Language in Society **42**, 557–577.
doi:10.1017/S0047404513000663

Metadiscursive regimes of diversity in a multinational corporation

JOSEPH SUNG-YUL PARK

English Language and Literature, National University of Singapore
AS5, 7 Arts Link, Singapore 117570
ellpjs@nus.edu.sg

ABSTRACT

Informed by recent work on the commodification of language and identity, this article offers a critique of the neoliberal corporate discourse of "diversity management," in which the diversity of the workforce is conceived as a resource for maximizing profit. Through a close analysis of the language ideologies deployed in an interaction between three mid-level managers at a multinational corporation and a researcher, this article shows how the discourse of diversity management, constituting a metadiscursive regime, works to rationalize and justify the inequalities of the global workplace through the specific ways in which older and newer discourses of language and identity are juxtaposed. The findings emphasize how sociolinguistic research may contribute to a deeper understanding of the conditions of work in the new economy by identifying language as an indispensable part of the mechanism that sustains processes of control. (Metadiscursive regime, diversity management, neoliberalism, work, language ideology)*

METADISCURSIVE REGIMES IN CONTROL SOCIETIES

Research on language in the new economy (Cameron 2000; Heller 2003, 2010a, 2010b; Urciuoli 2008; Duchêne & Heller 2012) has charted the shifts in our understanding of the relationship between language and identity—how we are encouraged to see language no longer as an emblem of one's essentialized self, inalienable from one's cultural provenance such as national or ethnic identity or political affiliation, but as a skill and resource that may be detached flexibly from more durable senses of belonging. These studies also reveal that older notions of identity do not disappear, but are reintegrated into a new system of valuation, working in tandem with newer conceptions of self. Such tension between older and newer discourses often serves as a site of conflict and struggle, for instance, over what counts as authentic language use and what constitutes valuable competence, and in other cases becomes a source of contradictions inherent in an apparently stable system of social power.

© Cambridge University Press, 2013 0047-4045/13 $15.00

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0047404513000663 Published online by Cambridge University Press

While such juxtaposition of old and new discourses is materially rooted in conflicting pressures of the market—for instance, in the dual need for variability and standardization (Duchêne & Heller 2012)—it also becomes important to understand specifically how these discourses are put together to produce particular effects and consequences for the worker. This is because discourses of commodification are part of the broader social transformations that we are experiencing in late capitalism (Gee, Hull, & Lankshear 1996; Fairclough 2002; Holborow 2007; Park 2010; Kubota 2011). Deleuze (1995) observes that we are moving away from DISCIPLINARY SOCIETIES, in which individuals are expected to fit themselves into moulds defined by distinct institutional sites such as home, school, or factory, towards CONTROL SOCIETIES, where individuals voluntarily engage in self-modulation, constantly adjusting themselves to the varying needs of different contexts. As Boutet (2012) shows, commodified language work is also increasingly about flexibly adopting communicative skills, rather than about following rigid rules and prohibitions regarding language use. Thus, our analysis of commodification must account for how language users, as workers in the new economy, come to dispose themselves as particular kind of subjects through their negotiation between old and new discourses of language and identity. This does not mean that overt discipline in the form of workplace language policy (e.g. regulations about which language should be used, scripts that workers should follow, etc.) is no longer relevant—the point here is that we need to recognize and critique the new and more insidious ways in which power operates in the changing workplace of the new economy.

A useful notion here is that of METADISCURSIVE REGIMES (Bauman & Briggs 2003; Makoni & Pennycook 2007), or specific orders that condition the way we talk about language. In so far as metadiscursive regimes refer to normative discourses about language, they may also be understood as interactional regimes (Blommaert, Collins, & Slembrouck 2005:212), properly emphasizing how speakers themselves, through their interactional practices, contribute to such order. Commodification is fundamentally rooted in the way speakers come to understand and construct themselves through discourse; it precisely involves a shift in the way we talk about the interconnection between language and identity, boundaries between language varieties, and ways in which different varieties and their speakers are hierarchically valued. In this sense, the notion of metadiscursive regimes allows us to focus on how speakers' own practices of negotiating between old and new ideologies of language and identity in discourse contribute to the very constitution of those speakers as ideal (or less than ideal) subjects and workers in the neoliberal workplace.

In this article, I discuss how such metadiscursive regimes can function as a mechanism of control in the workplace, even in the absence of overt national or corporate-level language policy that regulates speakers' practices. More specifically, I focus on analyzing metadiscursive regimes of language and culture at a multinational corporation (MNC), institutionalized in a particular form of managerial discourse commonly referred to as DIVERSITY MANAGEMENT. Since the 1980s,

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0047404513000663 Published online by Cambridge University Press

corporations have been embracing "culture" as a mode of governance (Brown 2009), enthusiastically speaking about the diversity of their workforce and utilizing such discourse as a managerial technique in late capitalism. As I show here, such metadiscursive regimes generate not only evaluations about which linguistic resources or styles of speaking should be seen as more valuable, but also beliefs about how one should dispose oneself as a worker in the global workplace defined by its diversity. By analyzing an extended interaction among three mid-level managers at a MNC and myself, I demonstrate how such metadiscursive regimes may work to rationalize the inherent contradictions that exist in the neoliberal order of the global corporation and the inequalities that its employees may suffer.

DIVERSITY MANAGEMENT: LINGUISTIC AND CULTURAL DIFFERENCE IN THE WORKPLACE

Diversity management is part of the broader set of transformations of the workplace in the new economy. Corporations today actively incorporate diversity as part of their organizational agenda. If companies of the past only reluctantly attended to problems of discrimination based on race, gender, and other social categories, recognizing and valuing the diversity of the workforce is now supposed to be good for the corporation. It not only benefits the company by enhancing its public image, but also allows corporations to maximally utilize their employees' potential by harnessing the wide-ranging skills, knowledge, and experience represented by their varying cultural and social backgrounds. In this sense, diversity management has much affinity with the ideology and practices of human resources management; it is a strategy that treats diversity as a resource to be closely managed for maximum profit (Kirton & Greene 2010). Diversity management first emerged in the late 1980s in the US, within the historically specific context of the rapidly diversifying demographics of the country's workforce, as well as the reactionary backlash towards frameworks of equal opportunity and affirmative action (Lorbiecki & Jack 2000; Holvino & Kamp 2009). More generally, diversity management can be situated within the neoliberal transformation of society that is reconfiguring the way we understand our selves and social relations.

Neoliberalism is a belief that market-based individual freedom, guaranteed by institutions of the state, is the best way to address social problems and achieve human well-being (Harvey 2005:2). It is not simply an economic doctrine, as pursuing the ideal of the capitalist free market has consequences for ideologies about the self and being in the world (Rose 1990, 1996; Yan 2003; Urciuoli 2008; Park 2010). Neoliberalism promotes individuality and entrepreneurship, celebrating the individual's choice and desire to realize the hidden, unlimited potential of the self as a form of human capital. The ideal neoliberal subject does not begrudgingly participate in work, but displays initiative, responsibility, and flexibility, willingly taking risks and engaging in projects of endless self-improvement (e.g. by taking up new

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0047404513000663 Published online by Cambridge University Press

skills and developing new careers) instead of relying on past achievements, welfare, or solidarity. Foucault's notion of governmentality (1991) identifies in this a new form of control (see also Deleuze 1995); instead of enforcing order through direct force, governmentality disposes subjects to willingly take up particular identities and craft their selves in a way that supports the interests of capital.

Diversity management fits into this picture because it extends the scope of management to the entire self of the employee. By subsuming the cultural life of workers under the purview of the organization, it seeks to secure their commitment, initiative, and accountability; it "demands (nicely) that employees give the corporation their entire person and potential, now including even those aspects which had previously remained refractory to direct workplace control" (Gordon 1995:18). Critics thus argue that diversity management is unlikely to remove discrimination based on social and cultural difference. Because diversity management locates diversity not in social groups but in the individual (in the form of the individual's human capital), it reframes it as an ahistorical notion detached from deep-rooted structures of inequality (Gordon 1995; Ahmed 2007; Mills 2011). In this sense, the focus on diversity is not really a turn to the collective and the social, but another aspect celebrated in the neoliberal individual, along with the characteristics of initiative, flexibility, and self-development that we discussed above.

Insofar as diversity management incorporates the entire self of the worker, it also constitutes a metadiscursive regime. This is because diversity management entails a particular ideological stance towards cultural difference, which inevitably includes linguistic and communicative difference. Diversity management instills in the worker a particular way of thinking and talking about different speakers and their varying ways of using language. Such metapragmatic discourse is in fact extremely important, because of the significance of language in the neoliberal workplace. The workforce has become the wordforce (Heller 2010b); and this is not only the case for the service industry, where communication obviously is the central activity. For other sectors as well, flexible, team-based work increasingly requires co-workers to communicate effectively for the purposes of close management of productivity and quality, often across hierarchical and professional boundaries (Iedema & Scheeres 2003)—and in the context of the global workplace, linguistic and cultural boundaries. Thus, metadiscursive regimes that constrain workers' beliefs about communication in the workplace—including how workers should engage in communication across linguistic boundaries, how they should value linguistic difference, and how they should relate communicative practices to their identities as workers, and so on—constitute a key element in diversity management.

This perspective adds a useful dimension to the study of language in the workplace. Previous research on the sociolinguistics of work has highlighted how problems of inequality, discrimination, and stereotyping are reproduced through particular institutionalized constraints in the workplace involving language. For instance, influential studies have pointed out how workers from particular social, linguistic, or cultural backgrounds may be disadvantaged due to structural constraints

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0047404513000663 Published online by Cambridge University Press

of the workplace deriving from overt managerial action, such as gatekeeping interviews (Gumperz 1992; Campbell & Roberts 2007; Roberts, Campbell, & Robinson 2008), organization of tasks on the work floor (Hull 1999), or discrepancy between training and requirements of the job (Duff, Wong, & Early 2000). But as the world of work becomes increasingly defined in terms of control, rather than discipline (to return to Deleuze's distinction), what becomes important is not simply those structural constraints in the form of direct managerial intervention, but the more subtle ways in which workers are made to dispose themselves as idealized laborers who willingly adjust themselves to the demand of capital. As diversity management implies a (seeming) retreat of management from discipline, it becomes more difficult for us to place our fingers on the "source" of discrimination in the workplace, because workers' behavior is controlled no longer through a single organizational juncture, but through the very way workers engage in work itself across multiple contexts.

A focus on metadiscursive regimes allows us to continue the critical impetus of the sociolinguistics of work into the era of the new economy. An analysis of complex "semiotic organization" of language ideologies (Gal 2012:22) as they condition everyday talk about language in the workplace is valuable not only because it provides us with ethnographic insight about how workers deal with managerial intervention into their work life; more importantly, it offers a glimpse into how control in the neoliberal workplace resides in the way in which workers come to occupy identities and subjectivities as ideal workers through the discourse they produce. In this article, I show that it is the metadiscursive regime that juxtaposes two different discourses of language and communication—an older discourse that upholds essentialist notions of language and identity, and a newer discourse that routinizes and technologizes communicative difference—that leads participants in interaction to rationalize and justify their position in a multicultural workplace that supposedly embraces diversity. My goal is to demonstrate that a close analysis of the highly specific way in which the two discourses are deployed in interaction offers deeper insight about the role of language in the global workplace. For this purpose, I investigate the language ideologies that are manifest in my data—participants' explicit and implicit articulations of linguistic and cultural difference in their talk about work—and their consequences for the relations of power and inequality within the corporation. Before we discuss this case, however, I must first provide a brief overview of the ethnographic context of my research site.

TENSIONS OF DIVERSITY AT BIODYNE REGIONAL HEADQUARTERS

Diversity management at Biodyne

The data for this article comes from an interaction that I participated in with three employees of a MNC that I call Biodyne,[1] who were working at the company's

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0047404513000663 Published online by Cambridge University Press

regional headquarters in Singapore. It was recorded as part of a broader research project that investigated the cross-cultural positioning of Koreans working at MNCs in Singapore. The interaction took place in January 2010, during lunchtime at a crowded food court next to the participants' office. The three participants were Donna, a Chinese Singaporean, Ranjit, an Indian national, and Shin, a Korean national, who were all mid-level managers working in the same department. I had already known Shin for a while as he was an acquaintance of mine and also a key participant in my larger project, but I met Donna and Ranjit for the first time that day. The interaction took place somewhat accidentally—I had arranged to interview Donna over lunch, but when we went to the food court we ran into Ranjit and Shin, so we ended up sitting together and the interview became something of an informal focus group. This led to a serendipitous opportunity to observe how the participants talked about their work among themselves. Even though I controlled the general flow of the interaction by asking questions, the talk itself was quite lively, with the participants actively discussing and joking among themselves about their life and work at Biodyne.

Biodyne is a MNC that operates throughout the world, with its headquarters in Basel, Switzerland. It is a market leader in its own industry, and has over 25,000 employees in ninety countries around the world. Such global reach of the company means that diversity is an unavoidable issue for Biodyne. In particular, the Asia-Pacific regional office in Singapore was a highly diverse place where interaction across cultural boundaries routinely took place. Unlike country offices, which mostly took care of local sales and production and were staffed predominantly by employees hired locally, each regional office supervised and managed the country offices in its respective region, and for that reason culled its employees from various countries within the region. The greater diversity of the Asia-Pacific region meant that its office was particularly more diverse than other regional offices; the Singapore office had over 150 people from nearly thirty different nationalities, including both people from within the region and Westerners from the headquarters in Basel. These characteristics made the Singapore office a truly multicultural workplace. Communication within the office, though predominantly in English, frequently took place between colleagues with different linguistic and cultural backgrounds; employees also routinely communicated with country offices located in culturally and linguistically distinct places within the region, ranging from Australia and China to Thailand and India.

Ironically, though, there was relatively little emphasis on diversity management in terms of overt corporate policy. Even though Biodyne had a Chief Diversity Officer (CDO) position as many companies that view diversity as a critical leadership factor often do (Llopis 2011), there was little specific training related to diversity. While Biodyne offered various training programs to its employees, including ones regarding communication in the workplace, they were usually outsourced programs provided by vendors, thus not specifically tailored to the contingencies of Biodyne, and usually focusing on generic soft skills such as presentation skills.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0047404513000663 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Employees were annually educated on the company's code of conduct, the last item of which was about diversity (how the company aims to cultivate a culture where each employee can contribute to the fullest of her or his potential, how it actively recruits people from different cultures and backgrounds, etc.), but the employees that I spoke to told me that the training focused mostly on reiterating technical issues of legal responsibility (such as avoiding discrimination and harassment). This lack of overt managerial interventions regarding the company's cultural and linguistic diversity is perhaps unsurprising, given that organizations tend not to be interested in the varying linguistic and cultural resources that workers bring with them unless there is significant social and ethical pressure (Wee 2012). The area in which diversity management at Biodyne was most visible as overt corporate action was that of recruitment, in its active hiring of employees from across the region; but what attracted the attention of the top management more was other "trendy" issues such as sustainability and the environment, which had a more direct impact on the company's business. This led some employees to remark that the company was merely paying lip service to the idea of diversity.

There was also an unavoidable sense in which diversity was foregrounded as an important and valued characteristic of Biodyne, however. The sheer diversity of Biodyne's workforce was strongly emphasized on the corporate level; for instance, publicly available corporate documents such as annual reports repeatedly highlighted the diversity of the company's employees. Evidently, such corporate-level discourse had a significant impact on how the employees conceptualized their workplace, and this was reflected in much awareness and explicit talk about this diversity. For instance, the employees of the Singapore office that I spoke with regularly told me how diverse the office was, often in a proud and excited tone. One salient example of this was their claim that no matter where in the world they went, if they ran into some kind of trouble they could always call back the office to get help, because most likely there will be someone from that country or someone who can speak the local language. Such stories were clearly told as amazing illustrations of the power and potential of the regional office's diversity.

This apparent discrepancy—between the relative lack of practical corporate-level interventions regarding diversity and discourses about diversity that were widely circulated within the office—in fact, is what makes Biodyne an interesting site for investigating diversity management as technology of neoliberal control; it allows us to focus on how, through the mediation of metadiscursive regimes, diversity management may still work to dispose employees as particular kind of subjects, even in the absence of direct acts of discipline. The prevalent highlighting of diversity at the office did not mean that diversity posed no problem. In fact, there was much tension surrounding the issue of diversity. Obviously, not all forms of cultural and linguistic difference were valued equally, and despite the great value placed on diversity, there was in fact strong pressure towards convergence in linguistic and communicative practice. For some employees, then, the discourse of diversity

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0047404513000663 Published online by Cambridge University Press

management was a false promise, as they realized that their linguistic and cultural background works as a handicap, rather than as capital valued by the corporation. As I show below, it is through the work of metadiscursive regimes in everyday discourse that such contradictions of diversity management came to be rationalized and neutralized, leading employees to accept and internalize the values attributed to certain ways of speaking and interacting instead of others.

The dilemma of Korean employees

The contradiction of diversity management was a particularly salient issue for the Korean employees. Including Shin, there were nine Korean nationals working at the regional office, the largest contingent of Asians by nationality after the Chinese and the Indians. These Koreans represented the new, elite modes of Korean transnationalism with greater mobility (Park & Lo 2012). Since the 1990s, Koreans have been moving abroad to work at MNCs overseas, aided by South Korea's globalization and the wider recognition that Korean corporations received in the international business scene. Those who came to be employed in MNCs overseas were typically mid-level managers who were relatively successful in their career; usually they would already have been working at the Korean branches of foreign multinationals, recognized for their job performance and English language competence and for their potential to competently adapt to the multilingual and multicultural global workplace. In this sense, they deviate from the stereotypical image of Korean workers as monolingual and monocultural that derives from Korea's linguistic and cultural homogeneity (Park 2008).

At the same time, however, the future prospects for Korean employees of foreign-based MNCs were often considered to be limited. In the case of Biodyne, even though the Korean employees were well recognized for their accomplishments, it was generally perceived that their current position as mid-level managers was about as far as they could be promoted. The next step up the ladder for them would be to take up a top position in the region or be assigned to the headquarters in Basel as part of the global-level management team; however, no Korean so far had ever achieved this. It was true that Asians in general had a much more limited chance of entering the circle of Biodyne's top-level management.[2] Nonetheless, it was often considered (by Koreans themselves as well as their non-Korean colleagues) that Koreans were falling behind in their foray into higher management, compared to, for instance, Singaporeans and Indians.

While the actual reason for such disparity must be complex (possibly involving a range of issues from individual performance and social relations to ideologies about race and ethnicity), the typical explanation given, both by Koreans and non-Koreans, often involved the issue of communication. In interviews I carried out with Koreans working for MNCs in Singapore, for example, Koreans' English was often characterized as sufficient enough for carrying out routine job requirements, but inadequate for more serious and fast-paced discussions and

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0047404513000663 Published online by Cambridge University Press

debates in strategic meetings. The interviewees would report that they sometimes feel that they are unable to express their views and ideas as often and clearly as they would like to, because they were not comfortable in quickly formulating and confidently articulating their thoughts in English. The implication of such statements, then, is that Koreans are unsuccessful in advancing into the ranks of higher-level managers because of their weak communicative skills.

We should, however, be careful not to treat such reports at face value, for evaluations of competence are always shaped and constrained by language ideologies, and must be understood within contexts of power (Park 2010). This is particularly the case for English in South Korea, where the widespread ideology of self-deprecation frequently leads Koreans to downplay their competence in English, subjecting them to a feeling of anxiety and inadequacy (Park 2009). We must also remember that these Koreans were competent managers, as evidenced by the fact that they were recruited from the Korean country office to work at the regional headquarters. Thus, it is important for us to consider how such talk about Koreans' communicative "difference" is deployed within metadiscursive regimes that are linked with broader flows of power.

The Korean participant in the recorded interaction, Shin, could be one example of this. In late 2011, Shin became one of the candidates for a higher managerial position. While he was quite optimistic about the outcome, the promotion was given to another candidate, who was an Indian national. When Shin asked his supervisor why he did not get the promotion, the answer he received was that it was because of his English—Shin's line manager had complained that his English was difficult to understand. This surprised me, because though clearly not a "native speaker," Shin appeared to me as reasonably competent in English; he was in fact a good communicator, using a mixture of logical argumentation and humor to convey his ideas in an engaging way. Shin was thus understandably upset by the supervisor's comment; he explained to me that no one, until that date, had ever complained to him about his English, and (probably rightly) suggested that it must have been office politics that cost him the promotion. Yet, Shin's story clearly resonates with the common argument I repeatedly heard (from people including Shin himself) about the position of Koreans in the global workplace: that Koreans cannot move further along the corporate hierarchy because of their communicative skills.

The fact that language and communication could be used as an explicit explanation for such outcomes suggests that diversity management in the global workplace does not simply operate on the level of overt corporate policy, but through metadiscursive regimes as well. It shows the extent to which older discourses of language and identity—in this case, that which essentially links "Koreanness" with a communicative competence lacking in value—still permeate talk about difference in Biodyne, despite its purported acceptance of diversity. While it is tempting to interpret this as a matter of discrimination and prejudice, it is important to explore the mechanisms through which such ideologies get inserted into

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0047404513000663 Published online by Cambridge University Press

everyday discourse, to carefully consider how this discourse about Koreans becomes a part of the normative ways in which difference is talked about under the regime of diversity management. This is because such metadiscursive regimes highlight not only the process through which different social groups come to be evaluated differently, but also how employees may be compelled to accept the realities of the workplace by adhering to normative ways of speaking (e.g. how Koreans may accept their position through an ideological conception of their own competence in English). This is indeed precisely the point about diversity management—how workers come to rationalize and internalize the logic of the capitalist workplace by understanding the self in those very terms. For this reason, metadiscursive regimes, which normalize and articulate particular orders of indexicality (Blommaert et al. 2005), become critical in understanding the consequences of diversity management for people such as Korean employees of Biodyne. Let us now turn to the analysis of the metadiscursive regime of diversity in the interaction between Donna, Ranjit, Shin, and myself.

DIVERSITY MANAGEMENT IN INTERACTION

Juxtaposing discourses of communicative difference

Juxtaposition of older and newer discourses of language and identity was prominent in the interaction. The older discourse was reflected in the way in which essentialized conceptions of language and culture dominated talk about different speakers. The participants made frequent references to essentialized cultural categories based on nationality, which were in turn associated with particular communicative behavior—manifestations of what Billig (1995) calls banal nationalism. The following example, which occurred when I asked Donna and Ranjit how they would characterize their Korean co-workers, illustrates this.[3]

(1) D: Donna, J: Joseph (researcher), R: Ranjit, S: Shin[4]

119	D:	I think most of them ((i.e. Koreans)) are very conscious about their language.
120	J:	Conscious of language?
121	D:	Yeah=. Compared to other nationalities. I mean normally Indians will
122		not have a problem.
123		(.)
124	R:	Yeah because English is often like first language. As good as.
125	D:	[Yeah.]
126	R:	[Mhm,]
127	D:	But if you're talking about even the Swiss, of even the= Scottish, (1.0)
128		or even= uh =, any other people= you know the Chinese=, they tend not
129		to so conscious of their language.
130	J:	I see.
131	D:	Yeah.
132	J:	So, so when you= say they're conscious about their language, in- in
133		what way. How- how do you notice those kind of things.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0047404513000663 Published online by Cambridge University Press

134 (2.0)
135 D: I think the way they talk. You know the way they talk really
136 <X care- X> I think they think, a lot, before they=, speak in English,
137 J: I see.
138 D: But, but else if you look at, like, maybe even the Chinese, they don't
139 think so much. You know they will just talk.
140 S: Just speak it out.
141 D: They will just speak it out.
142 S: Mhm.

In line 119, Donna offers the observation that Koreans "are very conscious about their language," which she later clarifies as meaning they think a lot before speaking in English (line 136). While somewhat qualified ("most of them" in line 119), this characterization is a good illustration of the essentialized categories of national-level identities that are articulated through metapragmatic stereotypes (Agha 2007:148) that typify certain communicative behavior as regularly associated with a group. This is illustrative of the way in which cultural difference was talked about in the whole interaction; stereotypical views about how each national group engaged in communication in the context of work were repeatedly articulated.

To be sure, the national-level identity category of "Korean" was first invoked by my questioning. There is sufficient reason to believe, however, that such metapragmatic stereotypes were not simply triggered by my question, but derived more fundamentally from the way the participants understood social relations in their global workplace. First, the characterization of Koreans in this example is not produced as an isolated statement, but located within a network of comparative and relational observations about other groups also defined on the same level, suggesting how distinctions in nationality served as natural categories for making sense of communicative difference in the workplace. Thus, Donna immediately contrasts Koreans' communicative behavior with other groups such as the Indians and Chinese. Second, such network of contrast is produced collaboratively among the participants (Ranjit's contribution in line 124, and Shin's in line 140), which shows the extent to which this understanding of difference based on essentialized communicative behavior was a shared resource among the participants. Indeed, references to such cultural metapragmatic categories were repeatedly found not only in this interaction and among these participants, but in my interaction and interviews with other Biodyne employees, and with those working in other MNCs with whom I spoke in the course of my research.

The newer discourse of language and identity, in contrast, could be found in the way the participants treated such cultural difference as mundane or trivial. When I asked whether Koreans' (purported) communicative difference caused any difficulty for work in the office, Donna and Ranjit responded that it did not, explaining that such communicative difference is so pervasive and common in the regional office that there is nothing special about it. Ranjit said:

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0047404513000663 Published online by Cambridge University Press

(2) 324 R: Basically what we want to do is to tune our brain, our- our understanding
325 to what- the meaning, <X we should get X> on that sentence. So once you
326 have that tuning right then I don't think it's a problem what words you
327 use. What- I mean what is important for me to is to get the meaning.
328 The right meaning out of what they're talking about. So for, initially
329 I mean I had light problems to understand what she was talking about what
330 he was talking about. It was the, sentencing or phrasing is different.
331 Or the word selection is different. But once I knew what I mean what kind
332 of- uh words she will use for what meaning. Then it's very easy for me
333 to understand. Same with ~Shin, same with, all other guys.

Ranjit describes the work of accommodation in the multicultural workplace as simply a matter of "tun[ing] our brain"—which seems to mean familiarizing oneself with the specific forms of English used by different speakers, in terms of accent, word choice, or grammatical structure. This in turn is represented as highly routine ("same with Shin, same with all other guys", line 333), and "very easy" (line 332)—even though in reality such intercultural work may not necessarily be so simple or straightforward. In contrast to more essentialized discourses of language and identity, in which linguistic and cultural difference is considered to be natural and fundamental, and thus a potential barrier to cross-cultural understanding, Ranjit's formulation of cultural difference as mundane and routine does not take difference as essential, but something that can be overcome by a technologized accommodation to the Other (e.g. "tuning our brain"), particularly by seasoned workers of MNCs who have developed great familiarity with diversity. Such reflections of ideologies of commodification, what we might identify as "technologization of discourse" (Fairclough 2002), are also articulated by Donna later, as given in (3).

(3) 341 D: So, you need to adjust to every culture, it's not just
342 Koreans, but I always say, Australians, they always want you
343 to call them, they don't want emails, so they like to- they like to
344 talk. Okay, so if you write that email, it might not get a response,
345 even in a month's time. After sending repeated emails they won't
346 reply. Because they have different way of doing it, but if you call
347 them, they will give you the answer immediately. You know the
348 Thais, also don't like to speak in English, so if you try to
349 communicate in English it's also very difficult for the Thais, it's not
350 only Koreans, if you try to communicate with a Chinese in English,
351 of course I can communicate in Mandarin, they will always prefer
352 Mandarin, they will not like, English of course.

Switching from talk about intra-office communication (that is, communication with colleagues in the same office) to communication with people in country offices (whose communicative practices may be even more diverse), Donna lists various strategies for intercultural communication—for instance, noting different preferences for using email vs. telephone, or for using English vs. other languages. While Donna's list essentializes communicative difference along national

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0047404513000663 Published online by Cambridge University Press

boundaries, it also technologizes it—that is, divergent communicative practices are represented as differences that can be easily learned and overcome once the appropriate technique for speaking with each respective group is identified. Thus, in this sense, the older discourse of language and identity is interlaced with a new discourse in which communicative difference is only a matter of technical acquisition that can be facilitated by being a part of the corporation and its immanent diversity.

The way Donna and Ranjit talked about communicative difference at Biodyne, then, is highly congruent with the discourse of diversity management. Cultural and linguistic difference is seen not as something that should be suppressed—it is not seen as representing a fundamental barrier to mutual understanding to begin with—but something that can be effectively managed through technological adaptation, for the purpose of facilitating smooth interpersonal relationships and collaboration. This illustrates how older discourses that emphasize essentialized cultural and linguistic boundaries may not be abandoned, but reworked into a newer discourse that frame them as manageable within the context of the MNC.

Rationalizing contradictions of diversity management

What effect is produced by this particular way of talking about communicative difference, by this juxtaposition of discourses via routinization and technologization of communicative difference? At least one effect is how it may place responsibility on employees who fail or refuse to adopt such a technologized perspective on diversity. After some extended discussion of the mundaneness of communicative difference at the regional headquarters, when I sought to confirm whether Koreans were truly no different from other nationals in this regard, Donna mentioned that there actually is "one different thing about Koreans" that might be problematic.

(4) 443 D: But I do, I do find one different thing about Koreans
444 that's quite different, I think is related to the speech thing, because of
445 the= the time that they need to think, because of the time they talk-
446 uh much slower, so sometimes they don't get their views expressed,
447 because people like the Indians, maybe the Singaporeans, or whoever,
448 who are good, or faster in English they tend to grab. The mike. And they
449 end up talking, you know, faster and, and and uh they, you know the
450 Koreans will have uh, uh a little bit of a disadvantage. Because they
451 can't speak as fast. I think ~Shin is not a problem, he's like getting more=
452 [better and bet-
453 R: [Yeah he speaks more than anyone [clearly. @@@@
454 D: [Yeah. @
455 But, some especially new Koreans who come into organization you
456 will see that they will be slower, so maybe their views don't get heard.
457 uh as much. Unless like somebody is like "hey ~Shin, you know you are
458 being very quiet." Then it becomes a negative thing, it's like "how
459 come ~Shin is always so quiet?" you know, How come, whoever, you
460 know ex-ex Korean is so quiet. They [are not talking enough.
461 R: [I think that has to do more

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0047404513000663 Published online by Cambridge University Press

462 with the confidence about the language rather than the grammar or
463 understanding of the language.

Donna goes on to suggest that Koreans' slowness to express their views could work to their disadvantage, because it means that they may be seen as too quiet in meetings—that is, not contributing new ideas and opinions—and thus as less competent than people who more actively and quickly present their thoughts. Perhaps it is significant that, in contrast to her statement in (3), where she was talking about communication with country offices, Donna shifts to talking about intra-office communication among colleagues, and particularly internal meetings, where one's performance can have important consequences for evaluation and promotion. Donna considers Koreans' communicative practice and style as "problematic" not because it is a matter of whether colleagues can adapt to Koreans' mode of communication (which she and Ranjit claim is not a problem), but because it implies a failure on the part of Koreans to demonstrate their own worth; that is, Koreans' difference is no longer treated here as a matter of varying communicative style, but a matter of whether the employee is appropriately disposing herself as an ideal worker who can effectively and actively contribute to the corporation. Similarly, when Ranjit argues that the problem with Koreans is more a matter of "confidence" rather than linguistic competence per se (lines 461–63) this may be a recognition of Koreans' competence in English, but it also frames the problem as a matter of self-understanding and responsibility—that is, they are not properly positioning themselves as the type of worker that they are expected to be.

We can see here, then, the pressure to converge toward a particular corporate communicative style in which confidence and open expression of one's views is valued. Also, this style is not just presented as a matter of job-related competence, but of personhood and subjectivity; this communicative style is not simply a technical skill one has to acquire as an employee, but indexes one's responsibleness as a corporate worker. Such formulations can indeed serve as a powerful way in which contestations to the metadiscursive regimes of diversity may be suppressed. This can be illustrated by the next extract. Immediately after example (4) above, Shin jumped in to offer his opinion about Koreans' observed behavior, which became a site of minor tension in the interaction.

(5) 464 S: I think I need to be clear on this one. There are several reasons why
465 they don't talk that much. One is, [the fear], fear of,
466 D: [<X culture X>]
467 R: confidence.
468 S: the uh confidence. But secondly there are cultural things. In Korea
469 I think that we are changing a lot. But uh= the working, working in
470 a Korean company means that you have a=, you need to reserve <X some

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0047404513000663 Published online by Cambridge University Press

471		of your things X>. Unless you, you are allowed to, to talk. But, you know
472		these days <X things are quite direct X> but, we are changing.
473		But still there is some cultural, [uh impact effect on XXX
474	R:	[That comes from the, culture.
475		Don't talk unless asked.
476	D:	You know for example when I went to Basel, we were sitting in a
477		big circle, and they asked for opinion, there basically I could even say
478		things like, I don't know what I'm thinking of but, but if it's right or
479		wrong, but this is what I think. But if you're coming from a different
480		culture where it's quite closed, then you might have a problem
481		expressing views that you're not sure of.
482	R:	Mm.
483	D:	Basically I just told the whole group of fifty people, I don't know
484		whether I'm right but this is what I feel.

Shin first notes that Koreans' reticence may be due to their "fear" of speaking English (line 465), echoing Ranjit's diagnosis that this has to do with lack of confidence (line 467; also 461–63 in (4) above). But then he comments on how it may also relate to the norms of Korean corporate culture, in which respect for hierarchy and seniority remains an important principle ("you need to reserve some of your things, unless you are allowed to talk," lines 470–71). In this sense, Shin's comment here may be seen as resisting Donna's evaluation of Koreans as failing to adhere to Biodyne's corporate communicative norms, which is implied through the way he prefaces his turn with "I need to be clear on this one" (line 464). That is, Shin draws attention to the contradictions in the metadiscursive regime of diversity management by pointing out the relativity of corporate communicative practice; if there is no universal ground for valuing free expression of one's opinion, should Koreans' practice still be seen as problematic?

Shin's critique, however, does not seem to be taken up by Donna and Ranjit, and almost goes unnoticed. Neither explicitly rejected nor actively supported, it simply serves as a basis for further talk about diversity that is ambiguous in its relation to the problem Shin raises. For instance, even though Ranjit appears to acknowledge Shin's point by agreeing that Koreans' difference may be explained by different communicative principles ("Don't talk unless asked", line 475), the lack of any explicit comment about the inequalities that Shin problematizes makes the import of Ranjit's comment unclear. Immediately after Ranjit's comment, Donna goes on (line 476) to offer an account of her personal experience of participating in a meeting at the Biodyne headquarters in Basel, and there is ambiguity here as well. On the one hand, Donna can be seen as aligning her stance with Shin's, as she highlights how the interaction at the headquarters, with its communicative culture even more open than that of the regional office, made her feel awkward (line 483–84), thus implying she can sympathize with Koreans who struggle with Biodyne's communicative culture. On the other hand, Donna's account depicts the Biodyne headquarters as a "safe space" for employees to articulate their viewpoints; it emphasizes the egalitarianism ("sitting in a big circle") and

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0047404513000663 Published online by Cambridge University Press

display of interest ("they asked for opinion") that naturally led the participants to openly express their view without fear of being seen as wrong or "different" ("I could even say things like I don't know what I'm thinking of …," lines 476–78). Through her story, the Biodyne headquarters, iconically located at the heart of the MNC, comes to represent the essence of the metadiscursive regime of diversity, in which everyone regardless of cultural background is seen as valuable and no contribution is useless to the corporation. But the important point about this is that everyone HAS to participate in this openness, and those who are less than able to do so due to their cultural difference (such as Koreans) cannot demand that their difference be recognized. Koreans who refrain from expressing their views in meetings can only blame themselves, because they are the ones who are not opening up to the "safe culture of diversity" that the corporation has so generously provided. In this sense, Donna's story disaligns with Shin's stance, defending the corporate order of communication and problematizing Koreans for their failure to adapt to that order.

Such ambiguity, I argue, reveals one important aspect of the metadiscursive regime of diversity in the data. The ambiguity here illustrates how the specific ways in which old and new discourses about language and identity are juxtaposed may work to deal with charges that diversity management only privileges particular styles of communication over others. On the one hand, we find persistence of an older discourse that articulates cultural difference in essentialist terms, with some communicative practices treated as more beneficial to corporate interests than others; on the other, this older discourse is juxtaposed with a newer discourse, in which no cultural difference is seen as lying outside of corporate governance and never rejected as irrelevant. Instead of emerging as a contradiction, this juxtaposition allows potential criticism of the metadiscursive regime to be neutralized. While some like Shin may point to this contradiction to highlight the difficulty Koreans face, the specific configuration of old and new discourses absorbs such critiques, turning them into just another cultural observation (as Ranjit and Donna do); instead, responsibility is placed on individual workers, who are expected to respond to the corporate order of diversity management as flexible workers who actively adopt technologized openness. The apparent lack of any uptake towards Shin's comment in this interaction demonstrates this effect, and it would not be too farfetched to suggest that this is one way through which Shin's (and all other Koreans') position within the company is reproduced.

BEYOND DISCRIMINATION: CRITIQUING INEQUALITY IN CONTROL SOCIETIES

The analysis in this article shows how diversity management at Biodyne is not simply a managerial imperative imposed from above, but a metadiscursive regime through which speakers dispose themselves as workers in the global workplace. As a metadiscursive regime, diversity management is manifest in the

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0047404513000663 Published online by Cambridge University Press

normative ways in which Biodyne employees speak about linguistic and cultural difference. As such, it conditions and shapes how specific problems in the workplace—such as inequalities based on language and communicative difference—may be explained, interpreted, and addressed by the employees in their daily lives. Because such effects are rooted in the everyday discourse of the participants themselves, rather than promulgated as company policy, they are also highly naturalized. Thus, the specific solutions for problems of inequality suggested by diversity management (e.g. embracing the "openness" supported by the company) are seen as "rational" practices that employees should adopt given the conditions and resources of the multicultural workplace. Even though this transforms problems of inequality into matters of individual responsibility and subjectivity, it is difficult to contest the solution's "rationality" and "naturalness" as it is embedded within everyday interactional practice. For instance, even people like Shin, who voiced his concerns about the contradictions of diversity management, were not free from talking about the cultural behavior of Koreans in essentialist terms and accounting for their failure in promotion in terms of communicative competence. While the interaction we looked at is only one specific instance of metapragmatic talk about diversity, it is nonetheless a concrete example of how challenges to the supposed equality promised by diversity management may be silenced and absorbed into the capitalist logic of neoliberal self-development.

Our analysis confirms the insights of earlier sociolinguistic work that shows that language issues in the workplace are often mere surrogates of other issues. As Piller notes, "'culture' is too often treated as an explanatory concept rather than one that is itself in need of explanation; as a consequence, another possible explanation—inequality—is overlooked" (2011:93). The approach that I advocated in this article, the one that focuses on the semiotic organization of metadiscursive regimes, extends such previous research by detailing the specific mechanisms through which issues of inequality are obscured. The metadiscursive regime of diversity management in the data, in a highly specific manner, mixes broadly circulating discourses of banal nationalism with newer discourses of commodification, situating them within the specific context of the global corporation in which the participants worked. By acknowledging the social differences among identity groups, but treating them in an ahistorical, essentialized manner, diversity management attributes any inequality that is experienced by such groups to their cultural essence—such as Koreans' "reluctance" to speak out their views—rather than to social conditions. It thus becomes the responsibility of the group members to overcome such essential characteristics—even though they are simultaneously trapped within those characteristics by the very discourses that define them as essential to the group. This also explains why older discourses of identity that reify national difference do not disappear in the age of commodification of language and identity; they serve as important resources for explaining, rationalizing, and reframing issues of inequality as something innocent, something that can be transformed into a justification for the dominant social order of the workplace.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0047404513000663 Published online by Cambridge University Press

What does our analysis, then, say about the position of Koreans in the global workplace, such as the Korean employees of Biodyne? The way in which they experience inequalities in the workplace shows important differences with classical cases of discrimination explored in earlier studies, such as that of Gumperz (1992). In those studies, what is emphasized is institutional power, represented by procedures such as gatekeeping interviews, that imposes a particular scale of evaluation upon the linguistic resources of the workers, leading to unequal access to economic and social benefits. In the case of Biodyne, those mechanisms are also in place (e.g. Shin going through review for promotion), but just as important as the raw fact of whether Koreans are given access to material opportunities or not are the discursive processes through which Koreans (and other employees) come to rationalize and internalize the outcome of such mechanisms. Our analysis shows that such internalization does not simply rationalize why inequality occurs (e.g. "it was because of my English"), but takes the form of employees adopting a particular model of behavior and disposition that is evaluated in terms of morality and responsibility (e.g. "I need to be more willing to take risks").

Is this a case of discrimination, then? Certainly there are inequalities at operation here, but the findings of this article suggest that it would be more productive to talk about it in terms of control. The notion of discrimination implicitly highlights the agency of those who make distinctions of others by determining who gets access to valued opportunities. While power undoubtedly still operates in such modes today, in the transition to control societies that we are experiencing, this is no longer a sufficient account of how power is exercised. The notion of control, through which subjects are guided to dispose and modulate themselves to take up particular ways of thinking, acting, and being, is a necessary basis for understanding the inequality that takes place in our neoliberal world. Not only is it a more powerful way of rationalizing inequalities, but also a technology that touches upon our own sense of being, expanding the domain of capitalist logic to include selves, identities, and subjectivities.

Thinking in terms of control also helps us see beyond the confines of the particular institution we are studying, and consider how speakers' practices of self-modulation may have consequences for a wider network of social relationships in broader context. For instance, while Korean employees at Biodyne are disadvantaged, on different scales of observation their position may turn out to be quite different. In the context of transnational South Korea, for example, they are in fact privileged transnational elites, who have moved beyond the bounds of Korean society using the linguistic and cultural capital they accumulated through their work at global MNCs (Park & Lo 2012). In this case, their self-positioning as neoliberal subjects in the global workplace contributes to their classed distinction, and this, indeed, must be seen as yet another way through which metadiscursive regimes of diversity reproduce inequalities. These issues suggest that, while the perspective of discrimination remains relevant today, our frame of analysis also needs to be expanded to consider the more subtle and insidious processes through which late capitalism incorporates every aspect of our social life.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0047404513000663 Published online by Cambridge University Press

APPENDIX: TRANSCRIPTION CONVENTIONS

[ ]	speech overlap
(( ))	transcriber comment
=	lengthening
(.)	short pause
(n.n)	pause (measured in seconds)
.	final intonation
,	continuing intonation
?	appeal intonation
XXX	uncertain syllables
<X X>	uncertain hearing
-	speech cutoff
@	laughter
~	pseudonym

NOTES

*I express my deepest gratitude to all participants in this study, the three speakers in the data, and everyone I interviewed and interacted with in the course of my research. I thank Barbara Johnstone and two anonymous reviewers for *Language in Society* for their helpful suggestions, and Adrienne Lo and Lionel Wee for stimulating conversation and support. Early versions of this article were presented at the Mobility Language Literacy Conference (Cape Town, January 2011) and the Workshop on Transnational Engagements (Singapore, February 2011). I thank the participants at these conferences for their constructive comments and feedback. This work was supported by the Academy of Korean Studies Grant (AKS-2012-R-24).

[1]All names, including names of individuals, are pseudonyms.

[2]Even though Biodyne's higher management positions were not necessarily limited to people from a particular national background (as is the case at some MNCs that are more closely associated with a particular national culture), the company's top management was occupied predominantly by white European men.

[3]My questions centered on how non-Korean workers viewed their Korean colleagues, and for this reason, were mainly directed to Donna and Ranjit, rather than to Shin.

[4]See the appendix for transcription conventions.

REFERENCES

Agha, Asif (2007). *Language and social relations*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Ahmed, Sara (2007). The language of diversity. *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 30(2):235–56.

Bauman, Richard, & Charles Briggs (2003). *Voices of modernity: Language ideologies and the politics of inequality*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Billig, Michael (1995). *Banal nationalism*. London: Sage.

Blommaert, Jan; James Collins; & Stef Slembrouck (2005). Polycentricity and interactional regimes in 'global neighborhoods.' *Ethnography* 6(2):205–35.

Boutet, Josiane (2012). Language workers: Emblematic figures of late capitalism. In Duchêne & Heller, 207–29. London: Routledge.

Brown, Megan (2009). *The cultural work of corporations*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Cameron, Deborah (2000). *Good to talk? Living and working in a communication culture*. London: Sage.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0047404513000663 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Campbell, Sarah, & Celia Roberts (2007). Migration, ethnicity and competing discourses in the job interview: Synthesizing the institutional and personal. *Discourse & Society* 18(3):243–71.
Deleuze, Gilles (1995). Postscript on control societies. In *Negotiations: 1972–1990,* 177–82. New York: Columbia University Press.
Duchêne, Alexandre, & Monica Heller (eds.) (2012). *Language in late capitalism: Pride and profit*. London: Routledge.
Duff, Patricia; Ping Wong; & Margaret Early (2000). Learning language for work and life: The linguistic socialization of immigrant Canadians seeking careers in health care. *Canadian Modern Language Review* 57:9–57.
Fairclough, Norman (2002). Language in new capitalism. *Discourse & Society* 13(2):163–66.
Foucault, Michel (1991). Governmentality. In Graham Burchell, Colin Gordon, & Peter Miller (eds.), *The Foucault effect: Studies in governmentality*, 87–104. London: Harvester Wheatsheaf.
Gal, Susan (2012). Sociolinguistic regimes and the management of "diversity." In Duchêne & Heller, 22–42.
Gee, James Paul; Glynda Hull; & Colin Lankshear (1996). *The new work order: Behind the language of the new capitalism*. St. Leonards: Allen & Unwin.
Gordon, Avery (1995). The work of corporate culture: Diversity management. *Social Text* 13(3):3–30.
Gumperz, John J. (1992). Interviewing in intercultural situations. In Paul Drew & John Heritage (eds.), *Talk at work: Interaction in institutional settings*, 302–27. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Harvey, David (2005). *A brief history of neoliberalism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
Heller, Monica (2003). Globalization, the new economy, and the commodification of language and identity. *Journal of Sociolinguistics* 7:473–92.
——— (2010a). The commodification of language. *Annual Review of Anthropology* 39:101–14.
——— (2010b). Language as resource in the globalized new economy. In Nikolas Coupland (ed.), *The handbook of language and globalization*, 349–65. Malden: Blackwell.
Holborow, Marnie (2007). Language, ideology and neoliberalism. *Journal of Language and Politics* 6(1):51–73.
Holvino, Evangelina, & Annette Kamp (2009). Diversity management: Are we moving in the right direction? Reflections from both sides of the North Atlantic. *Scandinavian Journal of Management* 25:395–403.
Hull, Glynda A. (1999). What's in a label? Complicating notions of the skills-poor worker. *Written Communication* 16(4):379–411.
Iedema, Rick, & Hermine Scheeres (2003). From doing work to talking work: Renegotiating knowing, doing, and identity. *Applied Linguistics* 24(3):316–37.
Kirton, Gill, & Anne-Marie Greene (2010). *The dynamics of managing diversity: A critical approach*. Oxford: Butterworth-Heinemann.
Kubota, Ryuko (2011). Questioning linguistic instrumentalism: English, neoliberalism and language tests in Japan. *Linguistics and Education* 22:248–60.
Llopis, Glenn (2011). Diversity management is the key to growth: Make it authentic. *Forbes*, June 13, 2011. Online: http://www.forbes.com/sites/glennllopis/2011/06/13/diversity-management-is-the-key-to-growth-make-it-authentic/; accessed 2 January 2013.
Lorbiecki, Anna, & Gavin Jack (2000). Critical turns in the evolution of diversity management. *British Journal of Management* 11:S17–S31.
Makoni, Sinfree, & Alastair Pennycook (2007). Disinventing and reconstituting languages. In Sinfree Makoni & Alastair Pennycook (eds.), *Disinventing and reconstituting languages*, 1–41. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.
Mills, Suzanne (2011). The difficulty with diversity: White and aboriginal women workers' representations of diversity management in forest processing mills. *Labour/Le Travail* 62:45–76.
Park, Joseph Sung-Yul (2008). Two processes of reproducing monolingualism in South Korea. *Sociolinguistic Studies* 2(3):331–46.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0047404513000663 Published online by Cambridge University Press

——— (2009). *The local construction of a global language: Ideologies of English in South Korea*. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.
——— (2010). Naturalization of competence and the neoliberal subject: Success stories of English language learning in the Korean conservative press. *Journal of Linguistic Anthropology* 20(1):22–38.
———, & Adrienne Lo (2012). Transnational South Korea as a site for a sociolinguistics of globalization: Markets, timescales, neoliberalism. *Journal of Sociolinguistics* 16(2):147–64.
Piller, Ingrid (2011). *Intercultural communication: A critical introduction*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.
Roberts, Celia; Sarah Campbell; & Yvonne Robinson (2008). *Talking like a manager: Promotion interviews, language and ethnicity*. Department of Work and Pensions Research Report No 510. Online: http://research.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd5/rports2007-2008/rrep510.pdf; accessed 19 May 2012.
Rose, Nikolas (1990). *Governing the soul: The shaping of the private self*. London: Routledge.
——— (1996). *Inventing our selves: Psychology, power, and personhood*. London: Cambridge University Press.
Urciuoli, Bonnie (2008). Skills and selves in the new workplace. *American Ethnologist* 35(2):211–28.
Wee, Lionel (2012). Migrant workers and language competencies: Focus on organizations. Paper presented at the Workshop on Language Practices, Migration and Labour: Ethnographing Economies in Urban Diversities. University of the Western Cape, Cape Town.
Yan, Hairong (2003). Neoliberal governmentality and neohumanism: Organizing suzhi/value flow through labor recruitment networks. *Cultural Anthropology* 18:493–523.

(Received 5 June 2012; revision received 3 January 2013;
accepted 20 January 2013; final revision received 7 May 2013)

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0047404513000663 Published online by Cambridge University Press