Most did not state any conditions or dwell on the problems that might arise as a result of living in close proximity.

In contrast, except for ME13, none of Group 2 subjects explained their views through reference to Chinese culture or its practices, quotation of Chinese proverbs and sayings or discussed of the judgments which society may pass on them as a result of their actions with regard to their siblings in need.

6.1.3 Direct and Indirect modes of communication

In this section, the way in which directness is manifested by the two groups will be looked at through the sub-patterns such as: expression of feelings, expression of views such as preferences and expectations as well as stating disagreement. In keeping with the Western preoccupation of speaking one's mind and presenting one's point clearly as well as arguing forcefully and logically (Servaes, 1988), subjects who were vocal in conveying all the above would be viewed to be direct and open in relaying their views and thoughts. Although there are other modes of communication to indicate directness, the above sub-patterns are mentioned as they have been used by subjects in their responses.

6.1.3.1 Direct expression of feelings by Group 2 subjects

Although most Group 1 subjects voiced their willingness to invite their siblings and family to stay with them, many Group 2 subjects were more reluctant, direct and vocal in conveying their strong reluctance. What is significant in this study is not merely the fact that they were reluctant, but also why they were reluctant and how they expressed this reluctance. Thus, in response to the question posed, Group 2 subjects who were unwilling to invite their siblings to stay with them did not hedge or utilize any indirect means to convey their strong reluctance. They answered outright about their stand and how they felt about the issue as seen in the excerpts given below:

ME5: (1) Er: **my first reaction would be “no”** if she has her own family...
 ME10: (1)**First choice, “NO.”** (2)I would avoid living with them...
 ME11: (1) Aa:m ((pause)) **this is a little difficult...**
 ME2: (2)...**I do not think I will** offer them a place in my home until they are **truly in need**.
 ME1: (1)Okay, well aa I think I would lah **if she is really in desperate need...** (3)But it'll be **better if you do not stay together...**
 ME7: (2)... **personally, I do not like** er: even though its my brother or sister, to come over to stay with me and my wife and my family.
 ME8: (1) **I wouldn't invite them but they have to make their intentions known to me** lah.
 ME9: (3)But er: as I've said, I'm English educated, and I think it has a lot to do with the relationship among the sibling themselves... (5)Aa: it is not so much as Chinese tradition aa: **I'm not so sure about this also**, I'm not so sure about this.
 [emphasis by the researcher]

ME5 was quick to indicate her strong reluctance, “My first reaction would be ‘No,’” or ME10’s answer “First choice, ‘NO,’” her increased volume and stress on the word “no” spoke volumes about her reluctance. Even ME11’s reaction, “this is a little difficult,” is also direct and open. While ME14 spoke openly about his feelings about the matter, “I do not like...my brother or sister to come over to stay.” ME9 on the other hand, spoke of it being an issue where it depends on the relationship between the siblings. However, at the conclusion, he corrected himself by openly confessing his uncertainty about it. In fact, almost all subjects with the exception of two subjects, ME12 and ME13, expressed in various degrees their reluctance to invite their brothers or sisters to accommodate their siblings. This could be seen through their verbalizations or through the various conditions laid down by subjects.

Another way where Group 2 subjects demonstrated directness in stressing their reluctance is observed through outlining the extremity of circumstances that would warrant them to provide aid to their siblings. ME1 spoke of accommodating her sibling only when she is “in really desperate need.” Her stress and intonation on the word, “really” indicates the weight of the situation. Likewise, ME2 spoke of inviting her sister over only when her sibling is “truly in need,” which is not having a roof over her head. Similarly, ME5 spoke of it being “the last thing” for her to do. ME11 spoke of it as “a last resort” while ME14 spoke of it as “the worse scenario” which reflect the deep reluctance on the part of the speakers to do so:

ME1: (1)Okay, well aa I think I would lah if she is really in desperate need.

ME2:(2) I will offer them a place in my home until they are truly in need. And they have no place to rely on.

ME5: (4)But the last thing I would do is to invite the family to come over.

ME11: (2)... aa: to-to me, it would be as a last resort.

ME14: (3)But if, it comes to the worst scenario and I do not have a choice, er: yes, I will aa: invite them to come over stay to stay with me.

6.1.3.2 Direct expression of views such as preferences, expectations and conditions by Group 2 subjects

Directness is also demonstrated by Group 2 subjects when they were open to state the conditions and limitations of aid to their siblings as well as their preferences and expectations. Even when Group 2 subjects voiced their agreement to invite their siblings to stay with them, they were direct about stating the conditions that would cause them to do so. This in a way also indicates their reluctance to accommodate their siblings and families:

ME15: (1)Ye-s:, I would. But they probably have to **sleep on the couch**. (2)Aa: I guess if its **temporary measure**, it'll be no problem.

ME1: (1)Okay, well aa I think I would lah if she is **really in desperate need**... (3)But it'll **be better if you do not stay together** ...Because, privacy and space is of utmost importance to me lah.

ME7: (4)...ya, I would welcome her **provided** I have the space in my house.

ME8: (1)... I think will be able to accommodate them as I have said, **for a short term period but not for long term**, ok?

[emphasis by the researcher]

ME7's willingness to invite his sibling to stay with him was conditional as seen in his reference to the word, "provided" that there is space in his house. Likewise, ME8 stated his condition for aid as represented in his use of "but," such as, "but not for long term." ME1 stated that she would do so if the situation was desperate enough but voiced her preference for privacy and space. ME15 on the other hand, voiced his willingness but stated outright about the limitations of his aid.

Directness is also demonstrated among Group 2 subjects when they speak openly of their preferences and expectations before inviting their siblings over to stay with them:

ME1: (2)But: aa we need to talk first about arrangements and preferences to avoid unnecessary squabbles later on, you know.

ME2: (5) But I would also tell her mm: what are some of the things I would expect from her if she lives under my roof. There would be some boundaries or: or: rules or: ya, expectations, expectations I would expect from her.

ME4: So: aa:m I'll have to aa: let her know that I do not like aa: aa: environment where you know, its loud noise and I prefer the noise level to be kept to aa: the lowest possible.
ME7: (4)... I would welcome her provided I have the space in my house... (5) But we need to set rules that's the important thing. We have a standard even between siblings em: I do set rules that's the important thing. (6)We need to know how long you are planning to stay because we want to make sure that I don't disrespect her and she doesn't disrespect me, you know. ME14: (3)... yes, I will aa: invite them to come over stay to stay with me. But er: under some terms and conditions, where we need to sit down and know that er: what are the expectations and boundaries...

ME7 spoke about setting rules while ME14 spoke of setting boundaries. For instance, ME7 talked about "conditions" for extension of aid as well as "setting rules," in other words, delineating the limits one could go or do when living together in proximity. Therefore, ME7 was quick to talk about the size of his house, "I would welcome her provided I have the space in my house," the need to set rules, "But we need to set rules that's the important thing," or the sibling's length of stay, "We need to know how long you are planning to stay..." It is pertinent to note that subject ME7 stated twice the importance of setting rules. The first time it was stated to explain what he expected of his sister, the second time it was mentioned was to reinforce his argument. Therefore, it could be seen that basically, subject ME7 was stating about the need to be open, to state in clear terms what was expected of himself as a brother and what was expected of his sister and family when they stay with him.

Two other Group 2 subjects who agreed to offer help to their siblings were also direct in stating their preferences. They spoke of helping their sibling to get a place to stay rather than to stay with them. Below are excerpts of their responses:

ME10: (3)So I'll rather lend them the money if I have the money than ask them to come and live with me.
ME11: (4)... To me, helping them to find another place and paying for their rental until they could stand on their own. I would rather do that, you know

In contrast, only two Group 1 subjects demonstrated directness in conveying their intention. MC4 spoke of the importance of not upsetting her time table while MC12 discussed about not liking people to intrude into his privacy. Below are excerpts of their responses:

MC4: (1)...But er: of course, certain issues have to- have to er lay down la her before- before they move in. (2)... Because if lets say they were to stay in the house, and then er my own time table -I won't want them to alter that table, and then what time I wake up or what time I use the-the-the toilet and so on.

MC12:(3)...I don't like people to: just intrude my privacy. But of course to solve their problems...

6.1.3.3 Group 1 subjects' indirect modes of expression

As discussed earlier, there were limited instances of indirectness displayed in this aspect by Group 1 subjects as most of them indicated agreement to help their siblings. Indirectness is observed when subjects failed to provide a direct answer, were verbose or use palliative language to soften the impact of their reluctance. In the instance of MC5, instead of answering the question directly, she compared the views and behaviour of Chinese in traditional times with modern Chinese before stating her own responses to the question posed:

MC5: (1)Mm: I think that this type of situation if happen in the olden days, aa:m most Chinese they will definitely help their sister and try whatever way they can...(2)But now as the things have already changed, and people -of course Chinese also have changed, um: there are many factors lah. (3)Probably they look at the people around them, they care more for themselves, so probably they will help er: in a very limited way...(4)And er if this type of -if this problem happen to me and my sister is in this type of financial crisis, I will definitely help her because I have a really good sister...

On the other hand, MC1 from Group 1 voiced his reluctance to invite his sibling over to stay with him. Notice his use of palliative language to convey his reluctance such as "where do I place them?" or "with the help of other family members... find ways to help..." and his assurance, "for sure we are going to help..." rather than the direct and bold statement of desires by Group 2 subjects in voicing their refusal. MC1 stated that he did not "think" he "would invite them" as opposed to the outright and definite refusal by ME10, "First choice, No" as discussed earlier.

MC1: (1) In my opinion, **I don't think I would invite them to stay with me.** For a simple reason for example, for myself, I'm living in a 3 room er: er: semi-D house. (2) If we have just enough ample space for just my own family. If I invited them for the simple reason, I cannot accept because, "where do I place them? ... (5)But I would not just stay like that. I would invite them or with the help of my other family members, we discuss and find ways to help her solve this problem. (6)...For sure we are going to help because they are part of my family members.

[emphasis by the researcher]

Notice that ME2 also said, “I do not think I will offer them a place in my home until they are truly in need.” In stating thus, she was clearly putting the possibility into consideration that only under extreme circumstances of need would she consider doing so. Notice MC1’s assurance of help from the family collectively at the conclusion of his verbalization as a way to solve his inability to house his sibling. He did not state directly his feelings but rather spoke of the limitation of his house and the possibility of “problems” as a result of the extended family. From his discussion, it is clear that he had no intention to invite his sibling over no matter what dire circumstances the sibling is in but he did not state this directly.

The Indirect mode of communication is also seen in the verbalization of MC9 who indicated agreement to invite her sibling over. However, she was quick to state that it would only be for a short period but she did not state about informing her sibling directly that it was a temporary measure. Furthermore, she stated that she hoped her sibling would not interrupt with her daily life or comment about it. Instead of openly informing her sibling about her preferences and expectations, MC9 stated about her wishes or hopes. This is in opposition to the views of Group 2 subjects who were direct about their preferences.

Below is an excerpt of her response:

MC9: (1)Um: um: due to my sympathy to her, I'll invite her to my house to live but only for a short period. (2)After the financial problem has been er: solved, I think I would advise her to move out because er: um: and as long as during the period of stay I also hope that she will just aa: aa: she will not aa: interrupt with my daily life and will not comment so much.

6.1.4 Organization of Information

Another distinctive aspect in the communication patterns of Group 2 subjects was the explicitness of their answers which is in keeping with the Western practice where speakers are expected to encode messages as clearly as possible (Nisbett 2003: 60). To fulfill the above, it was observed that 7 or 46.7% of Group 2 subjects have a tendency to organize their ideas for clarity of presentation and for coherence of argument. For the above

discussion, two categories have been identified, that is, organization through use of conditionals and according to topics. As the question posed was situational in nature, Group 2 subjects responded by indicating the various conditions and clarifying the different aspects of the situations through use of the conditional “if” and indicating the possible reactions to the conditions mentioned. Topical organization is also observable where subjects grouped their responses under terms such as “arrangements and preferences,” “circumstances,” “prime areas,” just to name a few. These two sub-patterns are not mutually exclusive.

6.1.4.1 Group 2 subjects’ use of conditionals

For instance, organization through use of conditionals is observed in the responses of 4 or 26.7% of Group 2 subjects. Subject ME5 discussed her first negative reaction to the situation posed:

ME5: (1) Er: my first reaction would be “No” if she has her own family. (2)If she is single, and alone, yes, by all means I would... (3)And if I had the means, I will rather that I would rent a room for her family to stay. And if she is in a very bad financial crisis I would probably try as much to help. (4)But the last thing I would do is to invite the family to come over. Unless of course, if she is being widowed.

There were many “ifs” in her replies to indicate the many different responses to the different situations envisaged, such as “if she has her own family,” “If she is single,” “if I [ME5] had the means...” or “if she is in a very bad financial crisis.”

Similarly, ME10, ME11, ME14 and ME6 organized their responses by organizing them “conditionally” :

ME10: (1)First choice, NO. (2)I would avoid living with them because I believe my family comes first... (3)So I’ll rather lend them the money **if** I have the money than ask them to come and live with me.

ME11: (2)First, assuming lah that my parents are in no position to help, ok? Because the first natural place they would go to is to stay with my parent, ok? Assuming they are in no position to help, aa: to-to me, it would be as a last resort... May be a rented place, you know. (3)Aa:m because aa: just er: er: I mean, **if** they are in financial crisis, it may be a short term financial crisis or long term, depending on the situation. (9)But usually, we’ll try to see how we could work it out, you know.

ME14:(1) Aa: ok. First of all, I would like to know what status is their financial problem, ok? I would-I would sit down and talk about it and try to solve their problems financially. (2)But er: inviting them to come over to stay at my place aa: that aa: I would not propose that yet. (3)But **if**, it comes to the worst scenario and I do not have a choice, er: yes, I will aa: invite them to come over stay to stay with me.

ME6: (4)Well, **if** the financial problem is bad enough, I will do that. She's my sister, somebody have to do that. Why not me?

[emphasis by the researcher]

ME10 began by listing in sequence her possible reactions to the situation presented such as stating that her first choice would not be to invite her sister to stay with her. Next, she outlined clearly her other choice which was to extend financial help to her sibling. In a similar matter, ME11 approached the problem by indicating his reactions to the various possible occurrences. For instance, he stated that his parents would be the first logical place for his sister to seek help and only when that option was exhausted, would he himself be the last resort. ME14 said that the first thing to do was to find out the "status" of his sister's financial difficulty before discussing with his sibling to solve her problem. And only when the discussion was unsuccessful would he invite his sibling over.

6.1.4.2 Group 2 subjects' topical organization

The above sub-pattern is also observed in the verbalization of 4 or 26.7 of Group 2 subjects. Subjects spoke of "arrangements and preferences," "circumstances," "situations," "prime areas," etc. For instance, ME1 spoke of "arrangements and preferences" to indicate the different aspects which she intended to clarify before making the decision to invite her sibling over:

ME1: (2)But: aa we need to talk first about arrangements and preferences to avoid unnecessary squabbles later on, you know. (3)But it'll be better if you do not stay together once you have your own family.

Two sub-patterns are observed in ME2's responses. ME2 organized her arguments under the various "circumstances" and "conditions" which would warrant aid to be given:

ME2: (1)Mm: ok: aa: now I have to say it would depend on the **circumstances**. (2) If they are financially in need, but they do have their own place-my house, somewhere to stay on their own... (3)But if they have no necessity for shifting house, I may help them financially if I can afford it but not otherwise. (4)And in the event that they do need a roof over their heads and I am not financially well of to: rent another place, then yes, I would offer them my home... (7)-if she's not agreeable to what I say, then of course, she can...

[emphasis by the researcher]

Notice the many "ifs" in ME2's discussion. For example, in chunk (2), ME2 discussed

about her sibling having a place of her own but only needed aid financially, she also discussed about the circumstance when her sibling may need a place to stay and she herself is not financially sound, then she would invite her sibling to stay with her. Finally, in chunk (7) she discussed about the event when her sister may not be agreeable to her plans or proposals.

Similarly, ME5's responses which has been discussed earlier under the sub-pattern of organization according to use of conditionals, could also be viewed to be organized under the various "circumstances" such as the single or married status of her sister which is realized in the abundant use of "ifs" in her responses:

ME5: (1) Er: my first reaction would be "No" if she has her own family. (2)If she is single, and alone, yes, by all means I would. Because er: inevitably there would be family conflicts. And it would lead on to er: to er: the extended family. (3)And if I had the means, I will rather that I would rent a room for her family to stay. And if she is in a very bad financial crisis I would probably try as much to help. (4)But the last thing I would do is to invite the family to come over. Unless of course, if she is being widowed.

ME4 on the other hand, spoke of "prime areas" for discussion such as "privacy" "cleanliness" and "peace" such as keeping the noise level to the very lowest in the vicinity of the house:

ME4: (2) ...I need to discuss aa: certain **prime areas** which are of aa: utmost importance to me and my family... (3)The areas which I need to aa: discuss with my sister are: - which I felt is important to me is the privacy of my family, er: cleanliness of the house and also I: I like to live in a peaceful environment...I do not like aa: aa: environment where you know, its loud noise and I prefer the noise level to be kept to aa: the lowest possible.

[emphasis by the researcher]

On the other hand, ME14 spoke of the "status" of his sibling's financial situation before help could be provided by him such as "worst scenarios" or where he does "not have a choice."

ME14: (1) Aa: ok. First of all, I would like to know what status is their financial problem, ok? I would-I would sit down and talk about it and try to solve their problems financially...(3)But if, it comes to the worst scenario and I do not have a choice, er: yes, I will aa: invite them to come over stay to stay with me.

The above sub-patterns discussed indicate that Group 2 subjects' responses are "logical"

and “coherent.” These two attributes are ideals of good communication in Western education.

6.1.4.3 Summary

From the above discussion on the aspect on Centrality of the family, it can be seen that four patterns of communication emerged. Analyses of subjects’ verbalization indicate that there were distinctive differences between the patterns of communication utilized by subjects from the two different groupings. Use of the singular pronouns indicate that although they were used by a few Group 1 subjects to indicate self identity, a majority or 60% of them used singular pronouns to indicate group or collective identity. This suggests that subjects have a tendency to view the self in relation to the group or collective. Thus, focus was not so much on the self but rather on the collective. Accordingly, subjects spoke of helping their siblings in order to please their parents, to protect their family name and reputation or even in compliance to societal norms for families which speak volumes about why great emphasis is placed on such values as harmony, obedience and loyalty.

A majority or 66.7% of Group 1 subjects displayed a tendency to use the plural pronoun “we” and its related forms as a marker of their collective identity. This is observed through their personal attestation to being members of the family and being united through the familial bond, stating their responsibilities as well as obligations. This is in keeping with the Chinese focus on the centrality of the family, its teachings, reputation, obligations and responsibilities which are discussed in the literature review in Chapter 3. Thus, endorsement of the social structure of the family or collective (Bond, 1990) has been mentioned by a sufficient number of Group 1 subjects which appear as an integral part of their world view and therefore of their thinking.

Another pattern which was utilized by 60% of Group 1 subjects was the use of explanation to justify their course of action or perception with regard to the issue discussed. To do the above, subjects explained about Chinese cultural norms and practices and Chinese

sayings and proverbs. Although the indirect mode of communication such as conveying an idea indirectly or through hedging was perceived not to be distinct, it was found only among Group 1 subjects. The above patterns utilized by Group 1 subjects point to a Chinese orientation as identification with the group such as the family or society is practiced and favoured by the Chinese. Moreover, explanation of Chinese cultural norms and practices as well as quotation of Chinese proverbs or sayings serve to indicate subjects' affiliation with Chinese practices and world view.

In contrast, 15 or 100% of Group 2 subjects seemed to favour the use of the singular pronoun "I" and its related forms in their verbalization as a marker of self-identity. Such use suggests their focus on the self with its views, aspirations, desires and expectations. Directness was another pattern which was distinct among Group 2 subjects. 73.3 % of Group 2 subjects were direct in stating their personal views regarding their expectations, preferences, arrangements, to name a few. There was also a tendency among 46.7% of Group 2 subjects to categorize information before presentation. Analyses of findings indicate that this was done perhaps for ease and clarity in the conveyance of ideas.

From the above discussion of communicative patterns it is possible to infer that Group 2 subjects have a tendency to operate from a Western world view as they displayed distinct self-identity, were direct and confident about their opinions and or decisions as well as were careful in organizing their thoughts before presenting them. With the exception of ME13, none of them used the plural pronoun "we" in their responses as each of them possess their own distinctive views and opinions of the aspect discussed.

6.2 Aspect 2 : Filial piety

Stimulus 2: Not having a son to carry on the family name amounts to breaking the ancestral linkage. It is regarded as the most serious filial failure by Mencius or Meng Zi, a renown master of Rujiao or Confucianism. What is your view with regard to this saying of Mencius?

In the discussion of the stimulus with regard to filial piety, the patterns of communication

used as indices of world view are: use of pronouns as markers of identity, direct modes of communication and use of explanations. Except for indirect modes communication, the patterns identified for the aspect of filial piety are repeated, therefore, they will be briefly discussed. Table 6.2 gives a global view of the findings.

Table 6.2: Patterns of communication for the aspect of filial piety among Group 1 and Group 2 subjects.

Patterns of communication	Group 1 (N=15)	%	Group 2 (N=15)	%
1. Use of Pronouns as identity markers				
i. Singular pronoun “I” and its related forms to indicate self-identity	5 (MC3, MC4, MC6, MC7, MC8)	33.3	14 (All except ME13)	93.3
ii. Singular pronouns to indicate collective identity.	7 (MC1, MC10, MC11, MC12, MC13, MC14, MC15)	46.7	0	0
iii. Plural pronoun “We” and its related forms to indicate collective identity	7 (MC1, MC2, MC5, MC9, 10, MC15)	46.7	1 (ME13)	6.7
2. Explanation				
i. Chinese culture and practices	3 (MC12, MC13, MC15)	20	1 (ME13)	6.7
ii. Past historical events and occurrences	12 (MC1, MC2, MC3, MC4, MC5, MC6, MC7, MC9, MC11, MC12, MC14, MC15),	80	1 (ME13)	6.7
iii. Chinese sayings and proverbs.	2 (MC5, MC15)	13.3	1 (ME13)	6.7
Explanation (Total)	13 (MC1, MC2, MC3, MC4, MC5, MC6, MC7, MC9, MC11, MC12, MC13, MC14, MC15)	86.7	1 (ME13)	6.7
3. Direct and indirect modes of communication				
i. Open expression of views and feelings	3 (MC3, MC4, MC8)	20	14 (All except ME13)	93.3
ii. Use of strong language	0	0	10 (ME1, ME2, ME3, ME4, ME7, ME8, ME10, ME12, ME14, ME15)	66.7
iii. Sharing of personal information, private secrets, hopes or thoughts.	2 (MC1, MC3)	13.3	7 (ME3, ME6, ME7, ME8, ME9, ME11, ME15)	46.7
iv. Indirect modes of communication	4 (MC2, MC5, MC14, MC15)	26.7	0	0
Direct modes (Total)	4 (MC1, MC3, MC4, MC8)	26.7	14 (All except ME13)	93.3

6.2.1 Use of pronouns as identity markers

In the discussion of the above aspect, factors that are highlighted include the use of the personal pronoun “I” as a marker of self identity. As mentioned earlier in section 6.1.1, it is equated to Goffman’s (1990) ‘ego-identity’ where the individual demonstrates his or her

subjective feeling of his or her own situation and uniqueness. However, self-identity is also observed when subjects related their individualized perspectives and views although the pronoun “I” and its related forms are not significant.

6.2.1.1 Group 2 subjects’ use of the singular pronouns as markers of self-identity

Significant in the responses of Group 2 subjects was the use of the personal pronoun, “I” as well as other related singular pronouns such as “me” and “my” in the explication of their views and opinions. 14 out of a total of 15 Group 2 subjects conveyed strongly their rejection of Meng Zi’s statement. Interestingly, none of these 14 subjects used any plural personal pronoun “we” or its equivalents such as the plural possessive, “our,” in their responses to indicate their identification with Chinese society. Below are excerpts of some of their responses:

ME2: (8)Frankly, I feel that the Chinese have taken this too far ... (10) I think, if I say that it is a serious : : : breakage of the ancestral linkage, it is beyond, beyond one’s control.

ME3: (3)I’m not agreeable to this at all. Because even my dad: he has four daughters, you see. He-he does not regret it anyway-in anyway... (5)This carrying of name all: it’s not workable nowadays to me.

ME4: (5)I disagree strongly and I feel that it is not important whether it is a son or daughter as long as they are good children.

ME5:(6) I-I don’t understand why emphasis is placed on the male lineage except for that – except for the fact that it is to carry the family line, the sir name of course and for ancestral worship. (7)Aa: but nor do I object because I also-I too believe that males being the first the first born, er: they are the first fruits of the couple

ME6: (2) I don’t think its correct. Not having a son to carry on the family name. For me, family name is not that important...

ME7: (8)... I couldn’t think of anything worse to say. This just sort of wipes out all the daughters of the world...(9)How stupid. I think this nonsense is still carrying on.

Although the singular personal pronoun was not significant in ME1’s responses, it is clear that the views presented were her own views:

ME1: (5)To get to the point, this view aa is outdated lah as women are given equal rights in almost everything, be it salary or property today.

With the exception of ME13, all subjects expressed their individualized views clearly and forwarded reasons substantiate their varied stands. ME13 on the other hand, initially expressed partial support for the view by explaining about the traditional Chinese practice of filial piety and substantiating her views by quoting a Chinese proverb. However, at the conclusion, she indicated that such views were untenable in today’s society:

ME13: (3)Ok, this is a thought passed down by the olden Chinese in those olden society. Having a son is very important or bringing down the family name... (4)Because as they say, *fai soi part lou pit yan teen*. Which means whatever property they have, whatever it is they have, they will definitely pass down ...to their sons. (5)Definitely, the daughters are out of question but nowadays in this modern society, even though the Chinese hope to have a son but then they don't place that as a first importance-the utmost importance...

6.2.1.2. Group 1 subjects' use of singular pronouns as markers of self-identity

Use of singular pronouns which reflect the ego-identity was observed in 4 Group 1 subjects. The pronoun "I" and its related forms used reflected some degree of self-identity and individualistic thought and views. Below are excerpts of their responses:

MC3: (4)Em: I think society nowadays, there are a few people who carry on this thought. But er: for me, I-I totally disagree as raising up a child is totally different nowadays. (5)Em: it involves a lot of cost and attention. We can see hardly any family er –er have more than two kids these days... (7)But er: I think to me: nowadays its totally-I can not er: agree with this thought.

MC4: (5)Well, I think um: at that at that point of time er: whether it is what? er: 14 something or was it 13 something? (6)Ya, at that point of time, the tradition[al] time, that olden days ya? Um: of course, it is a sin...(9)But in this society ya: WHO CARES? ((laughs)) (14)But I think in this context, at at this moment is like whether it is a son, whether it is a daughter, it is not very important lah.

MC6: (5)Regards to the saying of Meng- Meng Zi aa? (6)I think in olden days, it consider a filial failure but nowadays, people-most people are educated and they are open minded. So: I think they don't mind so much.

MC7: (4)((laughs)) Aha, I think aa: modern thing has been quite vary aa: from that old thinking. But of course, there are people who still following this er: this aa: ideology lah. (5)Ya, I think basically in the past, why people er: should have son should do, do: you know they should have son to carry on, carry their family name... (6)But I think now a days, modern thinking is is has becoming different has change, has been changing.

6.2.1.3 Group 1 subjects' use of singular pronouns as markers of collective identity

Use of the pronoun "I" and its related forms are also observed in the verbalization of 7 (MC8, MC9, MC10, MC12, MC13, MC14, MC15) Group 1 subjects. As observed in the previous aspect, the singular pronouns used here relate to the Chinese way of viewing the individual as being part of the collective, hence functioning according to the dictates of the collective. See below the excerpts of their verbalizations:

MC8: (2) I totally disagree [with] this statement. Either man or woman is a person ((?)). They should have the same aa: status in the society. (3)If the society all bow to this statement, that means there will be ((sigh)) no women in the future. All will be dominate by man. And ancestral linkage will be nothing that's all.

MC9: (3)Aa: this was an olden day quote lah. (4)So, I **don't** really er: its beyond **our** control. As long as we have children, we have er: offspring, it is good enough. It doesn't matter whether it is a boy or girl.

MC10: (3)Aa:m I disagree with that because I er: I mean in this 21st century, I mean, I fail to have a son to carry on the family name, its not **our**: ya, it's not **our** fault. (4)Aa:m it's the male who decides the sex of the child lah. So: er: if I fail to get a son, so: its not my fault loh.

MC12: (7)But definitely to me, I don't care whether this is a son or daughter... (8)However, the-the culture is structured in such a way that only the son has the right to carry on the linkage which I think is sad. So I have no choice but to you know, follow the –the-the cultural-culture re?

MC13: (2)Um: well, aa: for now I think er: I: **because** I not yet married so- I didn't feel any difference having a son or daughter. (3)Of course, maybe I might also do as this Meng Zi said ok? If I don't have a son, I'll not have er: my descendents later. Don't have "Tan" my surname, right?

MC14: (5)... Well, but I believe some of them still they still have this kind of mind. I think majority lah, ya. May be 70 or 80%... (12) Because for me, if I pass to my grandson, belong to my daughter one, than next time, if –if go to, I mean the husband then, husband go to the other side already. That's the reason. (softer)That's the reason, you see. (13)For-for Chinese that's why Chinese surname is very important, ((whisper)) very, very important, you see.

MC15: (10) Aa:m if –if have what I think, the sons aa:m all the sons will carry the name of the family, if-if I say if this family don't have the son, the family will try to get a son from their uncle or where-where-where you know, to carry the name of the son, you know...

Subject MC9 spoke of the mentioned quotation being acceptable in the distant past. However, for the present, she, as represented through the use of the singular pronoun "I," stated that it is no longer acceptable as the sex of children is "beyond" the control of females in general. Thus, the singular pronoun "I" is viewed to be part of the great collective of females in Chinese society as seen in the use of the plural pronoun "our." Likewise, MC10 in her statement in chunk (3) referred to herself through the use of "I" and concluded her argument by using "our" to indicate her identification with the collective. Likewise, MC8, MC13, MC14 and MC15.

6.2.1.4 Group 1 subjects' use of plural pronouns as markers of collective identity

On the other hand, as observed in the previous aspect, Group 1 subjects' collectivistic identity is also observed through the use of the collective pronoun "we" and its related forms to signal identification with the Chinese society at large, such as a common shared culture or experience. For instance, the phrase, "we all Chinese," was used by MC2 to indicate her identity with the Chinese as a larger group. She also spoke of sharing a common cultural belief, "normally for Chinese, the fundamental concept is that a person,

normally male lah or female, is descended from ancestors.” Following are some of the excerpts of Group 1 subjects’ verbalizations:

MC2: (10)...For **we** all Chinese, normally for Chinese, the fundamental concept is that a person, normally male lah or female, is descended from ancestors, ok? So Chinese descent was calculated through their male links only.

MC1: (16) ...Because as **we** know, nowadays **we** don’t only emphasize on the family, son is the best or daughter is the least important thing. (17)Nowadays, what **we** emphasize is: every member of the family, **we** must emphasize as parents, **we** must try to educate **our** children so that they have the best education.

MC5: (13)Now, you see nowadays, **some Chinese** they have only daughters. They don’t care because they know that er: carry the surname or not is not that important anymore... (15)So, instead of keep on giving birth to children, just to get a son, **we** will rather spend more time, er: taking good care of **our** children even though they are all girls.

MC7: (16)Aaa: of course, it is good to have sons and daughters at home. But when you don’t have that kind of a choice, **we we** look at er: look at er: the behaviour of our sons and daughters more than -more than whether it’s a boy or girl, ya.

MC9: (11)Aa: this was an olden day quote lah. (12)So, I don’t really I don’t really er: beyond our control. As long as **we** have children, **we** have er: offspring, it is good enough.

MC10: (1)Aa: Yes, definitely. I-I will do that. Because: aa:m first, she’s my sister. (2)I see that **we we we** as a family, I should help her.

MC15: (23)For **our** Chinese tradition, **we** also have the joss stick. Er: the joss stick, the sons- must have the son to carry it. The eldest son –all the son will carry the joss stick. Aa:m the girl cannot.

[emphasis by the researcher]

6.2.1.5 Group 2 subjects’ use of plural pronouns as markers of collective identity

Although, the pronoun “we” was found in the responses of two Group 2 subjects, it was only used once by each in the course of their verbalization:

ME11: (17)Yes, I think till today, they [my parents] would prefer to have the first as a son. (18)I can see that because my parents have five children, ok? All first child of each of my brothers and sisters, all are boys. So: **we** actually don’t know, you know, if it’s a girl what would happen. (19)But I don’t think it would be so much lah...

ME13: (6)As **we** can see nowadays, the Chinese, they don’t mind having just one child, a daughter or even 2 or even 3 daughters.

[emphasis by the researcher]

In contrast to its use by Group 1 subjects, the plural pronoun used by the mentioned Group 2 subjects did not clearly indicate identity with the Chinese as a group. However, ME11’s use of plural pronouns indicate indirect identification with the Chinese. In referring to being unsure if his parents would prefer sons as their first child, he was indirectly indicating identification with the Chinese through his parents’ possible preference for a son as practiced by the Chinese.

6.2.2 Use of explanations

The above pattern of communication is distinct among a majority of Group 1 subjects as

86.7% of Group 1 subjects utilize this pattern in response to the stimulus posed. It is observed through the practice of explaining about Chinese cultural observances, the traditional practice of ancestral linkage as well as through references to Chinese proverbs and sayings.

6.2.2.1 Group 1 subjects' reference to Chinese culture and practices

The kind of explanations used by Group 1 subjects is again indicative of their unconscious orientation as most subjects justify the traditional practice which is still practiced today by some people as it is viewed to be part of the Chinese culture. It is observed generally through the use of the conjunction "because" to provide the reasons for their views or through the use of explanations or clarifications as well as through the use of the conjunction "so" to introduce the consequence of the situation mentioned. Excerpts of their responses are given below:

MC12: (4)... Umm: in fact umm: the Chinese community always -how do I say aa? Remember its roots. (5)The family name is one way to remember your roots. **So**: I mean if you do it-if you so call not to carry a family name, it-it-it breaks all the linkage from-from – from your ancestor. (6)**So** umm: whatever Meng Zhi said, I-I-I would say is very crucial in terms of carrying on of the linkage lah.

MC13: (2)Um: well, aa: for now I think er: I: **because** I not yet married so- I didn't feel any difference having a son or daughter. (3)Of course, maybe I might also do as this Meng Zi said ok? If I don't have a son, I'll not have er: my descendents later. Don't have "Tan" my surname, right? **So**: aa: that might be one case, that I might think about it also.

MC15: (9)Ok, they say, if you do not have a son to carry on the family name, the breaking of the ancestral linkage, ancestral linkage right?(10) ...if-if I say if this family don't have the son, the family will try to get a son from their uncle or where-where-where you know ... (18)**So**, you must try your best to get one son at least, you know. ((Inhalation)) If you don't get one son, the family will: another people will laugh at you... (19)Daughter can not carry the name of the family. **So** when you dead already, no more, no people to serve you lah...

[emphasis by the researcher]

6.2.2.2 Group 1 subjects reference to past historical events and occurrences

Although not every Group 1 subject was in total agreement with the practice of prioritizing males, a majority were. 12 or 80% of Group 1 subjects began by explaining about the traditional practice of perpetuating the family name through male linkages. Thus, subjects situate the practice in traditional times as seen in the reference to "that point of time," "ancient times," "the past," "olden time," or "olden days." Reference to the practice is seen in subjects' reference to it being "the thinking by Meng Zi" or the recurrent reference to "normally" by MC2 to indicate that it was the norm then to calculate descent through

male progeny. According to Yen Mah (2003), it is a common practice among Chinese today to constantly draw upon history to explain the present. Hence, it is not surprising that Group 1 subjects conformed to this practice of drawing analogies from the past to explain current practices. Below are some excerpts of their responses. For further details refer to Appendix E:

MC1: (7) Ok er: I think er: **this part of the thinking by Meng Zi** or “ru chia se siang” lah. To me, that is something quite important in **the ancient times**. (8)But er: in our modern era, I think this thing, there are not many people so emphasize on this.

MC2: (4) For we all Chinese, **normally** for Chinese, the fundamental concept is that a person, **normally** male lah or female, is descended from ancestors, ok? So Chinese descent was calculated through their male links only. (5)**Normally** ok, so: the same way that surname is **traditionally descended** through male links only...

MC3: (6)So er: for the Chinese family, they would would want to have a son to carry the lineage er: er: that is in the **olden time**, the more the merrier...

MC4: (5)Well, I think um: at that **at that point of time** er: whether it is what? er: 14 something or was it 13 something? (6)Ya, at **that point of time, the tradition[al] time**, that olden days ya? Um: of course, it is a sin, ya?

Explaining and highlighting the norms and practices of Chinese society also indicated its importance and relevance to the subjects. For instance, see MC12’s response below:

MC12: (7)But definitely to me, I don’t care whether this is a son or daughter. But as long as carrying on my family last name, I think is good enough. (15)However, the-the culture is structured in such a way that only the son has the right to carry on the linkage which I think is sad. So **I have no choice** but to you know, follow the –the-cultural-culture.

[emphasis by the researcher]

MC12 discussed about the powerlessness of the individual in comparison to society. Likewise, MC13’s verbalization alludes to the powerful influence of societal beliefs on his views. :

MC13: (2)Um: well, aa: for now I think er: I: because I not yet married so- I didn’t feel any difference having a son or daughter. (3)Of course, maybe I might also do as this Meng Zi said ok? If I don’t have a son, I’ll not have er: my descendents later. Don’t have “Tan” my surname, right?

Subjects also explained the necessity to adhere to cultural practices and beliefs in order to avoid any unwelcome consequences from society as observed in the responses of MC15.

Recall that this was mentioned earlier by MC6 for the aspect of centrality of family.

Following are excerpts of MC15’s responses:

MC15: (2)Because aa: when they do the wrong thing, the people will think, this family aa: their teachings are very bad, their teaching very lousy and then will involve all the family members... I think all the family members will try their best to overcome the problem. (3)... Don’t let the people know, and the the people know, they will think-they will say, the last time, this grandpa do the wrong thing so you see lah, now the grandson lah aa: aa: aa, do the same thing also, hoh? They say, “bao ying.”

6.2.2.3 Group 1 subjects' reference to Chinese proverbs, sayings and phrases

In the verbalization of their views, as discussed in the previous aspect, a few Group 1 subjects referred to Chinese proverbs, sayings and popular phrases and explained about them to substantiate their views. Viewed in this context, it alluded to their knowledge and support of the views and norms of Chinese society which are encapsulated in the proverbs and Chinese sayings. Their verbalizations are given below:

MC5: (6)Oh, in Chinese it is “**wu hou wei da**” ok? ah: ya, to Chinese, to carry the surname is very important. (7)But, er: it is very important from er: until today, it is still very important. So the Chinese will somehow try to get a son. (8)Now, you see nowadays, some Chinese they have only daughters. They don't care because they know that er: carry the sir name or not is not that important anymore...

MC15: (17)So: the Chinese family, the son is very important ...So: aa:m Chinese will say, “**wu sher wai bu siao yeh.**” If you don't have son aa, you know, “bu siao”, you know. Not filial, you know. (18)So, you must try your best to get one son at least, you know...

[emphasis by the researcher]

In contrast, only 1 Group 2 subject, ME13, explained Chinese cultural norms and practices as well as referred to a Chinese saying through the use of “because” and substantiated her view of its importance through indicating what the saying “means” to the Chinese:

ME13: (3)Ok, this is a thought passed down by the olden Chinese in those olden society. Having a son is very important or bringing down the family name. And especially those days in rich family their properties are definitely pass down to the son and not to the daughters. (4)Because as they say, *fai soi part lou pit yan teen*. Which means whatever property they have...they will definitely pass down to the people within their own family, having the same surname. Which means passing down to their sons.

6.2.3 Direct and Indirect modes of communication

The discussion of direct modes of communication encompasses open expression of views and feelings, use of strong language and the sharing of personal information, private secrets, hopes or thoughts by subjects. A majority of Group 2 subjects, ten in all, utilized strong language to indicate their disagreement with the statement from the outset of their discussion as they strongly and boldly refuted the views voiced by Meng Zi. The pattern of directness is in line with the Western concept of being open and arguing logically and forcefully (Nisbett, 2003). A brief discussion of each follows.

6.2.3.1 Group 2 subjects' use of the direct mode of communication through their open expression of views and feelings

Directness is demonstrated by Group 2 subjects in their open expression of views as demonstrated in excerpts of their responses given below:

- ME1 : (4) Absolute rubbish! Aa @@ this is truly archaic @@
ME2 : (8) Frankly, I feel that the Chinese have taken this too far. (9)Whether you are able to have descendents, to have progenies it is : : out of your control.
ME3 : (3) I'm not agreeable to this at all...
ME4 : (5) I disagree strongly and I feel that it is not important...
ME5 : (6) I-I don't understand why emphasis is placed on the male lineage except for that –except for the fact that it is to carry the family line,
ME6 : (2) I don't think its correct - Not having a son to carry on the family name. For me, family name is not that important...
ME7 : (8) Oh, a lot of crud! nonsense and rubbish! I couldn't think of anything worse to say.
ME8 : (3) Aa: first and foremost, I don't care who Mencius is.
ME9 : (6) It is true lah to any Chinese who rigidly subscribes to Confucianism. (7)... Aa: to me, it doesn't really matter whether it is a son or a daughter...
ME10:(4) I think it's a lot of crap here ((laughs)).
ME11: (11) Aa:m ((pause)) It may be relevant back then... (12) Er: I believe the change has taken place in the generation of my parents. And the change is complete in my generation. Because I totally do not subscribe to this view, ok?
ME12: (2) It's rubbish! Its not necessary to have a son to carry on the family name.
ME14:(5) Aa: I totally disagree with that. I think this statement shouldn't –shouldn't be.
ME15: (4) ok, aa: to me it's a load of poo because aa: no matter what happens, my genes are as much my daughter and my son. (5)Secondly, filial piety is only of use if you are still alive, once you are gone, that's it!

In contrast to Group 1 subjects who used explanation as their main mode of response, Group 2 subjects used more direct modes of communicating that took little account of Chinese modes of thought as expressed in ME8's verbalization:

- ME8: (3)Aa: first and foremost, I don't care who Mencius is. It doesn't bother me what he thinks but I have no problems without having a son to carry on the family name.

Giving reasons for their stand, which is a feature of Western discourse patterns distinguish Group 2 from Group 1's responses. This is observed in the verbalizations of 8 Group 2 subjects. For example, ME4 objected to Meng Zi's view and reasoned that the thing to focus upon was, "having good children" not the sex of the children. ME8 stated that he would be happy if his two daughters could carry on with their lives as it did not matter if his surname got carried forward or if he had a son or not. ME10 reasoned that the family name could be carried on by an adopted son as "its only a name." For ME12, it was "not necessary to have a son to carry on the family name," as he reasoned that one has no

control over it. Subject ME14, on the other hand, refused to answer the question outright as he felt that such questions should not even be asked. While ME15 felt that, “filial piety is only of use when a person is still alive.” From the above answers given, Group 2 subjects based their answers on logic and equality.

6.2.3.2 Group 2 subjects’ use of strong language

Group 2 subjects were not only open but also used strong language to indicate their clear disagreement to Meng Zi’s ideas. Most of the above responses were emotionally charged as the above subjects indicated outright rejection and repudiated Meng Zi’s views as it was described as, “absolute rubbish,” “a lot of rubbish,” “a lot of crud,” “a lot of crap,” or “a load of poo,” just to name a few. Subject ME2’s use of the word, “frankly,” alludes to her open, uncompromising but honest view that, “the Chinese have gone too far.” The use of, “at all” at the end of the statement by ME3 also indicated her strong and complete rejection of the statement forwarded. Similarly, subject ME14 stated his “total” disagreement with the statement and conveyed his views strongly that the statement should not be made at all. Subject ME8 on the other hand, showed strong disregard for the person of Meng Zi and what he stood for. In short, what Meng Zi said was of little or of no import to the subject. ME4 also indicated clearly her strong disagreement with Meng Zi’s statement. Refer to the excerpts of their responses in section 6.2.3.1.

6.2.3.3 Group 2 subjects direct mode of communication through the sharing of personal information, private secrets, hopes or thoughts

The pattern of directness among Group 2 subjects is also manifested through the use of personalization such as in relating their personal experiences or sharing personal information such as private secrets, hopes or thoughts. Personalization is differentiated from the identity of self and others as it focusses largely on a subject’s personal affairs. 7 Group 2 subjects personalize their responses and their verbalizations are given below:

ME3: (3)I'm not agreeable to this at all. Because even my dad: he has four daughters, you see. He –he does not regret it anyway-in anyway...

ME6: For me, family name is not that important. (3)This-this-this-this is something the: old Chinese folk believe in.

ME7: (12)In fact, I told my girl friend that when we get married, our first child, I am hoping for a daughter. Hello, did you hear me say that?

ME8: 4)If I have two daughters then I would be happy if they can carry on with their lives. It does not matter if my surname get carried forward, it doesn't matter to me.

ME9: (7)Aa: as I have said earlier on, I'm Chinese but English educated. Aa: to me, it doesn't really matter whether it is a son or a daughter.

ME11: (14)Well, I can still see a little bit of it in the sense that when I speak to my parents, they talk by living the legacy, you know, double portion will go to the eldest son, which I am, you see. Although I do not believe in that lah.

ME15: (4) ok, aa: to me it's a load of poo because aa: no matter what happens, my genes are as much my daughter and my son.

Overall, it is observed that 14 or 93.3% of Group 2 subjects were direct and open about their views and stands. 10 or 66.7% of Group 2 subjects expressed openly their strong rejection of Meng Zi's views while 2 others used milder forms of disagreement. Although 2 others indicated agreement, they were nonetheless open about the scope of their agreement. Only 1 subject, ME5, was neutral but she also openly indicated her feelings of puzzlement at the actions of the Chinese prioritizing on male progeny.

6.2.3.4 Group 1 subjects' direct mode of communication through open expression of views

In contrast, only 3 Group 1 subjects expressed their views openly. In the discussion of male progeny as a mark of filial piety, MC3 openly indicated his disagreement by arguing that raising a child is not an easy task today so focus is not on male progeny but on raising a child successfully. MC4, on the other hand, indicated that the question of male progeny or the perpetuation of the family name is not of importance today. While MC8 indicated his disagreement to the saying by stating that equality should be the yardstick for everybody in society. Excerpts of their verbalizations are given below:

MC3: (4)Em: I think society nowadays, there are a few people who carry on this thought. But er: for me, I-I totally disagree as raising up a child is totally different nowadays.

MC4: (7)You know, not to have a son and then people place such great importance, you know. And and and they were even talking about er: getting a second wife because the first wife can't have a son, that sort of thing... (9)But in this society ya: WHO CARES? ((laughs)). You-you know, the thing is that ok now-now what is so important carrying the - the family name ok?

MC8: (2) I totally disagree [with] this statement. Either man or woman is a person ((?)). They should have the same aa: status in the society.

6.2.3.5 Group 1 subjects' use of indirect modes of communication

The indirect mode of communication was significant in the contradictory statements of a number of Group 1 subjects' such as MC5, MC14 and MC15 or in the unclear arguments presented by MC2 as observed in her roundabout manner of presenting her arguments. For instance, MC5 began by explaining that until today, sons are viewed to be important in order to perpetuate the surname. To stress this idea, MC5 repeated the word "important" as many as 3 times. Then, she discussed some Chinese who could only have daughters and explained about why they are not perturbed about not having sons through the use of "because." She attributed such an attitude to the view that having sons may not be the answer as sons may not marry or they may be given to excesses and instead bring disgrace to the family. She finally concluded that it is a greater responsibility to take good care of the children and bring them up well rather than to focus on sons to perpetuate the family name. Recall MC5's earlier attestation that it is important for the Chinese to have sons until today:

MC5: (6)Oh, in Chinese it is "Wu hou wei da" ok? ah: ya, to Chinese, to carry the sir name **is very important**. (7)But, er: it **is very important** from er: until today, it **is still very important**. So the Chinese will somehow try to get a son. (8)Now, you see nowadays, some Chinese they have only daughters. They don't care **because...** (9)You may have a son, but the son may not get married, or may not have er: you-you don't bring him up in the proper way... (10)So, instead of keep on giving birth to children, just to get a son, we will rather spend more time, er: taking good care of our children even though they are all girls. (11)But we bring up them in a careful way, in a proper way, is our even greater responsibility.

Likewise, MC14 began by stating that it was not important to have a son or sons to further the family name today as seen in his reference to, "cannot apply...in today's world lah," but as his discussion progresses, he explained and provided examples such as in the use of "because" to show why sons are preferred by the Chinese especially when there are inheritances to be passed down. At chunk (16) he talked about preferring a son because he is Chinese. At the conclusion, he spoke of the importance of sons because of the importance placed on Chinese surnames.

There seemed to be an indication of a change in his stand with regard to the issue discussed:

MC14: (11)Mm: for me, **I think you cannot apply, I mean, in today's world lah, ya?** Because aa: **today is totally different** like what happen in the past, ya? (12)In the past, ya, you must have a son lah, ya ...Well, but I believe some of them still they still have this kind of mind. I think majority lah, ya. May be 70 or 80%...(15)Some of them still have this mind, ya? but for me: nowadays, its different ya... (16)**for me lah, I think prefer a son, still prefer son** ((tongue click))Chinese man, ya. (17)When they don't compare its ok ...Because especially for those who are rich because for them they think BECAUSE aa: for Chinese family until today aa: most of them the way they treat their aa: their-their-their grandsons is what you call? (18)For me, its two layers, ya... because for me, if I pass to my grandson, belong to my daughter one, then next time, if –if [inheritance] go to, I mean to the husband then, husband go to the other side already. That's the reason. ((softer))That's the reason, you see. (21)For-for Chinese that's why **Chinese surname is very important**, ((whisper)) very, very important, you see.

[emphasis by the researcher]

MC2 on the other hand, adopted a roundabout means of answering the question posed. Only at the conclusion, could the listener infer that perhaps what was meant was the relationship aspect of filial piety which was viewed by MC2 to be important. Below is an excerpt of her responses:

MC2: (4)... For we all Chinese, normally for Chinese, the fundamental concept is that a person... is descended from ancestors, ok? So Chinese descent was calculated through their male links only. (5)Normally ok, so: the same way that surname is traditionally descended through male links only. So: it is not serious, ok?...It is not a serious filial ((clearing throat)) failure, sorry, aa: (6)Filial piety derived from the most fundamental human bond, as parents and children. So the parent children relationship, aa: very important as it is the first of the 5 Confucian relationship. (7)So in general term, take filial piety means to take care of one's parents and not to be rebellious so show love and support for each other.

MC15's verbalization was similar to the above. He started with a discussion of ancestral linkage and why it was important for the Chinese to have sons. However, at chunk (32) he had second thoughts and he stated that it was no longer practiced, "the last time, people think but now don't have lah." At the conclusion of his discussion, he reverted to reiterating the general Chinese societal practice of valuing sons above daughters. Excerpts of MC15's responses are given below:

MC15: (23)For our Chinese tradition, we also have the joss stick. Er: the joss stick, the sons- must have the son to carry it... Aa:m the girl cannot... Because daughter is like the water, you know. If flow out cannot get back already...(27)So: the Chinese family, the son is very important because the son carry the family name... (30)Daughter can not carry the name of the family. So when you dead already, no more, no people to serve you lah... (32)**The last time, people think but now don't have lah.** I think, so: I think not all lah. I think have a little bit old fashion one. All "lau wan tor" they think the thing one... (33)So aa:

so aa Chinese society, the son is very important. They carry ancestral aa:m tablet, ah?
Aa:m aa:m daughter cannot, aa? **Daughter cannot, so son very important.**
[emphasis by the researcher]

In contrast, none of Group 2 subjects were indirect in their responses.

6.2.3.6 Summary

From the above discussion on the aspect of filial piety, four distinctive patterns of communication have been identified. These patterns indicate that differences exist between the two groups of subjects as they have a tendency to favour different patterns of communication. For the aspect of filial piety, the most distinctive pattern of communication was the use of explanation by 86.7% of Group 1 subjects. The most distinctive sub-pattern for this pattern was the use of past historical events and occurrence. Thus, it is clear that filial piety and male progeny has its roots in the past and is observed in a greater or lesser extent by the Chinese community today. As Yen Mah (2003) explains, no rigorous distinction exists between history and today's events as history is viewed to be a mirror of human conditions for the Chinese as it is used and is expected to be used by the Chinese today and for the countless generations of Chinese to come. The second distinctive pattern was in the use of pronouns such as the use of both the singular and plural pronouns to denote collective identity by Group 1 subjects (cf section 6.2.1.3 & 6.2.1.4). Although singular pronouns were used by some Group 1 subjects to indicate self identity, it was not significant and its usage was limited to the recurrent few. Thus, usage of pronouns as identity markers indicate Group 1 subjects' identification with the Chinese and their thoughts and practices such as in the focus on male progeny and in the practice of filial piety.

Two very distinct patterns of communication were utilized among Group 2 subjects and they are: use of the singular pronoun "I" and its related forms as well as the use of direct modes of communication. 93.3% of Group 2 subjects used the singular pronoun and its related forms as a marker of self-identity. This is reflected in subjects' clear expression of

their individualized views and convictions as they substantiate their varied stands. Likewise, Group 2 subjects were unanimous in their open expression of personal feelings as they responded to the stimulus posed. To indicate their rejection of Meng Zi's views, 10 or 66.7% of Group 2 subjects used strong language to mirror their feelings and stand. A further 46.7% of Group 2 subjects shared personal information about their family and past to substantiate their stand. Subjects did not hide their feelings by hedging or spoke in a roundabout manner. It is evidenced in the use of strong language by a number of Group 2 subjects. Male progeny as a symbol of filial piety was therefore, clearly unacceptable to most Group 2 subjects as it devalues the female. The Western concept of equality and justice for all has been highlighted by quite a number of Group 2 subjects in their verbalization.

6.3 Aspect 3: Education

Stimulus: “wang zi cheng long, wang nu cheng feng.” Hoping for the future generation to obtain excellence in education. Could this saying be applied to the Chinese family?

For the above aspect, three recurrent patterns have been identified and discussed in the two previous aspects and will therefore be discussed briefly. For further details of analysis on this aspect, refer to Appendix E.

For the above stimulus, although the answers given by Group 2 subjects were diverse and appears to lack homogeneity, a distinct pattern was observable. Group 2 subjects were direct and open in forwarding their views and sentiments while most Group 1 subjects tended to explain the practice of putting emphasis on education. Conformity is also observed through their identification with the Chinese society at large through use of the collective pronoun “we.” Refer to Table 6.3 on the next page for greater details.

Table 6.3: Patterns of communication for the aspect of education among Group 1 and Group 2 subjects

Patterns of communication	Group 1 (N=15)	%	Group 2 (N=15)	%
1. Use of Pronouns as identity markers				
i. Singular pronoun “I” and its related forms as a marker of self-identity	2 (MC3, MC12)	13.3	9 (ME1,ME2, ME6, ME7, ME8, ME9, ME11, ME12, ME15)	60
ii. Singular pronoun “I” as a marker of group or collective identity	0	0	3(ME7, ME8, ME9)	20
iii. Plural pronoun “We” and its related forms as markers of group or collective identity	6 (MC1,MC2, MC7, MC8, MC9, MC11, MC15)	40	3 (ME6, ME11, ME15)	20
Collective identity (Total) N= ii+iii)	6 (MC1,MC2, MC7, MC8, MC9, MC11, MC15)	40	6 (ME7, ME8, ME9 ME6, ME11, ME15)	40
2. Explanation				
i. Chinese culture and practices	11 (MC1, MC2,MC3 MC4, MC6, MC7, MC10, MC11, MC12, MC14,MC15)	73.3	3 (ME3, ME5,ME14)	20
ii. Past historical events and occurrences	3 (MC7, MC2, MC15)	20	2 (ME6,ME13)	13.3
iii. Chinese sayings	5 (MC1, MC4,MC6, MC11,MC15)	33.3	0	0
Explanations (Total) N=i+ii+iii	14 (all except MC5)	93.3	5 (ME3,ME5,ME6, ME13,ME14)	33.3
3. Direct and Indirect modes of communication:				
i. Disagreement to views on education	2 (MC8, MC12)	13.3	7 (ME2, ME6, ME7, ME8, ME9, ME11, ME15)	46.7
ii) Sharing of personal information, regrets and disappointments.	1(MC12)	6.7	5(ME2,ME7,ME8,,ME1ME15)	33.3
iii. Negative statements	2 (MC7, MC15)	13.3	6 (ME2, ME4,ME6, ME7, ME13, ME15)	40
Direct modes of communication, Total (N)=i+ii+iii	2 (MC8, MC12)	13.3	10(ME1, ME2, ME4, ME6, ME7, ME8, ME9, ME11, ME13, ME15)	66.7
iv. Indirect modes of communication	2(MC7, MC15)	13.3	0	0

6.3.1 Use of Pronouns as Markers of Identity

The use of pronouns as markers of identity is discussed in relation to three aspects: use of singular pronouns as markers of self-identity, use of singular pronouns as markers of collective identity and use of plural pronouns as markers of collective identity.

6.3.1.1 Group 1 subjects’ use of singular pronouns as markers of self identity

Use of the singular pronoun “I” and its related forms to indicate self identity were also

observed in the responses of two or 13.3% of Group 1 subjects. Examples of their responses are given in section 6.3.1.1 in Appendix E.

6.3.1.2 Group 1 subjects' use of plural pronouns as markers of collective identity

Apart from indicating agreement to Chinese society's view with regard to education, six or 40% of Group 1 subjects indicated their identification with the Chinese society through the use of the plural pronouns "we" and "our." Refer to the responses of MC5, MC6, MC10, MC13 and MC15 given in section 6.3.1.2 in Appendix E.

6.3.1.3 Group 2 subjects' use of singular pronouns as markers of self identity

Nine Group 2 subjects used the singular pronoun "I" and its related forms to indicate their self-identity. Their responses indicated clear conveyance of their distinct individualized views and thoughts. In comparison to other aspects of the FDS, there were less use of singular pronouns for the aspect of education. This could be attributed to the fact that subjects' focus was not so much on themselves but rather to the practices and observances of the Chinese especially in matters relating to education and learning. This also strongly suggests that there is identification on the part of Group 2 subjects with the practices of the ethnic Chinese especially in the matter of educational motivation and achievement. Refer to Appendix E for further details of their responses.

6.3.1.4 Group 2 subjects' use of both the singular and plural pronouns as markers of collective identity

Although most Group 2 subjects displayed a pro-individualistic orientation, 40% of Group 2 subjects indicated that at times, they do identify with the group such as being members of the family or being identified as Chinese. However, Group 2 subjects use both the singular and plural pronouns to indicate their identification with the collective. Thus, a

distinctive difference between both groups of subjects is observed when some Group 2 subjects (ME7, ME8, ME9) tended to personalize their responses by referring to their own family and personal views using “I” instead of “we” to represent their identification with the collective. For further discussion refer to appendix E, section 6.3.1.4.

However, three Group 2 subjects indicated identification with the Chinese through the use of the plural pronoun “we” and its related forms. Refer to the responses of ME6, ME11 and ME15 in Appendix E, section 6.3.1.4 for further details.

6.3.2 Use of Explanations

In the aspect of education, the use of explanations is discussed in relation to three aspects: Chinese culture and practices, past historical events and occurrences as well as Chinese sayings.

6.3.2.1 Reference to Chinese culture and practices by Group 1 subjects

Most Group 1 subjects with the exception of MC12, spoke positively about education. Group 1 subjects gave either a short or detailed explanation of the saying and the practice of traditional society.

In contrast to Group 2 subjects, 73.3% of Group 1 subjects mentioned about emphasis on education as a cultural practice thus it is a source of hope and pride for the parents and is reflected in the Chinese saying discussed. Refer to Appendix E, section 6.3.2.1 for discussion and examples of subjects’ responses.

6.3.2.2 Reference to past historical events and occurrences by Group 1 subjects

In responding to the question posed, 3 Group 1 subjects explained about the Chinese view on education, in particular the traditional view. MC7 in particular referred to the “history point of view” to explain the importance placed on education. This is in keeping with what was discussed earlier in 6.2.2 that it is a Chinese habit to constantly draw upon history to explain the present (Yen Mah, 2003). Similarly, Yow (2006) is of the view that as cultural roots and mindset are derived from history, Chinese history is a valuable source for insight

into Chinese cultural values, wisdom and philosophical thought. This is observed in the recurrent reference to the past and the traditional practice of the Chinese by Group 1 subjects. Excerpts of their verbalizations are given in section 6.3.2.2 in Appendix E

6.3.2.3 Reference to Chinese sayings by Group 1 subjects

Five or 33.3 % of Group 1 subjects chose to explain about the Chinese saying to indicate its relevance and importance to the Chinese family. Excerpts of their responses are given in section 6.3.2.3 in Appendix E.

6.3.2.4 Reference to Chinese culture and practices by Group 2 subjects

In contrast, only three Group 2 subjects, ME3, ME5 & ME14 explained about the importance of education to the Chinese as a cultural phenomenon for economic upliftment. Refer to Appendix E, section 6.3.2.4 for excerpts of their responses.

6.3.2.5 Reference to past historical events and occurrences by Group 2 subjects

Only 2 Group 2 subjects, ME6 and ME13, explained about the importance of education in the historical past which is carried over till today. Refer to Appendix E for their responses.

6.3.3 Direct and Indirect modes of communication

The discussion of the above pattern of communication encompasses: expressing disagreement to the views discussed, negative statements, sharing of personal information, regrets and shortcomings as well as indirect modes of communication.

6.3.3.1 Group 2 subjects' disagreement to views on education

Although education was highly viewed by the Chinese, it is observed that this view was not unanimous among Group 2 subjects. Instead, there were mentions of a number of negatives related to ascribing education top priority. Some Group 2 subjects stated their disagreement towards education being the most important priority for the Chinese family. Contrary to the general view, a few do not think that it is the only route to success nor

should it be given the top priority. Consequently, it has been linked to negative attitudes such as obsession, excessiveness, pride, arrogance and belittling others. In short, it indicated their non-conformity to the high regard for education which is highly valued by Chinese society.

Five Group 2 subjects expressed disagreement with regard to the following in education: education is not the most important thing nor should it be given the top priority, education is not the only route to riches and success or even self-worth. Refer to section 6.3.3.1 in Appendix E for the discussion and examples of their responses.

6.3.3.2 Group 2 subjects' sharing of personal information, regrets and disappointments

Seven Group 2 subjects revealed personal information about themselves and some even shared their personal disappointments. Examples of their responses are given in section 6.3.3.2 in Appendix E.

6.3.3.3 Group 1 subjects' disagreement with regard to views on education

Directness of expression such as in expressing disagreement with regard to the view on education is also observed in the verbalization of 2 Group 1 subjects, MC8 and MC12. Refer to Appendix E, section 6.3.3.3 for their responses.

6.3.3.4 Group 2 subjects' negative statements with regard to saying on education

Six Group 2 subjects were direct in voicing their negativism towards the saying on education. Subjects mentioned about the negative aspects of Chinese parents putting pressure on their children to excel academically and putting top priority on education. Education was linked to excessiveness, regrets and obsessiveness. Refer to excerpts of their responses given in Appendix E, section 6.3.3.4.

6.3.3.5 Group 1 subjects' use of indirectness in communication of ideas

Although the above sub-pattern of communication is not a significant aspect, it is recurrent

in the verbalizations of MC7 and MC15. Excerpts of their responses are given in Appendix E, section 6.3.3.5.

6.3.3.6 Summary

From the above discussion, findings indicate that use of the singular pronoun “I” and its related forms to indicate both self and collective identity were distinctive among Group 2 subjects. This strongly suggests that there is identification on the part of Group 2 subjects with the practices of the ethnic Chinese especially in the matter of educational motivation and achievement. Although the percentage of difference between both groups were insignificant in the area of collective identification, difference is observed in the personalization of their accounts. Although Group 2 subjects discussed the relevance of education to the Chinese, they did not refer to Chinese society to validate their views or feelings. On the contrary, Group 2 subjects’ use of the plural pronoun “we” reflect the distinctive presence of the individualistic “I” with its independent thought patterns and behaviour. Thus, 60% of them indicated self identification through the use of the singular pronoun “I” compared to 40% who indicated group identification through the use of both the pronouns “I” and “we”.

The use of explanation was significant in the verbalization of Group 1 subjects as 93% of them explained about Chinese culture and its practices, historical events and occurrences as well as Chinese saying. In contrast, only 33.3 % of Group 2 subjects did so however, it is significant by comparison with other aspects such as centrality of the family and filial piety. This implies that Group 2 subjects identified more with the aspect of education hence, some subjects probably view it necessary to clarify or defend their views for subscribing to some of the cultural practices.

Consistent with the previous aspects, the next pattern of significance among Group 2 subjects was directness in communicating their views. 66% of Group 2 subjects utilized

this pattern when they shared personal information, regrets and disappointments, expressed their disagreement to the Chinese saying on education discussed as well as pointed out the negative aspects in striving for educational excellence and its applicability to the Chinese family. For the above aspect, significant findings are in the area of identity such as use of the singular pronoun “I” to represent both self and group identity by Group 2 subjects as well as both Group 1 and 2 subjects displaying the same numerical count in group identity.

6.4 Aspect 4: Face

Stimulus: Chinese people place face value highly-*mianzi* literally means “face value” has long been observed by most Chinese. As the saying goes, “Man live for face as trees grow for bark. Please comment on the newspaper clipping about “face.”

For the aspect of face, three recurrent patterns such as use of pronouns, explanations and direct and indirect modes of communication have been identified and discussed. As these patterns are recurrent and repeated, they are discussed briefly. However, sub-patterns which are new or non-recurrent to the grouping such as Group 2 subjects utilizing explanations as a communicative pattern or Group 1 subjects’ indirect modes of communication which are not significant numerically but are recurrent in all four aspects are discussed. See Appendix F for further details. Refer to Table 6.4 for details.

Table 6.4: Patterns of communications for the aspect of face among Group 1 and Group 2 subjects

Patterns of communication	Group 1 (N=15)	%	Group 2 (N=15)	%
1. Use of Pronouns as identity markers				
i. Singular pronoun “I” and its related forms to indicate self-identity	3 (MC3, MC7, MC12)	20	11 (ME1, ME2, ME3, ME5, ME6, ME7, ME8, ME9, ME10, ME11, ME14)	73.3
ii. Singular pronoun “I” and its related forms to indicate collective identity	0	0	2 (ME3, ME9)	13.3
iii. Plural pronoun “We” and its related forms to indicate collective identity	10 (MC1,MC2,MC3,MC5, MC6,MC9,MC10, MC12, MC13, MC15)	66.7	8 (ME1, ME4, ME5, ME8, ME9, ME11, ME12 ME13)	53.33
Collective identity(total) N= ii + iii	10	66.7	10	66.7

Table 6.4, continued

Patterns of communication	Group 1 (N=15)	%	Group 2 (N=15)	%
2. Explanation				
i. Chinese cultural norms and practices	13 (MC1, MC2, MC3, MC4, MC5, MC6, MC9, MC10, MC11, MC12, MC13, MC14, MC15)	86.7	5 (ME12, ME13, ME14, ME15)	33.3
ii. Historical occurrences and events	3 (MC2, MC14, MC15)	20	0	0
iii. Chinese sayings and proverbs.	4 (MC1, MC9, MC10, MC15)	26.7	1 (ME13)	6.7
3. Direct and indirect modes of communication				
i. Disagreement with the issues regarding face	2 (MC8, MC12)	13.3	4 (ME4, ME6, ME7, ME14)	26.7
ii. negative aspects of face	3 (MC1, MC12, MC15)	20	7 (ME1, ME4, ME5, ME6, ME7, ME8, ME12)	46.7
Direct modes(total) N=i+ii	4 (MC1, MC8, MC12, MC5)	26.7	8 (ME1, ME4, ME5, ME6, ME7, ME8, ME12, ME14)	53.3
iii. Indirect modes of communication	3 (MC1, MC7, MC15)	20	0	0

6.4.1 Use of Pronouns as Identity Markers

In the discussion of pronouns as identity markers, three aspects are discussed: use of singular pronouns to indicate self identity as well as collective identity and use of plural pronouns to indicate collective identity. The discussion of the singular pronoun “I” was done in relation to Goffman’s (1990) ‘ego-identity.’ However, its usage has been extended by Group 2 subjects to indicate collective identity.

6.4.1.1 Group 1 subjects’ use of plural pronouns to indicate collective identity

Group 1’s collectivistic identification is seen in the use of the plural pronouns “we,” “us,” and “our” to refer to their membership and affiliation to the group or society. Ten or 66.7% of Group 1 subjects used the plural pronoun “we” in their verbalizations. Refer to Appendix F, section 6.4.1.1 for more details and responses of subjects.

6.4.1.2 Group 2 subjects’ use of singular pronouns to indicate both self and collective identity

Eleven Group 2 subjects used singular pronouns to denote self identity which is in line with the Western view of the self as being unique and distinct. Thus, Group 2 subjects openly

aired their views with regard to the issue of face. Refer to appendix F, section 6.1.4.2 for excerpts of their responses.

However, Group 2 subjects also used singular pronouns to indicate collective identity. For instance, ME3 and ME9 personalized their responses to indicate their identification with the collective, namely the society. Refer to Appendix F, section 6.4.1.4 for details of ME3, ME9, ME11, ME12 and ME13's responses.

6.4.1.3 Group 2 subjects' use of plural pronouns to indicate collective identity

Eight other Group 2 subjects used the plural pronoun "we" in their responses to indicate collective identification but not necessarily with the Chinese alone. For example, ME1's use of the plural pronoun "we" encompasses both the Chinese and others such as other "people, races and culture." Likewise, ME4, ME11, ME12.

On the other hand, ME5, ME13 and ME8 indicated their clear identification with the Chinese through the use of the plural pronoun, "we." Refer to excerpts of the mentioned subjects' responses in Appendix F, section 6.4.1.3.

6.4.2 Use of Explanations

In the discussion of the above, the use of explanations will be discussed in relation to three areas such as Chinese cultural norms and practices, historical occurrences and events as well as proverbs and Chinese sayings.

6.4.2.1. Group 1 subjects' reference to Chinese culture and practices

The use of explanations by Group 1 subjects serve to indicate their support and validation for the views discussed with regard to the aspect of face. In attempting to do so, 13 or 86.7% of Group 1 subjects explained about Chinese cultural norms and practices with regard to face. Refer to Appendix F, section 6.4.2.1 for a discussion on Group 1 subjects' references to Chinese culture and practices.

6.4.2.2 Group 1 subjects' reference to historical occurrences and events

References to their ancestors are made by Group 1 subjects as ancestors are highly respected and revered. Therefore, it is natural for Group 1 subjects to look for affirmation from their family members and ancestors. Thus, when they explained how Chinese society thinks and works, the above Group 1 subjects were in fact subscribing to the views and norms of Chinese society regarding face and its observance. In explaining about the issue of face, some Group 1 subjects referred to historical events and occurrences to validate its practice and observance. Excerpts of their responses are given in Appendix F, section 6.4.2.2.

6.4.2.3 Group 1 subjects' reference to Chinese sayings and proverbs

Subjects who made references to proverbs and Chinese sayings to validate their relevance to the Chinese were all from Group 1 with the exception of ME13. Excerpts of their verbalizations are given in Appendix F, section 6.4.2.3.

6.4.2.4 Group 2 subjects' reference to Chinese cultural norms and practices

On the other hand, 5 Group 2 subjects explained about the importance of face to the Chinese. Excerpts of their verbalization are given in Appendix F, section 6.4.2.4.

6.4.3 Direct and Indirect Modes of Communication

The direct mode of communication is observed among Group 2 subjects where dual patterns of conformity and non-conformity were observed. Conformity is observed in subjects' agreement to the collective view of face while non-conformity is observed in the negative views of face as well as their non-compliance to the accepted Chinese societal norms. The indirect mode of communication is seen in the views presented by three Group 1 subjects who delayed presenting their personal as well as opposing views on face by first aligning themselves to Chinese societal view of face at the onset of discussion.

6.4.3.1 Disagreement to the views on face

Disagreement to the views on face as represented in the Chinese saying has been voiced

by 4 Group 2 subjects, namely: ME4, ME6, ME7 and ME14 who disagreed about putting high value on face. Similarly, two Group 1 subjects, MC8 and MC12, also indicated their disagreement to the saying on face. Refer to excerpts of their responses in Appendix F, section 6.4.3.1.

6.4.3.2 Negative views of face

On the other hand, 6 Group 2 subjects spoke negatively about the aspect of face. ME4, ME5, ME6, ME7, ME8 and ME12 aspects of face. For further details refer to Appendix F, section 6.4.3.2. Although a total of 13 Group 1 subjects agreed about the importance of face which is in keeping with the view of Chinese society, 2 Group 1 subjects did not.

6.4.3.3 Use of indirect modes of communication

Indirect modes of communication are observed in the responses of 3 Group 1 subjects such as MC1, MC7 and MC15. Refer to Appendix F, section 6.4.3.3 for excerpts of their responses.

6.4.3.4 Summary

From the above discussion on the aspect of face, use of singular pronouns such as “I” and its related forms is significant among Group 2 subjects, with 73.3% of them consistently using them as markers of self-identity, where the self is viewed and considered to be distinctive and separate from the collective. This self which is distinctive is also used to represent collective identity.

However, in the area of collective identity, both groups of subjects record a total of 66.7%. Group 1 subjects indicated collective identity through use of the plural pronoun “we” and its related forms compared to Group 2 subjects who used both the singular and plural form of pronouns to indicate collective identity. The result strongly suggests that on the whole there is identification with the group or collective with regard to the practice and observance of face by both groups of subjects. According to Ke (2000), “face” is often an individual’s perception of what others think of him or her and this aspect has been viewed

to be important by subjects from both groups, in particular, MC5, MC10, MC11, ME3, ME9, ME14, just to name a few.

On the other hand, a majority of Group 1 subjects, 86.7% of them employ the use of explanation as they responded to the interview task. This is observed when Group 1 subjects explained about Chinese cultural norms and practices, historical occurrences and Chinese sayings and proverbs. In contrast, use of explanations was not significant among Group 2 subjects although 33.3% of them did so. In the aspect of directness, Group 2 subjects indicated 46.7% compared to 26.7% of Group 1 subjects. Findings suggest that this aspect is viewed to be relevant by the Chinese. Thus, there was little outright criticism from both groups of subjects.

6.5 Conclusion

The conclusion for this chapter is based on the analysis of patterns of communication for Interview 2 or the Structured Interview and answers the research questions for the study. The research questions for the study will henceforth be referred to as RQ and are as follows:

6.5.1 RQ 1) What are the patterns of communication among Chinese language dominant Chinese Malaysians and English language dominant Chinese Malaysians.

Findings in Structured Interview 2 indicated that there were differences in the patterns of communication used by both groups of subjects. Generally, the patterns of communication utilized by a majority of Group 1 subjects are: use plural pronouns as identity markers and use of explanations. Although usage of singular pronouns were less significant among Group 1 subjects, they have been used to indicate both self and group identity. In contrast, a majority of Group 2 subjects utilized the singular pronoun “I” and its related forms as markers of self identity as well as direct modes of communication

6.5.2 RQ 2 i) In what ways do these patterns of communication reflect their world views?

Findings indicate that there are indeed observable differences in the patterns of

communication which indicate the differing cultural orientation of subjects. Generally, Group 1 subjects' identification with the collective is observed primarily through the use of plural pronoun forms and to a lesser extent, singular pronoun forms as well, utilization of explanation to clarify and support their views and the tendency to adopt an indirect style of speaking. Recall that the singular pronoun "I" was used in relation to the "we" of the collective and is not viewed by Group 1 subjects as a separate or distinctive entity (cf section 6.1.1, 6.1.4.3 as well as 6.2.1.3) and it occurred in aspects such as centrality of the family and filial piety.

Furthermore, Group 1 subjects' identification with the collective is observed in the discussion of familial obligations such as providing aid to siblings, roles and expectations of the members of the family, maintenance of family name through male progeny and achievement of educational success to bring honour and respect to one's family. Consequently, Group 1 subjects' focus on the need to maintain face for the family.

Although the indirect mode is not significant numerically, it occurred in all 4 aspects analyzed: centrality of family (13%), filial piety (26.7%), education (13.3%) and face (20%). Moreover, it appears significant when compared to Group 2 subjects who record 0% occurrence. Wai Ling Young (1982) quoted Kaplan's (1966) observation that the Chinese have a tendency to be indirect. She attributes this to their cultural practice of maintaining harmony in conversation such as in the usage of the topic-comment grammatical relationship. Similarly, Johnson (2000) stated that maintenance of elaborate measures in language use is a result of the importance placed on maintenance of social relationships as well as face and dignity of significant others. Thus, as discussed earlier, sensitivity to group goals and needs as well as the inherent social relationship it entails govern notions of discourse practice among Group 1 subjects and is reflected in their patterns of communication.

Findings indicate that use of explanation featured distinctively in all aspects of Group 1 subjects' verbalization and is observed through references to Chinese cultural norms and practices, historical events and occurrences as well as through the use of Chinese proverbs and sayings which affirm Yen Mah's (2003) view that the Chinese world view to a great extent is a product of lessons learnt from the ancestors. Moreover, citation of Chinese proverbs and sayings has been said to play a significant role in the expression of Chinese thought and is viewed by the Chinese to be a barometer of a person's level of education, knowledge and wisdom (Yen Mah, 2003).

Findings also indicate that critical and confrontational language were absent in Group 1 subjects' verbalization. It is probable that subjects viewed such verbal displays to be inappropriate as the Chinese avoid Western adversarial logic which employs argumentative and combative forms of language (Bond, 1991; Nisbett, 2003) for fear of lingering hostility and controversy. Thus, use of explanations to clarify and justify the various practices and situations discussed is a favoured pattern probably because it enabled them to harmonize the various forces and social interests in question which is again consonant with the Chinese cultural emphasis on harmony.

The above Group 1 subjects' communicative patterns indicate their adherence to a Chinese world view which focusses on the collective as "every Chinese was first and foremost a member of a collective or several collectives..." Hence, the emphasis on harmony which was discussed in the findings in sections 6.1.4.3.

On the other hand, the patterns of communication utilized by Group 2 subjects such as the frequent use of singular pronouns as well as direct modes of communication highlight the focus on the individual.

Use of the singular pronoun "I" and its related forms are significant in the responses of Group 2 subjects as they were uninhibited in stating their personal and independent

opinions, preferences and expectations. This suggests strongly the focus placed on self-identity which is in keeping with Western thought as Westerners possess a strong sense of individual identity and orientation towards personal goals and success (Nisbett, 2003). Although a majority of Group 2 subjects indicated strong self-identity in all aspects analyzed, findings reveal that in aspects such as education and face, subjects also indicated identification with the collective. However, distinct differences exist in Group 2 subjects' pattern of identification as some of them indicate identification through use of the singular pronoun "I" which highlights on the distinctiveness of the individual instead of the plural pronoun "we."

This is in keeping with the Western practice of prioritizing on the individual such as in the use of singular pronoun "I" which somehow is carried over by Group 2 subjects to indicate their personal views with regard to a collective practice. For example, for the aspect of face, ME3 stated that, "Because I'm Chinese, I also feel that I need a lot of "mianzi." Similarly, ME9 also personalized his response with regard to face by stating, "We live for face. I live for face. If I want to stand out in society, I want to have some face." Somehow, subjects' focus was still first and foremost on the self before the collective. This pattern of use is distinct in aspects such as education and face where convergence of views occurred between both groups with regard to their practice and importance.

Although explanation is not a significant pattern of communication among Group 2 subjects in Interview 2 or Structured Interview, it is interesting to note that this pattern while not being significant in aspects such as centrality of family and filial piety which records 6.7% for both aspects, rose to 33.3% for aspects such as education and face. The findings imply that there were Group 2 subjects who identified with the Chinese cultural practice of prioritizing on education and face. Thus, they probably deemed it necessary to explain their views and practices which were consonant with the Chinese world view.

On the other hand, the pattern of directness is observed in the open expression of feelings, views, expectations and thoughts by Group 2 subjects. It is manifested in the aspect of centrality of family where subjects provided their personal views and responses to the question and situation posed. Likewise, in the aspect of filial piety, a majority of Group 2 subjects used strong language to reflect their rejection of Meng Zi's statement. Subjects were direct, assertive and even used confrontational language to express their feelings. While in the aspect of education, a number of Group 2 subjects were direct and open in sharing personal information, disappointments and regrets. All the above, suggest strongly of adherence to a Western orientation as it has been stated that Americans and Westerners dislike beating about the bush but prefer to get to a point in any discussion (Lam and Graham, 2007).

Although there were instances where Group 1 subjects spoke their mind, it only occurred infrequently and among subjects such as MC3, MC4 and MC12, who were in the habit of doing so. On the contrary, most Group 2 subjects were open and direct about their feelings and views. They did not hesitate to indicate their strong feelings or views which was not a norm of Chinese society. Hence, it is clear that subjects were not in conformity to Chinese societal view as they tended to criticize, disagree or pass negative comments about the sayings, proverbs or views discussed.

6.5.3 RQ 2ii) Is there a consistent pattern of differences between both groups?

In Structured Interview 2, the pattern of differences between both groups were consistent and recurrent to a few specific patterns and aspects. Findings reveal that of the 4 aspects examined, overall, Group 1 subjects conform to the Chinese world view in all 4 aspects. For Group 1 subjects, use of plural pronouns as identity markers was distinct in the aspects of centrality of family (66.7%) and face (66.7%). Although this pattern of communication only recorded 46.7% for the aspect of filial piety, it appears significant when compared to only 6.7% of use by Group 2 subjects. Use of explanation as a pattern

of communication seems to be the most significant pattern as it is distinct in all 4 aspects analyzed: centrality of family (60%), filial piety (86.7%), education (93%) and face (86.7%). Although indirect modes of communication are less significant, they are observable in all four aspects analyzed: centrality of family (13.3%), filial piety (26.7%), education (13.3%) and face (20%).

For Group 2 subjects, use of the singular pronoun “I” and its related forms as identity markers is significant in all 4 aspects: centrality of family (100%), filial piety (93.3%), education (60%) and face (73.3%). On the other hand, the direct mode of communication is another pattern which featured significantly in all 4 aspects analyzed: centrality of family (73.3%), filial piety (93.3%), education (66.7%) and face (53.3%).

Thus, Group 2 subjects conform to a predominantly Western world view in 3 aspects namely: centrality of family, filial piety and education. Patterns of convergence are observed in the use of singular pronouns to indicate collective identity for aspects such as education and face. In the aspect of education, almost all Group 1 (with the exception of MC8) and a majority of Group 2 subjects (with the exception of ME7, ME8, ME12 & ME15) indicated their identification with the collective view such as endorsing success in education as the hope of Chinese families and education being a source of pride for parents and families. However, six Group 2 subjects also discussed about the negative aspects of prioritizing on education (cf Chapter 6, section 6.3.3.4). It is needful to note that in the reference to group or collective identity, 40% of subjects from both groups did so. However, three Group 2 subjects also indicated their collective identity through the use of the singular pronoun “I” instead of “we.” The responses for some patterns for the aspect of face were a departure from the rest of the aspects as Group 2 subjects indicated both self and group identity. Although 60% of Group 2 subjects indicated identification with the Chinese, 73.3% of them also indicated self identity. Thus, collective identity by Group 2 subjects were indicated through use of both the singular pronoun “I” and the plural pronoun “we.” This suggests that Group 2 subjects who used the singular pronoun

“I” to indicate identification with the collective did so from their personal perspectives. Therefore, focus was still on the self rather than the collective.

However, discrepancies which were highlighted in Chapter 5 section 5.5.6 and 5.6.3 recurred in the responses in both groups of subjects for Interview 2 or Structured Interview. This was observed in the responses of 3 Group 1 subjects (MC3, MC4 and MC12) whose responses were reflective of Western world views. MC4 reflected Western orientation in two aspects such as filial piety and centrality of family, MC2 in three aspects such as centrality of family, education and face while MC3 reflected Western orientation in all 4 aspects. In Group 2, two subjects (ME9 and ME13) utilized some patterns of communication similar to that of Group 1 subjects such as in their references to Chinese phrases, proverbs, sayings and historical practices in presenting their arguments and stands which indicated their identification with the Chinese and hence their alignment with the practices and philosophy of the Chinese. Although these subjects do not conform to the overall orientation of their grouping, they also displayed traits that are inherent of their grouping. For example, MC3, MC4 and MC12 utilized explanation to fulfill their task in 3 aspects such as filial piety, education and face. ME9 and ME13 who displayed distinctive traits of Chinese culture and practices also utilized western traits such as using singular pronouns as markers of self identity in aspects such as centrality of family and filial piety and direct modes of communication for aspects such as filial piety and education.