

**Language and Power in Nonprofit/For-Profit Relationships:
A Grounded Theory of Inter-sectoral Collaboration**

A thesis submitted by

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in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the degree of

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CERTIFICATE OF AUTHORSHIP/ORIGINALITY

I certify that the work in this thesis has not previously been submitted for a degree nor has it been submitted as part of requirements for a degree except as fully acknowledged within the text.

I also certify that the thesis has been written by me. Any help that I have received in my research work and the preparation of the thesis itself has been acknowledged. In addition, I certify that all information sources and literature are indicated in the thesis.

Signature of Candidate

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ABSTRACT

Concerns over the future of the nonprofit sector due to increasing resource pressures and an economic rationalist political climate in Australia have led to increasing public and private interest in partnerships between nonprofit organisations and the private sector.

The purpose of this research is to describe, understand, map and analyse the experiences of nonprofit staff in organisations that are linked to businesses in a variety of funding relationships. The major questions that drove the research were:

1. Does the language used by nonprofit staff and in organisational documentation relating to relationships with for-profits reflect the status of and contribute to the reproduction of the power relationship between the organisations?
2. Do nonprofit/for-profit relationships affect the organisational capacity of nonprofit organisations and the social agency of individuals? If so, to what extent can balanced power-sharing arrangements contribute to increased organisational capacity?
3. Does the media aspect of the institutional context of relationships in which nonprofits operate affect the social agency of individuals and the capacity of nonprofits?

The thesis presents a grounded theory (Glaser & Strauss 1967; Strauss & Corbin 1998) of language and power in inter-sectoral relationships, using five case studies, a media analysis and a quantitative component as the data from which to draw theoretical implications. The work develops an innovative methodological tool called ‘linguistic threads’ and uses Clegg’s circuits of power model (1987) to culminate in static state and process theories of language and power in relationships between nonprofits and for-profits in the Australian context.

INTRODUCTION

IDENTIFYING THE ISSUES

Concerns over the future of the nonprofit sector due to increasing resource pressures and an economic rationalist political climate in Australia have led to increasing public and private interest in partnerships between nonprofit organisations and the private sector. Two recent examples of the attention to the topic of collaboration in the Australian context demonstrate the salience of this topic at the beginning of the 21st century. Firstly, the Australian Prime Minister has set up an organisation to deal explicitly with the potential and challenge of these nonprofit/for-profit inter-sectoral relationships. Named the Community Business Partnership, this project was set up to recognise, reward, facilitate and promote nonprofit/for-profit relationships. Prime Minister John Howard said of this initiative:

Working in partnership not only has the potential to enrich people's lives but can also deliver tangible results for all Australians. Community and business partnerships are a driver to accomplish better outcomes than any group acting alone could achieve.

(Community Business Partnership Web site,
<http://www.partnership.zip.com.au>, accessed 09/07/01).

A second recent example of academic interest in private/third sector collaboration was evident at a conference hosted by the Australia and New Zealand Society for Third Sector Research (ANZTSR). ANZTSR is the Australia/New Zealand equivalent of the ISTR, the International Society for Third Sector Research. The ANZTSR conference held in December, 2000 focused on 'Partnership and Activism,' and papers presented ran the gamut from community development projects through to explorations of Australian philanthropy. The current interest in both political and academic circles in the ways in which business and nonprofit organisations can work together makes this a critical time for

a study that focuses on the internal experiences of nonprofit staff who are experiencing threats and opportunities presented by collaborating with the private sector.

The Federal government's initiative of Community Business Partnership is primarily concerned with promoting the concept of nonprofits working with the private sector. However, the political rhetoric does not take into account possible negative consequences to the nonprofit organisations themselves as a result of collaborating with business. The research reported here addresses that gap by centring itself on the people closest to the issue. That is, the staff working in the nonprofit trying to maintain and secure financial support for their core community-based work. It is important to understand these co-operative arrangements in context and to examine what possible threats and opportunities these alliances might pose for the agency of staff in nonprofits, the organisational capacity of nonprofits and broader issues of social equity.

This research contributes to an understanding of the third sector by concentrating on some of the possible implications—both negative and positive—of these co-operative arrangements from the point of view of those staff members in the nonprofit. Having ascertained that the primary informants for the study would be staff engaged in nonprofit community work in an urban environment in Australia, it was also critical to select the theoretical bases for analysis. This process emanated partly from the researcher's own experience, and as such is important to include here. As a social worker in a small homeless services organisation in inner-city Chicago several years ago, the researcher had the opportunity to be involved in fundraising and resource development for the organisation. Although at the time she had no label for the cognitive dissonance she and her co-workers experienced, there was a distinct level of discomfort as the organisation was forced to move from full government funding to other financial arrangements. One of these was to solicit support from the private sector, from large corporations to small local businesses.

Anecdotal evidence from her organisation and subsequent immersion in the literature convinced the researcher that she and her colleagues were indeed caught in conflicting

‘thought worlds’ (Dougherty 1992). On the one hand, the team of social workers and employment placement officers were working to empower participants (never ‘clients’) to re-build their lives by taking control. In this part of their jobs, the nonprofit staff modelled self-confidence, proactive behaviour and assertiveness in setting and achieving goals for themselves and the people with whom they worked. On the other hand, when it came to financial support of the organisation (upon which its very survival depended), staff exhibited almost servile behaviour, fawning over potential donors and showing immense gratitude when assistance was proffered.

One of the most striking features of this experience to the researcher at the time was the linguistic difference between the way in which staff interacted with each other and with participants and the shift when attempting to gain financial support from the private sector. It appeared that some connection between the power relations of the two organisations was reflected and reinforced by the language used in the relationship. This observation led to thoughts about whether the interplay of language and power in nonprofit/for-profit relationships could at least partly account for the perceptions of staff in her organisation several years prior to embarking on the thesis journey. Subsequent informal observation coupled with substantial grounding in existing work led to this idea being at the core of all the work presented here.

An examination of the language and power implications of these alliances will focus on how the staff is affected by power reflected by language and power inherent in language. The ideas of social agency (the extent to which people feel able to act positively on their own behalf), organisational capacity (the ability of an organisation to respond to challenges and develop progressively) and institutional context are three main constructs of the research.

AIMS & OBJECTIVES

The purpose of this research is to describe, understand, map and analyse the experiences of nonprofit staff in organisations that are linked to businesses in a variety of funding relationships. The set of questions that drove this study were:

1. Does the language used by nonprofit staff and in organisational documentation relating to relationships with for-profits reflect the status of and contribute to the reproduction of the power relationship between the organisations?
 - 1a. What elements of vocabulary, narrative structure and syntax constitute a 'language of inequality' between the private and third sector?
 - 1b. How is this language different in genuine power-sharing relationships?
 - 1c. To what extent is this linguistic space shared across nonprofit organisations engaged in similar relationships with for-profit firms?
 - 1d. How is the structure of that language transmitted throughout the organisation?
4. Do relationships affect the organisational capacity of nonprofit organisations and the social agency of individuals? If so, to what extent can balanced power-sharing arrangements contribute to increased organisational capacity?
5. Does the media aspect of the institutional context of relationships in which nonprofits operate affect the social agency of individuals and the capacity of nonprofits?
 - 3a. To what extent are staff members in the nonprofit aware of the constraints on them of this aspect of institutionalism?

Both qualitative and quantitative methodologies were used. To accomplish this, a rigorous methodological framework was created to support the assumptions underlying the research questions as outlined above (Lee, T.W. 1999). This rigour was essential to the integrity of the research process itself.

At a broad level, the theory presented here was developed using a grounded theory approach as articulated by Glaser and Strauss (1967) and explored in further detail in *Basics of Qualitative Research* by Strauss and Corbin (Second Edition, 1998). Strauss himself articulated the drivers behind the need to develop theory from data. Some of these, excerpted below, are drivers behind the methodological consideration of this grounded theory development. These were adapted as follows:

1. The need to get out into the field to discover what is really going on
 2. The relevance of theory, grounded in data, to the development of a discipline and as a basis for social action
 3. The belief that persons are actors who take an active role in responding to problematic situations
 4. The realisation that persons act on the basis of meaning
 5. The understanding that meaning is defined and redefined through interaction
- (p. 10)

These five tenets underpin all of the methodological considerations of the work because they are closely aligned with the theoretical intent of the overall project. In other words, grounded theory was used in conjunction with other methodological choices (detailed in Chapter 3) to explore, refine and answer the research questions at hand.

ORGANISATION OF THE THESIS

As an inductive study, the thesis is organised according to a process of working from data to theory using previous work to contextualise, inform and direct initial exploration. As such, there are three framework chapters to summarise the reasoning behind literature scope, theoretical heuristic and methodology. Each case study is developed as a separate chapter. The case study chapters are all presented according to a template consisting of an organisational overview, the analysis and a section called ‘weaving the threads’ that connects elements of the discourse into a coherent story. These are followed by chapters on the media and quantitative data analysis. The last chapter in the dissertation presents a comprehensive theory of language and power in nonprofit/for-profit relationships in the selected context. The thesis is divided into eleven chapters.

Chapter 1 is a summary of the literature surrounding various components of the research topic. An overview of the historical context of nonprofits and philanthropy in Australia offers a context-specific narrative of how nonprofits have evolved in the country in which the study is being undertaken. As part of the focus of the study, a number of

characterisations of collaboration, and especially inter-sectoral collaboration, are explored. Another area of importance that maps how relationships with business and traditional philanthropy are changing for nonprofit organisations is understanding of the ‘new’ forms of support to third sector organisations. Finally, as a bridge to the theoretical construct discussion that is the main thrust of Chapter 2, issues of power and philanthropy round out the range of literature in which this work fills some knowledge gaps.

The focus of Chapter 2 differs from Chapter 1 although it too is concerned with definitions of important concepts and previous work. Chapter 2 looks more closely at constructs including power, language, social agency and organisational capacity. It offers a discussion of the importance of institutional context in this type of study and traces out a possible theoretical heuristic to guide the rest of the study into language and power in nonprofit/for-profit relationships. This chapter also provides details of the research questions that drove the entire project.

In Chapter 3, the methodology of the entire project is outlined and explained. Using an interpretivist/poststructuralist paradigm hybrid, the work is a combination of discourse analysis through the lens of an innovative analytical tool called a ‘linguistic thread’ and quantitative triangulation. Details of the construction of the hybrid, with particular attention to the paradigmatic assumptions underpinning the choice of methodology in conjunction with the meaning of the research questions, are presented as integral to the successful implementation of the inductive research cycle. Specific elements of the methodology, including field note protocols and triangulation processes are also included in this chapter.

Chapters 4 through 8 are individual case studies. Each case study is introduced, explored using the linguistic threads analytical tool and compared against the others. Importantly, Chapter 4 is also the pilot case study conducted at the outset of field work. Therefore, it contains a close examination of the final form of research questions as well as how some aspects of the case fit with theoretical constructs defined in Chapter 2. Although cases were studied in sequence, the final versions of analyses reflected here are in accordance

with the iterative nature of inductive research (Lee, T.W. 1999). Therefore, these five case study chapters have been analysed in relation to data discovered in each of the other case studies as well as against their own internal frames of reference.

Chapter 9 presents the results of a media analysis of discourse into nonprofits in print and television media in the local market over a three-year period, from 1998 to 2000. It includes full methodological detail, results of the study and links to the case studies. The initial intent for Chapter 9 was that the media analysis answers comprehensively one of the main research questions. However, for reasons explored in detail in that chapter, the media analysis became rather a supplementary piece of the research. Nonetheless, it was essential to explore this aspect of the relationships.

The purpose of Chapter 10, the quantitative analysis, is two-fold. The detailed presentation of findings above fulfilled the first goal, which was to provide triangulation for case study data and some confirmation of findings. However, the second and perhaps even more crucial objective for the quantitative questionnaire was to expand and adjust the theory that was developed out of this research. The chapter itself contains methodological specifications as well as rationale for this part of the overall project. As with the case studies, the quantitative component had both pilot and final phases. In addition to detailing what correlated with case study results, Chapter 10 contains a key section on the process of using this form of triangulation to expand the theoretical boundaries of the work.

Finally, Chapter 11 culminates in a theory of language and power in nonprofit/for-profit relationships. Carefully embedded in the data as it is presented and analysed in preceding chapters on case studies, the media and the quantitative triangulation, the work represents a process of grounded theoretical development (Glaser & Strauss 1967; Glaser 1993; Strauss & Corbin 1998). The last section of the thesis offers potential for future research to extend the theoretical, methodological and pragmatic aspects of the results of the study.

CHAPTER 1: LITERATURE REVIEW

A theory of power and language across the two levels of individual and organisational experience in a given institutional context will encompass a broad band of literature.

Three areas of literature are particularly important to research questions here: the historical context of philanthropy and nonprofits in Australia; inter-organisational and inter-sectoral collaboration and power and philanthropy. This chapter focuses more specifically on the context in which the relationships occur; more detailed analysis of the theoretical literature is in Chapter 2. As constructs that are central to the theoretical frame of the research, issues of organisational capacity, social agency, language and power are dealt with there. The next sections outline literature concerns.

1.1 HISTORICAL CONTEXT OF NONPROFITS AND PHILANTHROPY IN AUSTRALIA

Almost 20 years ago, Lansbury and Spillane published an organisational behaviour text detailing the context in which Australian organisations operate. Although some of the work is outdated, many of the characteristics they identified are instructive to a study of nonprofit organisations in the 21st century in Australia. They argued that institutions were bound by bureaucratic ideals that contrasted with the idea of the ‘rugged individual’, and that this dependence on government has increased over time. The view of government that complemented this reliance on public services was one of entitlement (Lansbury & Spillane 1983).

The ‘third sector’ in Australia, which encompasses nonprofit organisations, co-operatives and other mutual forms of organisations, is made up of groups that fit into neither the ‘government’ nor ‘for-profit’ arenas. The third sector grew out of a particular environment in a specific era. Broadly, the third sector in Australia has several unique features. Unlike

its counterparts in the United States or the United Kingdom, nonprofits in Australia tend to be equitably distributed in areas as diverse as sporting, social clubs, religious affiliations, human service organisations and arts institutions (Lyons 2001). In line with much of Lyons' earlier work, this most current exploration takes a historical perspective on the birth, adaptation and context of third sector.

In his historical overview, Lyons (1993) divided third sector development into four separate periods, culminating in the 1980s. A summary of the developments during those years is provided in Table 1. The 1990s have been added to this earlier timeline to update the historical situation in Australia.

Table 1: Historical Overview of Nonprofit Development in Australia

Period	Predominant institutions	Significant events
1788-1860s	Religious organisations and members of social elite	European settlement Discovery of gold and rapid urbanisation Population growth and increased wealth
1860-1914	Mutual organisations: Friendly societies Trade unions Professional associations political parties Recreation clubs	Highest per capita income in the world Peak of nonprofit creation in terms of variety of organisations developing
1920s-1950s	Creation of regional counterparts to urban progress associations and recreation clubs	30% unemployment in the 1930s Social devastation of WWI

	Transformation of clubs into gaming venues	Gambling generating revenues for clubs and government
1960s	Mutuals declining except for building societies Parent-run organisations	Commonwealth government became major source of funding for health/community services and education
Late 1960s-1980s	Community endeavours and small nonprofits in health, housing, community development, aged care, disability services	Service sector growth Activism of minority groups including women Well-educated youth spurned traditional bureaucracies and generated growth in community sector Increasing participation of women in the labour force
1990s	Some sectors decline, others grow	See discussion of Lyons influential factors below

Lyons identified both stimulating and diminishing factors in the historical environment of Australia that affected the third sector. Growth factors include religious belief, secular ideologies, economic self interest, desire for increased social interaction with people who shared interests and government incentives (Lyons 2001).

According to Lyons, diminishing or inhibiting factors including social changes contribute to the decline of some types of nonprofits in some sectors of society. For example, groups may disband once they have achieved their social objectives. More frequently, organisations must be flexible to the socio-economic changes around them. Changing societal expectations, organisational inability to adapt, commercialisation of traditionally nonprofit strongholds, globalisation, the growth of the service economy and shifts in work patterns have all worked in concert to retard or reverse third sector growth in some areas. The combination of these elements has implications for inter-organisational links and research into relationships between nonprofits and for-profits. Firstly, these factors point to inherent tension and possible contradictions between the sectors. The most obvious difference between nonprofit and for-profit organisations is their fundamental mission. For-profit businesses exist primarily to offer increasing value to shareholders and to operate with profit-making as a primary organisational objective. Nonprofit organisations, on the other hand, are founded to assist members of a particular community, promote a cause or fill a service gap not covered by private or public institutions. This difference is far more than cosmetic—it points to a deep structural, value and organisational mission divide between the two sectors.

Acknowledging that Australian nonprofits are sometimes aggregated erroneously with trends affecting those in the United States or the United Kingdom, Lyons also clarified the legal status of nonprofits in this country. Most germane to research focusing on innovative nonprofit funding is the understanding that donations in this country do not receive as broad deductions from tax as do donations in other countries (Lyons 2001). This difference has had considerable impact on the way nonprofits are funded and on the relationship between business and nonprofits. This may be a partial explanation of why businesses may not see immediate tangible benefits for participating in partnerships with nonprofits beyond

the possible public relations advantage of being associated in the public perception with a 'good cause.' Nonprofits are in the position of having to market themselves as advantageous partners to business.

The myth of the expansive, all-encompassing welfare state has prospered in discussions of nonprofits in Australia. Traditionally, public opinion has held that a high level of taxation and an 'overlarge' public sector should cover the costs of nonprofits (Lyons 2001). Lyons has pointed to a number of shifts in the way nonprofits are funded in Australia. He drew a scenario of increasing privatisation in the 1970s, followed by sharp falls in the next decade. Current trends in privatisation including employment services and demutualisation of member-owned organisations have seen the movement back towards commercialisation for nonprofit organisations. This is another indicator of the need for research into how nonprofits and for-profit organisations can accommodate each other in the search for relationships.

One strong argument against pure competition and the tenders that are replacing traditional service contracts is the adversarial relationships into which nonprofits are forced with one another (Lyons 1995b). This trend is in direct opposition to the direction in which for-profit firms are moving, which includes recognition of the value of working together in collaborative environment and networks. Faced with the need to diversify from a single funding source and an increasingly hostile environment in which to bid for those resources, nonprofits may be forced into situations competing in a market style that operates quite differently from their traditional ways of working.

Structures, tradition and management processes of nonprofit organisations aside, another crucial element of the narrative of relationships is the people on the inside. Onyx (1993) and Onyx & McLean (1993) explored how the concept of career exhibits itself in career motivation and how the demand and supply sides of social service careers compare. They concluded that for the community sector, the dominant motivation is related to strong social values and personal development. This career picture appeared to hold true for senior management as well. Strong personal values of service combined with 'accidental careers'

in nonprofit and participatory managing were also outcomes of a study conducted in 1992 (Lyons 1992). This picture of individual reasons for participating in third sector employment was clearly linked to broader organisational goals, management structures and the definitions of nonprofit ‘success.’ In other words, the motivation of nonprofit staff members was connected to the activities, values and objectives of the organisations.

The non-linear nature of many career paths is another example of how nonprofits are differentiated from traditional business ventures. Because the present study focused on the perceptions of this group of people working in nonprofits, it is important to understand the work that has been done on why they choose third sector jobs. These very personal reasons create close attachment of individuals to organisational potential and development. Unlike corporate ‘loyalty’, which may be influenced by financial incentives, the motivation for staff in the nonprofit sector may be more closely related to individual affiliation with organisational mission and values. This is important in a study on the relationships between nonprofits and for-profits because any effect on the nonprofit’s mission will also have consequences for individuals working there, especially if one of their primary reasons for working in that organisation is the organisational mission.

1.1.1 Shifting History: Emerging forms of support to nonprofits

Enterprising nonprofits and self-funding charity activities are examples of how funding is changing. The media and practitioner press have stampeded to popularise the latest jargon in promotion and inter-sectoral co-operation, but theory lags behind the brash image of revolution. Headlines for articles like ‘The moral case for promotion’ (Levine 1999), ‘Venture Capitalists Alter Face of Charity’ (Brandon 1999), ‘On creating a new nonprofit language’ (Muehrcke 1998) and ‘Cooperating to survive and thrive: innovative enterprises among nonprofit organizations’ (Kohm 1998) offer quick solutions to resource shortages; however, the understanding of the fundamental implications of these partnerships and an examination of how different they really are is almost absent from even popular debate.

Academic research into these areas has proceeded more cautiously. Three authors who embraced the idea of nonprofits becoming more like for-profit institutions were Porter & Kramer (1999) and Dees (1998). The idea that philanthropy itself (i.e. foundations) should create value can clearly be extrapolated to nonprofit organisations themselves. Dees went even further, arguing that ‘market-based funding approaches do have an important role to play in the social sector’ (p. 58). While noting the possibility of over-commercialisation, his ‘social enterprise spectrum’ showed how nonprofits are continually and willingly subjugated by the dynamics of the relationship with for-profit business. Dees also makes a brief comment about the ‘bristling’ nonprofits at the mention of language associated with business, like the word ‘customer’, without acknowledging the different traditions from which private and third sector organisations emerged.

Barrington (1998) presented an interesting case of corporate philanthropy where the non-governmental organisation remained firmly in control of the scope, operational management and long-term planning of the organisation. His assertion that this model ensures integrity of the third sector organisation raised issues regarding how deeply involved in management decisions venture philanthropists ‘should’ be and who should return decision-making power inter-sectoral collaboration. His assessment of the need for clear expectations and constant feedback provided a good model for corporate partnerships.

Although the nature of U.S. institution-specific data is not necessarily valid in the broader context of corporate partnerships, Austin’s study of motivation and structure of top executive involvement in non-profits (1999) did give insight into how third sector organisations might integrate that type of expertise into their management structure. It also pointed to potential conflict in situations where managers with experience in the for-profit context attempt to impose their cognitive map of how an organisation should behave on to a nonprofit framework.

A U.K. study (Palmer, Wise & Penny 1999) illustrated a trend in that country of increasing commercialisation of charities and warned against blurred sector lines. The authors suggested increasing ‘blurring’ of the lines between third sector and for-profit endeavours,

even when charities run their commercial activities through subsidiaries. Although caution is required because of the unique aspects of the British third sector, it did imply a need for further research into how third sector organisations are moulding themselves to demands of the market economy. In a related article on Cause-Related Marketing (CRM), Hemphill (1995) discussed how the motivation for the corporation in this becomes self-serving rather than altruistic. This distinction is important because it pointed to the conflicting interests that private and third sector organisations may pursue.

The potential impact of profits on donations is a crucial point in how nonprofits decide to fund their activities. A study by Bruce Kingma (1995) advised managers to carefully scrutinise how potential changes in prices for services could influence donations. In other words, nonprofits have to balance their financial needs with the possible negative consequences to donations if there is the perception that the organisation is no longer 'nonprofit.' This note of prudence marks a crucial difference in how non-profits and corporations define success and is a beacon for other potentially disastrous misinterpretations between private and third sector organisations attempting to work together toward a mutually defined goal.

In Australia, research expanding Lyons' work on a spectrum of business interactions ranging from philanthropy to corporate citizenship (Lyons 1998; Onyx, Lyons & Booth 1999) has looked at social partnerships between nonprofits and business. The engines of change reflect macroeconomic shifts, and the authors explored concerns related to social capital, including increased ties, bounded solidarity, enforceable trusts and norms and value creation. 'Integrative' relationships are the most grounded in equality and offer the greatest opportunity for mutual development.

Work on the changing ways in which nonprofit organisations are funding their activities is important to a broad understanding of the relationships between nonprofits and for-profits because a shifting funding environment requires nonprofits to be creative in their resource development. This section has explored a variety of ways in which nonprofits have chosen

to approach the issue of resource shortages, and it points to some possible concerns that may arise from these types of relationships.

1.2 COLLABORATION

There has been some differentiation in the past between work that focused on the private/nonprofit connection and work that dealt more closely with intergovernmental or public/nonprofit links. However, there is a strong case to be made that public sector organisations are becoming increasingly business-like. A glance at the privatisation trends of once public services will confirm this observation. For example, tendering processes for employment services in Australia have changed the way that nonprofit providers view clients with different levels of need because of incentives and disincentives to work with certain target groups. Therefore, for the purposes of understanding how the literature on inter-sectoral- collaboration contributes to a discussion on relationships between for-profit businesses and nonprofit organisations, both types of inter-sectoral interaction will be discussed here.

Rhodes studied the use of ‘policy networks’ in work into the privatisation of the public sector. Defining policy networks as ones in which some organisations are dependent on others for resources and that dominant coalitions dictate the pace of interaction, this research can be contextualised for private/nonprofit links (1992). In practice, this might mean that the organisations with the most power (i.e. the private sector firm in the context of a ‘partnership’ with nonprofits) dominate discussion of the manner in which the link is formulated and implemented. In this scenario, the nonprofit would simply become the dependent entity rather than an active participant in the exchange. Although Rhodes’ analysis of the networks of influence is persuasive, it is not clear that the nonprofit organisations studied in the research presented here would always be in the position of lesser power. Resources are only one of many contributing factors that might influence which organisation was dominant in a particular collaboration.

A number of authors focused on the complexity of collaboration. It is variously described as a process (Lawrence 1998; Alexander 1995; Huxham & Vangen 1996; Phillips, Lawrence & Hardy 2000), a 'form of conversational activity' (Lawrence 1998), a trust-building exercise (Huxham & Vangen 1996) and joint task orientation and sequential decision-making processes (Agranoff & Lindsay 1983). Each of these characterisations has useful elements in the context of nonprofit/for-profit inter-sectoral collaboration.

Lawrence focused on the specifics of an ongoing negotiation, with an interesting distinction between the need for a common language and the need for common representations of joint interests. This is especially useful in the present study, because it demonstrates the split between using the same language and identifying mutually agreed upon opportunities from the collaboration. The definition of collaboration as a 'form of conversational activity' also hones in on the importance of language in the development of the relationship. Other researchers have acknowledged this (Hackley 2000; Russ, Galang & Ferris 1998), but Lawrence explicitly points to the possibility that even when language is very different between the organisations, collaboration may be possible if both parties are cognizant of the mutually beneficial outcomes that may result. However, Lawrence's study does not include power in the equation and therefore does not take into account the ways in which the dominant organisation might manipulate the definition of joint interests in the relationship.

Alexander (1995) provided a blueprint for inter-organisational co-ordination, or IOC. Building on the work of Lindblom and others who understood co-ordination as both a reactive and proactive response to externalities, Alexander strongly supported IOC as a process rather than a transaction. Because IOC implied that notion of 'concerted action' towards a mutually agreed-upon goal, any relationship would rely heavily on trust for success. There was further acknowledgement of inter-sectoral tensions constructed around the three types of IOC systems: hierarchical (command based on authority), market (exchange based on price) and solidarity-association (consensus/agreement based on trust). According to Alexander, fundamental differences exist in the rationale behind for-profit and nonprofit organisational emergence and development and IOC illustrates these tensions. Alexander used Giddens' structuration theory to explain IOC structures as social

structures that are recursively organised, that enable or constrain behaviour and that function as ‘virtual entities that persist over time.’

Alexander’s conceptualisation of collaboration shares several features with the present study on language and power in nonprofit/for-profit relationships. The requirement of trust in the relationship provides a beacon for understanding how individuals in the nonprofit organisation perceive their relationships with staff on the business side and appears to indicate the effect that trust might have on their interactions. Furthermore, Alexander’s acknowledgement of implicit tensions and contradictions between nonprofits and for-profits is useful.

One element missing in Alexander’s model is the idea that social structures are *discursively* as well as *recursively* organised. Although he used Giddens to explain the structures of inter-organisational collaboration, the present study is equally interested in the structuration of the relationship discourse. This will be explicated further in Chapter 2.

One researcher whose work combines a theoretical understanding of collaboration with practical strategies for achieving it is Barbara Gray (1989; 1991; 1996). In addition to mentioning that one contextual reason for collaboration may be ‘shrinking federal revenues for social programs’ (1989, p. 29), she notes the importance of power on page 10, ‘...there may be a disparity of power and/or resources for dealing with the problem among stakeholders.’ The issue here is not only that there is a power imbalance, but that it must be constructively addressed in order to pose a reduced threat to the success of inter-sectoral relationships. Her critical features of collaboration can only be achieved in nonprofit/for-profit relationships if the power differential is addressed.

The language of that power game is critical to successful collaboration, and Gray acknowledges this by including in her list of attributes of successful partnerships that communication between the partners improves throughout the course of the partnership.

Gray's features of collaboration include interdependence, solutions emerging by dealing constructively with differences, joint ownership of decisions and collective responsibility for future direction of domain. Two of these pose particularly interesting questions for relationships between nonprofits and business. The first, interdependence, is complex. What 'dependence' can a business be said to have on an organisation to which it donates a specific amount of money annually? In the Australian context, the notion of philanthropy as an exercise in image management and reputation enhancement is slowly gaining currency (Centre for Corporate Public Affairs & Business Council of Australia 2000), but nonetheless the dependence of a business on that marketing versus the complete reliance of a nonprofit on donations to make up diminishing public funds can be argued to be in a different league of dependence. This last one is critical, because it refers to how relationships change over time and stipulates that new relationships have to be negotiated.

Gray's model incorporates a number of key elements for the research presented here. The model contains overtones of social agency in urging parties to deal constructively with differences. It also incorporates a definitive process for collaboration and insight into the way that power and different frames of reference can hamper emerging co-operative efforts. Furthermore, her view of obstacles to collaboration contains language of conflicting cultures and ideological barriers to success.

Although other authors alluded to it, Agranoff & Lindsay (1983) and Phillips, Lawrence and Hardy (2000) were most explicit about the context in which inter-sectoral collaboration occurs. In the same vein as Lyons argued for historical frameworks for understanding nonprofit evolution in Australia, Agranoff & Lindsay linked the legal/structural, political and technical contexts into an operating environment to which intergovernmental management (IGM) processes and actors must adapt. Their notions of contextual elements as constraining factors on the relationships are highly relevant because a study of individual and organisational effects on nonprofits working with business occurs in a unique institutional context.

Phillips et al (2000) take a slightly different approach to context, with a focus on the institutional fields in which organisations operate. Arguing that institutional fields depend on the process of structuration, their work demonstrated how collaborations and institutional fields mutually sustain, re-create and re-frame one another. The importance of structuration theory for the study presented here is that language is seen to both create and reflect organisational and individual reality in the context of inter-sectoral relationships. This will be further explored in the presentation of theoretical concepts in Chapter 2.

In related work on nonprofits and policy development, Najam outlined how nonprofits become ‘policy entrepreneurs.’ His three characterisations of ‘NGO-government’ relations—confrontation, complementarity, and collaboration—connected with the stage in the policy stream and the role that the nonprofit will play in the partnership, are a useful matrix for understanding how decision-making processes can be built into how nonprofits perceive themselves (Najam 1996).

In a similar vein, Hardy and Phillips (1998) presented four strategies used in inter-organisational relationships: collaboration, compliance, contention and contestation. Their work is useful in two key areas related to the present research. Firstly, they question the common wisdom that collaboration is a solution to every problem between organisations. In doing so, they bring to light a range of other organisational responses that may be more appropriate in a given situation than an attempt to pursue ‘equitable’ collaborative arrangements. Secondly, the authors examined both structural and discursive aspects of control and authority, which ties contextual constraints to language and power. One of the ways in which Hardy and Phillips’ work takes a slightly differently focus is its use of the word ‘strategies’ to identify the four possibilities listed above. Rather than seeing collaboration as a strategy, the thrust of the current research uses collaboration as a process through which a relationship is developed, without necessarily requiring that certain levels of organisational integration or meshing occur. In other words, collaboration as a process may be deemed more or less successful in the research presented here, but it is not defined as distinct from other organisational strategies in the context of inter-sectoral relationships.

Another useful concept is that of legitimation of management, which followed from earlier work by Drucker—that is, that the legitimation of management is that it works in the interests of those it governs (Lansbury & Spillane 1983). This is pertinent to inter-sectoral collaboration because nonprofits and for-profits may bring with them the complexity of differing management styles, competing value paradigms or starkly contrasting leadership demands. Any understanding of relationships requires recognition of these challenges.

The issues of leadership and collaboration were taken up by Huxham and Vangen (2000). Importantly, they point out that leadership can be difficult to formalise in collaborative arrangements. Here they are talking about the possibility of one ‘leader of the collaboration’, which they acknowledge is inherently contradictory because individuals in the collaboration come from different organisations. Instead, they present a series of ‘leadership media’—leadership through structure, leadership through processes and leadership through participants—through which collaborative agendas are developed.

One of the interesting assumptions in the Huxham and Vangen work was that there was a ‘partnership agenda’ that was affected by the processes of communication that led to a shifting balance of power in terms of who determined the issues of contention or negotiation in the partnership. This is highly relevant to nonprofit/business relationships, where there may not even be an assumption of a single partnership agenda but the contrast of conflicting organisational imperatives on both sides. In that case, where external structures may be more limited than in public collaborations and processes limited to communication between one or two key individuals from each organisation, the leadership through participants may take precedence over the other two media as individuals seek to assert power over the collaboration to achieve their own organisation’s goals.

In addition to leadership concerns, the Huxham and Vangen (2000) paper also noted:

Given that collaborative structures play such an important role in shaping and implementing the direction of a

partnership, it is significant that they [the structures] are often not within the control of members of a collaboration.

(p. 1164)

Again, although their context is public/community relationships, whose structural constraints are sometimes within the purview of an external body, this observation highlights the importance of negotiated collaborative structures in private/nonprofit relationships. In other words, the ways in which the business and nonprofit organisations structure themselves to engage in partnerships is critical to successful collaboration.

Their earlier work focused (1996) on specific issues in public/community sector collaboration including managing aims, compromise (especially how much time relatively minor issues can take to sort out), communication, democracy and equality, power and trust, determination, commitment and stamina. They asserted the need to start with small collaborative projects to build trust and advocated incremental relationship development.

In this research, collaboration is characterised as a process through which separate entities work together to achieve a set of aims. Note that it is not defined as convergence or ‘melting’ of two organisations, but the emergence of a third ‘relationship’ that combines elements from both organisations. Each of the approaches and applications of collaboration above has a unique contribution to make to a meaningful discussion of relationships between nonprofits and for-profits in Australia. Taken together, they combine to form an understanding of collaboration that includes process, context, language, power and consequences for the individuals and the organisations involved.

1.3 POWER AND PHILANTHROPY

This section includes work conducted around philanthropic endeavour and donor rationale as it pertains to power. Several authors have done work on how philanthropy is affected

and affects the social world. In her book a decade ago on the culture of American philanthropy, Odendahl detailed how the activities, behaviours and self-described identities of philanthropists perpetuate the current social system. She found that groups that serve the elite are those most likely to receive substantial funding. For example, mainstream arts institutions figured prominently in the discussion because they attracted large donation subsidies for their work (Odendahl 1990).

Hanson reiterated this argument in work on ‘tribal exchanges’, in which the author defined modern philanthropy as ‘the paradox by which the affluent preserve and reinforce their power by their selective and symbolic abandonment of power over material wealth and goods’ (1997, p. 17) Hanson also cited Eminhiser, who did work on elite social structures and philanthropic funding as it relates to the process of gaining power. In this view, the process of philanthropy is itself an exercise in power acquisition and consolidation. It also clearly states the role of power in relationships between donor and recipient. However, Hanson and Eminhiser’s work is focused primarily on individuals and does not address the possible organisational consequences. Nonetheless, the framework might be expanded to point to the possibility that engaging in traditional ‘charity-type’ donation relationships may have adverse effects on the nonprofit organisation involved.

The areas of historical context, collaboration, and the interaction of power and philanthropy are all part of the literature that pertains to an exploration and development of theory around language and power in nonprofit/for-profit relationships. In conjunction with a detailed exploration of the theoretical heuristic that guided the empirical phase of the research presented here, Chapter 2 outlines the theoretical constructs that are pertinent to this research. These include power, language, social agency, organisational capacity, the role of structure and the institutional context in which relationships between nonprofit organisations and for-profit businesses develop.

CHAPTER 2: THEORETICAL MODEL & RESEARCH QUESTIONS

2.1 OVERVIEW

The research is based on a theoretical heuristic that explores:

- whether and how relationships between for-profit and nonprofit institutions are characterised by power inequities;
- how language shapes and is shaped by these ‘partnerships’;
- implications of these elements for the nonprofit’s organisational capacity and for individual social agency.

There are two steps to understanding the model. Firstly, the theoretical bases of power and language, social agency, organisational capacity and institutional context are described below. Secondly, an overall explanation of how these components fit together in the model follows from these individual concepts.

Research into power, language, social agency, organisational capacity and institutional context is quite rich in the organisational literature. In addition to the work outlined in the previous chapter, the research reported here relies on work from these areas. Although there has been research conducted into each of these constructs separately and in different circumstances, this is the first work that integrates this set of constructs to develop a theory of how language and power reflect and shape nonprofit/for-profit relationships in Australia. Another significant addition in this work is a theoretical link between two levels of analysis: individual and organisational. Language and power are incorporated as driving factors in the model.

The research questions with which investigations were begun reflect the two levels of analysis, the media impact and a strong focus on the experiences of the staff in the nonprofit organisation. The questions with which this research was initiated are:

1. Does the language used by nonprofit staff and in organisational documentation relating to relationships with for-profits reflect and contribute to the reproduction of the power relationship between the organisations?
 - 1a. What elements of vocabulary, narrative structure and syntax constitute a 'language of inequality' between the private and third sector?
 - 1b. How is this language different in genuine power-sharing relationships?
 - 1c. To what extent is this linguistic space shared across nonprofit organisations engaged in similar relationships with for-profit firms?
 - 1d. How is the structure of that language transmitted throughout the organisation?

2. Do relationships affect the organisational capacity of nonprofit organisations and the social agency of individuals? If so, to what extent can balanced power-sharing arrangements contribute to increased organisational capacity?

3. Does the media aspect of the institutional context of relationships in which nonprofits operate affect the social agency of individuals and the capacity of nonprofits?
 - 3a. To what extent are staff members in the nonprofit aware of the constraints on them of this aspect of institutionalism?

For this research, two complementary positions for the interplay between language and power were assumed. On the one hand, power is reflected by the individual and organisational discourse of a nonprofit. On the other hand power is inherent in the language, which describes structural constraints under which the organisation and individuals operate. Both play a crucial role in describing and understanding relationships

between nonprofit and for-profit organisations. As will become clear in the following sections, these assertions are firmly grounded in existing research.

This work is an investigation into the experiences of staff in nonprofit, community sector organisations that are involved in collaborations with for-profit business. An examination of the language and power implications of these relationships looked at how the staff was affected by language that reflects inequality. One initial idea was that power and language affect and are reflected by social agency, (the extent to which people feel able to act positively on their own behalf) and organisational capacity (i.e. the ability of an organisation to respond to challenges and develop progressively).

In order to gather appropriate data through the case study approach (see Chapter 3 for more methodological detail), assumptions were outlined about areas that contribute to a theory of language and power in relationships between nonprofits and for-profit organisations. However, they offered the opportunity to filter the data, ask for clarification during interviews and documentation gathering and understand how new concepts emerged from the fieldwork phase. The literature, working definitions and existing connotations of collaboration between nonprofits and for-profits were detailed in the previous chapter. The purpose of this chapter is to present a discussion of the theoretical constructs of power, language, social agency, organisational capacity and institutional context. In the theoretical framework, power and language are inextricably linked.

2.2 POWER, KNOWLEDGE AND LANGUAGE: DISCOURSE AND STRUCTURAL COMPONENTS

Wildavsky offered a useful note on the connection between knowledge and power. In a discussion of program evaluation, Wildavsky stated that knowledge is useless without the authority and legitimacy to implement changes from that knowledge (1979). For example, nonprofit organisations may have knowledge that could inform the structure and process of an evaluation (i.e. what is to be measured and how), but they lack the power to carry out

changes that they would see as contributing to the work of the program. This notion links into power as an indication of the authority to make and implement decisions. In that example, the power resides with the funding body overseeing the evaluation.

Power is shifted away from nonprofit organisations when 'funders' dictate the evaluative process. In this example, power may be exercised through a structural constraint-- nonprofits are bound by their contractual obligations to carry out evaluations according to a given set of criteria. Foucault's idea that power is a driver behind the creation of reality also illustrated how individuals and the knowledge that they gain through power are part of this iterative transaction (1980). In fact, Foucault's definition of power and knowledge as one are crucial to an understanding of how language embodies knowledge and how this knowledge is both a source of power and a reflection of it.

In the context of researching relationships between nonprofit and for-profit organisations, the particular subset of literature on power that provides the most useful framework focused on the role of narrative and social control. At both individual and organisational levels, the links between power and language affect how nonprofits fare in relationships with private firms.

In order to understand the assumptions that ground this research regarding power, it is important to note salient points in the development of a theory of power. Clegg (1987) provided one history of power theory and the role of narrative. In this history, the conceptualisation of power started as elitist where power was something that could only be revealed by objective, well-informed researchers. In this sense, power was something outside the experience of individuals.

Shifting to a pluralist standpoint, the conceptualisation of power hung in the balance between individuals and the environment in which they operate. Pluralists like Bachrach & Baratz (1962), who put forward the 'two faces' theory of power, partially included individuals in the picture by allowing intentions to function as causes. However, they remained stalled in causal behavioural explanations rather than agency. These behavioural

explanations were heavily influenced by the context in which the power was exercised. Clegg noted that others like Weber and Russell were also pluralist, but their work downplayed contextual factors.

Lukes' three-dimensional view (1962) represented an expanded pluralist model of power. By criticising the 'intentions as causes' argument of Bachrach and Baratz, Lukes introduced the concept of hegemony into the power debate. Where Bachrach and Baratz saw behaviour as the result of intentional exercise of power, Lukes saw concealment. He operated on the premise that people did not know their own minds or that they might falsify their intentions.

From Clegg's standpoint, both concealment and revelation constituted an elitist view. The idea of research into revelation argued that researchers could perceive the 'reality' of power relationships, which individuals might be unable to do. The concealment argument, on the other hand, fits in with the idea that people were not even aware of how power shaped their lives or that they would deliberately not acknowledge that influence. Both of these approaches assumed a concept of power that relied solely on the force of power to cause changes in behaviour, whether or not the individual was aware of the existence of power.

In a break with the dichotomy between revelation and concealment, Clegg offered insights into links between agency and context that were concise and influential. He reiterated that social agency remains an important concept in understanding how power works. The sociology of translation supported the idea that theories of power should incorporate a theory of organisation, and that this in turn would lead to effective agency. A good example of this theory in action is Spencer's anthropological work on authority, which stressed a point of view that combines 'creative force of human agency' and 'structural constraints of cultural institutions' (Spencer 1993).

Clegg's 'circuits of power' model took the opposite assumption from dominant narratives of power. He grounded the argument by taking as given what people say in certain situations. Unlike revelation, which required superior analytical powers on the part of

researchers to understand the power dynamics, or concealment, which held that people did not know their own minds, Clegg's architecture provided a new basis from which to study power and individuals. This position is critical to the research into the perceptions of power in nonprofit/for-profit 'collaborations', because the focus is on the need to understand the phenomenon from the inside out. Without imposing revelation or assuming concealment or ignorance, the circuits of power model offers a framework in which participants in the research provide the empirical basis for analysis. Their words, in the context in which they are written or spoken, are accepted at face value (Clegg 1989).

By combining conversational analysis (language as social reality) and ethnography (language reflects social reality), Clegg supported the 'language as medium and outcome' in the methodology itself.

Another advantage of using the 'circuits of power' model, which is based on Lockwood (1964), is that it incorporates three distinct types of power:

- Episodic power—agents getting other agents to do things (resources and causal power)
- Facilitative power—social integration, rules of practice, positive, innovative, rules 'fixing relations of meaning and membership'
- Dispositional power—system integration, domination, 'techniques of discipline and production'

(Clegg 1989, pp. 27-31)

One of the crucial aspects of this model was that it showed power as fluid, multidirectional and having the capacity to act in multiple ways. Each of these types of power has embedded within them separate sets of assumptions. In the first, power rests on the agents and resultant actions. The pressure of power causes agents to behave in a certain manner. Episodic power is a person-to-person interaction. Facilitative power has a different function and implementation. It is the grease of organisational structure that enables social interaction. These rules pivot around inter-subjective meaning and the 'rules' that result from individuals creating and conforming to organisational norms and practice. This type

of power has positive implications for functional organisations and collaborative efforts. Dispositional power extends the structural element of the facilitative power. Where facilitative power rests on mutually agreed rules that become ingrained in how members of an organisation act, dispositional power is more extreme in its structuralist focus. For example, this aspect of power is highly visible in regimented bureaucracies governed by rigid rules that constrain behaviour. The metaphor implied here is mechanistic and impersonal, where the power rests in the position and the strategies of rigid discipline.

Episodic, facilitative and dispositional definitions of power have a place in the study of relationships between third sector and private sector entities. Episodic power is linked to social agency; facilitative power can be used to promote organisational capacity in the rules that create shared meaning; and dispositional power and the possibility of domination arise in an inter-sectoral collaboration where there is pre-determined inequality in power.

The circuits of power model addresses both agency and structural elements of power and language in organisations. At one level, power is agentic; that is, it flows from the influence of one individual over another. At another level, the structures, limitations and context define how power is implemented in an organisation. For example, the reporting or auditing requirements in a nonprofit organisation exercise power over that organisation by dictating how certain systems must be implemented to maintain the type of information required by that funding agency.

Clegg called language and its relationship to power an important medium and outcome (1987). In this view, language is a contributing factor to both the development of social reality and as an image of that social construction. As such, language is a part of social structure and social action. In the 'language as medium' argument, people use language to create mutual frames of reference, reproduce rules within organisations and share the social world. The metaphor for this function of language is a tool, which individuals use to shape their joint social realities and enforce power relationships. This view of language veers away from the extreme determinist view. Language is not deterministic, but it is contributory--and therefore one of the important factors in power relations. On the other

side of the power and language connection, the words, syntax, and linguistic devices that people use are shaped by the power structures inherent in organisational imperatives and institutional context. This perspective offers a different metaphor for language. Language is at the same time a mirror and a magnifying glass, which reflects and focuses the rays of power in a particular context.

In research into collaboration between nonprofits and for-profits, this reciprocal relationship between language and power offers a clear advantage. Language is both a power unto itself and an object upon which power is exercised, subject to the constraints, prior social constructions and norms that dictate language use in an organisational environment. This definition closely connects language to the way in which staff in the nonprofit perceive and act upon their social agency, contribute to fulfilling organisational capacity and responding to the institutional context in which the organisation finds itself.

A third element coloured the assumptions behind language: that language is material, tangible and objectified (McHoul & Clegg 1987). Language exists as an object in the world, a view that does not contradict the anti-realists assumptions of methodologies such as discourse analysis and ethnography. This is not to argue that language is deterministic, but only to emphasise that objectification of language can co-exist with anti-realist positions.

This is an important contribution in the context of inter-organisational power because it suggests that language can be manipulated to create tangible change in the relationships among individuals. Rather than viewing language as simply an elusive construct, the 'language is material' perspective argues that shaping and developing changes to language will have significant effects on the organisational structure and power inequity between organisations. If language is both a contributing factor and a reflection of power inequality, then the ability to shift that power by modifying language use is a powerful tool in facilitating integrated collaboration between the third and private sectors. Language can frame both external structural limitations (e.g. a contract or signed agreement that

constrains action) and internal discourse (e.g. how staff in nonprofits see themselves in relation to their counterparts in the for-profit).

Other theorists have combined structural and discursive theories of power. In an attempt to combine structural, functional and interpretivist theories of power, Lee drew on a case study of a power struggle in a school (Lee, M.L. 1999). Using a method of successive analysis, Lee built a parallel individual view of power based on both 'reality' (i.e. understanding of power structures) and perceptions, based largely on the internalised perceptions of power. Here again, power and language have both agency and structural elements. The restrictions on what action individuals could take depending on their position in the school hierarchy, combined with internalised maps of their own social agency illustrated that a comprehensive picture of narrative and structure could be constructed from the interplay of language and power.

Lee also made an important contribution to social agency. Using a distinction between rhetoric and poetic self, she concluded that consistent manipulation of a situation to correlate with one's own experience in an effort to maintain a sense of 'empowerment' led to impotence. In other words, people are able to be reflexive in their outward constructions of themselves and of situations in which they operate. Once again, the link to social agency is clear. Where structural/functional analysis fails to capture fully the internal dynamics of the effects of power on individuals, an understanding of those reflexive perceptions is crucial. Lee's combination of individual perception with the structural constraints of the situation and the tangible effects of exercised power parallels the intention to understand the research questions at individual and organisational both the perspective of relational discourse and the very real limitations that structure and context can place on nonprofit organisations. In terms of how staff in nonprofit organisations in 'collaboration' with for-profits fit into this model, it is useful to understand the break between feelings of empowerment and the structural authority to act on those perceptions.

A third set of theoretical links between power and language have been explored by Weedon. She wrote:

Language is the place where actual and possible forms of social organisation and their likely social and political consequences are defined and contested. Yet it is also the place where our sense of ourselves, our subjectivity, is constructed ... Subjectivity is produced in a whole range of discursive practices - economic, social, and political - the meanings of which are a constant site of struggle over power.

(1987, p.21)

Weedon contributed to the debate on language, power, social agency and organisational capacity on several levels. Firstly, she identified language as a critical component of social interaction and organisation. More importantly, she noted that language contributed to and reflected the power relationships between individuals as they construct themselves in relation to one another. Using discursive practice as the springboard from which to propel forward an activist, materialist view of language, Weedon elaborated that language as the site for social change because discourse constructs, develops and modifies both the individual's conception of himself and the institutional constraints in which he operates. One of the disadvantages to this is that although Weedon positions herself as a post-structuralist, over-emphasising the role of language might obscure the very real obstacles to change and the inertia of the status quo that limits opportunities for change.

Ford and Ford embraced the structuration of language and discussed the way in which intentional change can occur through the use of language. Using language as performative they argued not only that communication plays an important role in change but that:

Change as an organizational phenomenon necessarily occurs in a context of human social interactions, which constitute and are constituted by communication (Giddens, 1984; Poole & DeSanctis, 1990). These interactions produce and reproduce the social structures and actions people know as

reality (Berger & Luckmann, 1966). From this perspective, change is a recursive process of social construction in which new realities are created (Ford & Backoff, 1988) sustained, and modified in the process of communication. Producing intentional change, then, is a matter of deliberately bringing into existence, through communication, a new reality or set of social structures.

(1995, p. 541)

Ford and Ford also speculate that ‘a change agent's effectiveness in producing an intentional change can be increased through the effective application of these conversations’ (p. 542). This understanding of language as material, able to be manipulated and resulting in concrete changes to the organisation through the social agency of individuals may have application in a theory of language and power in nonprofit/for-profit inter-sectoral collaboration.

Other researchers have also used the interaction of power and language in an organisational context (McCann & Gray 1986; Donnellon, Gray & Bougon 1986; Chamba 1996; Randel 1997; Carmichael 1998; Farrell & Farrell 1998; Oakes, Townley & Cooper 1998;), making the link between discourse and action a well-established issue in theoretical debate.

As illustrated by these examples, using an interactive model of power and language to complement one another captures a more complete picture of the phenomenon. The model assumes that power is reflected and constituted by the language. The next section examines specific examples of power in organisations.

2.2.1 Examples of power in organisations

Examples of power in organisations are prevalent in the literature, but there are a number of particularly pertinent examples for understanding nonprofit organisations and their

relationships with institutions that provide resources to them. Altheide's work on 'the production of fear' is useful in understanding how one cognitive model can be reproduced internally and externally to an organisation (1997). In this work, Altheide records how one dominant discourse in the media—the 'problem frame'—was reproduced and integrated into broader society, creating heightened perceptions of fear in communities that had previously not exuded this dynamic. This is a good illustration of how a particular way of looking at a situation (e.g. how staff in a nonprofit perceive a relationship with the business) can alter ongoing perceptions of the situation.

In a noted case study, Milofsky and Morrison examined the power relations among the Executive Director, staff, volunteers and board in a shelter for victims of domestic violence (1989) and found that there were strong links within the organisation itself among the power relations, structure and communication. Although this study is focused on intra-staff relations, it does raise some important issues regarding the meaning of power in nonprofits, including the connection between hierarchy (structure) and power and communication (discourse) and power.

Two discourse analyses with distinct versions of the power game further serve to illustrate the complexity of internal and external cultural dislocation of power. The first, by Gamble and Duncan, was an attempt to understand the implicit cultural values embedded in social relationships, with a definite emphasis on organisational culture as a factor in maintaining and enforcing those relationships (1999). Based on Hong Kong data, this study scrutinised how the discourse of organisational culture reflected and promoted cultural values.

Skillington in the United Kingdom conducted the most closely related work to research into the power structures of 'innovative' relationships between nonprofits and business institutions. The author showed how strategies and 'new' types of relationships in fact reinforced traditional power structures. With the premise that discourse is social practice and that it recursively reproduces relationships, Skillington's work demonstrated that the power can be entrenched even when superficial linguistic relationships shift (1997).

2.3 SOCIAL AGENCY

Social agency is a recurring theme, either explicitly or implicitly, in all of the work that takes as a model the individual in the context of social relationships. In order to understand this concept, it is useful to begin with a discussion of social capital, a distinct but related concept. Many of the researchers using this framework maintain a structuralist perspective. Bourdieu's view of capital is one of exchange in the framework of the social world. His vocabulary included conversions among different forms of capital (i.e. cultural to economic), embedding of capital into institutions (i.e. the value of a tertiary degree) (Richardson 1986; Bourdieu 1983). This objectification required that culture be a tangible that can be bought, sold and traded in a marketplace; this in turn subjects social capital to a 'multiplier' effect depending on sizes and depths of social networks. In work on community organisations and social capital, Bullen and Onyx found that social agency was the second strongest factor in measurement of social capital with their index (1998).

In its most deceptively simple form, the term 'social capital' can be defined as 'features of social organization, such as trust, norms and networks, that can improve the efficiency of society by facilitating co-ordinated actions (Putnam 1993, p. 167). However, upon examination, it is clear that the term when defined in this way is rife with assumptions about the nature of social interaction (that it is reproducible and measurable), underlying societal values (efficiency), and that social capital is a concept that can be objectified and wielded as a tool for greater co-ordination. As is illustrated by the World Bank's Social Capital Bibliography compiled in 1998, the term remains somewhat controversial. Operationalisation of the concept has been offered in almost as many guises as there have been examples to support the existence or refute the possibility of 'social capital' (Serageldin & Grootaert 1997; Grootaert 1998). For the purposes of researching individuals working in nonprofit organisations in Australia who are grappling with issues of power and legitimacy in terms of their relationships with for-profit businesses, the social capital literature is reviewed here through a lens of social agency. In the section on organisational capacity aspects of social capital that contribute to organisational development are reviewed.

A basic element of social capital is trust. This means that social capital is found in the spaces between people and in the relationships that they form with one another. Another researcher who has made significant contributions to the theoretical basis of social capital is Fukuyama, who focused on personal interaction (1995). He is included in the section on organisational social capital for his notions of the organisational imperatives of hierarchy combined with the need for trust in social settings. Fukuyama's term 'spontaneous sociability' and the organisational requirements that flow from his definition provided another perspective from which to view the creation of collaborations and collaborations between nonprofits and the private sector. He wrote:

The most useful kind of social capital is often not the ability to work under the authority of a traditional community or group, but the capacity to form new associations and to cooperate within the terms of reference they establish...based on shared values rather than on contract...under the general rubric of what Durkheim labelled "organic solidarity"...by contrast, people who do not trust each other will end up cooperating only under a system of formal rules and regulations...this legal apparatus serves as a substitute for trust.

(p. 27)

Two related works detailed agency specifically in the context of networks and social capital. Harrison (1999) cited work by Ganz (1995) that indicated 'unsettled times' provide proactive individuals with an opportunity to change organisations. Democratic institutions bear this out as well. Traditionally, prosperous times lead to complacency and inertia, whereas difficult economic circumstances draw individuals into the policy arena. This idea that one person's outlook on a situation can lead to change is critical to a discussion of how staff at nonprofits understand their dual roles as providers of service and passive recipients of resources.

Falk's definition of 'social brokers', predicated on a combination of personal identity and community position, used dimensions of social capital including identity, knowledge and historical context (1999). Several issues here are directly related to the development of relationships between the third and private sectors. His comment that shared values provide a more sound foundation to organisations can be extended to networks of organisations attempting to work together. This follows that for organisations to be dynamic, innovative and able to adapt to an increasing pace of change, they must do more than co-ordinate their activities. They must integrate their fundamental reasons for operating in the way they do into a third synergy, which creates a new organisational bridge every time two or more organisations join forces.

In a different approach to locating and evaluating the effects of social capital on individual lives in Australia, Stewart-Weeks and Richardson (1998) chronicled the motivations behind dimensions of social capital. The focus on characteristics of people with high social capital (e.g. people who have access to rich horizontal and vertical linkages of trust) is useful input into research that seeks to identify how the staff in nonprofit organisations perceive their own social agency, both internally in their organisation and externally in interactions with private sector partners.

Understanding the meaning of shared, established terms of reference is vital for these types of relationships. In the context of nonprofit funding, the terms of reference are often contractual in nature; that is, that the legal system and sanctions for non-compliance and non-performance replace a sense of mutual obligation, which may decrease social capital among individuals and between organisations.

One of the tenets of operationalised organisational social capital is the idea that it can be systematically identified and manipulated. Ritchey-Vance asserted as much in her tool for measuring what constitutes successful programs funded by the Inter-American Foundation (IAF). In this work, the 'yardstick' of personal capacity (or social agency) is in fact a reflection of the structure of the grassroots organisation that includes democratic practice and flat organisational frameworks (1996).

Some researchers asserted that the social capital in an organisation depends on how individuals can interact with one another in the organisation. This supports the idea that flat, democratic institutions are more likely incubators for trust and reciprocity, which would raise an organisations internal social capital. Using network analysis and locational identity, Burt has called this the 'structural ecology of social capital' (1997). What Burt is referring to is the extent to which social capital of a particular individual depends on his or her position in the hierarchy. This is a useful concept because it noted possible differences in social agency and levels of social capital related specifically to how powerful a person is within an organisation.

In related work, Leana and Van Buren (1999) discussed how employment practices affect organisational social capital and how enhancing the image of employees as assets or resources can have positive consequences for the firm. This is directly linked to social agency, because employees who see themselves as positive contributors to an organisation will enhance the organisation itself.

Garnsey and Rees (1996) conducted a discourse analysis to 'explore ways in which the persistence of inequalities may, without apparent intention, be encoded in language' (p. 1042). They concluded that cognitive schemata or maps of these dominant discourses may constrain an individual's ability to act and promote social enactment of the established hierarchy.

Social capital and social agency are different properties. Taking into account all these varied definitions of social agency and how social capital operates, social agency is defined as the extent to which people feel able to act positively on their own behalf in a given social context. Social capital is not located in individuals. Like the definition of language and in conjunction with the premise behind Giddens' structuration theory (1984; 1987), there is an assumption that social capital is both a process and an outcome of itself. It exists and can be manipulated in the relationships that people form with one another. Social agency, on

the other hand, is a perceptual quality that facilitates or inhibits an individual's ability to act in a positive manner on their own behalf.

Another element of the possible connection of these constructs to power and language is that they shape an individual's perceptions of the meaning of action and the possible consequences of that behaviour. If they have a well-developed sense of social agency, people may be more likely and more able to act creatively and constructively within the organisation. Structurally, all individuals in organisations are subject to boundaries on their behaviour. These boundaries may be based on position (e.g. power in the hierarchy), legal obligation (e.g. a professional code of practice), institutional expectation (e.g. how nonprofit staff 'should' act) or a number of other structural constraints.

2.4 ORGANISATIONAL CAPACITY

Although the subject is welfare, Ahmed's study of how to build people's capacity in organisations has close ties to nonprofits and their relationship with funding sources (1999). Organisational capacity was defined in Ahmed's work as the set of skills acquired by members of the organisation or group. Skills might include leadership, networking, socio-economic awareness, networking and negotiation. This links well with the hypothesis that staff in nonprofits may lack the contextual and organisational awareness to recognise inconsistencies in their own behaviour towards potential funders, and that this skill deficiency may have adverse affects on the organisational capacity of the nonprofit.

Dougherty's work on how 'thought worlds' interfere with process integration applies as well to nonprofit enterprises as it did to innovation in large firms (1992). Nonprofits that maintain distinct inner and outer thought worlds (i.e. differing perceptions of themselves as internally proactive and externally or contextually passive) interrupt their own development as holistic organisational entities. Language plays a critical role in developing thought worlds and by extension on the ability of the organisation to develop. Note that these 'thought worlds' are more than a simple aggregate of how people feel about the

organisation. Organisations' perceptions of themselves are often codified in documentation, organisational hierarchy and procedures that illustrate how language and power are inherent in organisational structures.

However, it would be naïve to assert that organisational capacity rests solely on an organisation's internal dynamics. Organisational capacity is also affected by the requirements placed on it by external structure and discourse. An organisation may be innovative, entrepreneurial and progressive. However, if the structures under which it operates are restrictive, regressive and rigidly bureaucratic, the internal discourse of capacity will be severely limited and modified by the structural constraints.

More than fifteen years ago, Granovetter looked at how social relationships affect behaviour and institutions—a theory that emphasised networks and underscored the importance of linkage density for understanding how organisations expand and succeed. (1985). Putnam's notion of horizontal and vertical linkages in an organisation makes a good point about the possibility of internal inconsistencies, saying 'the actual networks that characterize an organization may be inconsistent with the ideology that inspires it' (p. 173, 1993). This is another example that applies to some instances of nominal 'collaborations' between nonprofits and for-profits in a funding arrangement. Words like 'collaboration' imply horizontal linkages, but in fact the power relationship between the organisations may maintain vertical linkages that prohibit organisational integration and the establishment of shared purpose. This discrepancy can lead to decreased organisational capacity because an organisation is forced to consider conflicting, parallel courses of action. Several years later, in a case study of a Southern United States textile community, Wilson showed how organisational social capital is embedded in local networks of power and domination (1999).

A recent study in Australia of two communities facing rapid economic and social change offered salient comment on both community development and organisational capacity (Gibson, Cameron & Veno 1999). Research from a pilot project situated in regional Victoria documented how narratives within the community shape those residents; abilities

to adapt to change. By exploring the ‘variety of understandings’ participants had of the socio-economic shifts and the consequences to their region, the authors created a model for assisting communities to nurture optimistic scenarios for their communities. This type of work is closely linked to research into relationships, because it discussed the power of narrative and language to shape community development. It also took into account structure, because both communities were responding to externalities from a macro-economic situation over which they had little control.

In ‘Community Development and the Role of Local Government’, Onyx (1992) described the tension between ‘new managerialism’ and the concerns of responsiveness, resource allocation and efficiency. These structures, imposed upon nonprofits from the institutional context, might include modified procedures for resource allocation such as competitive tendering. Young and Steinberg (1995) included an analysis of the pressures of conflicting values ‘efficiency v. equity.’ Although the focus is local government, the assessment is useful because it outlines the differences in approach that have characterised economic rationalism and community development. Nyland’s identification of the pressure to seek “economies of scale” also entered into such a discussion (1993). The interplay of innovative resourcing and the resulting pressure on non-profit organisations exhibits similar strain and may affect organisational capacity, which is defined as the ability of an organisation to respond to challenges and develop progressively.

2.5 INSTITUTIONAL CONTEXT AND STRUCTURE

By combining organisational discourse at the ‘institutional field level’ with the context in which organisations operate, Hardy and Phillips’ (1999) research into the refugee system in Canada created a bridge between internal and external models of how the system is perceived. The discussion centred around how discourse constrains actions, and offers an interesting perspective as to how the language of ‘collaboration’ between organisations defines the power dynamic of that relationship. For example, there might be pressure points when the language of the nonprofit clashes with the terminology used by business to

signal a link. These deep points of disconnected meaning can lead to serious problems for an organisation that finds itself in the position of having to work under two separate frames of reference and have direct relevance for nonprofit/for-profit relationships.

2.6 CONSTRUCTING THE THEORETICAL HEURISTIC

This section explores how the work of Giddens (1976; 1984; 1987), DiMaggio & Powell (1991), McHoul (1987), Wittgenstein (1972), Lyotard (1984) and Winch (1958) were used to frame research questions, guide the theoretical basis of this work and select specific methods in work investigating the nature of language and power in inter-sectoral relationships.

Giddens has been selected as the primary guiding theory for the research for several reasons related to research questions and methodology. His structuration theory on the reproduction of social relations and the concept of duality of structure provides a 'revolving door' metaphor for social life. As both the medium and outcome of the duplication and transmission of social practices, structuration theory nimbly incorporates both sides of the debate of cause and effect for social reality. His view of social agency is also instructive. Human beings are agents limited by the social structures that they create and perpetuate. The rules are structural properties. Giddens contributes to the discussion of power with his idea of the dialectic of control, which maintains that individuals in subordinate positions have some power by virtue of the role of dependence (1984). This is an interesting turn on the 'superiors as all-powerful' position that some power theorists maintain and an important concept as one analyses language and power relationships from the perspective of those perceived to be dependent. Of power and duality of structure he writes:

action logically involves power in the sense of transformative capacity...resources are structured properties of social systems, drawn upon and reproduced by knowledgeable agents in the course of interaction.

(1984, p. 15)

This illustrates two important points. Firstly, it links the idea of power to action. Secondly, it promotes the idea of agency without presuming omniscience. That is, people may act in accordance with structural properties of systems. This clearly relates back to the main research question under investigation on language and power; that is, language and power act on one another to create structures in which the inequitable power differentials are reproduced and amplified. Once again, however, there remains the possibility of informed action on the part of individuals.

Although Giddens' work plays a significant part in the theoretical thrust of this thesis, it is nonetheless important to note some criticisms levelled against structuration. Layder (1987) and Clegg (1989) both note that structure is dominated by agency in Giddens' discussions. However, structuration is an important starting point for the work presented here as it frames the grounded theory emerging from the data.

Neoinstitutionalism as conceptualised by DiMaggio & Powell (1991) is a strong counterpoint in the argument of systems and agency. By moving away from a traditional institutionalist theory that focused on rigid sets of rules governing behaviour, neoinstitutionalism includes in it the contradictions of power. Structuration is evident in this theory as well. DiMaggio and Powell argue that 'institutions are not only constraints on human agency; they are first and foremost the products of human actions' (1991). They also hold that context (in this case, the organisational context of the power relations between a nonprofit organisation and its private sector 'partner') is embedded in the structures themselves. This would support the idea that language and power contribute to structural and organisational locus of control discrepancies in these types of relationships. Another important idea in neoinstitutionalism is isomorphism: that is, that these relationships pattern themselves after broader trends in the community and that organisational arrangements between like entities become more homogenous over time. The argument here is two-fold: first, it requires a link to the historical context of community sector organisations in societal discourse; and second, that it acknowledges

that, in the absence of intervention or at least revelation, these patterns will reproduce themselves across organisations.

In a response to Clegg's discussion (1987), McHoul bridges the gap between the anti-realist perspective of language shaping and shaped by social reality and the idea that language is an object (1987). For the research into alliances, power and language, the materialist position for language is the assumption taken for this work. That is, language is nominalist in that it is an inter-subjective construct. However, it becomes embedded into structures, solidified by use and manipulated as an object in much the same manner as a hammer or saw. This is one of the advantages of crossing the subjective/objective divide on the paradigm map. Language as an object relates back to structuration theory: it is both the medium and the outcome of power relations between nonprofit and for-profit organisations in relationships.

Having established the assumption that language can be viewed as an object, it is also important to note its functions in the building of social reality and the perpetuation of power inequity. Wittgenstein's agonistic language games model how individuals influence one another in a dialectical process. Each element of conversation--question, request, assertion or narrative--is identified as a 'move' in the game that creates displacement, which in turn provokes (1972). The boundaries of language games, defined by previously created structural rules of engagement move as the dialogue progresses. However, the constraints provide strong incentive for actors to remain between the lines. For example, in a situation where a nonprofit staff member has one set of scripts or game rules pertaining to organisational goals for clients (i.e. empowerment) and another set for organisational goals for funding, the latter set of rules might take on rigidity and perceived permanence.

Constrained by structure, the assertions rest squarely on the function of narrative and language. Lyotard's concepts of narrative knowledge and internal equilibrium provide a valuable platform from which to investigate language and power (1984). Narrative knowledge, distributed as 'flexible networks of language,' takes as an assumption that individuals seek internal equilibrium as they interpret the world around them, which is

directly linked to the research question of perceptions and social agency of nonprofit staff in organisations that are engaging in private sector 'collaboration.' Using the idea of language games, Lyotard asserts that the social bond itself is made up of a series of language games. Another useful metaphorical connection is that Lyotard sees language as a node through which communication is established and this is echoed in Clegg's circuits of power model (1987). As a postmodernist, Lyotard offered an optimistic view of the possibilities of theorising within this paradigm. He argued that the discourse itself is part of the construction of social reality and positioned power as a game in which players have the ability to assess the situation and respond accordingly.

In the context of a study on power and language in relationships and perception, Winch's work (1958) on internal relations fits in well with Lyotard's discussion of narrative knowledge and internal equilibrium. Winch reiterates how social science differs from the natural sciences and supports the post-modern stance on a lack of 'grand theories' to explain social relations. He constructs meaningful behaviour from a 'tracing of internal relations,' and holds the view that social reality is constructed through individuals interacting with one another. As the last link in the cascade of theorists to support the proposition of the interplay of language and power in a nonprofit/for-profit relationship, Winch combines the importance of language as the medium and outcome of social relations, power structures as constructed constraints on behaviour, and historical context as the lens through which to observe organisational phenomena.

2.5 EXPLORING THE MODEL

Figure 1 details the model that framed this work from the beginning. The theoretical heuristic that initially guided the research into nonprofit/for-profit relationships is comprised of language and power at individual and organisational levels in a particular institutional context. Resource relationships between nonprofits and for-profits operate with a given institutional context. These include political, social and economic conditions that circumscribe the entire phenomenon. These resource relationships are driven by

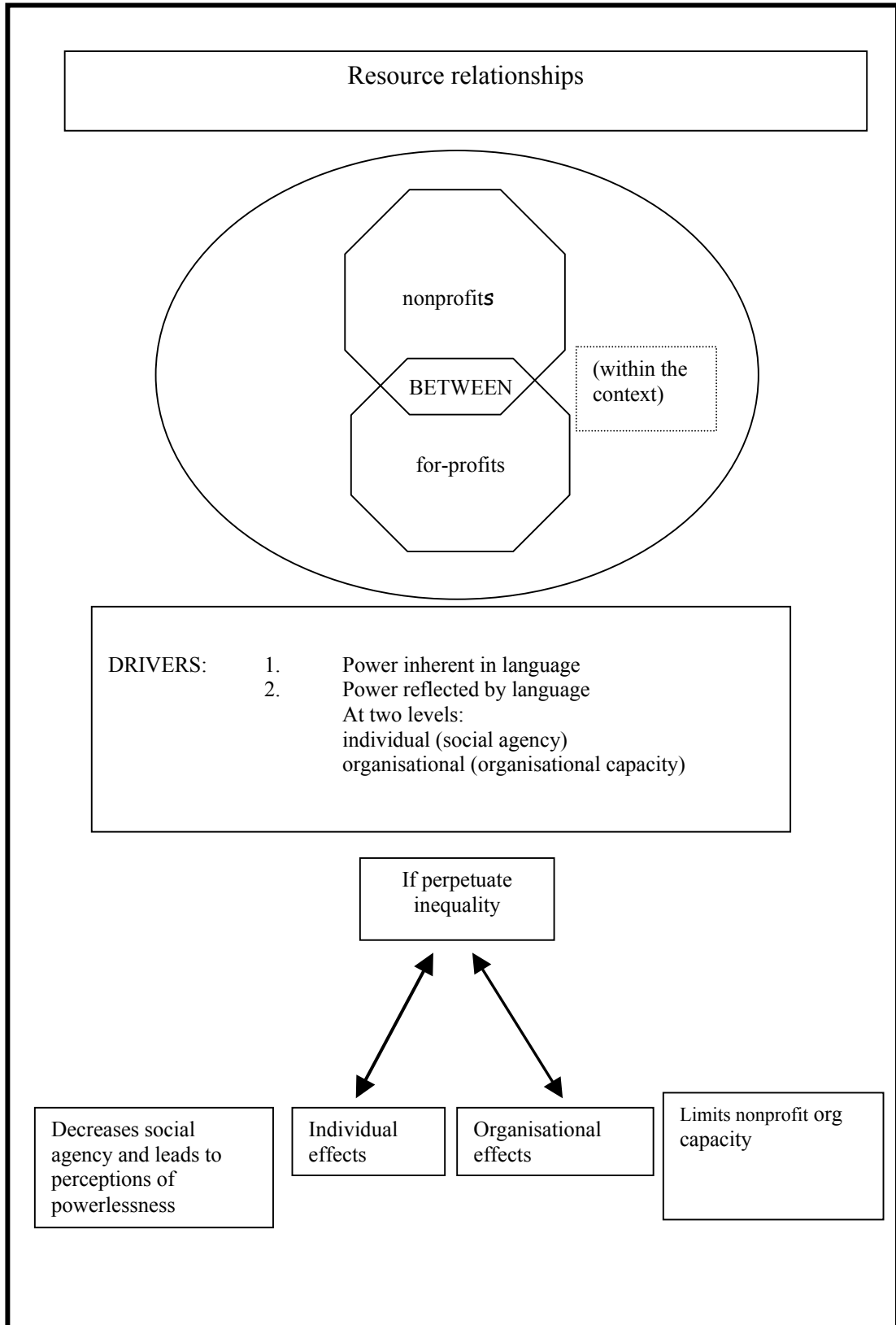
interaction of language and power, which can occur two ways. Firstly, power may be inherent in the language (i.e. position in the hierarchy). Secondly, power can be reflected by the language used. These interactions are on two levels in relationships between nonprofits and for-profits: individual and organisational. If the power/language link perpetuate inequality, there may be both individual and organisational effects. On an individual level, staff in the nonprofit may experience decreased social agency (ability to act on their own behalf) and perceptions of powerlessness; on an organisational level, this situation may limit an organisation's capacity to develop and thrive. The model is presented on the final page of the chapter as Figure 1.

The links in the model may appear firmly established. However, although they are grounded in concepts from the literature, the connections between ideas were only a guide in the exploration of data.

The next chapter details methodological concerns in developing an appropriate study to investigate the issues presented in the first two chapters.

Figure 1:

Initial Theoretical Heuristic



CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

Methodology is more than just the way to conduct research. It is the sum of all the procedures, processes, constraints, analysis, working assumptions and intentions of the researcher in a particular context for a particular project.

There are two competing views of the link between methodology and research. The view that informs much 'casual' research is that 'research is research.' This perspective divorces the methods used from some of the deeper philosophical discussion of why certain approaches may be better suited to one type of question. One way in which this is evident is the use of statistics in mass market research to measure answers to questions that might be better researched using case studies.

On the other side is the idea that research is an integrated process from the start. At its most basic level, research can be seen as an extension of the researcher. It is one type of relationship that individuals forge with their environment. In the context of the social sciences, these relationships are the study of interactions of human beings with each other and with the world. Broken down further, an investigation of relationships between nonprofits and for-profits is the study of individuals in the peculiar structure of organisations. With this view, it is impossible to separate the integrity of the research process from a thorough understanding of the intent, framework and consequences of research, whatever methodology is employed. Devine and Heath have called this 'reflexive consideration' of method (1999); others describe it as the process of deliberation (Young 1966).

3.1.1 What is science?

Western educational institutions have had a history of focusing on the physical sciences for the model to which all things purportedly scientific should aspire. The legitimization of some types of research and the discarding of other approaches have been profoundly influenced by a particular worldview. Rigid theoretical and methodological boundaries have obscured the deeper quest for meaning that lies in the notion of science. For example, the scientific method is one model for creating, carrying out and evaluating research. As can be seen from Hoover and Donovan's (1995) definitions (Appendix A), there are assumptions immanent to that process itself. Words like 'reality test' and 'hypothesis' presuppose the kinds of research to be conducted and the results to be expected.

Any meaningful examination of methodology must transcend these limitations. *In Social Research Methods*, Neuman quotes Randall Collins: 'Modern philosophy of science does not destroy social science; it does not say that science is impossible, but gives us a more flexible picture of what science is' (Neuman 1997, p. 61). Mills (1959) also points to that question of science as an important issue of clarification for social scientists.

However, although hybrid methodologies may be used to broaden understanding of a topic and afford depth to theory testing, they should not be undertaken without first considering the implications of such decisions (Devine & Heath 1999; Goia & Pitre 1990; Poole & Van de Ven 1989).

In this chapter, it is argued that research into relationships between nonprofits and for-profit organisations can be framed in a model that links these two approaches. Without losing sight of the need for clear boundaries for some parts of the research or resorting to functionalist 'absolutes' of how research 'should' be conducted, a theoretical paradigm for this project is presented that incorporates hybrid methodologies firmly rooted in prevailing assumption frameworks.

3.2 BUILDING THE ASSUMPTION BASE

One basic assumption is that the philosophical and therefore theoretical framework of research is an integral part of the methodology itself. A useful way to conceptualise this approach to methodology is that of a mirror. The research questions precede the method, which means that the methodology reflects the assumptions underlying the research questions. These assumptions are based on philosophical factors that identify the context and characteristics of human nature and social reality. With this in mind, two sets of factors determine how the methodology will be constructed. In short, both the fundamental assumptions and the research questions that evolve from those understandings affect which methodological approach provides the most satisfactory fit.

The first step in a discussion of methodology with this atomic approach is to clearly define terms that will be used throughout the chapter. It is a crucial part of ensuring that the author and the reader are well-placed to maintain the same assumptions of meaning, and provides an excellent example of how making assumptions explicit can add value to the research endeavour. In fact, this in itself is an exercise in understanding how methodological assumptions function in research. Terms as referred to throughout this research are defined in Appendix A.

3.2.1 Laying the foundation: the researcher and the research questions

Trochim (1999) raised a general methodological issue concerned with the types of questions studied in research. In his typology, descriptive, relational and causal questions require different methodological approaches, depending on the outcome expected and the intent of the researcher. Studying any organisational phenomenon comprehensively may require two or more types of questions to be asked during the research process.

There are two sets of complementary tasks contained in the research questions for this investigation into relationships between third and private sector organisations. The first is to describe the experiences of individuals and organisations working in nonprofit organisations and their perceptions of power, individual social agency and organisational

capacity. The second is to assess to what extent the drivers of these changes are found in other nonprofits in similar circumstances and whether or not experiences are similar. Inherent in these questions are assumptions about the nature of an individual's interaction with others and with her environment and the context and creation of social reality. After defining the theoretical frameworks, the research questions are examined in the context of paradigm selection and 'best fit.'

Research is a human endeavour. By this observation, the concept of research itself will be shaped by and will shape how researchers understand themselves, their relationship to social reality and the status of different types of knowledge. One useful trait shared by Burrell and Morgan (1979) and Neuman (1997) is the view of methodology inexorably connected to questions of who we are, how we interact with one another and the environment, and what constitutes knowledge. However, both are likewise limited by a view that precludes movement across paradigm lines.

In Burrell and Morgan's view, research can be categorised on two major axes. The first, subjective versus objective, incorporates the theoretical assumptions of the research. The second, radical change versus regulation, refers to a set of assumptions about the nature of society. Broadly, this notion frames the question of whether research is based on a view of the world that is subjective or objective; that is, whether it is an outside-in constraint or an inside-out construction. A brief overview follows of the four sets of assumptions in Burrell and Morgan's typology, which operate on separate sets of questions related to ontology, epistemology, human nature and methodology. These are also summarised in Appendix B.

Ontological suppositions are related to whether or not social reality is perceived to be subjective (i.e. through the perceptions of individuals) or through objective, external verified existence. An element of action is implied if it is understood to be subjectively created, whereas with the objective status human beings are seen to react to the reality originating from outside. Research is the pursuit of knowledge, and epistemological assumptions frame what will be accepted as knowledge of social relationships, how knowledge will be collected and how and whether it can be communicated to others or

viewed as integral to individual consciousness. This is the answer to questions of how people access and transmit knowledge. Assumptions about human nature refer to issues of agency, pre-determined causal laws for action and the relationship of human beings to their environment. Questions around agency are linked to whether or not there is a degree of intentionality in action. In the view that espouses social agency, human beings have the ability to make decisions about their actions. The deeper level assumption here points to whether or not there is such a thing as inherent human nature, or alternatively that it is the result of individual experience.

Methodological assumptions are at the heart of how to select a particular method to answer a given research question. To a significant degree, methodological assumptions depend on ontological assumptions. For example, if the ontological assumption is that social reality exists outside subjective experience, methods to understand social reality would closely mirror those of the natural sciences. On the other hand, if that assumption dictates a subjective social reality, appropriate methods would enable investigation of how individuals create, interpret, perpetuate and communicate social reality. Burrell and Morgan included in their discussion a practical table of assumptions underlying social science (1979, p. 3). The table is adapted in Appendix B.

The second major axis in the model is related to the continuum of assumptions about the nature of society. These assumptions about the nature of society depend on whether the researcher understands society in terms of the goal being to maintain and regulate the status quo or profoundly challenge existing structures to promote radical social change. Partially linked to questions of power, privilege and inequality, this axis determines issues like intent and strategy for methodological implications of research.

If the social system is ordered, then it is characterised by cohesion and consensus when ‘correctly’ regulated. In this view, the social structure is seen as a logical, coherent system that can be subjected to fine manipulation and improvement. The social system is mechanistic and the goal of social research should be to understand how better to tune this instrument and regulate society. In opposition to regulation and status quo, the radical

change assumption embodies a vision of society that is marked by structurally inequitable power relationships which lead to a misleading sense of social consensus. Society is a set of institutions characterised by inequality and conflict. In addition, there is the active component of this assumption that maintains that this hierarchy supports the interests of an elite group of individuals.

3.3 METHODOLOGICAL IMPLICATIONS OF PARADIGM CHOICE

Assumptions and paradigms shape the basic units of understanding about the nature of human experience and society. The five paradigms and exemplary methodological approaches detailed below each have unique advantages and problems. However, they are delineated by adherence to rules guiding the matching between philosophical assumptions about human nature and social reality and the appropriate methodologies for those assumptions. The method is another link between the questions the researcher is attempting to answer and the manner in which she goes about satisfying her intellectual curiosity.

Two methodological paradigms that deal with the status quo are the interpretative (or social constructionist) and structural functionalist (or positivist). Both assume a social system of regulation, which means that the intention of research is concerned with the status quo. However, the exemplary research methods that create the best 'fit' for each paradigm are very different. Interpretivism is nominalist, which means that interpretivist researchers follow a guideline of subjective experience of social reality. This is closely connected to its voluntarist and idiographic stances; that is, interpretivists hold that human beings have social agency and act on their own initiative, and that social phenomena are best studied by scrutinising one situation in a particular context. Neuman's (1997) definition states that social reality is constructed through interaction, development of shared meaning and communication. This view validates individual experience as not only relevant but crucial to the fabric of social reality in which people develop relationships with one another. In this sense, contrary to positivism, interpretivism is an 'inside-out' approach to social

science; that is, the reality is dynamic and responsive to the fluctuations of human interaction, perception and creation of meaning.

Interpretivist social science is much more inclusive than extreme positivism. From the positivist viewpoint, there is only one 'correct' answer; in contrast, the interpretivist paradigm allows multiple positions to be taken into account when attempting to analyse a situation. By extension, 'science' is something that all of us do every day, using a combination of common-sense understandings of the world and general laws to create meaning.

Depending upon which paradigm a social scientist selects or identifies with, each frame offers one or two outstanding methods that are clearly aligned with the assumptions underlying it. Interpretivist researchers seek methods that enable them to understand in depth the relationship of human beings to their environment and the part those people play in creating the social fabric of which they are a part. They are not searching for an objective, external answer to their questions, because they view the world through a series of individuals' eyes. In fact, methods that purport to offer objective or 'correct' information are contrary to the interpretivist position of subjectivity. People have their own interpretations of reality, and interpretivists choose methods that encompass this worldview.

The purpose of the research is important. Interpretivists have as their main goal to describe a phenomenon, not to prescribe a solution to a problem. They are interested in using methods that allow them to reflect on an individual's experience in a social context. Ethnography, which uses the anthropological methods of participant observation and unstructured interviews matches the interpretivist assumptions precisely. By using as the primary data set information from the subject experiences, focusing on how individual decisions affect the broader social reality and searching for deep understanding of a person or group of people, ethnography satisfies the requirements of an interpretivist paradigm. Another key point is that interpretivists do not see themselves separate from the process of

research. Participant observation embraces this standpoint and enhances a researcher's ability to probe deeply into the phenomenon under study.

Linguistic definitions differ as well. For an interpretative social scientist, there may be as many versions of 'truth' as there are subjects in a study. Each person in the research setting has a unique perspective on the phenomenon at hand and each of those accounts is equally valuable to the research task. To build a comprehensive picture of the situation, interpretivists rely on a kaleidoscope of 'truths' through stories. In contrast, the 'truth' for a positivist is just that: a singular, causal account that explains the phenomenon and extends beyond individuals into an external objectivity. The model for a positivist, in contrast to the multi-lens kaleidoscope of the interpretivist, is the microscope—a meticulous, single-focus tool that allows the researcher to identify and quantify previously undiscovered answers. The difference in the use of the term 'knowledge' can be similarly characterised. Knowledge for the structural functionalist (another term for positivist) is an immutable concrete wall, waiting to be catalogued and manipulated; knowledge for the interpretivist is a shifting sand dune, different from every angle, elusive and internally placed.

The importance and the credibility of the work can be analysed on the basis of the extent to which the researcher is able to communicate the subjects' perspectives and the degree to which others are able to share a cognitive model of the research setting. Interpretivist social science is no less rigorous than positivism; it simply requires different sets of standards to be applied, such as understanding rather than replicability. Context, shared meaning among members of a group and communicability of understanding are the benchmarks of success. The researcher in an interpretivist paradigm is fully integrated into the research setting. This means that it may be difficult and undesirable to assume any sense of value-neutrality.

In contrast to interpretivism, structural functionalism seeks to identify universal laws already present in social reality and articulate causal connections between constructs. Neuman explored this area further by re-iterating that positivism is the most widely accepted approach to research (1997). With a strong history in the natural sciences, it

overshadows much of what is popularly labelled ‘research.’ Under this umbrella, the rationale for conducting research is to find and apply laws of human behaviour. The goal is to create theories that explain behaviour in concrete terms. A strong predictive component exists here as well—the intent is to identify replicable patterns of human interaction and then anticipate behaviour across contexts. In positivist social science, these abstract laws are in a sense ‘waiting to be discovered.’ They are widely applicable and subject to rigorous testing. This is a predominantly nomothetic stand; that is, positivists look for generalisability in laws and research outcomes.

The epistemological basis of positivism is that knowledge is objective and can be manipulated. This extends to positivist language. ‘Truth’ is seen as a tangible construct and there is one ‘right’ or ‘pure’ way of doing things. This determines the kind of knowledge that would be considered legitimate in a positivist framework. There is a value judgement regarding the type of information that can constitute knowledge. Internalised knowledge that is pertinent to one individual such as feelings are less valuable than observable behaviour.

Depending on perspective, positivism can be seen as the only correct way to proceed or a rigid system of mechanistic principles. Neuman also points out that the positivist tradition has maintained a division between the ‘scientist’ and the ‘non-scientist,’ arguing that scientists reveal the truth through constrained scientific language (1997). Social reality is regimented and highly structured in a positivist world. There are assumed to be logical progressions between cause and effect, which extend to humanity itself. Here positivism inserts the idea of ‘probabilistic causal laws’ to explain human behaviour. This means that although it may not be possible to predict with certainty the behaviour of a particular individual in any given situation, predictive causal models can be built to explain human behaviour in the aggregate. Humans are seen to be rational creatures, who act in their own self-interest and whose patterns of action can be reliably mapped and predicted. It is important to note that this model is nonetheless deterministic and not agentic because of the predictability of the approach.

Another important aspect of paradigm description is the role of values and politics in research. Positivism assumes value neutrality as a natural consequence of the 'objective' status of social reality and the kinds of 'true' (i.e. observable) knowledge that are legitimate. In addition, the researchers should position themselves outside or above the phenomena they study to maintain objectivity and separation from the investigation.

Methodological implications flow from the description of structural functionalism. Just as interpretivists use participant observation as an exemplary method mirroring the assumptions of that paradigm, positivists are constrained by what they take for granted in their understanding of the world. A perfect method for a structural functionalist would have to adhere to rigid constraints. Firstly, it would have to provide the researcher with the chance to control for variables in the phenomenon, because one of the goals is to identify causal relations. It is much easier to identify causal or even correlation effects in a setting in which the variability is limited and able to be manipulated. Secondly, the data should allow researchers to 'discover' existing rules of behaviour, so the researcher in a structural functionalist view is attempting to aggregate objective responses that result in broadly applicable conclusions. Finally, because value-neutrality and regulation are also assumptions in this paradigm, an ideal method for the structural functionalist would offer the researcher distance from the phenomenon under scrutiny in order to control and manipulate social reality using the predictive models discovered.

Traditional 'scientific' methods and conventional social research would fall into this dominant framework, including surveys and experiments. An experiment fits these criteria almost perfectly. It offers a precise tool, a controlled environment and the advantage of quantitative data results. One of the measurements of validity in an experiment is the sample; because positivism is nomothetic, searching for general rules from a large representative sample offers a method that matches the paradigm assumptions.

A counter example is useful at this juncture. Structural functionalists would not be able to use participant observation effectively because it is contrary to their most basic research tenets: objectivity, determinism and the goal of research being to predict and control

behaviour. Participant observation is an excellent tool when the goal is to describe a phenomenon in depth, understand an individual relationship and create a space in which the researcher becomes part of the research itself. The implication is clear: why use a spanner when a screwdriver is required?

On the 'radical change' end of the paradigm spectrum, radical humanism and radical structuralism espouse the need to overhaul a social system characterised by power relations and internal contradictions. Radical humanism focuses on individual empowerment and 'reminding' human beings of the assumption that they create social reality. They are suspicious of reification of constructs, preferring instead to return the initiative to individual emancipatory action from the point of view of individual perception. In Neuman's model, critical social science shares many characteristics with radical humanism (1997). Critical social science is fundamentally about transformation. Predicated on the idea that people are unknowingly 'trapped' by processes such as socialisation and power inequity, this paradigm seeks to reveal hidden constraints. Unlike positivists, who see the world in terms of regulation, critical social scientists perceive a need for revolutionary and evolutionary shifts in the social structures that constrain individuals. The objective/subjective axis in critical social sciences integrates validated personal perception with concrete structural obstacles in the path of empowerment.

The tools of praxis and the dialectic process of human interaction are evident in 'good' critical research. Inter-subjectivity is an important concept in this paradigm. It refers to the idea that individuals create a shared reality through their relationships with one another. Language plays a part in this process as well. For example, two doctors in an operating room have created a shared reality in which they maintain similar definitions of the objects, processes and relationships in that situation. Although they may have very different perceptions of reality outside the boundaries of surgery, their interaction in that social phenomenon is characterised by inter-subjectivity--agreement on the scripts, responses and identities required of them. The role of inter-subjectivity is to enable individuals to maintain and reproduce mutually consistent patterns of action.

One evaluative measure of this approach is the degree to which a transformation takes places and to what extent individuals are empowered to change the circumstances in which they find themselves. Neuman's explanation details the important point that critical social science is a cycle in itself:

A complete critical science explanation does several things: it demystifies illusion, describes the underlying structure of conditions, explains how change can be achieved, and provides a vision of a possible future [and]...implies a plan for change...good critical theory teaches people about their own experiences...and can be used by ordinary people to improve their conditions.

(1997, p. 77)

Radical humanists look for tools of change in the methods they use. Experiments, with their supposition of quantifiable measurements, predictor variables of behaviour and regulation outlook would be useless in this situation. The researcher is an actor-director in radical humanism. Unable to be apart from the research process, the researcher nonetheless wants to use a method that will enable her to control and change the situation being observed. In radical humanism, the intent is the over-riding assumption of the paradigm, because it drives the research forward and defines the research action.

Action research fulfils these requirements quite well because it is the only way to satisfy the radical humanist purpose of 'awakening' subjects to their political subordination. It provides for a close examination of individuals using interviews, process documentation and action notes, while at the same time articulating the need for individuals to be made aware of their predicament. The researcher can take an active role in shaping the outcome of the work, thus participating in the research process and maintaining a subjective point of view. Action research embraces transformation through creating an environment in which individuals realise their own agency for change. This makes it an excellent match for

radical humanism, the thrust of which is to emancipate people and promote significant shifts in organisations.

The goal of radical structuralism is to recognise discrepancies in the system, detect defects in the structure and then use that knowledge to initiate and sustain radical social change. Radical structuralists hold that there are larger forces such as history that act in a teleological capacity. This means that powers external to human agency march inexorably toward a pre-determined outcome. The typical examples of evolutionary progress are Marxist politico-economic or historical analyses, which are intended to illustrate that massive overhauls in social structure will be the inevitable consequences of current inconsistencies in the system. These methods fit the paradigm for a number of reasons. Firstly, these types of textual analysis are focused on change through structural shifts. They examine history and structural artefacts as tangible social objects of reality, a characterisation that infuses them with the power to create and destroy social structures. The texts and the historical conditions frame social structure in a manner that denies social agency. People are pawns, battered by an inconsistent structural framework. These analyses also offer radical structuralists a method by which to identify causal, general laws of historical and teleological inevitability, in order to predict the outcome of structural constraints. Radical structuralism is realist, positivist, determinist and nomothetic.

There is a fifth paradigm that straddles the divide between the subjective/objective dimensions, rooted in the regulation seat of social change. Poststructuralism has much in common with the subjective side of the continuum. They agree on the socially constructed nature of reality, but poststructuralism embraces the idea that social agency or voluntarism is circumscribed by structural limitations. For example, power is seen as a determining factor in constraining the actions of individuals and in perpetuating structural inequalities in social systems.

Although there is no universally accepted definition of poststructuralism, Clegg's broad description neatly sums up the dominant themes:

...the centrality of conceptions of language, the relational nature of all totalities, the practices of linguistic signification...and a concern with discourse.

(1989, p. 150)

There are a few key issues in this description. The first is that interaction creates, sustains and defines meaning in social reality. Interaction itself is constituted through discourse. Secondly, poststructuralism maintains a dynamic, shifting perspective on how participants in the language interaction understand and project themselves and perceive each other. The traffic lights, the stops and starts of objective meaning, are transformed into vague signposts. The meaning is not in the outcome, but in the relational processes. Instead of objective paradigms, which emphasise uniformity and objectivity, poststructuralism is predicated on constantly shifting difference between participants in the discursive practice.

Methods most appropriate to this paradigm have to do with deconstructing the discourse that surrounds interpersonal relationships in the context of organisational boundaries. By balancing a keen attention to personal experience (i.e. through interviews) with a constant assessment of the common themes of powerlessness or control through structure, poststructuralists maintain the subjectivity of perception in a context of structural determinism.

Although paradigm boundaries are useful tools to understand research questions and identify underlying assumptions, there is a strong case for a multiparadigm foundation to organisational research. Several authors have advocated hybrids, synthesis or integration of these paradigm distinctions. Goia and Pitre developed bridging paradigms using metaparadigm theory building in a 'search for comprehensiveness' (1989). Their links rely on exploiting overlap in paradigms to bring them closer together by accommodating differences rather than exacerbating them. In an extension to that work, Lewis and Grimes presented an application of metatriangulation by collecting, analysing and presenting data using several paradigms (1999).

The advantages of a hybrid over a purist view are clear. A more flexible approach acknowledges that research is not monolithic. In this view, research questions for a single project can encompass different ways of understanding social reality and the nature of humanity. It is only necessary to identify the types of phenomena that organisational researchers want to investigate—human beings and their relationships in structural configurations—to understand that the complexity of the subject demands flexibility of the researcher and that 'fragmentation can lead to provincialism' (Goia & Pitre 1989). For example, although structural functionalism tends to seek the 'right' answers, a more adaptable concept of this is that it is looking for one of the answers to one part of the phenomenon under scrutiny. One of the pitfalls of a hybrid approach is the possibility of mutually incompatible assumptions. However, as illustrated in the methodology, the degree to which inconsistency can be tolerated is affected by how integral to the research questions particular assumptions are. The next section identifies how the methodology for this research was constructed and assesses the advantages and disadvantages of those choices.

3.4 BRICKS AND MORTAR: THE METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK OF RELATIONSHIPS

Language plays a key role in the understanding of the experiences of staff in nonprofit organisations that are engaged in partnerships with the private sector. Therefore, it is critical to select terminology carefully. Instead of 'synthesis', which implies seamless integration, or 'bridge', which implies connections between competing elements, the word 'hybrid' was chosen to describe the methodological approach of this study. This admixture is precisely that: an attempt to blend two separate entities closely enough so that they maintain some of their original characteristics while simultaneously transforming them into a different creature altogether. The result is not simply a combination of the limitations and advantages of either paradigm—it is a new construct, capable of achieving more than either one separately but constrained by new contradictions. Another way to envision this process of hybridisation is as an overlay to the Burrell and Morgan model,

with its core at the poststructuralist juncture and arrows emanating south-east and south-west through the matrix.

Two other important elements of choice in methodological considerations were the qualitative versus quantitative and deduction versus induction differences. Similarly to the decision to build windows rather than doors between paradigms when selecting the approach for research into relationships, it was decided to visualise these as counterparts to a whole rather than separate entities.

Although more closely associated with theory- and model-building, understanding the deductive and inductive reasoning processes has an important place in a discussion of methodology. Trochim (1999) and Young (1966) both refer to the qualitative differences between the two.

Trochim's simple definitions, supplemented by Lave & March's model development (1975), are useful here:

Deductive = theory → hypothesis → observation → confirmation

Inductive = observation → pattern → tentative hypothesis → theory

To bring elements of the methodology in line with the research questions, an inductive approach was used to describe the situation of individuals in nonprofit organisations that are engaged in resource 'partnerships' with for-profit business. Induction implies an assumption about research that researchers learn from the people and organisations studied, rather than strict deduction, which tests theories and seeks confirmation of those models.

One other issue, that of quantitative and qualitative data, is an important methodological consideration. Kumar's typology of research offers an excellent explanation of quantitative and qualitative research. First of all, the dimension measured in this distinction is about the

type of information gathered. However, he makes another useful distinction by noting that the analysis will result in different types of information generated and he clearly links the types of research questions with expectations of what analysis will produce. Table 2 adapts and summarises Kumar’s classifications (1999, p.10).

Table 2: Description of Qualitative versus Quantitative Purpose and Analysis

	Qualitative	Quantitative
Purpose	to describe an event or situation	to measure the variation
Analysis	establishes variation in situation	establishes magnitude of variation

As explored earlier in the chapter, this research combines paradigms in order to give voice to the varied assumptions that combine to form a more comprehensive picture of the phenomenon.

3.4.1 Constructing the hybrid

The methodology is constructed from two frames of reference, dependent on the research question. For the first set of questions, which deal with the perceptions of staff in nonprofits working under resource partnerships with for-profits, it has been established that an interpretivist/poststructuralist hybrid provides the most congruent combination to understand the research target.

In terms of their relationship to the phenomenon of the interplay of language and power in relationships between nonprofits and for-profits, the hybrid offers several distinct advantages. Firstly, the interpretivist and poststructuralist paradigms share many substantive constituents that are directly linked to the assumptions of the research questions themselves. They both assume ontologically nominal positions, which means that social reality is perceived to be best accessed through the interpretations of individuals. The

theory building is predicated on the idea that individuals create inter-subjective reality in the course of their relationships with one another. Idiographic methods, another shared attribute, also point out the need to study one particular case to understand that situation from the inside out. The hybrid emphasises other attributes, most saliently that in poststructuralism the politics of the researcher are integral to the research process. For the poststructuralist, this may amount to acknowledging participation in the research process and to understanding power. Also, both poststructuralism and interpretivism provide the advantage of accessing information directly from multiple points of view and taking as given the data provided by informants.

There are tensions that cannot be resolved in this hybrid and drawbacks to this combination as well. One is the delineation between objective and subjective social reality. Interpretivism rejects the objectification of social reality or social constructs; poststructuralism focuses on language to the extent that it may be seen as reified or objectified within the paradigm because of how clearly it focuses the locus of control in a relationship or linguistic interaction. Also, in a poststructuralist view, voluntarism is tempered by determinism and it therefore does not fit neatly into the four categories originally described by Burrell and Morgan (1979). Human beings have agency, which is limited by the structures that they have created.

There are poststructural peculiarities that provide a sharper image of the phenomenon of relationships between third and private sector organisations. The structure of institutional context is clearly supported by this paradigm, as is the idea that power constrains behaviour, limits social agency and in turn undermines organisational capacity.

This hybrid embodies the cascade of theories underlying the research questions and informs the choice of research constructs for theory building. The process of defining constructs and examining data for patterns helped to refine theoretical elements.

The second part of the methodology relied on somewhat more traditional structural functionalist methods to triangulate data collected and analysed during the first. The

rationale for incorporating a mechanism for expanding observations is more closely connected to the need to complete the induction/deduction research cycle and to provide triangulation for case studies than to philosophical considerations that might require a strict positivist orientation for 'testing' theory. The quantitative study was also part of the theory generation process.

3.4.2 Technical details of the methodology

The study design incorporated case studies, a media analysis and a quantitative triangulation of results. Within each organisation, 3-4 informants participated in interviews that ranged from 45 minutes to 1 ½ hours. All informants were aware of who else was participating but each person was interviewed separately. The interview protocol is Appendix E and the table in Appendix F gives more detail on informants.

As an element of the context in which the organisations and staff were working, a media analysis was used to portray the broader environment of the phenomenon. Finally, a questionnaire tool was developed to triangulate case study findings and round out the study design.

Case studies were conducted using discourse analysis, followed by a questionnaire to triangulate data. Detailed case studies provided the most appropriate method for understanding and describing organisations' perceptions of their relationships with for-profits. An idiographic method enabled the study of individuals/organisations without resorting to a search for rules and general structures. In addition, because of the need to study organisations in context to complete the picture, a method was required that encompassed organisational environment as integral to the phenomenon. Case studies suited this purpose admirably. It is important to note that both primary (interview) and secondary (documentation) data were used.

The data sets reflected the intention to analyse the discourse of organisational capacity of nonprofits in 'partnerships' with for-profits at three levels. Firstly, at the level of individual informants, unstructured depth interviews were used to probe the experiences of staff in the

nonprofit organisation. This primary data formed the bulk of the information at the first order of understanding. At the next level of organisational perceptions of capacity, a set of secondary data was examined including minutes of meetings and organisational documentation. This layer linked individual perspective with organisational positioning in relation to the inter-organisational links in the with the for-profit firm. Finally, to deepen understanding of one aspect of the context in which nonprofit organisations operate, a media analysis was conducted.

In order to increase validity for the study, and to maintain the methodological integrity along the lines of the hybrid constructed, two elements of validity were incorporated. Lee (1999b) explains Kvale's (1996) 'validity as craftsmanship'. This process requires a critical stance from which to scrutinise design, collection, analysis and discussion of findings. Set parameters for field notes and constant re-evaluation of data through the iterative process of collecting and interpreting material adhered to this practice of craftsmanship.

The second element is the concept of 'validity as communication.' This type of validity is particularly relevant to a study of language and power because it originated 'in language-based disciplines' (Lee, T.W. 1999, p. 161). The premise that 'truth (sic) can be tested through dialogue' supports the idea that the quality of communication is a driving factor in the overall quality of research. Again, careful attention to the messages that were being transmitted from informants and translated into data fulfilled this concept of validity.

The way in which the case studies were selected was also closely monitored. Yin (1994) argues that the logic of multiple-case designs is replication rather than sampling distributions. This notion centres on the idea that multiple-case study planning is similar to the development of several experiments. According to Yin, there are two aspects to this logic:

Each case must be carefully selected such that it either (a) predicts similar results (a *literal replication*) or (b) produces

contrasting results but for predictable reasons (a *theoretical replication*).

(p. 46, emphasis in original)

Thus, the results of a multiple case study approach may fall into one of two categories. A set of parallel results for all case studies would provide strong support for the initial propositions, whereas broadly differing results might pinpoint to weaknesses in the emerging theory. As a primarily inductive study, both replication and purposive selection techniques were used to narrow the search space for cases to analyse. Nonetheless, Yin's differentiation between these two techniques informs the decision to maintain distinction during the data collection and data analysis phases between cases that support initial theoretical heuristics and cases that add value to the theory itself. This is also important because it helped to maintain the flow of concurrent data collection and analysis—a critical element in qualitative research. The final criterion for completing data collection rested on the concept of theoretical redundancy, which is the point at which no further theoretical insight will be gained by further case studies (1994).

The size for the bulk of the research was five case studies, followed by a pilot survey of 35 organisations and a final survey of 22 organisations. Each organisation selected for case study was subject to interviews and analysis of documentation. Further details of the methodology for the media analysis and the quantitative phase of the research can be found in Chapters 9 and 10 respectively.

The criteria for selection of organisations for research rested on three important considerations: their relationship with a for-profit institution, the nature of their charitable activities (i.e. human services/community sector) and access. The first point has obvious implications—it was crucial that the researcher had the opportunity to study the phenomenon of choice. The purpose of selecting organisations working in relatively narrowly defined fields was to increase the opportunity of cross-study comparison. In addition, as indicated in the chapter on the theoretical framework, it was assumed that the power differential between organisations would be most evident in situations where the

target client base for organisations was disenfranchised and marginalised from broader society. Nonetheless, it was the intention to locate organisations working in this area that were not in situations of inequitable power relationships as well. Because of the differences between organisations working in urban and regional areas of Australia, discussion was limited to Sydney-based institutions.

Although the issues of access may appear trivial, the subject of power and resources is a sensitive area for many nonprofit institutions. In some sense, this 'purposive selection' was also a sample of necessity. By using methods that concentrate on understanding, describing and informing participants, impeccable ethical standards were maintained throughout the study. All participants in the project were given sufficient background for them to be able to make a determination on their willingness to participate. All information, including primary interview data and secondary organisational source data, was coded by the primary researcher and remained confidential throughout the process. The required ethics clearance was also obtained before initiating any part of the fieldwork. The ethical issues in this project were particularly crucial because sufficient rapport had to be built between researcher and informants in order to gain access to information that might be deemed sensitive or damaging by the interviewees. Strict confidentiality was maintained and pseudonyms were used in data analysis.

3.5 CREATING AN APPROPRIATE TOOL FOR ANALYSIS: THE LINGUISTIC THREAD

This section provides the rationale, source and use of a new tool developed for analysis of language and power in nonprofit/for-profit relationships. The data was analysed using discourse analysis, focusing on themes, patterns and content (Fairclough 1992; Stubbs 1983). However, discourse analysis using existing tools such as simple thematising (Lee, T.W. 1999) for identification of these themes were insufficient for the purposes of this work. The concept of the 'linguistic thread' emerged from early data collection and was

subsequently honed, explored and developed. The sections below explore that evolution. Nonetheless it is important to note that the concept itself sprung from the data.

Because language and communication are key elements of an understanding of the discourse, it was important to identify the way in which language and communication were being theoretically construed before analysis commenced. The final result of these explorations was the development of a new tool, called the linguistic thread. A brief overview of the rationale for this new tool follows.

3.5.1 Linguistic threads: definitions, functions and significance

Initial forays into language for this research were predicated on a relatively narrow discourse approach (Fairclough 1992; Garnsey & Rees 1996; Grant, Keenoy & Oswick 1998). Linguistic threads incorporate a number of other approaches to understanding and theorising about the topic (Gilbert 1992; Mumby 1993; Cossette 1998; Falk 1997; Johnstone 2000; Marschan & Welch 1998). In other words, rather than taking an either/or approach to selecting how communication and language can be viewed, this research takes as its starting point that it is possible to integrate multiple perspectives of the phenomenon of the language in media discourse.

One way that has been postulated to construct representations of communication and language in organisations is using metaphor. Putnam, Phillips and Chapman's extensive list includes metaphors for communication as conduit, lens, linkage, performance, symbol, voice, discourse and even genre (Putnam, Phillips & Chapman 1999). Their examples of these illustrate the range with which theoreticians and practitioners have approached language and communication. Contrary to Putnam et al.'s contention that 'studies that mix metaphors, however, run the risk of confounding the assumptive ground of both communication and organisation' (p. 145), linguistic threads provide an alternative theoretical viewpoint that allows for metaphoric parallelism rather than convergence or confusion.

At first glance, linguistic threads may appear to be an entirely new metaphor for language and communication. Using descriptive, non-literal language, the phrase conjures up a clear picture of sewing together, mending or joining. It does not readily appear to fit into any one of the categories introduced by Putnam and colleagues (1996). It can certainly be reduced to fit into several classifications: a conduit for information transmission, a discourse of inter-organisational collaboration and ‘organisational organising,’ or a voice of media exposure. Nonetheless, this reduction ignores the possibility of using the concept of linguistic threads to weave together in a theoretically meaningful way all of these three existing metaphors.

Upon closer examination, it is clear that linguistic threads are in fact akin to simultaneous, parallel representations of language primarily across three metaphors, including conduit, discourse and voice. As a metaphor, a linguistic thread has four important properties and connotations connected to Putnam et al.’s taxonomy:

1. Language can be objectified for conscious use (CONDUIT)
2. Patterns of language recur and re-create themselves
in media structures (DISCOURSE)
3. Implied inter-organisational power structure (VOICE)
4. Continuity across time or through time intervals

Finally, beyond all of the similarities and shared characteristics that linguistic threads have with the three metaphors explored here, this heuristic has one other significant element inherent within it as a metaphor that offers a critical advantage to researchers studying communication in organisations. Time continuity is a feature of the deep-rooted meaning of linguistic threads because ‘thread’ implies a long, straight strand or filament that has a beginning, middle and end. Theoretical and empirical representations of changes of communication over time are easily accommodated by the thread metaphor. This is in marked contrast to even the most dynamic of Putnam et al.’s metaphors, discourse, which remains tied in social interaction that can be construed as a continuous dialogue among

parties rather than the evolution over time of the way in which organisations are portrayed in the media.

Although Putnam and colleagues' contribution does offer some discussion of how metaphors are linked to one another, they are more intent on urging use of single metaphor models than exploring ways in which these can be productively placed in parallel orientation to one another. As an empirical application of a new concept, these three examples of linguistic threads analysis illustrate that far from warning against theoretical confusion as Putnam et al do, linguistic threads form a theoretical umbrella under which three other metaphors can work in parallel with one another. By using assumptions inherent in each metaphor, the multi-tasking approach offered by linguistic threads can create more comprehensive, richer portraits of communication.

The strength of this way of thinking, writing and talking about organisational communication is that linguistic threads afford the possibility of holding metaphors concurrently but not necessarily in conjunction with one another. In other words, the properties described above are parallel, not necessarily complementary. Linguistic threads tie together structure and process of communication. The metaphor of linguistic threads is useful precisely because it affords the opportunity to link analysis of communication by working simultaneously with metaphors, not mixing them together. Metaphors do not overlap or amalgamate. They exist side by side. The data and the research questions through which experiences of communication are explored in the media discourse dictate which aspect of linguistic threads takes precedence over the others in particular instances. The linguistic thread is more than a 'mixed metaphor.' It is the fluid incorporation of metaphors of conduit, discourse and voice that combines the strength of each of these approaches into a holistic sense-making representation for language and communication.

3.5.2 The internal logic of linguistic threads

Linguistic threads are defined as patterns of discourse denoting recurring elements of data in interviews and documentation. Some linguistic threads incorporated a number of sub-

themes within them; others were nominated as stand-alone categories. These designations were based on relative complexity of the linguistic thread (see Table 15 for summary).

The logic behind using these linguistic threads as the tool to structure the analysis is simple. Because the intent was to focus on the language of the interviews and documentation, a device was required that would allow comparison of language patterns among informants and in organisational papers. The idea of linguistic thread was one way in which to categorise data linguistically while at the same time offering flexibility to accommodate emerging elements of discourse throughout multiple case studies.

Linguistic threads serve two main functions. At one level, they are thematic markers of elements of the discourse that informants construct around the concept of nonprofit relationships with business. These language beacons demonstrate how elements of discourse carry through an organisation, became embedded in the organisation itself and are reflected in informant perception. However, linguistic threads are also important because they can be used to pinpoint tangible structural constraints on informant and organisational behaviour. This device covers both language elements in the social construction of organisational reality and very 'real' barriers to development such as legislation requirements, funding cuts or staffing issues. The dual functionality of linguistic threads means that they illustrate more than just discursive phenomena. The device elucidates well-grounded concerns of daily organisational management and development.

Each case was selected on a rolling basis stemming from the data that emerged from the one before it. This incrementalism required flexibility and recursive data analysis throughout the data collection process. In other words, the pilot study resulted in a certain number of linguistic threads but these classifications were preliminary, not exhaustive. Subsequent cases demonstrated some overlap (with theoretical redundancy the goal), but new linguistic threads surfaced as well. As part of the iterative nature of this qualitative approach, the list of conceptual categories was applied back to each case after all the interview data had been gathered. In the final analysis, all of the linguistic threads

identified throughout the study have been applied to all cases. This iterative methodology and the linguistic thread coding scheme offered the advantage of a transparent process of data categorisation, which is crucial to the integrity of inductive research (Kvale 1996).

3.6 SPECIFIC LINGUISTIC THREADS USED IN THIS STUDY

The linguistic threads that emerged from the case studies were language matching, language recruitment, social identification, anchor shift, intra-organisational communication (with sub-themes informal chat, inclusion and exclusion pathways, documentation and incrementalism), understanding the relationship-building process (with sub-themes personal contact, values, conflict of interest, mutual benefit and future alliances), intent and implementation, leadership and recognising the institutional context. Linguistic threads were also related to specific research questions. Table 3 outlining this taxonomy appears at the end of this section.

In the following section, generalisations about some of the data is incorporated into the definitions for illustrative purposes only. Each case will be explored in-depth in subsequent chapters as the results unfold.

3.6.1 Language matching

Language matching is how staff in the nonprofits studied shifted their linguistic patterns to match those of their for-profit counterparts. Matching can be changing words, phrases or tone; it can also indicate changes effected when speaking to a particular person. In the cases, language matching appeared both consciously and subconsciously. That is, in some situations informants were aware of the need to sound different or mimic corporate language; in other circumstances, language matching was a subconscious response. Language matching was not only identified as such when an informant demonstrated components of traditional nonprofit speech and business language; in fact, some of the more interesting occurrences of language matching in these cases occurred in situations where informants were unaware of their use of for-profit jargon.

3.6.2 Language recruitment

Closely linked to language matching, language recruitment is a more aggressive form of that linguistic thread with specific directionality. Language recruitment differs from language matching because it describes the process through which some nonprofits in the cases studied actively sought to induct corporate partners into the nonprofit language space. Although relatively rare, language recruitment results in quite different perceptions from nonprofit staff than simple language matching because of the active nature of this linguistic thread.

3.6.3 Social identification

Social identification is the extent to which informants understood and identified with individuals in the for-profit. This association demonstrated the perception on the part of informants of how closely connected they were to corporate representatives with whom they were engaged in some type of relationship. Social identification surfaced most frequently in discussions of inclusive language, as in the use of the first person plural pronoun 'we' to denote both nonprofit and business staff engaged in a joint project. Another way in which it emerged was in metaphorical language that indicated either positive (high) or negative (low) social identification. For example, strongly combative language would be an instance of low social identification.

3.6.4 Anchor shift

Anchor shift is defined as the extent to which the organisation and its members are able to create alternatives that embrace the corporatisation of a once purely nonprofit entity. It does not presume that either extreme is the 'correct' position; instead, it is a descriptive tool that demonstrates the element in the narrative of informants that refers to a fundamental change in individual and/or organisational worldview.

Note that although it may appear similar to social identification, anchor shift is a uniquely useful concept because it covers the internal mind mapping at a personal level. Therefore, anchor shift incorporates within it a temporal dimension of dynamic change, something that social identification by definition cannot do because social identification relies on static

descriptions of inclusiveness or collaborative metaphor. Balance and history are the two sub-themes identified in anchor shift and cued by the other processes listed in Table 3 in that box. The anchor shift in balance almost always referred to how individuals reacted to organisational changes. Most importantly, balance was not a description of simple movement from a starting point on one side to an endpoint on the other. Balance could also be fluid, changing from one circumstance to another depending on how the person saw herself at the time. Sometimes, anchor shift occurs in response to organisational development including history and staffing changes. These tend to be more organisational in level of analysis, in contrast to balance, which is predominantly a description of individual sense-making.

3.6.5 Intra-organisational communication

Another important element of understanding the nonprofit organisations was identifying who knew what in the organisation and how they came to know it. This was also related to how the language of the relationship was transmitted throughout the organisation. Intra-organisational communication was made up of four principal sub-themes: informal chat, documentation, inclusion versus exclusion pathways and incrementalism. Rather than a static indicator, this linguistic thread refers to the processes through which interviewees acquired, demonstrated, shared and obscured knowledge about the relationship with the for-profit. Informal chat is made up of the conversations that occur throughout a normal working day, usually away from informants desks. Documentation includes memos, annual reports, minutes, brochures, Web sites and other written material describing the relationship. Inclusion versus exclusion pathways is the sub-theme that acknowledges how some people have privileged access to sources of information. Finally, incrementalism indicates the gradual learning through which informants gather data about the relationship.

3.6.6 Understanding the relationship-building process

Informants' discourse was littered with issues dealing with how they understood the relationship-building process. Under this umbrella, five sub-themes constituted the processes of this development. These sub-theme discourses work together to either promote or hinder positive outcomes of this linguistic thread. Conflicts of interest are

defined as situations in which the primary mission of the nonprofit organisation (for example, its responsibilities towards its members, clients or target population) is undermined, threatened or superseded by considerations of external implications for the organisation. Informants experienced this conflict either directly in their own work demands or indirectly through perceptions of the effect of the relationship on the organisation as a whole. Personal contact is a sub-theme that is strictly limited to individual-to-individual networks between nonprofit and business staff. It relates to indications from informants that a particular person in the corporate partner played a role in the informant's understanding of the relationship's evolution. Mutual benefit was expression of a need for an element of reciprocity in the relationship. Usually expressed as an intention from the outset of the relationship, mutual benefit was a fluid sub-theme that manifested itself in many different ways and changed over time in several cases. The commonality of this sub-theme was the recognition that each organisation in the relationship could expect some type of mutual advantage as the relationship developed. Values indicated organisational goals as well as individual ethos as they affected the way in which the relationship prospered or suffered. Often, values differed among individuals in organisations and people's perceptions of their own goals sometimes differed from explicit organisational missions and objectives. The final sub-theme of this linguistic thread, future alliances, indicates whether and how staff discussed possibilities or concrete plans for further interaction with the corporate sector. In some cases, future alliances were strictly limited to working with the same companies as they were at the time; in others, future alliances was viewed as the evolution from one relationship to a broader, more comprehensive engagement with the business world.

3.6.7 Intent and implementation

The linguistic thread of intent and implementation is a description of the potential tension between the stated goals and objectives of a relationship and how that developed over time. The temporal dimension of this linguistic thread is usually demonstrated by the difference between expectations and the reality that sets in with hindsight. However, the intent and implementation linguistic thread did not always indicate problems, because in some cases

these two joint processes of objective-setting and execution of the projects maintained close ties to each other.

3.6.8 Leadership

Leadership as a linguistic thread is the presence in the discourse and in organisational decision-making that focuses on an individual's influence on the relationship of the nonprofit to the for-profit. Usually evident in actions taken by the leader or in responses to decisions by staff, leadership is important in its own right because it recognises the impact that a single person can have on the outcome of inter-sectoral collaboration.

3.6.9 Recognising the institutional context

Institutional context is defined as the legal, social, economic and political environments in which the organisation operates. This linguistic thread demonstrates awareness of structural limitations and opportunities afforded the organisation by external requirements. Issues such as funding, legal questions, media portrayal of nonprofits and political shifts are all part of this linguistic thread.

Taken together, the linguistic threads form the basis of all the analysis of data in this study. The table on the next few pages shows correlation among threads, cues that signalled sub-themes of threads, research questions and interview questions.

The core questions of the research presented here were:

1. Does the language used by nonprofit staff and in organisational documentation relating to relationships with for-profits reflect and contribute to the reproduction of the power relationship between the organisations?
 - 1a. What elements of vocabulary, narrative structure and syntax constitute a 'language of inequality' between the private and third sector?
 - 1b. How is this language different in genuine power-sharing relationships?
 - 1c. To what extent is this linguistic space shared across nonprofit organisations engaged in similar relationships with for-profit firms?

- 1d. How is the structure of that language transmitted throughout the organisation?

- 2a. Do relationships affect the organisational capacity of nonprofit organisations?
- 2b. Do relationships affect the social agency of individuals?
- 2c. If so, to what extent can balanced power-sharing arrangements contribute to increased organisational capacity?

3. Does the media aspect of the institutional context of relationships in which nonprofits operate affect the social agency of individuals and the capacity of nonprofits?
 - 3a. To what extent are staff members in the nonprofit aware of the constraints on them of this aspect of institutionalism?

Table 3:

Research Questions and Linguistic Threads

Linguistic Thread	Sub-theme cues	Research Questions	Interview Questions
Language matching	Recognises differences in language Purposefully adopts language of for-profit Subconsciously mirrors for-profit language	RQ 1 _a RQ 2 _a & RQ 2 _b RQ 2 _a & RQ 2 _b	Can you think of an example of a situation when you were pleased with the relationship? Can you think of an example when you felt frustrated by the relationship?
Language recruitment	Directionality from nonprofit to for-profit Deliberate	RQ 1 _a RQ 2 _a & RQ 2 _b RQ 2 _a & RQ 2 _b	Can you think of an example of a situation when you were pleased with the relationship? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can you think of an example when you felt frustrated by the relationship? • If you had to use one word to describe this relationship, what would it be? • How has this relationship affected you personally? • What do you think about the relationship?
Social identification	Simple word identification Symbolic/metaphoric identification Positive versus negative	RQ 1 _a & RQ 2 _b RQ 2 _a RQ 1 _b	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If you had to use one word to describe this relationship, what would it be? • How has this relationship affected you personally? • What do you think about the relationship?

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How would you describe the relationship? • How do you feel about the relationship? <p>Can you think of an example of a situation when you were pleased with the relationship?</p> <p>Can you think of an example when you felt frustrated by the relationship?</p>
Anchor shift	<p>Dynamic process</p> <p>Fluid and situational</p> <p>Focus on the individual</p> <p>Balance</p> <p>History</p>	<p>RQ 1_a & RQ 2_b</p> <p>RQ 2_a</p> <p>RQ 1_b</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If you had to use one word to describe this relationship, what would it be? • How has this relationship affected you personally? • What do you think about relationship? • How would you describe the relationship? • How do you feel about the relationship? <p>Can you think of an example of a situation when you were pleased with the relationship?</p> <p>Can you think of an example when you felt frustrated by the relationship?</p>
Intra-organisational communication	<p>Documentation</p> <p>Incrementalism</p> <p>Exclusion & inclusion pathways</p> <p>Informal chat</p>	<p>RQ 1_d</p>	<p>What do you know about the links between your organisation and the business?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How did it start? Do you know who was involved in setting it up? • At what stage of the process did you find out about

			<p>the relationship?</p> <p>Can you think of a situation in which co-workers expressed satisfaction/dissatisfaction w/ affiliation?</p> <p>What do you think is the general feeling among staff about the relationship?</p>
<p>Understanding relationship-building process</p>	<p>Experience of conflict of interest</p> <p>Personal contact</p> <p>Mutual benefit</p> <p>Values/Mission</p> <p>Future alliances</p>	<p>RQ 2_b</p> <p>RQ 2_a & 2_b</p> <p>RQ 2_a</p> <p>RQ 2_a</p>	<p>How has this relationship affected you personally?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Did you have expectations for what might change in either your job or the organisation when the relationship started? • Has anything changed in your day-to-day responsibilities since the affiliation began? • How has this relationship affected the organisation? <p>Has this relationship had any impact on the people you serve?</p> <p>In your mind, is the relationship a successful one?</p> <p>Do you think this relationship will continue for another year? Three? Five? Why or why not?</p> <p>If you could change the way the relationship works, how would you improve it?</p>
<p>Intent and implementation</p>	<p>Potential for conflict</p> <p>Not always in opposition</p>	<p>RQ 2_b</p> <p>RQ 2_a & 2_b</p>	<p>How has this relationship affected you personally?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Did you have expectations for what might change in

		RQ 2 _a RQ 2 _a	<p>either your job or the organisation when the relationship started?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has anything changed in your day-to-day responsibilities since the affiliation began? • How has this relationship affected the organisation? • Has this relationship had any impact on the people you serve?
Leadership	Influence of individual Can underpin all other linguistic threads	RQ 2 _b RQ 2 _a & 2 _b RQ 2 _a RQ 2 _a	<p>How has this relationship affected you personally?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Did you have expectations for what might change in either your job or the organisation when the relationship started? • Has anything changed in your day-to-day responsibilities since the affiliation began? <p>How has this relationship affected the organisation? Has this relationship had any impact on the people you serve?</p>
Recognising the institutional context	Acknowledge impact of environmental factors	RQ 3 _b	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What do you think were the reasons behind it? • Do you think relationships like these are becoming more common for nonprofits? Why or why not? • Do you know of other organisations that are engaged in similar associations?

			<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To your knowledge, has your organisation made any public statements about the tie?
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For many of the linguistic threads in the case chapters, two levels will be explored. Firstly, language helps to construct and create the social worlds of participants. On the second level, structures and organisational constraints such as funding issues, legislation reporting requirements and organisational hierarchies also play a role in defining the situations in which informants find themselves. In other words, rather than simply examining the discourse of the individuals and organisations, linguistic threads will be employed to illustrate structural themes of objective reality in which organisations operate. Language is both a medium and an outcome of social reality.

In the pilot study chapter, specific reference from linguistic threads to research questions will be included. However, subsequent chapters will focus on individual case analyses.

3.7 DETAILS OF IDENTIFYING THE LINGUISTIC THREADS: A MICRO-LEVEL EXAMINATION

Lee's (1999b) chapter on qualitative analysis presents several options for qualitative research. A combination of meaning condensation, narrative structuring and a series of ad hoc methods was used to analyse the interviews, organisational documentation and elements of institutional context for accurate, interpretative meaning extraction and to constitute linguistic threads.

By beginning with the process of meaning condensation in parallel with processes of clustering themes, natural meaning units (nmus) were identified from interviews and texts. This process enabled definition of nmus according to emerging linguistic threads. Because by necessity interviews are sequential, not simultaneous, the condensation process supported efforts to maintain consistency during the initial stages of thematising from data. In conjunction with meaning condensation, several of Lee's (1999b, p. 94) techniques, attributed to Kvale (1996), were employed. These included identifying patterns, clustering, counting instances of words and synonyms and comparing and contrasting among cases.

In order to facilitate the process of comparing across interviews and case studies, NVivo 1.1 was used to assist with data analysis. All thesis documents, including field notes, interview transcripts, interview protocols and information/consent forms were imported. After coding all the documents for units of meaning (identified as 'nodes' in the NVivo terminology), searches, text matching, semantic analysis and conversation mapping were conducted to develop linguistic threads.

In order to maintain consistent notes, increase reliability and mitigate the concern that the use of qualitative analysis software might constrain the ability to assess the data according to an emerging framework rather than existing software limitations, the following layout was used for all field notes on case studies:

- ◆ Point of access
- ◆ Advantages of the organisation as a case study
- ◆ Disadvantages of the organisation as a case study
- ◆ Intended schedule and any changes through the course of the study
- ◆ Physical location/layout
- ◆ List interviews conducted
- ◆ List documentation/materials gathered
- ◆ Describe broad cultural issues--dress, process, links with other organisations, purpose of organisation
- ◆ For each informant describe body language, tone of voice, interaction with others in the office, willingness to disclose
- ◆ List follow-up needed

Detailed protocols for work conducted on the case studies resulted in richly textured specifics about the organisations. This list was drawn up prior to the pilot study and used consistently on all successive field work.

On a more structural level, a process of narrative structuring was used to develop cohesive 'story lines' of the experience of each organisation in a resource alliance. The purpose of these narratives were two-fold: the first, to create comprehensive accounts of the organisation in this particular relationship with the for-profit firm through the

stories of informants; and the second, to compare across individuals and organisations the structure of the narratives themselves.

Another aspect of qualitative research is the documentation of practice. From six months prior to fieldwork, during the process of reviewing literature and becoming immersed in the process, a daily log of work was maintained. This practice formed the basis for the extensive field notes in the data collection and analysis phases of research. Several researchers writing on qualitative research point to the significance of field notes (Kvale 1996; Lee, T.W. 1999; Yin 94). For each case, a template was developed to guide the notes. During the pilot, this guide was tested and expanded to reflect the incoming data stream. Elements of the field notes included but were not limited to:

- ◆ Description of environment: location in neighbourhood of organisation, building, offices (including layout), location of interview room
- ◆ Observed interaction between members of staff
- ◆ Log of conversations and written communication with organisations at point of access
- ◆ Extensive debriefing after interviews including impressions, possible links to other fieldwork, connections to constructs, anecdotal evidence of research
- ◆ Follow-up communication
- ◆ Connections to larger societal metaphors and opportunities for follow-up
- ◆ Lists of participants and roles in the process of developing a resource alliance with a for-profit firm

These field notes informed the analysis, bolstered confidence in the construct and content validity of the research and assisted in the process of developing narrative structure from interviews and analysis of organisational documentation.

Although some preliminary notions of what might be discovered accompanied the beginning of fieldwork, the intention of the case studies, media analysis and subsequent quantitative portion was to build a theory of language and power in nonprofit/for-profit relationships. These are different types of questions that required very different treatment. On the one hand, questions of description and relationship are handled well

by qualitative data and analysis that focuses on the observed phenomenon. On the other hand, for further research a triangulation survey was helpful to re-direct the theory and highlight previously unobserved correlation or connecting themes in the data. In addition, the process of triangulating the data using more than one method (applied to different but complementary sets of data) provided added credibility.

In relationships between nonprofits and for-profits, the research questions addressed are intertwined with issues of politics, power and people. The hybrid methodology presented here, which connects the poststructuralist/interpretivist approaches in the first instance with the development of the linguistic thread as an appropriate tool for analysis of these issues, is sufficiently theoretically sound to provide a basis for the implementation of the project itself. The next chapter presents the pilot case study findings.

CHAPTER 4: CARE & SHARE ASSOCIATION

4.1 OVERVIEW

The Care & Share Association is a membership-based state-wide peak body in one area of community services. The majority of its funding comes from project-based government initiatives. It runs one for-profit insurance program in-house and supports and assists its members through service development assistance, government lobbying and training programs. The insurance program is comprised of three parties—the Association, the underwriter or insurance company and an intermediary broker who negotiated some transactions between the two. This three-way interaction was important to understand in order to fully appreciate how the relationship operated between the nonprofit and the for-profit broker and insurance company.

The Association was established in 1989 in response to shifts in government policy toward such services. It has viewed itself as a strong advocate of client needs and sometimes found itself in opposition to government policy over the fate of member services. The Director has been with the organisation from its inception.

There are eight staff members: Director, Policy/Project Officer, Management Training Officer, Project Officer, Finance/Administration Officer, Insurance Officer, Clerical Assistant and Receptionist/Administration Assistant. The Management Training Officer, Policy/Project Officer and Insurance Officer report to the Director. Project Officer reports to the Policy/Project Officer and both Assistants report to the Finance/Administration Officer. For this case study, the Director (Barbara), the Policy/Project Officer (Melissa), the Insurance Officer (David) and the Project Officer (Anne) were interviewed. Pseudonyms are used to maintain informant and organisational confidentiality.

The relationships with business studied here include the for-profit insurance arm of the Care & Share Association and a separate project under which the Association worked

with three separate corporate entities on one joint initiative. The three companies would be easily identified by the services and products they provide; therefore, for confidentiality purposes, the nature of their activities has been omitted from discussion. The three businesses involved with this project are labelled Biz1, Biz2 and Biz3 respectively.

The initiative was intended to be a statewide enhancement of service, starting off as a pilot and then expanding throughout the state. The relationship was based on provision of products by the corporate bodies under exclusive contract for reduced rates to clients.

4.2 ANALYSIS

The linguistic threads that occurred in this data were language matching, social identification and understanding the relationship-building process (comprised of the sub-themes of conflict of interest, personal contact, mutual benefit, values and future alliances). Each thread is first defined and then connected to the appropriate research questions. This section then explores and presents evidence for the linguistic threads in the case of the Care & Share Association.

4.2.1 Language matching

One linguistic thread that appeared in several instances was a process that is dubbed 'language matching.' This describes how staff in the nonprofit shift their linguistic patterns to match those of their for-profit counterparts. The matching can be simply narrative (that is, changing words, phrases or figures of speech), but is most effective when it is structural as well (that is, shifting into the syntax patterns of the other). Language matching is one mechanism that links directly to the following research questions:

- 1a. What elements of vocabulary, narrative structure and syntax constitute a 'language of inequality' between the private and third sector?

- 2a. Do relationships affect the organisational capacity of nonprofit organisations and the ?
- 2b. Do relationships affect the social agency of individuals?

In the Care & Share Association, language matching appeared to be both conscious and subconscious. This means that the concept of language matching refers to a process that results in parallels between the languages of nonprofit and for-profit environments.

Some language matching is conscious, as in Barbara's example here when she decided to speak to a business manager in a particular way to exert episodic power over him. In this scenario, Barbara rang the her corporate contact to discuss concerns over whether or not the firm was adhering to commitments that had been made to the Care and Share Association in writing:

And I remember at one stage thinking I had to ring the corporate relations manager, and I was planning in my head what I was going to say, and I was going through all this we believe, I think, we feel, and I thought no, no, no, can't do this, I'm about to talk to the corporate relations manager in...this multi-million dollar megacompany, and it came down, the facts are, this is what you said, this is your letterhead, we're about to launch it, are you aware of what the implications are. And he said I'm perfectly aware of the political and the economic implications. He said I'll have to, but I can't do anything...I have to talk to the CEO. And I said OK, a copy of this letter has gone to [the CEO] so he knows what it's all about. Um, so I had to actually stop and think, I don't talk the way I normally talk within the community sector, I had to change.

In the first example, the choices that Barbara made in this situation were both narrative and structural. On the one hand, she modified the words she used; on the other, she

created a situation in which the legal implications of his non-compliance forced him into a situation of powerlessness. The two levels—language and concrete reality—are a good illustration of how linguistic threads can both reflect language scenarios and elucidate tangible, objective constraints on organisational behaviour.

This is a good example of how the language and subsequent power implications reflect and construct the social agency of Barbara. By changing her speech patterns, her words took on the properties of assertive speech acts, forcing the other party to respond accordingly. The mechanism works in the following way:

1. Recognition of the differences in language and the futility of using ‘nonprofit’ vocabulary, combined with the need to assert power in the situation
2. Adaptation of vocabulary and strategy
3. Outcome in which the power shifts from an ‘asking’ to a ‘demanding’

This is the discursive measure of the language matching linguistic thread. In a structural way, the mechanism works like this:

1. Recognition of the effects of legal scenarios for the for-profit
2. Use of that knowledge and language matching to achieve a positive outcome for the nonprofit

There is a danger that this language matching simply becomes a capitulation to business terminology as the only way to get things done, and that this language matching could be an example of ‘co-option’ of the nonprofit by business terminology. In that situation, the power relationship might dictate that one organisation become more like the other in order to maintain or develop the connection between the two. However, the data does not indicate this to be the case with the Care & Share Association and Barbara’s interview data in particular.

Barbara was thus in a position to assert her own control over the situation. Although social agency and organisational capacity were not always linked, in this case the

organisational capacity of the Care & Share Association was enhanced by this exchange as well.

In other situations, language matching may be nested subconsciously in a specific linguistic interaction. David's repeated description of 'healthy discussions' with his for-profit counterpart in the insurance company is an example of this language matching. In a business-to-business interaction, and using his knowledge of the insurance industry, David selected that phrase to represent disagreement, in effect portraying the conflict as a negotiation. This is another example of the way that language creates and sustains the social relations between two actors. David's social agency increased in that interaction because of his ability to assert power through his knowledge of the language of insurance. David thus maintained his social agency and 'equal partner' status in the discussion even though final power rested with the insurance company to assess claims and set premiums.

4.2.2 Social identification

Language use indicated 'social identification' in relationships. The 'social identification' linguistic thread is defined as the extent to which individuals in the organisation understand and identify with individuals in the for-profit.

The thread of social identification is concretely related to the initial research questions.

To reiterate, these are:

- 1a. What elements of vocabulary, narrative structure and syntax constitute a 'language of inequality' between the private and third sector?
- 1d. How is this language different in genuine power-sharing relationships?
- 2b. Do relationships affect the social agency of individuals?

There are a few examples from the interviews in which informants expressed a sense of associating themselves with their business counterparts. In response to questions about

the activities in which the Care & Share Association and the insurance company engaged, David frequently referred to an inclusive 'we' in discussing the links among the Care & Share Association, the broker and the insurance company, as in the excerpt below:

So we [the Care & Share Association and the insurance company] combined the two and it's got a good questionnaire. We don't call it a proposal form...because it scares [members]... so we just use a friendlier term, 'questionnaire'...So we've got a three-way partnership that we've built it, a strong relationship I guess...

This indicated high social identification on the part of David with the for-profit component of that particular alliance.

Positive or high social identification can be signalled both by metaphors (indicating separation or convergence) or single words (such as us/them distinctions). Consider Barbara's comments about the Care & Share Association's relationship with Biz1. In response to how the relationship came about, she said '...[Biz1] were already very interested in anything they could do to work with us.'

High or positive social identification occurred most frequently in the relationship between the Care & Share Association and the insurance brokers and between the Care & Share Association and Biz1. Images of a 'bridge,' a 'mediator,' an 'interpreter,' or a 'translator' all indicated strong associations of collaborating or building an understanding. In these linking positions, they communicated expectations; tutored unfamiliar participants in the culture and language of the nonprofit; and initiated action towards achieving goals of service and access for their clients. A note of caution is required at this point, however. Positive or high social identification does not imply a merging of the two organisations into a seamless whole. In fact, these metaphors of bridging or translation also highlight the difference between the organisations as separate entities. In this way, they maintain their distinctiveness while making it possible to build links between two very different organisations.

There are other possibilities for positive social identification. It could be construed as ‘co-option’ of the nonprofit by the for-profit, in which case the organisation might collapse into itself or lose its identity. However, it was found in this study that the Association maintained a presence of its own even when strong social identification occurred.

The phrases indicating high social identification are in sharp relief against the examples of low or negative social identification that follow. There are many more examples of low or negative social identification from the interviews, specifically related to the Care & Share Association’s relationship with Biz3. That is, responses to questions that indicate a sense of division, linguistic separation and sharp distinction between ‘us’ and ‘them.’

And it also is clear to me that that contact should have been maintained, we should have kept them informed. Um, we should have, by letter, by telephone call, by um, just sending little updates on what, and anything that appeared anywhere we should have sent it through to them. Um, but we assumed that the people within the organisation would have done that. But that's the wrong assumption because, I think there's something about the commercial world where they don't necessarily recognise what their underlings are doing. I think it has to come from outside. They, that's the lesson for us to think about in the future.

Barbara

The relationship was also described as ‘operating on their (the for-profit’s) terms’ and ‘trying to meet (the for-profit’s) requirements’ (Anne). As with positive or high social identification, images or metaphors were used extensively to describe the relationship. The Care & Share Association’s interaction with Biz3 was frequently described in negative terms. The relationship was described as a ‘battle’ (Anne)—by extension, the informant’s perceived role was to be a fighter or a ‘crusader’ (Melissa). This was in the

context of an individual informant attempting to resolve an issue with a representative of Biz3, one of the corporate partners. Describing one of the difficulties, Barbara said,

...and we were given line after line in terms of distribution and commercial viability...and ugh it was just one thing after another...and um, so, that was big dramas, because we had worked on the premise that it was there, that they [Biz3] had done their bit.

Firstly, there is a distinct linguistic space of which social identification is a significant aspect. There are differences of vocabulary and syntax between situations in which positive social identification prevails and those in which negative social identification dominates.

Second is the issue of the power relationship between organisations and whether or not the data show differences in power relationships. In the Care & Share Association, it was found empirically that social identification can be either positive or negative and that positive social identification occurred much more frequently in discussions of the Care & Share Association's relationships with the insurance company and Biz1 than it did with Biz3. The language linked to each of those interactions showed patterns that indicated distinct power differences. Consider the connotations of 'working with' someone versus the associations of language like 'operating on [the for-profit's] terms.' In the latter situation there is a sense of bending the nonprofit to fit the existing business; in the former, a mutual set of objectives to achieve together.

The power dimension is supported by and re-created by the language itself because of the effect that communication has on the parties engaged in dialogue. Language of positive social identification and collaboration reinforces the mutual standing of both parties through the social construction of individuals as productive actors in the relationship; language of conflict and negative social identification undermines the weaker 'partner' in the relationship by fostering an environment of uneven power.

Finally, social identification and differential power relationships can be linked to social agency in a similar dichotomy. For example, the language of negative social

identification indicates a struggle for supremacy because it is characterised by metaphors of conflict. In situations where the individual in the nonprofit felt he/she was losing the fight, this language of conflict and low social identification correlated with decreased perceptions of social agency. This link between language, power and social agency had an impact on the person's perception of herself and her role in the organisation.

4.2.3 Intra-organisational communication

In the interview, informants were asked a series of questions to elicit details about their knowledge of the relationships with for-profits in which the Care & Share Association was involved. After careful analysis of the ways in which it occurred, the linguistic thread of intra-organisational communication was split into three sub-themes—documentation, incrementalism and inclusion/exclusion pathways. Documentation was simply the written material about the relationship with the nonprofit. Incrementalism referred to the gradual accumulation of knowledge that formed the second possibility for intra-organisational communication. The third issue that constituted this linguistic thread were the pathways through which staff members were included or excluded from information flow about the nonprofit's relationship with business.

The focus of the research questions is on how they come to know what they know and how the language of the relationship was communicated throughout the organisation, is captured by this question:

- 1d. How is the structure of that language transmitted throughout the organisation?

Documentation

Although it was not in direct response to interview questions, formal tools including publications such as the newsletter, project briefs and mission statements are available for members of staff to access at any time, and provide at least some basic understanding. All informants had read (and in some cases written) organisational documentation relating to the for-profit relationships. In two cases, informants referred the interviewer to written documentation in response to questions about the Care &

Share Association programs. One example of the power of these documents to act as sources of authority on the language of the project came from Anne:

Interviewer: Tell me a little bit about that project and sort of how it...panned out, what you know of that process.

Anne: OK, the [] project was, it's fairly well documented in the information package, but it's about...

This showed that the first source of information that staff direct outsiders to is the information documents. It follows then that inside the organisation these documents also had legitimacy as one way in which staff communicate the language of the alliances to one another.

Incrementalism

In response to solicitations of informants' own reflections on their learning, most indicated that they acquired knowledge about the for-profit relationships over time. For example, Anne discussed how she gradually acquired knowledge about the project in various positions with the organisation, and here David clearly articulated his increasing levels of comfort in the nonprofit sector over time:

Interviewer: Tell me a little bit about the learning you went through, or the things you discovered when you got here. I mean, there were some things you already knew, and there were some things you probably didn't know anything about until you walked through the door...

David: Big learning curve, yeah, big learning curve...Um, certainly the ones that are in our program it's taken me three years now, to get them to a stage where I think they're now confident with insurance.

Exclusion & inclusion pathways

In the same way that 'non-decision making' (Bachrach & Baratz 1962) is a crucial concept for understanding how power is disseminated and maintained, inclusion and exclusion from information pathways are important aspects of language dissemination in the Care & Share Association. Anne attributed some of the barriers encountered in one of the for-profit relationships to her frustration with a lack of information from her colleagues:

I don't know about some aspects of the project. Which meant that some things that were totally out of my control. So I didn't have any contact with the evaluator. Which I'm unhappy with...um, and so, all that stuff was happening outside and I had the services saying to me, why don't we have the evaluation stuff, and I'm just having to say well my understanding is that it's getting there.

Inclusion pathways included who attended meetings (in this case, it was frequently David with the insurance side and Melissa/Barbara with Biz1, Biz2 and Biz3). This is partially linked to the power and hierarchy in the organisation, which has an effect on what exposure staff will have to external for-profit relationships.

It is important here because it reflected that second level of linguistic thread analysis, in which objective social structures influence the organisation instead of discourse creating it. The language was the outcome of the power relations, not necessarily the cause of them.

4.2.4 Understanding the relationship-building process

Much of the data that was collected during the interviews refers directly to how informants understood the development of the relationship between their organisation and the businesses with which the Care & Share Association was involved. In response to questions about various elements of this process, most informants pointed to

characteristics of conflicts of interest, personal contact, mutual benefit and values. Although the discourse varied among each of these sub-themes, the ‘understanding the relationship-building process’ linguistic thread has been created to identify a strong trend in the primary data and to analyse how these discourses work together.

This linguistic thread deals with the following research questions:

- 1a. What elements of vocabulary, narrative structure and syntax constitute a 'language of inequality' between the private and third sector?
- 1b. How is this language different in genuine power-sharing relationships?
- 2a. Do relationships affect the organisational capacity of nonprofit organisations?
- 2b. Do relationships affect the social agency of individuals?

Conflict of Interest

In the course of reconstructing their experiences with the interviewer, some informants explored the conflicting interests in their relationships with for-profits. A modified version of the legal definition will be used here. In this research, conflicts of interest are defined as situations in which the primary mission of the nonprofit organisation (for example, its responsibilities towards its members, clients or target population) is undermined, threatened or superseded by considerations of external implications for the organisation. For example, if a nonprofit health organisation received resources from a tobacco company to publish a consumer magazine, the content of the magazine might be influenced by the source of the funds. In that case, the rights of the clients of the health organisation might be jeopardised because the organisation was prevented from carrying out its main objectives of public education.

Informants were clearly aware of the possibility of conflict of interest in their discussions. Here Melissa expressed some concern over both the insurance and the other for-profit partnership in response to questions about perceptions of the relationships:

... I remember early on, I came here at the same time as our Training Officer did... and he and I used to have a lot of discussion around ethics and values and dilemmas and so on, and back then I probably think he had some of the same concerns that I still have, yes, there's benefits and it's good, but, we're still kind of dipping our hands into the dirty side of the world. You know, there are things the insurance...decisions that are made on claims or decisions are made by, like the issue of the premiums going up...

Melissa further explained the possible consequences of this conflict:

...there'll be a big claim that doesn't go right...and that's where I think there'll have to be a question about where is the Association in this and how does everything fit together. Do we feel comfortable about that. But isn't our role to advocate? When did we, where do we draw the line, where's the boundary come in?

Later in the interview Melissa reiterated a preference for not pursuing the insurance business at all, saying, "It's just a feeling of not being quite easy, I don't feel easy with it...my preference would be not to have it."

There is a sense in this informant's perception that the Care & Share Association is compromising itself in some way by engaging in the insurance business. She elaborated briefly by mentioning the notion of 'getting one's hands dirty' when the decisions made on insurance are in the interests of the organisation but perhaps not all of its members.

The other relationship with three for-profits also elicited some conflict of interest discourse. Acknowledgement of the for-profit's contributions without compromising organisational integrity was another area of concern. In a discussion about the organisational newsletter, Anne explained:

I think it goes back to the ethical questions... But it wasn't acknowledging what it actually meant to start to put their name through the [newsletter]. Like, what kinds of things does it tie us to, and if we want to them put an article in in general about insurance, are we able to do that, because are we actually compromising the relationship with --like we couldn't just, you can't just stick anyone's name in there, and then not expect them to want something for it.

These discussions continued with a sense that the Care & Share Association's freedom to be critical of partners might be decreased and that possible conflicts of interest might bar that from occurring:

And unless you actually clearly have that conversation to begin with, thank you but, we're not going to be tied, if we've got concerns about insurance, we want to be able to write...about that. Or if um, y'know Biz1 let's say is acknowledged we don't want to then be tied to saying always positives about them, we want to have an opportunity to d'know what I mean? More balance...

All of these examples point to constraints on the Care & Share Association's organisational capacity by requirements of the for-profit. Organisational capacity is defined as 'the ability of an organisation to respond to challenges and develop progressively. Conflicts of interest threaten this development by impinging on the primary mission of the organisation. The process appears to work like this:

1. Conflict of interest occurs when there is friction between the actions the nonprofit organisation's primary objectives and the consequences of relationships with for-profits
2. Conflict of interests is recognised by individuals in the nonprofit as having implications for the organisation
3. Organisational capacity is affected

In the case of constraints and conflict of interest, structural rather than discursive forces were at play. It was not the language of conflict of interest per se, but rather the underlying reality of the organisation's situation which led informants to disclose information circumscribed by this linguistic thread.

Personal contact

In addition to obvious project management considerations that demanded these links to tasks with individuals, personal contact was an important part of the discourse of relationship building. All informants mentioned at least one person in a business relationship with whom they had had personal contact. Communicating with this person was seen as a key element of building the bridges between the organisations.

Of the insurance company David stated, "...the managing director has often told me that he feels, he feels privileged that he's looking after the community sector."

Barbara's contribution to the area of personal contact reveals similar common ground:

Fortunately, we got on to the marketing manager...at the beginning, and she had been involved in the PM [Prime Minister's] round table talking about business and community partnerships, so there was interest at that level.

She spoke of the relationship with Biz1 in words that evoked empathy and personal contact, saying "...they've really shared the project, they're sharing the whole burden and understanding what it's all about. So yeah, it's been really really good."

And then Anne's description of the for-profit partner Biz1:

The type of culture that that organisation has already or the type of person that got interested in it...all the work that he did last year, is just paying huge dividends now. Like I don't hear any concerns...All I continue to hear about Biz1 is their flexibility, the good natured staff...the

on the ground only happened because of the workings of that person...he's working on goodwill and goodwill is working. [It's] an indication of their commitment and their responsibility to the project.

All of these examples point to informants' perception of how some individuals 'understand' or 'empathise with' the community sector. Personal contact was seen as crucial to building the relationship.

One element of structure in the personal contact node was the frequency of meetings set up by both parties. In the Care & Share Association, meetings often took place. These served the purpose of an opportunity to raise concerns in a non-urgent manner and created further situations in which individuals could learn more about one another.

Mutual benefit

The mutual benefit theme appeared in every informant's language and the documentation about how the relationship evolved. The idea that the for-profits 'had to be aware of the fact that there had to be something in it for them' (Barbara) was one way it was explored in the discourse. Other information was even more collaboration-focused, especially in the discussion of the insurance business, with allusion to working together to solve problems for a mutual group of clients:

We've got a questionnaire that I [David] designed with the insurance company, which answers and solves a lot of the problems under the ICA [Insurance Contracts Act]. Um, I, I think it's, it's got a positive outcome as well. From the business viewpoint. Because [the insurance company has] not been involved in the community sector. Previously.... I guess if you go direct they'll say yep, you're just a name...And that these cheaper premiums that they offer us is going to the betterment of the community. So they actually get a positive kick out of it as well. Now obviously [they] will profit from a dollar viewpoint as well, think of it as a business venture, but they're also

supportive in sponsorship as well for things that we do.
Um, yeah, I think that's a positive aspect of the program...

Discourse analysis of project documentation illustrated similar patterns of mutual benefit as a sub-theme of understanding the relationship-building process. For example, the phrases contained in the project brief assumed mutual goals. It stated:

The project brings together the community and corporate sectors in a new way—a genuine partnership. The strategic alliance...offers numerous benefits, in sharing ideas and information. Both sectors can learn from each other about how best to meet the needs of people...the [] project provides a common goal for all parties...

The project was conducted on a pilot basis and the organisation's newsletter contained a piece about initial evaluations of the project. In this piece, directed at clients, the notion of mutual benefit was omitted and the focus was entirely on the needs of clients. Obviously, the purpose of the discourse was different—in the newsletter, to promote the benefits to clients, and in project briefs and negotiations, to promote mutual advantages stemming from the project. There was also an intention of balance in the meeting minutes—'we need to find a happy medium between service centres, our corporate partners and volunteers.'

The insurance information in the newsletter, which was directed to members of the Association rather than program clients, contained a slightly different version of mutual benefit. Phrases like 'attractive to the insurance market', allusions to competition for the Care & Share Association business and '[insurance company] remains the most competitive by far' reflected David's focus on mutual benefit for both parties. Practical considerations of success were also embedded in mutual benefit, because informants recognised that offering reciprocal advantage would provide further incentive for corporate partners.

Values/mission

Values or mission sub-themes are markers of differences and similarities in nonprofit and for-profit goals within the partnership. Issues of ‘service’ or ‘access’ versus ‘commercial viability’ surfaced throughout the discourse in different ways depending on the informants’ perception of the relationship. Anne’s explanation detailed this variation:

Well, commercially viable, things have to be *commercially viable, things have to fit into the structures that are already in place at Biz3*. The difference with Biz1 I think is that they've come into it knowing that they'd not be *commercially viable*, and it's not what they're there for. Like, they'll keep on saying, we're there for the people, we're there for the clients. Biz3, they're there to get more of their products out, and they're there for product recognition, um, financial viability, different things. Biz3 have come in as the big body, if you asked me about the relationship I would say that it's a big body that's just there and we would try and do what we could to keep them on side. Yeah, it's not been an equal relationship.

(Italics by author)

Barbara summarised the perceived differences in mission like this:

...I think it's because we have different values. And because those things are really, really important to a community organisation. That you really sit down and discuss who you are, and where you're going and why.

Future alliances

Future possibilities for contact between the organisations and the longevity of this project also featured in the interview data in responses that detailed how participants saw different potential for a variety of for-profit relationships. The future alliance sub-

theme was important because it pointed to the differentiation among relationships that staff at the Care & Share Association maintained. Two distinct discourse emerged around this linguist thread sub-theme:

...the relationship with Biz1 has been really good all the way through. They've been prepared to listen, negotiate, be flexible, same as our members have. So that they, they've really shared the project, they're sharing the whole burden and understanding what it's all about. So yeah, it's been really really good. Um, really interesting experience... And we want, one of the objectives in going down this path, as clearly stated in the project is to set up a model that other community service organisations can use in terms of building partnerships out in the community. So we see, we go into all these things about, what the legal problems are, what the actual structural problems are, and all of those sorts of...hoping to resolve some of them, and in the evaluation, say OK, these are the things we found, these are things you need to do when you go out and build a relationship. Um, we're always looking for where we can make that work.

Barbara

And then in a different way altogether:

Can I see it continuing? I think, I can see, well, no. Not with Biz3. Not unless we were able to change their way of thinking about what they're meant to be getting out of this type of project.

Anne

In the instance of the positive relationship, the data reflected a willingness to work on remaining issues proactively; in those relationships that were stagnating or regressing, the discourse indicated a sense of indifference to the potential for further opportunity.

This is important for organisational capacity because it indicated that the Association was able to recognise failure and move away from those detrimental relationships without endangering the possibility for new opportunities to emerge in their dealings with the business sector.

4.2.5 Organisational context

Evidence for the links between capacity and social agency in the discourse of institutional context is limited in the Care & Share Association data. Staff at the Care & Share Association knew of the constraints placed on them by institutional context and clearly the nonprofit felt some pressure to conform to changing institutional expectations. However, there is no data from this case to support the idea that social agency is directly affected by the media aspect of institutional capacity. Organisational capacity is equally problematic. Although there were repeated references to funding cycles, changing political priorities, shifting social concerns and broader community support for the organisation's mission, there is little in the language of the interviews themselves to indicate a direct link. Rather, an indirect mechanism is suggested that makes use of the neoinstitutionalist concept of isomorphism:

1. Informants recognise the public perceptions of nonprofit organisations as 'charities' or 'little community services'
2. In order to conform to institutional expectations, informants take on the characteristics of these stereotypes, thereby reinforcing the role of recipient in the perception of potential or actual business partners.

Further empirical data is required to assess the proposed process for how language of institutional context influences the development of nonprofit organisations and their staff.

This linguistic thread included elements of narrative and structure. The stories were how informants respond to the concrete reality of institutional context. In this case, the linguistic thread is defined firstly by the way in which it describes objective considerations for the organisation's operation.

4.2.6 Intent & Implementation

This linguistic thread describes the contrast between the language of objectives or goals and the tangible outcomes affecting how the project was put into practice. In conflict between intent and implementation, there is a ‘before and after’ dimension that describes the differences between how the project was envisioned and how informants described its outcome.

For example, in the documentation, all relationships between the Care & Share Association and its three corporate partners were housed under a single linguistic umbrella. Words like ‘initiative,’ ‘strategic alliance,’ ‘genuine partnership’ and ‘new relationships’ surfaced frequently on marketing materials and project briefs. However, as has already been evident in the other linguistic threads, strong differences emerged in the language of implementation, where one relationship appeared much more difficult than the others did. Informants’ language in the interviews reflected these differences and the reality of the inconsistent outcomes further supported the importance of this linguistic thread.

This side of intent and implementation can be connected to research question 1a:

- 1a. What elements of vocabulary, narrative structure and syntax constitute a 'language of inequality' between the private and third sector?

By showing that there are distinct differences between one for-profit relationship and another, this linguistic thread points to important issues for staff in a nonprofit engaged in creating a sustainable ‘alliance.’

There is another more subtle aspect of intent and implementation that shows clearly in the material. All of the corporate partners were acknowledged in the documentation. However, although as indicated above words like ‘partnership’ frequently appeared in other types of documentation, their assistance was labelled ‘support’ in the newsletters. The reasons behind this subtle but potentially crucial difference have to do with organisational concerns that address another research question:

2a. Do relationships affect the organisational capacity of nonprofit organisations?

This example from the data points to a language shift. The word ‘partner’ indicates equity, or at least the attempt at equity for the organisations to work with one another; ‘support,’ on the other hand, denotes aid, assistance or help for the nonprofit. Small, but far from inconsequential. In this discourse, the nonprofit continued to find itself indebted to the corporate entity. The word ‘support’ indicated little or no acknowledgement of the benefits that the for-profit obtained through this relationship. In this context, the linguistic thread labelled a situation in a particular way and simultaneously created the conditions under which these differences might lead to failure or conflict.

At another level of analysis, this thread is linked to organisational capacity. It would be very difficult for the Care & Share Association to develop progressively in a situation of subordination to another organisation. In attempting to shift into ‘partnership’ mode and particularly in its dealings with corporate entity Biz3, the Care & Share Association continued to have difficulties with the differences between the language of intent and the language of implementation. In terms of collaborative models, this language of subservience prevented the possibility of an equitable relationship from developing.

Finally, there is the question of social agency in the intent and implementation linguistic thread queried in research question 2b:

2b. Do relationships affect the social agency of individuals?

For example, Barbara described the most successful relationship (with Biz1) as a process of listening and flexible thinking on both sides. She spoke in terms that illustrated common goals as well as adaptability, saying “...they've really shared the project, they're sharing the whole burden and understanding what it's all about. So yeah, it's been really really good.” Where the Care & Share Association informants perceived ‘sharing’ and ‘flexibility’ throughout both intent and implementation phases, a sense of mutual goal setting emerged and the social relations between participants were imbued

with collaborative effort. This made it more likely that informants would feel higher levels of social agency, because they perceived themselves to be on equal footing with the for-profit counterparts.

4.2.7 Supplemental coding

In addition to the linguistic threads identified in the previous section, three supplemental nodes were coded that appeared in the discourse: staff, history and funding. These three nodes are structural or objective in nature, because they describe the situation of the Care & Share Association over time.

In response to questions about various roles in the organisation, it was clear that there were high levels of change within the staff and the structure of the organisation itself. For example, in this sequence Melissa discussed how her position was changing:

...So, my position at the moment, and it's going to change. My position for another three weeks is policy project officer, I'm responsible for managing the projects...so I manage consultancies that we run, and I also manage the project officers. And I do, have been, not as much lately, been involved in...policy, getting out and about to meetings and working with other policy workers to change the universe I suppose. But um, they're actually re-structuring this position so that it will become a Deputy Director when I leave, and it will actually take on responsibility for managing all of the staff and managing projects and have less of a focus on policy, so it's a bit of a shift going on there...Odds and ends.

In another, Anne detailed how she had had three separate 'project' jobs since she joined the organisation. Melissa also described this role that Anne plays in a similar way,

So [Anne's role] is, she only works part time at the moment, so we broker out some of her, some of her hours

I guess hours or some of her funding to work more closely with the services...So that position is due for renewal at the end of the year. And it's kind of, the money that's attached to that project is almost like a special projects money...It may well re-shape or re-form into another position over time to meet more specific, like it might become an Aboriginal worker at some stage for example, so it's kind of shaping and re-forming all the time.

Two areas that often appeared together in the interviews and in the organisational documentation were history and funding. When asked about the progression of projects or the development of the Care & Share Association, all informants mentioned both how the organisation grew and what funding was attached to that development.

These supplemental coding elements are included here because although they did not have any direct bearing on the questions, they did serve to provide a more comprehensive picture of the environment in which the Care & Share Association operated. As such, these themes can be loosely coupled with institutional context which as has been acknowledged is an inextricable part of an organisation's position but not directly related to the phenomenon under investigation here. For example, the history and funding of the organisation could not be separated from the political, economic and social climate in which it is operating.

Another interesting point is that the discourse of change was reflected in all three identified supplemental nodes. Staff were aware of their dynamic roles in the organisation and appeared to take for granted that this pace of change would continue, although there were differences as to the degree of comfort informants exhibited in response to this change. This theme permeated conversations around staff, history and funding with all informants.

In conjunction with the structured linguistic threads, these auxiliary coding patterns are significant factors in how the Care & Share Association operated in the context of its for-profit relationships.

4.3 WEAVING THE THREADS

All the linguistic threads fall into one or both of the following categories. They are either elements of language in the data that help to create reality within the narrative, or they reflect reality as it stands. Linguistic threads fall in fixed relational positions—that is, they describe the intersection of a relationship and thus encompass power differences between the organisations. As such, these threads contain theoretical assumptions about language and power with which this research was begun.

In terms of language, these assumptions are:

- differences in quality of relationships through language
- language as a tool
- inequality coded in language

They also include structural factors that affect how a nonprofit organisation can operate. Differences in how well relationships proceeded were definitely a part of the experience of the Care & Share Association informants. Consistent reporting of satisfaction with Biz1 and dissatisfaction with Biz3 in the context of the linguistic threads show that language can reflect relationships. Clegg's notion that language is contributory is evident in this emerging characteristic of the data as well (1987). As a critical factor in power relationships, language shapes and is shaped by the relative strength of the organisations in the alliance. Furthermore, it is bounded by the structural limits of objective circumstances of the organisation and the informants.

Finally, the data appeared to support Garnsey and Rees' contention that language can contain within it the discourses of power inequity (1996), because differences in perceived quality and satisfaction with relationships was clearly mirrored in the language of those relationships.

The power assumptions that were bolstered by this first empirical exploration are:

- More powerful organisations dominate how relationship is formed (Rhodes 1992)
- Examples of facilitative, dispositional and episodic power are evident in these relationships and can be discerned and affected by language

The first of these assertions, that more powerful organisations prevail in negotiations about how the relationships is formed, can be seen from the case of the Care & Share Association. On the one hand, in terms of selecting brokers, the nonprofit organisation was in a position of superiority. It operated from a more powerful stance than the for-profit, which in this instance was the broker. From that position, it was able to dictate the terms of the tender process and defined the limits of the contract. There are also examples of when the data indicated that the for-profit held more power. For example, in dealing with at least one of the for-profits (Biz3), the perceptions of staff remained that the organisation was bending to the will of the for-profit. It followed that in the first scenario the nonprofit had more power, and in the second situation it was the for-profit that dominated the relationship. This is how the first assertion holds in the organisation.

The next section demonstrates the presence of episodic, dispositional and facilitative power from the data and then presents an illustration of how the power can be modelled from this case study.

Episodic power

Episodic power was a rare feature in the data from the Care & Share Association. One of the possible reasons for this may have been methodological—as the research plan did not include observing interactions between the for-profit and nonprofit staff, it is difficult to identify specific situations in which one or the other exercised direct episodic power. However, dispositional power and facilitative power were evident in several instances.

Dispositional power

The Care & Share Association demonstrated dispositional power in its insurance broker documents. Of the thirty-two total points of service agreement, seventeen began ‘The

Broker will' and only seven 'The Client will'. In this case, the power negotiated rests with the Care & Share Association. In this case, the language of the agreement is an example in which the nonprofit organisation holds the power. Thus, using the legalistic language, the Care & Share Association engineered a situation in which it held the balance of power over the broker. This was an important indicator of the potential for increasing organisational capacity, where the Care & Share Association moved from 'putting up with' several months of unsatisfactory service from one broker before taking the initiative to tender out the process. This gave the Care & Share Association an 'opportunity to assess' services and to thus put itself in a position of power over the ineffective corporate partner.

Facilitative power

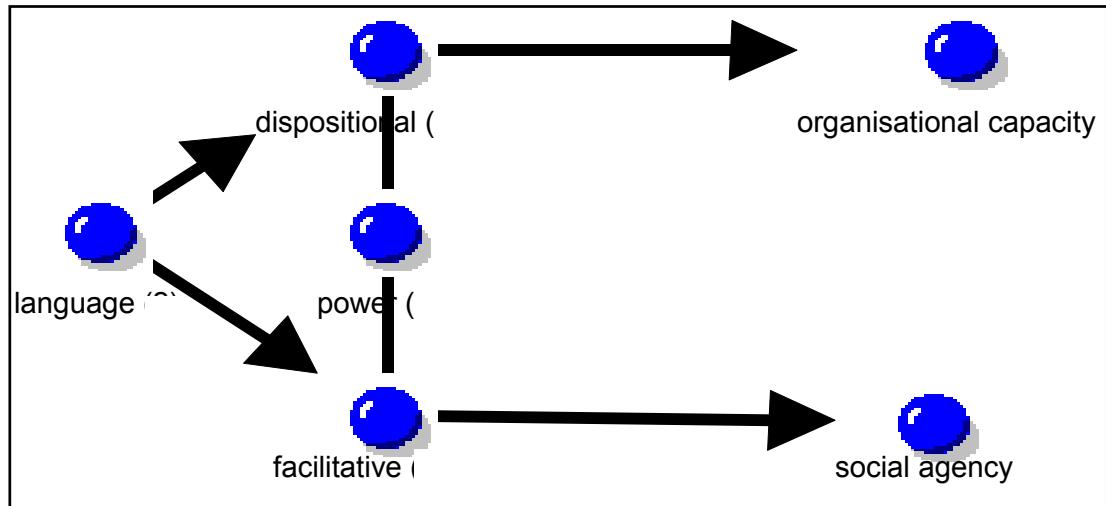
The process through which the Care & Share Association dismissed a low-performing broker and tendered out the job to other for-profits is also an excellent example of facilitative power by the nonprofit. In the case of dispositional power, the Care & Share Association devised a document that restrained the broker. By creating an organisational system of three-year review of brokers and a new set of rules of the game, the organisation re-established supremacy over the situation that had deteriorated to the point of affecting their members and the organisation's image. The facilitative power resulted in a return to the organisation's mission and a stronger sense of social agency on the part of staff members involved. Barbara discussed the results of the facilitative power thus:

...it was about building again that trust relationship
between us, the broker and the client in the middle.

These situations were linked closely to the informants' sense of how much control they had over the situation and were marked by references to social agency and organisational capacity.

The model that is supported by the data in the Care & Share Association for assumptions linking language/power with social agency and that has been developed to represent how these three types of power interact may be understood thus:

Figure 2: Power Interaction in Care & Share Association



In the model above, linguistic threads are the mechanisms that drive the language/power interaction and lead to increases or decreases in social agency and organisational capacity. Linguistic threads are the drivers as well as the cues of power differences, language use and relationship development. They occupy the space within the circle in this diagram, but they are not haphazardly arranged. In their internal dynamics with one another, patterns have surfaced from the interviews and documentation.

In order to construct the model in a linear fashion and to facilitate understanding, dyad relationships are built one at a time in the following analysis and then culminate in a model that incorporates all of the linguistic threads. Starting with exploring relationships between two linguistic thread, the intention of this weaving section is to integrate all of the components into one picture of this case study.

The first connection between linguistic threads is the relationship of ‘conflict of interest’ to ‘values.’ The literature on careers and motivation in the nonprofit sector indicates that in the community sector, individuals tend to be motivated by personal value systems (Onyx 1993; Onyx & McLean 1993). The data suggests that the individuals in the Care & Share Association conformed to this generalisation and that their emphasis

on values extended to the organisation. This language, juxtaposed against what some perceived to be difficult or less value-driven decisions created conflicts of interest for the organisation and led to perceptions of decreased organisational capacity and social agency. There is also literature that points to the consequences of such conflict between internal value systems and organisational direction (Hardy & Phillips 1999).

Informants felt uncomfortable with some aspects of the relationships with for-profit firms and this discomfort translated into the perception that they as individuals and the organisation as a whole was less able to perform according to its primary 'mission.' On the positive side, those relationships that appeared to have shared values were perceived to increase the organisation's ability to develop.

The next loop in the chain is values related to personal contact. One of the factors that permeated the discourse of the Care & Share Association was the importance of connecting to an individual in the for-profit organisation. This need for personal contact appears to be directly related to the values espoused by the nonprofit as a whole and individuals. The importance of personal contact was in its consequences for social agency. Stewart-Weeks and Richardson's work (1998) on the benefits of rich horizontal and vertical social capital networks is aligned with the work that demonstrated how personal contact could have a positive impact on the social agency of informants.

In turn, values and personal contact are related to mutual benefit. The trust inherent in parallel values and personal contact is further connected to mutual benefit. The notion of action towards a mutually-agreed goal implies that both parties must have clear expectations of the relationship for it to be successful (Alexander 1992). Gray's work on collaboration is further demonstrated by the Care & Share Association because of her cautionary tale of the danger to collaborative efforts of different frames of reference (1989). The linguistic process of deriving these mutual expectations for reciprocal benefit is illustrated in the Care & Share Association's multiple relationships. Where well-established goals were coupled with strong personal relationships and a sense of mutual benefit characterised the relationship, the alliance appeared much more likely to result in positive outcomes.

Contrary examples in the literature revolve around the concept of philanthropy. Connotations of philanthropy as ‘giving something for nothing’ are in direct contrast to the idea of mutually beneficial partnerships. In the Care & Share Association, informants recognised the difference, and in the discourse this was reflected in the extent to which relationships were characterised as being mutually beneficial.

In a philanthropic model, the relationship develops where one party requests resources from another. However, in a more balanced ‘partnership’ structure, even initial discussions revolve around mutual interests (Gray 1989). Hanson (1997) reiterated this argument in work on ‘tribal exchanges’, in which the author defines modern philanthropy as ‘the paradox by which the affluent preserve and reinforce their power by their selective and symbolic abandonment of power over material wealth and goods’ (p. 17). Hanson also cited Eminsier, who did work on elite social structures and power funding as it relates to the process of gaining power. In this view, the process of philanthropy is itself an exercise in power acquisition and consolidation. This links increases in mutual benefit in the relationship to more level power structures between the organisations.

In aggregate, the data showed values, personal contact and mutual benefit all connecting to social identification. In the informants’ perceptions, the ability to identify with another person relied on the interaction of these three threads. Recognition of values as a key component of the relationship allowed personal relationships to develop. This then improved the possibility for mutual goals to emerge from initial negotiations. Social identification was the product of these processes because they created an environment in which informants gravitated towards seeing themselves and the ‘others’ as part of the same social construct. The intersection of values, personal contact and mutual benefit produced social identification.

Structures and institutional context are the breeding grounds in which the relationship develops. The linguistic thread of institutional context embeds within it all the others because the legal/structural, political and socio-economic contexts in which the alliances operate affect how the nonprofit develops (Agranoff & Lindsay 1983).

Upon initial assessment, one linguistic thread stands relatively isolated from the others in the data from the Care & Share Association. Intra-organisational communication has already been linked to social agency through the interviews; nonetheless, it is a critical piece of the developing puzzle in the language/power game of nonprofit/for-profit relationships. The data within the intra-organisational linguistic thread supports Foucault's idea that power (through language) is a driver behind the creation of reality illustrated how individuals and the knowledge that they gain through power are part of this iterative transaction (1980). This makes it an important part of the narrative of the pilot study.

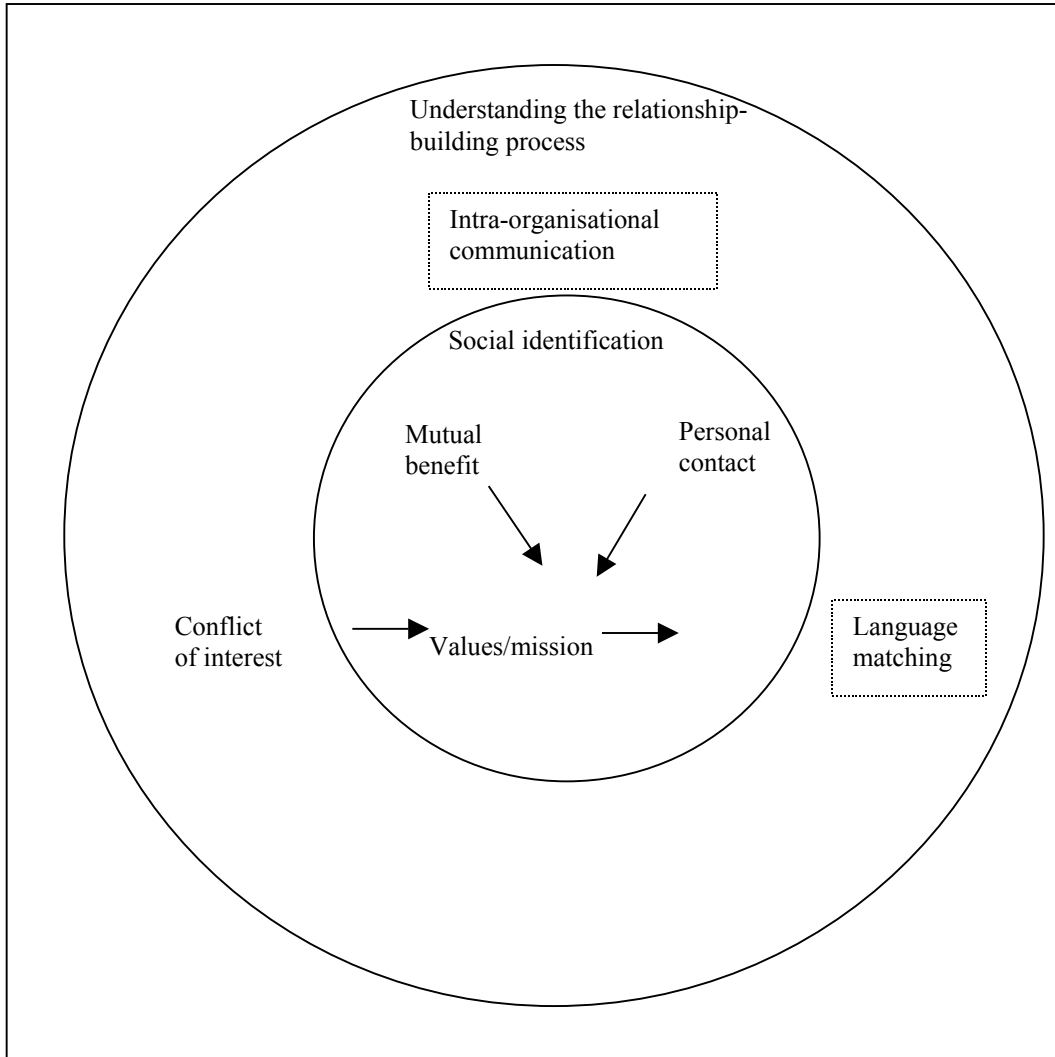
All the previous elements begin to draw a picture of how language contributes to the understanding of the relationship-building process in the Care & Share Association. This is shown in Figure 3.

Language, power and structure combine to affect how organisations operate. In the context of the Care & Share Association, there is strong preliminary corroboration for the idea that the language of relationships can affect the organisational capacity of nonprofits and the social agency of individuals. There is also some support that links the extent to which relationships are defined through a 'language of inequality' to variability in how effective individuals perceive themselves to be in their work and how the entity operates. In other words, collective organisational capacity and individual social agency are critical to the survival, development and responsiveness of nonprofit organisations. Staff members who feel constrained by conflicts or undermined by the preponderance of 'business language' in a relationship may be more likely to experience a lack of capacity to act in their own interest and on behalf of their organisation.

Figure 3 is a visual representation of how these threads fit together. As demonstrated in the discussion, some linguistic threads were closely tied to one another, whereas others appeared as part of the overall relationship but not directly linked to any other specific linguistic thread. Throughout the thesis, these models provide a graphic guide to the explication in the text.

After initial confirmation of some elements of the starting assumptions of the theoretical heuristic, four more case studies were conducted. The second case study is presented in Chapter 5.

Figure 3: Care and Share Association Linguistic Threads Model



CHAPTER 5: NIGHTLIGHT

5.1 OVERVIEW

Nightlight is a youth services organisation in the inner city. Started by a number of social workers as a lobby group, the organisation was initially funded by the Cabinet Office in response to a survey on youth issues. The service opened in 1984. In 1999, the organisation closed some of its services to provide more appropriate assistance to young people. Nightlight caters for about 600 youth a year, the majority of whom are self-referred. Nightlight currently runs a range of services to address individual client needs. It is still funded from government sources, although in 2000 10% of its budget came from non-government sources including private business. Staff at Nightlight include an Executive Director, four case workers and one part-time administrative assistant. The Director (Stephen) and two case workers (John and Carolyn) were interviewed.

Up until 1992, Nightlight was a collective organisation in which consensus decision-making, general distrust of the 'system' and a sense of progress in the face of conservatism dominated. Although this has shifted somewhat in the last decade, Nightlight remains committed to strong advocacy for its clients and somewhat distrustful of the corporate sector.

In Nightlight, three informants were interviewed using the same protocol as in the pilot study. This chapter follows the same patterns of identifying linguistic threads, offering examples from the data and exploring how the strands combine to link language, power, social agency and organisational capacity in nonprofit/for-profit relationships.

Linguistic threads of language matching, social identification, intra-organisational communication, understanding the relationship-building process, leadership, anchor shift and recognising the institutional context were the primary themes coded in Nightlight.

The relationships that Nightlight has with business are based on sponsorship arrangements. In return, corporate supporters receive publicity in some local press for

their engagement in the community. However, the exchanges is not formalised into a contractual partnership.

5.2 ANALYSIS

5.2.1 Language matching

Language matching is the process of parallel language from the nonprofit to the for-profit, where staff use terminology that is more closely associated with business enterprise. All the language matching in interviews with informants from Nightlight was conscious, in contrast to the subconscious matching that occurred in positively skewed relationships that the Care & Share Association had with for-profits. Two examples from Nightlight illustrate this. In the first, Stephen discussed how he would have acted differently if the interviewer had been a funding body:

Stephen: [Discussing how his office would look different] I think it kind of looks good to tell you the truth if people come in and there's a few logos of corporations on the wall.

Interviewer: Why do you think it looks good?

Stephen: Aw, it means you play the game. Y'know. It's a bit like if you were from one of the funding bodies I'd probably clean my office. It's part of the image. And y'know, a few signs up that y'know, no harm in having [a well-known corporation] or someone else's logo on your door.

The phrase 'it means you play the game' indicated Stephen's awareness of shifting into a different organisational space in order to attract and maintain legitimacy in the eyes of funders. Once again, the interviewee puts distance between how Nightlight 'usually' is

as an organisation and how it must match external expectations for funders. This is a clear indication of the power differential between a nonprofit organisation and the bodies that hold funding control over them, including corporates who are deciding whether or not to sponsor a community organisation. This example of language matching is structural rather than narrative, because it refers to the objective funding situation in which the nonprofit finds itself.

John provided the most blatant example of how a nonprofit 'should' act in relationships with business:

Uh, without being too specific about who they were and what was involved I think probably what we learned as an organisation is that we need to have business minded people on the Management Committee...and particularly people who are au fait with corporate law, just to ensure that we're not taken for a ride as an organisation by business. Yeah, they used our goodwill...and raised or done joint advertising with that name and haven't actually given us much back. As Ross has probably told you. So the lesson from that is be prepared and to contract business, you have to be very business-like to do business. So the whole concept of goodwill and good citizenship is, it's about needing checks and balances essentially to make sure business is doing the right thing, isn't just looking for a quick tax dodge or worse.

John added to this vision of how to match language with corporates specific instructions on what an ideal relationship might entail:

OK, ideal relationship with business would be one that's roped in by contract. Professional, just like you're in a partnership with them as they are with their suppliers and their business partners. If they want to give you something for nothing that's fine, I want it in writing I

want it signed with the corporate seal on it, thanks very much. And yeah you can get the tax advantage and we'll put you in the annual report and at the back of your annual report you gave to [Nightlight]. I think we just need to tighten it up a lot. And it takes resources to do that, resources we don't have. Needs to be monitored at a Management Committee level.

In this example, John was explicit about the purpose of language matching in terms of setting up contractual arrangements with for-profits. This part of the discourse shared some history about how acting 'like a nonprofit' (i.e. less business-like, more trusting) led to a compromising situation for Nightlight in which its goodwill was misused by a corporate sponsor. To avoid a recurrence of these circumstances in the future, John was adamant that Nightlight should pursue arrangements that hinge on the 'contractual' language of business. Once again, this language matching included an awareness of the legal implications of relationships.

As with the Care & Share Association, there is a mechanism through which language and power implications reflect and construct the social agency of Nightlight staff. It works in the following manner:

1. Recognition of the differences in language and the futility of using 'nonprofit' vocabulary, combined with the need to assert power in the situation
2. Adaptation of vocabulary and strategy
3. Outcome in which the power shifts from an 'asking' to a 'demanding'

The primary difference in the way that language matching played out in Nightlight compared to the pilot study is a deep streak of cynicism that pervades this adoption of business strategies. As John outlined, the organisation had been 'burned' by a relationship with a for-profit organisation and had therefore adopted the strategy of working under business terms in order to ward off further instances of that kind. This 'back-foot stance' is connected to the way that Nightlight saw itself as surviving by using business money because it had been coerced into the situation, rather than feeling proactively involved in any long-term relationships.

5.2.2 Social Identification

Social identification is the extent to which staff in the nonprofit identified with their business counterparts. Social identification was the most common linguistic thread identified in Nightlight. In fact, more than a third of the data from the interviews was coded under this linguistic thread. As described in the introductory section on linguistic threads, there can be both high or positive social identification and low or negative social identification.

Without exception, companies that supported Nightlight were referred to as ‘they.’ There was not a single instance of an interviewee using the inclusive ‘we’ to answer questions about their for-profit links. One informant described the relationship thus:

So um, so what started happening was we started being approached by companies who would make donations and then use that donation, then acknowledge that donation in their advertising and in related media stories running through the tabloid press. Cuz it's essentially advertorials, but, although they'll deny that. Um it is, it's the easiest way of actually linking your corporate identity to the [identifying data deleted] community. Make a donation and get your picture in the paper doing it... Um, it's easy to do, cuz once you've got the link they just write you a cheque.

Stephen

Another interviewee echoed similar sentiments in his language:

It's that whole proving and trying to get any money out of them and making it constant and relevant as well is pretty tough.

Carolyn

And a third:

And someone from the welfare side of the organisation turns up and cuts the ribbon. And that's super and we go out and serve the poor. Economists will tell you, money is what money does. They want to give the money over to us we make it do something.

John

The distinction between 'us' and 'them' was further strengthened by the current of negative social identification that used metaphors to set up how the relationship worked according to the staff at Nightlight. The strongest language came from Stephen when he was talking about the way that the relationship seemed to him at times:

...and so it was really, it was interesting, no it feels like prostitution is the best way to describe it.

Another informant used an almost identical metaphor in describing what the organisation was required to do in order to survive:

And part of that will mean dancing with business for money. But you've got to do it, the way they do it basically, which isn't the way we work normally.

John

Both of these excerpts indicate low or negative social identification. A third type of social identification came from Stephen when asked to describe the relationship. He said simply, "It's vague, it doesn't exist to tell you the truth...it's um, it's advertising is what it is...". In other words, not only is the link based on a dichotomy of 'us' and 'them' and images of exploitation, the relationship itself is nebulous and could be better characterised as 'advertising' for the business.

The vivid language and the consistent distancing of themselves from business can be linked to social agency and organisational capacity. The research questions associated with these concepts include:

- 1a. What elements of vocabulary, narrative structure and syntax constitute a 'language of inequality' between the private and third sector?
- 2b. Do relationships affect the social agency of individuals?

As with the pilot study, there is a clearly delineated linguistic space in which social identification plays a pivotal role in defining, perpetuating and sharing perceptions. In Nightlight, there are no opportunities to compare positive social identification with negative situations, but nonetheless the sense of barriers and distance is reflected by the language of the organisation on this issue. The focus in social identification is narrative and socially constructed.

The images employed by informants in Nightlight explicitly acknowledged power differences in the connections. Metaphorically speaking, staff at the organisation found themselves in a situation where they are 'selling their product'—the positive advertising that a company will get when it demonstrates its support for homeless youth—and simultaneously attempting to protect themselves and their clients from exploitation. John narrated the tension in this way:

... my focus is on the clients and my role is also to make sure that they're not involved in it...corporate advertising participating in corporate BBQs being trailed out. It's a form of exploitation and it's just not acceptable. Y'know I'm homeless, they don't want to advertise. We get a lot of people who don't live with us or have dropped in or y'know are living with us but feel like they're getting their lives together with jobs and everything. But the people with real problems which is what we're here for don't want it advertised

Organisational capacity and social agency are jointly affected in this situation as a result of the language that mirrors and re-creates the position of Nightlight in relationship to its corporate sponsors. On the one hand, informants used images of exploitation to describe their feelings about the situation and they were conscious of possible negative consequences to their clients; on the other, they also felt the necessity to continue seeking increasing support from business in order to survive and provide tangible benefits to their clients. There was a discrepancy between the sense of powerlessness they experienced as a result of their description of the relationship and the support that the money provides to the organisation and to their clients.

As well as being one of the carriers of the existing distance between the staff and the for-profit connections, staff used this negative social identification to address the strain inherent in the conflicting needs. When asked, John stated flatly ‘that's not my role in this organisation to play any part with business. If I'm doing that, there's a problem. I shouldn't be doing that, my focus is on the clients.’ In this way, the distance is increased but John is able to hold two conflicting views of business support simultaneously. However, the pressure created on both John's social agency and the organisational capacity of the organisation as a result of the social identification mismatch is considerable. This concentration on specific roles that should deal with the business side of the organisation was further evidence of the negative social identification that Nightlight had with business.

5.2.3 Intra-organisational communication

In marked contrast to the pilot study, which relied heavily on organisational documentation and institutionalism to illustrate how informants learned about the links between for-profits and their own organisation, Nightlight is characterised by limited intra-organisational communication on the subject and a single document about the relationships. This particular linguistic thread was linked to the following research question:

- 1d. How is the structure of the language transmitted throughout the organisation?

Documentation

The name of businesses that donated to Nightlight appeared on the back cover of the Annual Report. This was the sole documentation of the relationship. One of the reasons that is evident for the lack of documentation is that the links between Nightlight and its corporate sponsors were more like transactions and less like relationships than was the case in the Care & Share Association. As already noted in the section on social identification, Stephen describes the relationships as ‘vague.’

This idea that there existed not an ongoing developing connection between Nightlight and its supporters but rather a series of annual transaction of money for positive community publicity is an important one in the broader context of ‘partnerships.’ Although as already noted there were doubtless ‘real’ relationships requiring ongoing investment of time, money and human resources between nonprofit and for-profit entities, often something that might be viewed from outside as a relationship is nothing more than a business deal.

As with the Care & Share Association, in Nightlight incrementalism, exclusion/inclusion pathways and personal history were mechanisms through which staff members acquired information in this area.

Incrementalism

Incrementalism is the gradual learning process around the nonprofit/for-profit link for staff members in the nonprofit. Personal history and incrementalism appeared to work closely together in this area. One of the most obvious examples was Carolyn, who had joined the organisation about a month prior to being interviewed. When asked about her knowledge she replied:

I don't know heaps and heaps. I must admit I'm really interested in getting into the business association side in order to support people in job placement and that kind of stuff, employment training, because I think that community looking after their own community is pretty damn important and I think a lot of people forget people

on the streets and people who are just coming out. So that sort of I'm very interested in that, but I don't really know a lot yet about what other kind of organisations or businesses are associated as such with [Nightlight] I'm still in the finding out a bit.

In this example, Carolyn pointed to the need for time to assimilate organisational culture and within that the specifics about relationships with for-profits. She asserted that she was in the process of developing that knowledge. This example also demonstrates the connection between her personal history with alternative funding sources for nonprofits and her awareness the knowledge that she had yet to acquire in her new position with Nightlight.

Exclusion & inclusion pathways

There is a definite exclusion pathway in Nightlight. Stephen, the Executive Officer explained that he is the only one who is aware precisely of the amount and that he would stall any attempt by staff to access this information:

But yeah, I think there is like, I know how much I've got sitting in fundraising reserves. I know, I can tell you down to the cent. I know exactly how much is there and um I wouldn't answer that question if asked by a member of staff. I would give them a pile of financial reports. Well, it's sitting in there, it's pretty easy to see, but I don't think a lot of people, and no so I'm not keen to well, to spend it, I think that they are.

Rather than a judgement on the way in which the leader chooses to exclude staff members from that data on links to for-profits, this exclusion pathway pointed to an issue of social agency. As Executive Officer, Stephen was aware that staff have not always agreed with the way in which the money donated from business has been spent. He was increasing his social agency—his ability to positively affect the outcomes for clients—by managing that communication strategically and avoiding dissent that might damage his legitimacy.

The interesting thing is that this directed behaviour does not go entirely unnoticed by staff. John made a comment about attending Management Committee meetings though ‘I’m not required to, I don’t get paid to’, with the implication that he participated in those meetings because of a need to remain informed about what goes on at the management level of the organisation. This is not the same as wanting to be a part of that management process; rather, it is behaviour that is specifically targeted towards gathering information about the organisation that might affect his clients, who remain his primary concern. In this way, John actually created a pathway of inclusion for himself while tacitly acknowledging that a lack of this information could be detrimental to his social agency as a case worker by affecting his clients. The inclusion and exclusion pathways in Nightlight were a product of both narrative and structural forces. On the one hand, the language tended to focus on clients rather than administration; on the other, structural factors such as role boundaries, individuals’ history and a long tradition of grassroots service led to communication differentials.

Informal chat

In some cases, informal chat was an important vehicle for intra-organisational communication in the area of business relationships. For Nightlight, no such mechanism was observed. From comments about role delineation, especially from John and Stephen, it is likely that informal chat was restricted to client-focused activities. All of the dialogue observed among staff members on site was of this nature. One possible reason for this omission in the discourse was the obvious discomfort that some staff members felt when discussing how Nightlight might benefit from relationships with the corporate sector. This was not yet a part of the modus operandi of the organisation and therefore the topic had not filtered into informal communication channels.

5.2.4 Understanding the relationship-building process

As already discussed, the connections between Nightlight and its corporate sponsors was not constituted by staff as a ‘relationship’ that entailed a process of rapprochement between the two organisations. Nonetheless, this linguistic thread appeared throughout the discourse and the sub-themes hold answers to some of the links between language, power, social agency and organisational capacity in the organisation. These sub-themes

form the discourse around which informants explored issues relating to conflict of interest, personal contact, mutual benefit and values.

Conflict of Interest

Conflicts of interest occurred when informants perceived that either individuals or the organisation was operating under competing strategies that undermined the mission of the nonprofit. It was usually a question of structure rather than narrative, because there were concrete, objective reasons for concern of these issues.

The primary factor of conflict of interest occurred around issues of whether donations caused harm to clients. Donations, which were viewed as ‘advertorials’ and ‘paid goodwill in the broader community’ were eyed with suspicion when accompanied by requests for clients to appear in the advertising itself. Here is an example of that situation, with a strong emphasis on power and control of the organisation’s primary goal of helping clients:

Yeah. I think in terms of it being, when you've got funding from outside organisation that is structured as such and they put their little limits on it and say well we want this for this and we want this for that and we want it run this way, I think that can be problematic for the community and for projects. Um, in terms of power and control from those organisations that don't have the front line view and can't see what is really really happening down on the streets. And so they've got these lovely little idealistic notions of well if we do that and do it that way it will work that way and it's like no, that's not how it works. So there's that kind of clash there, and I think it can be detrimental to the community when it's sort of being done as a goodwill kind of thing rather than sincere interest.

Carolyn

Another quote illustrates the point about how what companies were willing to give (and what may look good on their annual reports) is not always what nonprofit organisations

need. This reiterated the potential harm of stipulations on funding that interfere with programmatic concerns. Carolyn explained:

So it's not necessarily hey, we're going to do this because these kids need it or things like that, so what we want out of it. Which, I mean, it's the nature of humanity, that whole selfish thing of you get something out of what you put into it, but I think it can be problematic when it's not looked, looked at in terms of the basic needs and whether it's actually doing something that's gonna promote, like, independent living skills or something in the future. It's just, OK, we're giving this money, give these kids presents.. it's like yeah, fucking good on ya, but what are you gonna do to maintain something else or give us money to do, say, independent living skills course or something like that.

One more subtle type of conflict of interest emerged when informants discussed the differences in approach between grassroots community development and top down structures:

...I've got that background in commerce, which I hate, I really don't like the whole capitalistic structure thing um, that's why I like working in community based organisations. I think the top down versus bottom up approach clashes big time.

Carolyn

This second example is a good instance of personal conflict of interest. Carolyn asserted her unwillingness to participate in the 'capitalistic structure', but in order for the organisation to survive she recognised it must pursue private fundraising opportunities.

Taken together, these two examples illustrate that conflict of interest was an important part of the discourse at Nightlight around for-profit sponsorship. There is a sense of both personal and organisation compromise (echoed by social identification of 'prostitution') that appeared to support the links between language, social agency and organisational capacity in the following way:

1. Conflict of interest occurs
2. Individuals 'protect' clients from harm as best they can
3. Staff resign themselves to the conflict because of the need to supplement dwindling funding, thereby decreasing social agency

Once again, conflict of interest was not simply a reflection of the discourse. It was a concrete operational concern that preoccupied staff members in their attempt to balance client and organisational needs.

Personal contact

In the Care & Share Association, personal contact was a critical element of successful relationships with for-profit institutions. Personal links built up mutual trust, provided a safety in times of difficult negotiations and offered staff the opportunity to view business people as active, interested partners in the process. In contrast, during the interviews at Nightlight, only one individual was mentioned and only Stephen seemed to know anything about him:

I think corporations are the easiest way to do it...because, because, like, [corporate sponsor--individual], down at , is that his name? Anyway, [another name, incorrect] not [them] um, yeah, [corporate sponsor], it is, it's [individual] isn't it, oh God see that's awful, can't even remember his name... I remember his catch line... he gave a great speech. He gave this speech about when he was poor, and when he lost everything, and when the bank repossessed the house and it's a great story about y'know, doing things hard and he equated that, that hardship, that losing everything that being unemployed and bankrupt at

the age of something or other to what it must feel like for [Nightlight clients] to lose their family or their community and have to start again. And some people would go--well, y'know that's a long straw to draw--but I, I truly think he believes it.

The irony is that although the informant lauded the donor's intentions, there was not in fact an ongoing relationship, as clearly indicated by the interviewee's difficulty recalling the business person's name.

Overall, Nightlight showed personal contact to a much lesser degree than the pilot research. Nonetheless, the discourse does reflect a wish that personal contact could be established, as outlined here:

...to actually have people that are generally, genuinely interested in community based organisations or communities. Um, that would be fabulous if there are people out there who, within those big corporations or within corporate sponsors are interested that'd be great. Um, because sure they may have skills and things like that that they can impart as well. And that could then be passed on to other young people for example um, them being able to provide some kind of other than just monetary, to be able to provide some sort of employment training or work experience...

Carolyn

Not only is the discourse here mirroring a preference for personal contact, it is in fact acknowledging that personal contact can provide substantial benefits to the organisation and its clients that extend beyond mere monetary contribution. Firstly, it would increase staff members' social agency by offering them a direct link to the person who is involved from the business side. Secondly, it would assure them of the businesses' intentions to act in the best interests of the nonprofit organisation's clients. Finally, it

would provide them with ‘counter-examples’ to the prevailing view of business as greedy or lacking compassion.

Mutual benefit

Mutual benefit describes the strands of discourse that deal with for-profits and nonprofits work together to obtain reciprocal advantage. This sub-theme played out in Nightlight discourse in two ways. Firstly, as voiced here by Stephen:

So um, so what started happening was we started being approached by companies who would make donations and then use that donation, then acknowledge that donation in their advertising and in related media stories running through the tabloid press...

And later, recognising and giving voice to the advantages of non-government funding, that the funding was ‘discretionary’.

There was a perception by staff at Nightlight that donations were offered solely in exchange for good media coverage. This conceptualisation was supported by the notion that all that was required was ‘a letter, a faxed annual report and a photo opportunity’ to acquire funds from a self-interested and a ‘welfare type person to cut the ribbon.’

Another important distinction for at least one member of staff at Nightlight was the difference between a benefit for the corporate sponsor such as advertising and business using its influence to impinge on what was seen as the core activity of the nonprofit. In this vein, Carolyn asserted:

I can understand, I mean I think it's OK to have some kind of come back in terms of advertising or whatever for some kind of corporate sponsor, but without too much input into how this should be done in terms of the top down thing.

Overall, mutual benefit was at best a weak element in the Nightlight discourse. Arguably, this discourse is less about intentional mutual benefit and more aptly labelled

‘incidental reciprocal advantage’ or simply a commercial transaction. The themes of collaboration and mutual development that appeared in the mutual benefit discourse in the Care & Share Association were notably absent from the Nightlight narrative.

Values

Values were a strong sub-theme in the discourse of Nightlight and they dominated the ‘understanding the relationship-building process’ linguistic thread. There were two ways in which this sub-theme surfaced. Firstly, a simple discursive stream that indicated fundamental differences in value systems of for-profits and community organisations. Two examples below illustrate this aspect of values.

...taking money off someone like y'know a bank or an insurance company would make me cringe a little, I think they're quite, this is all, y'know, my personal values, and yeah, it's it makes it a little easier to smile for the camera as the cheque gets handed over if you know that there's a sharing of views between the person giving the money and the person receiving it. I think with [sponsor company] it's not a floated company yet, it's still an individual, it's a company run by one man, and he's he's got philanthropic, and you can, I like the reasons that he gives for becoming philanthropic...He's becoming very wealthy and he's giving a lot of it away and I like that sort of notion. It does make it feel better.

Stephen

...the experience has been that they're all fairly frustrated by the lack of business-like professionalism and such y'know, shoestring run charitable organisation. To me it's not so much a reflection of just our organisation. It's a general frustration with small charitable organisations that business people have when dealing with it, when volunteering time to work ...because they've felt that they brought a lot of their professional skills there they don't

like wasting time and they just can't see any structure at all, or what they call a structure in a business like way. 'that's not the way we do it here.' So business and charity don't automatically mesh. Two different paradigms I guess.

John

The second example is a straightforward examination of some of the perceived differences that is much more structural in nature. It identified concrete experiences of staff in trying to relate to people from a different frame of reference in the corporate world.

However, the first example provided some insight into the difference it made in Stephen's perception of himself and of the organisation when values were shared. In other words, he was less inclined to characterise a donor whose values mirror or at least approximate his as someone from whom he felt uncomfortable accepting support on the organisation's behalf. This difference in perception could in turn lead to increased social agency, because his level of comfort with the ethical issues of accepting corporate donations would be alleviated by the qualities of the person from whom he is receiving sponsorship.

Although there is little direct evidence of a further link to organisational capacity in this example, the second illustration above of different value systems is more closely tied to organisational capability and development. It reflected a discourse of division—the word 'paradigm' itself suggests a certain incommensurate barrier that precludes collaboration between the organisations.

A second thread of values discourse emerged from the 'ideal' relationship that might be brokered between nonprofit and business. Staff at Nightlight urged a sense of understanding of issues in the community and willingness to learn on the part of business, as in this example from Carolyn:

I think lack of real understanding of what the issues are around that.. It's like, OK, well, we've got these and we

can give this much out a year, let's just do it because that's good. But without actually looking at the issues underneath, whether it is all safe, whether it is all appropriate, so maybe not enough research into what they're doing and just saying well hey, here's an organisation give it out. Um, yeah, more so the understanding bit there...[or] Yeah, let's go through [inner city area]. I think there needs to be more awareness generally that people who live on the streets aren't shitheads and all gonna rob you...

This sense of value differences was predominantly pessimistic. Staff felt that although it 'would be nice' to have people who understood the nonprofit way of doing things, the reality was that they simply had to deal with a starkly different value system and subsume their own conflicts to the survival mode of gathering funding from all possible sources. The subsequent decrease in social agency and the constant battle between 'our values' and 'their values' was dampened by lack of direct dealing with the for-profit institutions, but it was not dispersed altogether.

5.2.5 Leadership

Leadership as a linguistic thread is the presence in the discourse and in organisational decision-making that focuses on an individual's influence on the relationship of the nonprofit to the for-profit. In the case of Nightlight, leadership was most obvious in that only Stephen had contact with any business sponsors. No one else in the organisation had a role to play in initiating connections, developing relationships or monitoring what percentage of Nightlight's budget would be covered by corporate contributions. In this sense, the impact of leadership was to isolate staff members from the changing reality of nonprofit funding. In fact, although as John stated he had no wish to be a part of that aspect of the organisation that dealt with business links, this separation may have had a negative impact on the social agency of other staff members. Staff members were insulated from the need to cultivate relationships with business and were thus forced to accept whatever arrangements were eventually agreed to by their

management and potential corporate supporters. In addition, this continued separation, reinforced by directive leadership, negated the possibility of opportunities to develop personal contacts that may have assuaged some of the negative experiences and cynicism that characterises Nightlight on the issue of working with the business sector.

5.2.6 Anchor shift

Anchor shift is defined as the extent to which the organisation and its members were able to create alternatives that embrace the corporatisation of a once purely nonprofit entity. It refers specifically to the way in which individuals adopt in their own minds complementary or parallel ways of thinking in both nonprofit and business ways. This linguistic thread is evident as the antithesis of the adaptation and accommodation that usually characterises anchor shift.

In Nightlight, there was evidence of ‘anti-anchor shift’ because staff members report that they staunchly oppose any rapprochement between the traditional nonprofit view of the world and a corporatised version of the work that they do. Carolyn put it thus:

...I've got that background in commerce, which I hate, I really don't like the whole capitalistic structure thing um, that's why I like working in community based organisations.

John's assertion that there would be something wrong if he became involved in the business links was another example of this concerted effort on the part of Nightlight staff to avoid becoming personally connected to ‘the other side.’

5.2.7 Recognising the institutional context

In the institutional context thread, informants from Nightlight discussed political, cultural, historical and legal issues linked to the environment in which their organisation operated. Even Carolyn, who had been with Nightlight for just over a month when interviewed, demonstrated sophisticated understanding of the contextual factors affecting the nonprofit. Most of the examples of understanding institutional context incorporate several aspects of the environment, as in this from John:

The American model is one that's based on philanthropy and private sector primarily and secondarily by the government, well it's not the sole responsible factor for how their government is but it just leads to very a patchwork approach of addressing where the funds need to go and who can choose who are the deserving poor. We're going that way, the PM has an inquiry into philanthropy, that to me is a sign of that kind of move. And y'know, despite federal government surpluses, and us being in an economic boom we still have welfare sector cutbacks and try to battle constantly with the Dept of Housing...

John

In this example, John showed awareness of cultural, political and sociological issues in the institutional context. The comparison with the American system and an acknowledgement that the current political climate in Australia is moving toward the same structures is closely tied to the feeling of needing to 'battle' these changes. Undercurrents of injustice were close to the surface in this excerpt as well, because John shares his perceptions of the changes while mocking the irony of economic well-being linked to welfare sector cuts. Political and cultural drivers were at the core of this discussion as well:

I think you have to acknowledge that it's a changed world to tell you the truth. Um, I know why we're doing it. And the reason we're doing it is that the money not going to come from government anymore because it's in terms of tax cuts, and every election Australians vote for tax cuts. Both parties offer them, both parties y'know, hand them out, um, and it's disturbing because it's money that used to belong in social services. It's getting a bit more disturbing now because there's also this cutback in terms of income

support which is I s'pose is the basic framework of our welfare system...

Stephen

Stephen also offered specific information about the source of some of his knowledge of changing institutional contexts when he described the demise of some community organisations:

Yeah I think we've done better than most like organisations. I think a lot of which are disappearing. I looked at the public notices in the Saturday paper and there's always a list of incorporated associations which did great work in the community in the 70s who are being de-registered for not doing their paperwork.

Institutional context is a defining element in the organisational life of Nightlight and its need to link up to business. There is strong evidence that funding shifts and increasing bureaucratic burdens associated with public sector support were at the core of Nightlight's perceived need to pursue for-profit links. The conversation about environment was more than socially constructed talk; it was built from responses to actual circumstances in which Nightlight was operating in order to survive in the socio-economic climate in which it found itself. Informant data clearly supported this reality-based linguistic thread.

Of particular interest in Nightlight is data directly linked to this research question:

- 3a. To what extent are staff members in the nonprofit aware of the constraints on them of this aspect (the media context) of institutionalism?

Although it is difficult to pinpoint precisely from where the attitudes about changing institutional context came from, factual data was gleaned from media reports about government intentions.

Some phrases emanating from the institutional context like ‘deserving poor’, and ‘we’re helping you, you’re our poor cousin’ showed that staff at Nightlight were aware of the way in which community service organisations were sometimes portrayed to the outside world. However, unlike in the pilot study, where the perception of ‘charities’ in the media was linked to social agency, the issues of institutional context in Nightlight were much more closely associated with organisational capacity. The mechanism appears to work like this:

1. Staff hold strong views on social justice and the role of government
2. Institutional context shifts away from funding
3. The constraints of institutional context lead to changes in organisational operation

Some may argue that an understanding and acknowledgement of institutional context, including how their client base may be portrayed in the media or used in advertising, actually increases staff social agency at Nightlight in the short-term. That could occur because staff were making conscious choices to acknowledge the changes (for example in decreased funding) but retaining their indignation about the situation. This solidarity of an ‘us against them’ (see section 5.2.2 on social identification) mentality is further supported by media reports of changes in the community sector explored in Chapter 9.

Although there may be short-term gains in terms of social agency as staff members bond over this shift, in the long term their social agency will nonetheless be undermined because they feel unable to change broader perceptions about the community sector. In other words, they were resigned to the portrayal, not in control of it. This is another example of the link between power, language and social agency supported by the institutional context linguistic thread.

As with the Care & Share Association, staff members at Nightlight took on the mantle of stereotyped community service workers as recipients in their relationship with for-profits. The institutional context that forced them to confront organisational realities that clash with their personal views is one driver of this process.

5.3 WEAVING THE THREADS

Taken separately, the linguistic threads point to a language of inequality and power differentials between the for-profit and the nonprofit. As with the Care & Share Association, there were several examples in which the discourse weaves multiple linguistic threads into the overall narrative. These connections, built directly from the data in Nightlight, provide further evidence for most links described in the pilot study and illustrate some differences displayed by the discursive data.

Conflicts of interest in Nightlight were a direct consequence of value differences as perceived by nonprofit staff. The link between values and personal contact surfaced in a less forceful way in Nightlight than in the pilot, but it nonetheless demonstrated that when staff members were able to identify individuals they were more likely to develop affinity for value alignment. One critical difference is the source. In Nightlight, data clearly indicated that the values differences and personal contact were more fundamental and therefore led to conflicts of interest. The changed arrow direction of the model in Figure 4 shows this.

In the model, conflict of interest then shifts into the ‘social identification’ circle in Nightlight, indicating the strong bond between conflict of interest and values in this case. In fact, social identification was the strongest linguistic thread in this case. Perceptions of conflicts of interest that threatened clients, stemming from discrepancies in values and lack of personal contact with donors, were placed squarely in the social identification arena. Strong negative social identification in Nightlight encompassed all these links among sub-themes of understanding the relationship-building process.

As already discussed, discourse around mutual benefit in this case was muted. In the model, it is represented within a dotted box to note that although there was some reference made to it, mutual benefit did not play as large a role in this organisation as in the pilot study. However, it remains tied to values and personal contact because of the documented decrease in discomfort on the part of Nightlight staff over for-profits

reaping benefits when values were aligned with the community organisation's goals and personal contact was established.

These three linguistic threads were embedded in recognising the institutional context. Informants felt that the compromises they made were in response to environmental factors rather than simply organisational evolution, and this awareness surfaced from the discourse as a cynicism and resignation coupled with knowledge of the 'real world.'

Intra-organisational communication occupies a similar distant 'bubble' in the Nightlight model. Although documentation did not play a role, neither was this linguistic thread particularly linked to any of the others for which data was coded.

There were differences between the pilot study and Nightlight as well. First of all, because of reasons explored in the section on the difference between a transaction and relationship, the category of 'understanding the relationship-building process' occupies a slightly modified space in the model. Conflict of interest, values, personal contact and mutual benefit can still be usefully collected under the relationship-building umbrella, but as part of the discourse the broader category's importance is undermined by the characterisation of the relationship as not a relationship at all. In other words, the elements within it were important, and informants expressed that in the discourse; however, the classification of 'relationship' applies only loosely in this case. In the model shown in Figure 4, the 'understanding the relationship-building thread' concentric circle has been constricted to encompass only those few elements directly incorporated in it instead of taking in social identification and institutional context as with the data in the Care & Share Association.

Another difference that can also be accounted for by the discourse of 'transaction' rather than 'relationship' is the 'intent versus implementation' linguistic thread. In the Nightlight process, the interactions between itself and the for-profit were limited to handovers of financial support for publicity, and therefore blurred the distinction between intended process and outcome.

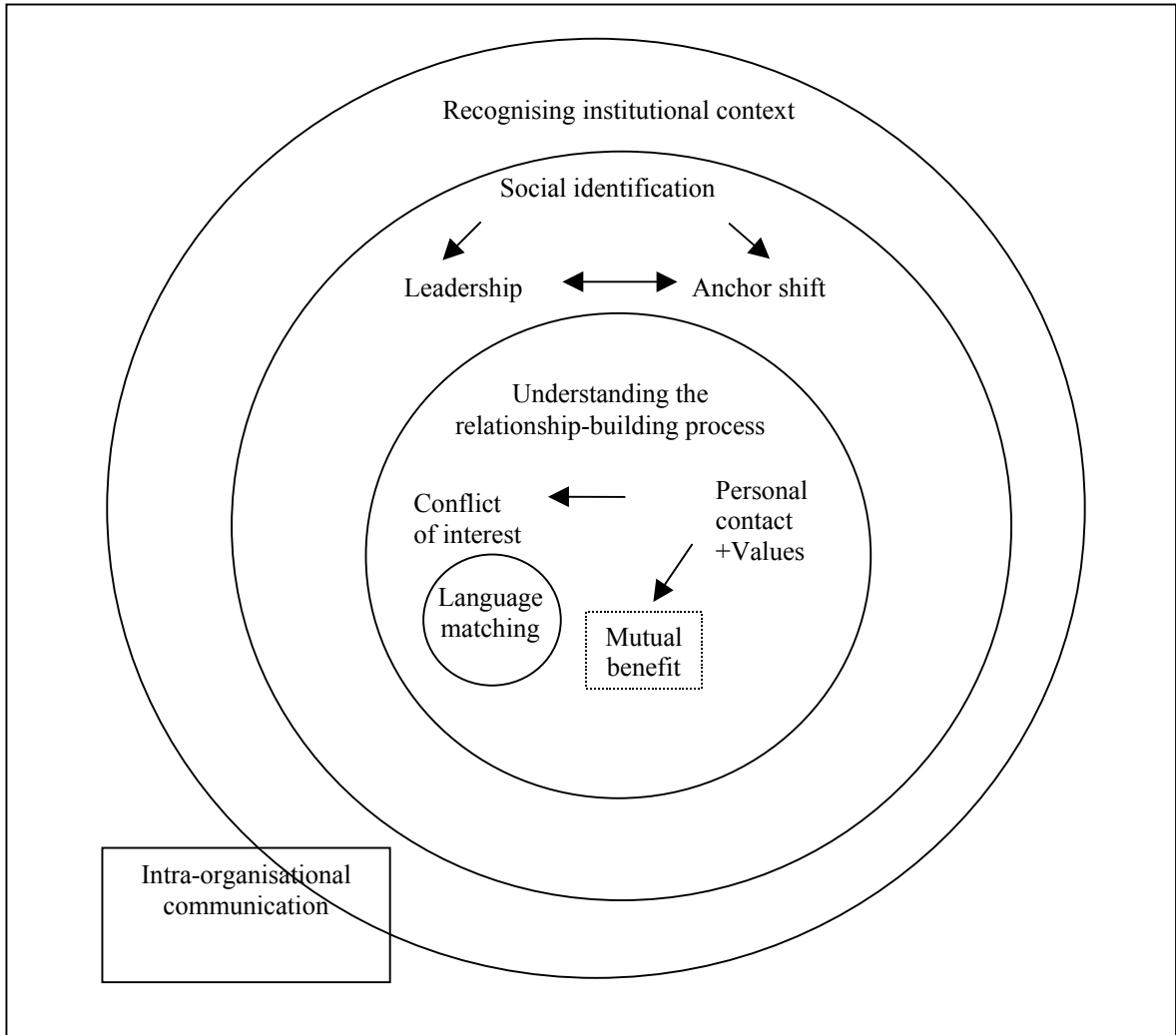
Finally, language matching has been placed within the understanding the relationship circle in Nightlight. Although language matching was sparse in the data, participants

recognised the need to ‘play the game’ and create ‘contractual’ relationships on business terms in order to achieve their financial goals. Language matching therefore is connected to how informants understand the relationship (or transaction) process.

In Figure 4, leadership and anchor shift are connected. From both management and staff points of view, relationships with for-profit business at Nightlight were to be confined to the Executive Director of the organisation. In terms of leadership, this meant not informing staff of every transaction. From the staff side and linked to anchor shift, individuals were content and even adamant about their distance from this aspect of the organisation. The bi-directional relationship between leadership and anchor shift, connected to strong negative social identification and real conflict of interest concerns describe the attitudes of staff at Nightlight on the subject of for-profit relationships.

Figure 4:

Nightlight Linguistic Threads Model



CHAPTER 6: INTEGRATE INC.

6.1 OVERVIEW

Integrate Inc. is a disability services organisation. They opened their doors in 1987 as a result of liquidation and dispersion of a state-wide service. At the time, the culture of disability services focused on large hostel accommodation, command hierarchies and authoritarian structures that focused on discipline and control. Rapid changes in disability legislation, coupled with a shift toward deinstitutionalisation made Integrate Inc. one of the first organisations to implement a new model of service. Three years after its inception, most of the staff and much of the old style accommodation had been shut down. Integrate Inc. runs a community-based supported living service that focuses on individual ability.

The project was funded by the Commonwealth as a demonstration project early in its development. It is still about 85% government funded, with 15% coming from its two small business enterprises that were operated internally.

The small businesses began in 1991. Although neither is particularly lucrative, these initiatives have evolved and changed over the last decade and appear to be in constant development. One of the most salient consequences of this shift into small business operation was a loss of most core entire staff between 1992 and 1995 when individuals reacted negatively to the organisational shift into for-profit territory. New employees who have been hired since that time have all been recruited with an understanding of the dual nature of Integrate Inc.

There are nine permanent staff in a flat organisational structure and forty direct service staff who work part-time. At the time of interviews, the Chief Executive Officer was in the process of recruiting a manager for one of the small businesses with marketing expertise. The Director and three other permanent staff were interviewed. All staff interviewed had been with Integrate Inc. for at least five years. Staff included the Chief

Executive Officer (Dawn), a Manager (Linda) and two Program Co-ordinators (Kerri and Janet).

Integrate Inc. presented a variety of similarities and some intriguing difference from the first two organisations studied. As with the previous chapters, linguistic threads are the basic tool of analysis to understand how language and power interact in relationships between this nonprofit and its for-profit ventures. This organisation is a small disability services provider. Four interviews were conducted there, including top management, one middle manager and two service co-ordinators.

As with the Care & Share Association and Nightlight, Integrate Inc. presented a number of linguistic threads that echoed discourse found in earlier studies. Language matching, social identification, understanding the relationship building process, recognising the institutional context and intra-organisational communication were evident in the data. However, Integrate Inc. offered some new threads in the discourse between nonprofit and for-profit viewpoints that were key to understanding the dynamics of this organisation. Anchor shift and leadership were first identified through data in Integrate Inc., although as described in the section preceding the pilot study these threads were subsequently applied to the other cases for any relevant matches. Finally, organisational documentation filled a unique niche in this organisation and so has been accorded extensive comment in the section on weaving the threads.

Integrate Inc. is involved in the for-profit world in two ways. Firstly, it currently runs two small businesses on its own. Secondly, it is working with a legal firm on a reduced-fee basis. These two relationships will be clarified and expanded upon through the course of the linguistic thread analysis.

6.2 ANALYSIS

6.2.1 Language matching

Language matching was the way in which staff in the nonprofits used parallel language to that of business partners. It was rampant in Integrate Inc. Three out of four of the informants engaged in language matching that illustrated a shift in their view of their organisation as strictly ‘welfare’ to a business enterprise. The excerpts here are deliberately lengthy, because language matching is present in multiple phrases, structures and processes described.

This is my prime focus [pointing to core business]. To get this prime focus together, I have to get that right too. I mean I actually try and sell them the match as to why and how. Yes, acknowledge that it’s never easy, but there are some ways that you can make it easier for yourself. I mean, picking up that phone and making the cold calls is hard, it’s hard for everybody. So, one of the strategies is you do it without thinking about it. You pick it up, you dial the number and you’re in and you get it out of the way without sitting and thinking about it for a half an hour.

Dawn

Interviewer: And that would be the business ventures and those other kinds of things...

Dawn: Yeah. Yeah, and we’ve got to diversify...Yes, absolutely. So [the business] started as courses and training. It’s now moving into consultancy and personalised training according to people’s wants. Um, [other business] started off as housecleaning, it diversified into highly complex co-ordination um, and but it’s shifting as well now, because other people are picking up

the cleaning and undercutting us in terms of those things...So some of the previous market that we had along there which was about long-term support for people with disabilities, they're now going into some of those other programs.

That's a big issue, customer satisfaction and managing customer complaints. Very difficult.

Dawn

So, marketing for me is easier than fundraising. I'd sooner market than fundraise. We're out there saying what it is, but you're not out there, ...we're selling on strengths rather than selling on weaknesses.

Dawn

Here Linda described the reason for developing markets and explained the 'spiel' for her efforts:

Opportunities for the organisation. When you, when you're selling something like what we do, it's a lot easier because there is a need there, you've already identified the need. And if you can solve somebody's problem, they're very willing to listen to you...finding consistency of a reasonable service is not easy. It's the comprehensiveness of the service. The fact that you are employing and training your own staff and that the customer has the right to ring you and give you feedback, complain and that person can go. But it's the comprehensiveness of the service and saying, well they're not going to just come in and vacuum the floor, if you want me to sit there for three hours and clean the silver I mean that's your decision, so

you direct it. And people are happy about that. If they've had other services in the past, it's very much the service telling me, whereas they like the notion of being able to tell the service about what they want.

And Kerri acknowledged the selling and reported her way of marketing the service:

Well it depends who you're talking to, no, it's selling. Alright, well the spiel is that we're meant to be a flexible, responsive service so that if you need it tomorrow we'll do our best to make it happen. We prefer a couple of days notice, I mean, whilst it's a spiel, and I know the background that it's like a shit fight to make it happen, um, with all good intentions we do try to make it as flexible as possible. Like y'know you might get your service from 12-4 today and it's been happening but then you say to me, "Oh next Wednesday I need it then" and then you'll call up and say, "No well I need it on the Thursday." So there is that part of yes, we are flexible...Other things that you can sell it on is that generally the people who have worked here for a long time do know what they're doing...I guess there's also that whole set of support and supervision. I wouldn't say that I'd sell it on our rates, because unfortunately things are really overpriced in this sector. I mean government funding is bad, but y'know, the fact is that our service fees are quite high, but when you look at it in comparison, we're on par. I wouldn't ever sell it on price. I try not to do the quote until I've really got the job. The only thing that really kills me is that y'know you can tell people who are little old ladies and they want to know about cleaning and y'know I do race through that, because, I will do the hard sell on people who've got money like government agencies because I know they've had a stack load of

funding recently so therefore bugger it. But and we may as well share in that, that's my attitude

One of the possible reasons for the absence of language matching from the last informant, Janet, was that she of all the interviewees had little or nothing to do with the business, for-profit side of the organisation. As the co-ordinator of the service to support tenants, she was focused primarily on staffing issues internal to that side of Integrate Inc. Nonetheless, she recognised the need for the organisation to expand and shift in order to accommodate increasing need from its core clients.

In the data, words like 'core business', 'diversify', 'market', 'selling', 'ventures', 'consultancy', and 'customer satisfaction' all indicate clear language matching with the business engagement of the organisation. Even the structures of the processes described ('get in and out', 'strategies') are more akin to results-oriented business than traditional process-focused non-profits. This illustrated language matching as both a linguistic process and a reflection of concrete structural changes in the way the organisation operated to a more business-like approach. Language matching is in fact a positive contributor to social agency and organisational capacity in the following way:

1. Staff become comfortable with the language of marketing
2. They incorporate this language into other aspects of their organisation ('customers', 'core business')
3. They perceive an opportunity to use this mindset to an organisational advantage
4. They act on this opportunity

It was also clear that a simple structural mechanism was in place as well:

1. The organisation is introduced to business principles such as strategy
2. The processes are reinforced through organisational planning and development activities
3. The structures become part of organisational culture

The Chief Executive Officer reported that this difficult transition was still in progress (see anchor shift thread for more detail), but the inclusion of words that denote a proactive business strategy for organisational survival and development also indicated

that many staff members are becoming more comfortable with this language. Integrate Inc. is a linguistically hybridised organisation, and this language reflects and reinforces the organisational necessity of embracing both worlds in order to survive and thrive in the current context of community service provision. By creating linguistic permeability between the two worlds, Integrate Inc. reclaimed power for itself as it internalised and absorbs this for-profit/nonprofit barrier.

6.2.2 Social identification

Integrate Inc.'s discourse contained some examples of social identification. However, presumably because much of the discourse centred on the small businesses run by the organisation itself, there was not a marked schism between the 'us' and 'them' of other external relationships. In fact, the external relationship was characterised by much greater emphasis on the relationship-building process that will be explored later in the chapter than on social identification.

Dawn described the organisation's first foray into an external relationship in the context of social identification:

And it was essentially about a partnership between [a university] and ourselves. So we went around with that, we designed some courses, got some up and running...

In the example above, positive or high social identification is reflected in inclusive language of 'we.'

Although social identification did not play a quantitatively significant role in the linguistic thread analysis, it did provide one qualitatively critical example. The relationship with the legal firm is a more interesting case of social identification, language, power, social agency and organisational capacity than the internal business ventures. The first excerpt illustrated positive social identification (as stated above, to be examined more closely in the context of personal contact); the second, a contrasting view of positive social identification with one person overlaid with negative social identification with other possible 'outsider' contacts.

So we've done it as dual act, the corporate part from him and the nonprofit from me. Um, so we've evolved a whole array of those sort of little opportunities as well.

Dawn

So, if I have a conversation with [lawyer] at one level, that's fine. But there's been a few instances where I've disagreed violently with him. I heard him get up in one meeting and talk about volunteers, y'know that volunteers had to be professionalised and we had quite a little raging argument about that. He'd never thought of it in a different context in terms of that. I mean, but I wouldn't do that with other people. You'd sort of just bite your tongue and think bloody hell, I'll get around to that later. But you can't you can't risk the relationship, you can only get, it's only when you get to a certain level of the relationship that you can say you don't know what you're talking about.

Dawn

In this negative case, the informant expressed intent to quell her instincts to argue based on the perception of what might be the consequences for her organisation. She felt comfortable confronting someone with whom she had developed a relationship, but was conscious of the need to moderate this response had it been another person from the corporate sector with whom she was speaking. This illustrates her understanding of the power relationship that exists even between herself and a for-profit representative in terms of status. What is more significant is the difference between positive social identification on an individual level, as in the first example, and the recognition of possible threats to her organisation's capacity in a situation of negative social identification. It is important to note that the acknowledgement of these threats was a realistic portrayal of the situation in which Integrate Inc. and the Chief Executive Officer often found themselves, not just a reflection of the language used to describe the circumstances. Social identification was a good marker of the difference between

individual trust levels and organisational imperatives dictated by the need to appear accommodating to potential corporate partners.

6.2.3 Intra-organisational communication

Intra-organisational communication is a description of how individuals in the organisation learned from one another about issues related to business developments for Integrate Inc. The sub-themes of intra-organisational communication in the Care & Share Association were documentation, incrementalism, institutionalism and factors affecting language transmission. Of these in Integrate Inc., only incrementalism and documentation fits into this linguistic thread. However, one new sub-theme emerged for this organisation which was then applied to earlier cases—informal chat.

Documentation

For reasons discussed in section 6.3 of this chapter, documentation in this organisation plays a particularly important role in language and power relationships as they link to social agency and organisational capacity. Documentation pertaining to how Integrate Inc. positioned itself in terms of both its internal business initiatives and external relationships was contained primarily in publicly accessible material such as annual reports and in internally-circulated documents such as strategic plans.

Incrementalism

One of the issues for staff in Integrate Inc. was ‘learning the ropes’ of a marketing agenda. Dawn provided a vivid description, accompanied by a figure like the one below the excerpt, to explain how this process gradually ebbed and flowed over the life cycle of projects. Incrementalism is also evident in the length of time over which all staff interviewed have had to familiarise themselves with the operation of the organisation as a hybrid. In this narrative, incrementalism becomes the process through which staff grapple with the challenge of shifting their thinking about marketing.

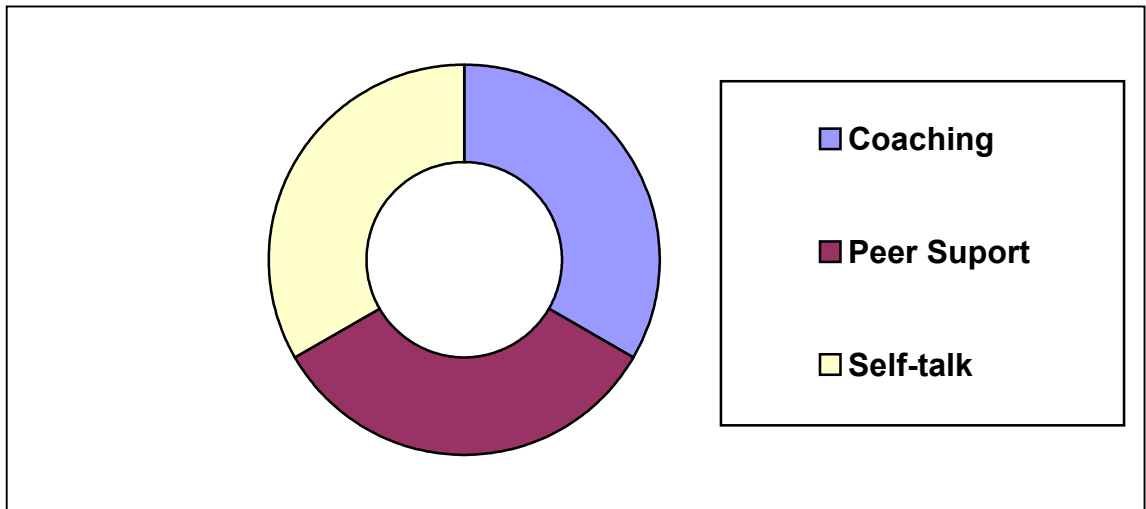
Well, we did do that. We did do that to start with. But what I’m trying to do. It’s the same thing that we found with the tenants. It’s no different really. Um, if you think

about it, the things that we've found out with the tenants were, they'd start here and they'd be happy and they'd do a run into the community and something would happen and they'd become fearful and go back to where it was safe. And they'd stay down there for little while and then they'd venture out again and try it and y'know you'd sort of get this process and then something'd happen. The same thing happens in terms of shifting yourself into a commercial venture, I think. In this organisation...what I'm finding is, we sort of start there and people say, "oh yeah well this sounds reasonable" and they try it and they think, bloody hell, we're not like this, we're people who care about people, we'll come back where we're caring and sharing and we stay for a little while and OK, she's telling us we've got to get out there and do it again so we'll y'know, we'll change our strategy and we'll go out holding hands and we'll venture and we'll get to about there and think, we like it back here again we'll just stay down here. So the steps stay around the middle line and every now and then you might get a little wind and you might get up there briefly and then come back again. Now, the strategy I'm looking at the moment is to try and say OK, these people don't do that well. What we have to do is overlay those skills, keep those skills, cuz they're important, they're important skills for this, and that's our core business. These are supporting our core business. However, if we don't make a success of this we don't have a core business. So, that reality then allows people to try this, try this bit out. But, they still get nervous about it.

Dawn

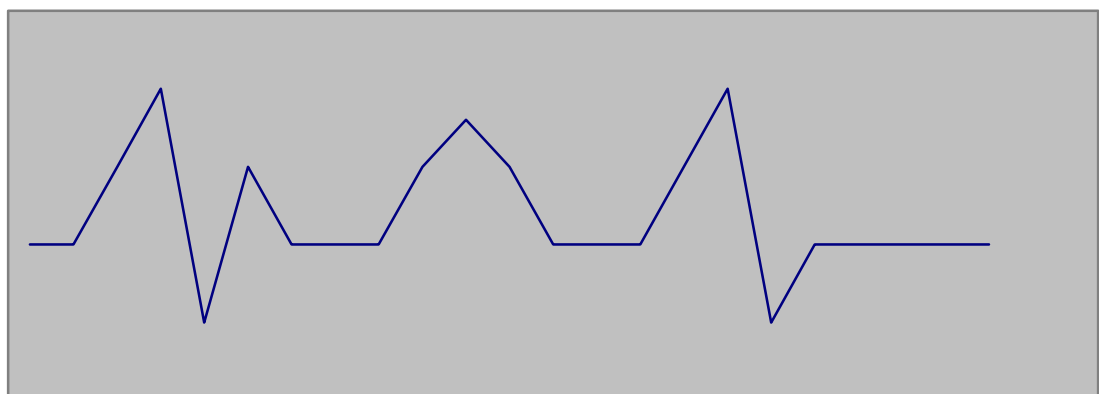
Modelled as a graph of intra-organisational communication about nonprofit/for-profit relationships in Integrate Inc., the narrative would look like this in terms of type of intra-organisational communication incrementalism:

Figure 5: Intra-organisational Communication Incrementalism in Integrate Inc.



And like this in terms of the process of progress and retreat back to 'safe' positions for staff members coming from a more traditional nonprofit perspective:

Figure 6: Progress and Retreat



In this case, incrementalism of progress was punctuated by disappointments or negative experiences attributed to low social agency about business-like behaviour for staff.

Dawn described one such incident as:

Um, we had a conference in June which we wanted to promote as a national conference, we brought in overseas people, it was a joint venture with...the disability group. And um, we wanted to cover our costs before we started. It was the most painful process I've ever been through. And we, I'd say, in the end I said, the first two hours of every morning we're all going to sit here and we're all going to find five customers. We will ring them. And then we will come together and talk about how we did this. It was not a successful process. We got a couple of nibbles but y'know, nowhere near we should have because people essentially didn't believe that they could do.

Informal chat

This was an element of organisational discourse observed first hand on site. Integrate Inc. is a small organisation with nine full-time staff members and about 30-40 part-time direct care workers. Staff in the offices also have hands-on interaction with clients. Upon arrival I was informed that one of the staff would have to re-schedule her interview because she had to take a client to a medical appointment. This direct contact with clients, combined with the need to maintain flexible rostering systems to accommodate both the nonprofit core business and the for-profit service brokered out, requires staff to communicate frequently on issues directly related to service provision and the balance of the for-profit and nonprofit businesses of the organisation. All interviewees were observed conducting informal discussions with one another on this equilibrium and other direct service issues.

Informal chat is a critical mechanism in intra-organisational communication. In Integrate Inc., it served as a valve for staff to talk about the entire organisation as made up of complementary instead of competing parts. This is especially critical because one of the small business of Integrate Inc. used the same pool of part-time staff as the core nonprofit business. The two Program Co-ordinators were observed engaging in

discussion about the implications for roster changes to each program. This observation does not undermine or dismiss the presence of conflict, dissatisfaction and distrust in the organisation. Rather, it is to simply note the existence of a mechanism through which some of these issues can be worked out and to underscore the extent to which Integrate Inc. is an organisation in which much of the discourse about for-profit links was aired frequently in informal chat. Informal chat as a concrete organisational practice was part of Integrate Inc.'s culture.

6.2.4 Understanding the relationship building process

As with the other cases, the process of understanding how the small businesses developed and how relationships developed with outsiders was very much a part of organisational discourse in Integrate Inc. Conflict of interest, personal contact, mutual benefit and values appeared as sub-themes in this linguistic thread.

Conflict of interest

Conflict of interest is defined as situations in which the needs of clients or core activities are in conflict with business links. Conflict of interest was one of the most interesting aspects of the discourse in this organisation around relationships to business, because it surfaced as a negative rather than a positive and was attributed to 'others', not those who were interviewed. Phrases like 'I don't have a problem with it' and 'some people feel...' conveyed a sense that in the organisation there is some unease with the shift towards business practices but no one individual was prepared to own that discomfort. In fact, conflict of interest is important because it is only obliquely present in the discourse, like a half-remembered dream. Referred to as something that affected other people, this sub-theme appeared frequently in shadow, usually coupled with an explanation of how the for-profit activities would enable expansion of other services.

In terms of social agency, conflict of interest offered an indirect route to positive staff experiences. On face value several of the interviewees were not troubled by any sense of conflict. One of the reasons for this is that the small businesses were developed, presented and maintained as cross-subsidising activities to the core business. Every informant remained firm on this point. In other words, the discourse of how and why the businesses were developed were at least superficially accepted by staff and were

seen as having little or no negative effects on their primary client group. The effect on their social agency would then be positive because they did not report concern for clients as a result of these changes.

It is critical to distinguish conflicts of interest from other possible concerns staff might have had about the developing trajectory of the organisation as a whole. This other area of discourse, a linguistic thread unto itself, will be deconstructed in the section on anchor shift. Conflict of interest is specifically related to how staff perceive the impact of business relationships on client groups. Furthermore, conflicts of interest were frequently based on real concerns about objective changes to the organisation, not solely reflections of language in the organisation.

Personal contact

Personal contact was a prevalent sub-theme in Integrate Inc. Informants referred to it regarding their legal partner, for-profit customers, staff and client base. Dawn explained:

But interestingly, where we have made some, where we have had some joint ventures, particularly in the training area we've done some joint ventures with the legal firm in courses and they've been well attended etc...So, building up a personal relationship... Um, so, that relationship is still very strong.

Dawn

Another informant included the element of marketing and potential business, recognising how personal contacts can develop into profitable networks:

So I was able to draw on those connections. So that when we started, I was able to contact people I knew...and it's a personal thing. It's the same with the customers it's the same now... Because in the course of that 'hi, how you going da da' there's always the potential for another conversation taking place. And you're bringing yourself

up again, thinking oh yeah, they can do that. It reminds people of the broad range of skills that the people have got, building those connections.

Linda

It's always, as long as you've got the name, I always like to know the name of somebody. Similarly with insurance companies, you can check and find out ring them up and ask who does this...

Linda

Start with the services that you know. Somebody that knows somebody that knows somebody...Personal contact is the best.

Linda

In fact, much of the narrative from all four informants revolved around their experiences in developing personal relationships with multiple stakeholders in the organisation. This suggests that personal contact was more than a theme in the discourse of the for-profit/nonprofit connection, and rather more a central tenet of organisational culture. As part of this discourse, personal contact has the effect of increasing social agency because individuals feel more connected to the range of people with whom they interact through the organisation. In this final case, personal contact is a structural factor rather than narrative, because it defined with whom individuals had connections inside and outside of the organisation.

Mutual benefit

Mutual benefit was the sub-theme that dealt with the issue of reciprocal advantage to be gained when a nonprofit entered into a relationship with a business enterprise. Mutual benefit occurred in the two ways and referred to the structures, objectives and outcomes in place that were expected from this engagement with for-profit activities. Firstly, staff reiterated that the small business operations cross-subsidised the core activities of the organisation. As with conflict of interest, there was a general sense that these

businesses enabled the organisation to provide more services for the original target group, as in this comment from Janet:

I can see how it can work, like I've got, I can see the big picture of how it can be extremely successful and I can see the long term gains.

In a second way, mutual benefit appeared as a boon for a lawyer who became associated with the organisation. Only one informant had information about this relationship and Dawn summed it up like this:

And y'know, it's sort of grown from there and I um, introduced him to a number of other organisations, he ran a course for us, that exposed, got him some further exposure and y'know he's now got a very solid not for-profit business in health and safety. Which nobody had touched. All of the legal firms didn't see that there was a market for them in it....the lawyer in fact has, as a result of his involvement in this organisation been able to expand his business considerably.

Organisational capacity was linked to the elements of mutual benefit in this discourse. The concept of mutual benefit appeared to be inculcated in the narratives of all informants, and this sense of gaining from the changes gave the organisation as a whole confidence to seize other opportunities as they arose. Once again, this discussion does not discount the issues that staff may have had on an individual level around the changes. It simply links mutual benefit perceptions to the vision for a developing organisation that can take charge of its future.

Values

The values sub-theme was another significant aspect of the discourse around nonprofit/for-profit relations in Integrate Inc.

And we made a decision that we weren't going to pay any attention to historical documents which were all about people's inabilities, We just said to people what is it you want to do. So we established a model of service which actually saw people moving in and out of the community. People were learning experientially which is the most profound way of doing it.

Dawn

In this section, values are directly linked to the operations of the organisation. It illustrates both strong social agency on the part of Dawn and the possibility of increasing organisational capacity by modifying the value base to one of experiential learning. Dawn later asserted that this 'learning by doing' value extended to the way in which staff were encouraged to engage actively in marketing the business side of the organisation.

Values also served as a point of convergence for staff to return to when discussing how they maintained their priorities in the face of change:

This is my prime focus [pointing to core business].

Dawn

You stick to your values...

Linda

...managing the [core client service] and to make sure that that doesn't change. Y'know like, it can grow but not change its core values.

Janet

Finally, values served as the gauge upon which informants measured whether or not a particular individual would become a partner to the organisation. Of the lawyer with whom a relationship had developed, Dawn had this to say:

Um, I think probably there's a friendship that's developed as well. It probably comes into a personal values base, that this was a person who understood, even though he was a lawyer, the social justice issues and the difficulties that small not for-profit organisations were facing. And worked on a way of convincing these organisations that the rules weren't any different from them they still had to comply so, his strategy was to put the fear of God into them so that they would listen. And I guess that's probably a bit of my style as well. So y'know, there was sort of, um, we agreed on the strategies and I have to say I think in terms of the way he works with people it's a very strong social justice ethos as a basis for it. But that doesn't hold with all lawyers let me tell you. A couple of others...

This recognition of the importance of values in relationships with for-profit bode well for both the social agency of individuals in Integrate Inc. and the overall organisational capacity. With acute awareness of their individual and organisational identities, informants were able to distinguish those who would support the primary mission of the organisation from those who might be less suitable. Furthermore, the power in this instance remained firmly vested in Integrate Inc., because it was able to assess the opportunities from a position of strength and internal values integrity rather than desperation or sheer survival instinct.

6.2.5 Recognising the institutional context

All four informants displayed significant awareness of the social and economic environment in which their organisation operated and in it were embedded all the elements of organisational discourse. Dawn described the understanding of the social changes thus:

Um, and basically they [the old group homes] were run for the staff, the people were just the fodder for it. ..the needs um, were about funding a new model of service. This was in the mid-80s, just after IYDP (International Year of Disabled People), when there was a huge shift happening in the disability arena. And, um, the federal government had just enacted the new legislation, disability services legislation ... So, we spent the next three years closing down things, shutting houses, getting rid of staff or changing their roles so that needless to say they didn't want to be part of it. And uh, we set up a model to move people out into the community. And we'd accomplished that, closed everything in two years. So, then we had to sit around working out well how we went about this. And we made a decision that we weren't going to pay any attention to historical documents which were all about people's inabilities, We just said to people what is it you want to do. So we established a model of service which actually saw people moving in and out of the community...

And then she noted the changes in funding in the same answer:

And we'd sold some property and that kept us going until our first grant came through. We were one of the um, demo projects that the Commonwealth funded at the end of the 80s. Um, but we, there was still always that gap between, at that stage we were funded 85%, we had to find 15%...

Linda and Janet also merged the understanding of client services and economics:

At that time it was the Tenant Support Service, which is the disability program and the Community Training and

Development and then because we were looking at y'know the funding issues, y'know how home care does this and this and this why can't we do that and raise some money. And we can have a small fee for service...

Linda

We're partly funded by government funds and then we use the other two businesses to make up for the deficit in our funding. What I basically do is manage the whole program area in terms of meeting people's needs and that's done on an individual basis so there's no sort of grouping together of people who may live together everything's done individually.

Janet

One of the interesting aspects of this acknowledgement of institutional context was the way in which respondents outlined both knowledge of funding issues and the way in which broader society viewed people with disabilities. As Dawn indicated above, her view of the prior model was that people were 'fodder' and the model in which she reported to operate currently was one of individual service.

It is also important to note that for every informant in Integrate Inc., the social and economic institutional contexts could not be understood separately from one another. In other words, although recognising changing funding patterns was important, it was equally if not more important for informants to note that the people with whom they were working most closely were marginalised by many of the communities in which they lived.

Recognising institutional context affected the social agency of individuals in the following sequence:

1. Awareness of social and economic environment
2. Social agency triggered to protect vulnerable individuals and 'do something different.'

3. Active introduction of new models of service

In this mechanism, the recognition of social attitudes towards people with disabilities was part of the impetus to proactively engage in changing those attitudes. Dawn confirmed this as she explained the possible expansion of one of their fee for service businesses:

We're going, we're looking for much more sort of a quasi-consultancy, but it's not really a consultancy as such. Um, it's much more about standing beside organisations and assisting them to solve their problems. So, they've got a person who has major behavioural issues, um, we'll provide the assessment, the training for that particular person. And um, train up the staff, and provide an ongoing service for that person into that organisation. And the ethos, the intent behind that is that that might then capture us some other business within that organisation...I would think that we've got a potential there to do a lot of disability awareness training into corporates etc. That's part of our ethos. But we've done a little bit of that in the past...y'know, the sort of, the actual training of how you orient somebody by speech or movement or whatever doesn't come into it. So we'll start to do a bit of work around those sorts of areas as well.

Dawn

The next step that would then follow from number three above involves the translation of an agentic impulse into a positive component of organisational capacity. Thus:

4. Active introduction of new models of service
5. Acknowledgement that organisation is capable of adapting
6. Increase in organisational capacity from response

Thus recognising the institutional context in which the organisation operated was a catalyst for change. The institutional context was much more than a narrative construction of the individuals in the organisation. Rather, it was the comprehensive set of possibilities and limitations placed on the organisation (including staff and clients) that determined the realm of opportunities and choices in which Integrate Inc. could function.

6.2.6 Leadership

Leadership as a linguistic thread had the peculiar quality of being not very explicitly evident in the individual interviews but strikingly omnipresent in almost every other linguistic thread. In this section, leadership will be examined from a strictly singular linguistic thread point of view. This narrow treatment will be expanded in the section on weaving the threads. Nonetheless, a few brief examples from the interviews illustrate the presence of this linguistic theme.

Dawn's comment about how she viewed the organisation at the outset and how it changed rapidly is evident here:

... it was at a time when I was removing myself from [large non-profit] having failed miserably to reform the [institution.] I was their first female manager and they were in the process of deciding that they needed to come to a parting of the ways with me, and I equally with them, and this job came up... so the upshot was, I got myself employed. And the first time I ever walked into the place, the image that stays with me were all their shirts and clothing, hanging on the clothesline, um, with everybody's name in about 12-inch letters. Y'know, it was that sort of institutional process. And I thought well OK, I can have fun here. So, we spent the next three years closing down things, shutting houses, getting rid of staff or changing their roles so that needless to say they didn't want to be part of it.

And about the Board itself:

I have to say the board is actually very supportive, but they often don't know what I'm talking about...Yeah, yeah, mostly they're prepared to accept the fact that they know nothing about the service delivery and they don't particularly want to, um, the majority of them haven't met the people we support. They've met a couple of them. But they're very nervous about that. But that's not why they're there. They're actually there because they've got a whole array of expertise I don't have and this organisation needs. Um, I headhunted my board, went out and found them and enticed them in here. And most of the them have been here since the beginning of the '90s, which is a pretty long run...

This passage demonstrated the link between leadership and social agency. Dawn was clearly confident of her ability to change the organisation and offered a perspective on her career that showed her willingness to tackle managerial challenges. She carried this leadership into Integrate Inc. and began to implement change immediately.

Leadership was also linked to loyalty and longevity, as in these excerpts detailing supporting the Chief Executive Officer and comments in the next paragraph about length of employment at the organisation.

And I've, I've given my support to the Chief Executive Officer in terms of I really think that should happen and I will go out of my way to make sure that it does happen.

Janet

There are several issues of importance here. Firstly, the sense that the Board of the organisation understood the context well enough to work with the Chief Executive Officer on issues relating to expansion of business opportunities for the organisation.

This means that leadership at both managerial and Board levels were in accord over the direction of the organisation—an element of discourse that should not be overlooked in its potential to enhance organisational capacity. However, from the interview discourse the programmatic leadership of the organisation rested firmly in the hands of senior management, not the Board.

Second is the strong evidence of inherent social agency in the leadership style of the Chief Executive Officer. As she acknowledged herself, this style is directive towards staff and directed by the changing environment in which her organisation finds itself.

Finally, another aspect of organisational culture that is modelled and rewarded by the organisational leaders is longevity. Of the four people interviewed at Integrate Inc., the person with the least tenure at the organisation had been there for five years.

Leadership is an important linguistic thread because it strengthened the social agency of at least one individual who is representative of the organisation in negotiations with possible business partners, staff selection and internal business development. There was a link between the leadership and the organisational capacity of Integrate Inc. Strong social agency on the part of senior management could translate to power remaining internalised in the organisation rather than being shifted to external sources.

6.2.7 Anchor shift

Anchor shift is defined as the extent to which the organisation and its members were able to create alternative cognitive maps of Integrate Inc. that embrace the corporatisation of a once purely nonprofit entity. It does not presume that either extreme is the ‘correct’ position; instead, it is a descriptive tool that demonstrates the element in the narrative of informants that refers to a fundamental change in individual and organisational worldview.

Note that although it may appear similar to social identification, anchor shift is a useful concept because it covers the internal mind mapping at a personal level. Therefore, anchor shift incorporates within it a temporal dimension of dynamic change, something that social identification by definition cannot do. In the discourse of Integrate Inc.,

anchor shift appeared in three guises: balancing ‘welfare’ and ‘corporate’ modes and the history of the organisation.

Balance

The anchor shift in balance almost always referred to how individuals reacted to organisational changes. In other words, the discourse was not about how Integrate Inc. was changing, but how staff was positively or negatively responding. The first instance below is a description of the different ‘modes’. The remaining excerpts are about specific reactions to these polarities.

[the opposite of the welfare mode is] Probably the corporate mode, y’know, which is about how the bottom line is everything. And part of the difficulty. And it’s interesting, I think our board has had to struggle with the difference between the importance of the bottom line and the importance of the social line. And I think they’re only just starting to get it. I have to say the board is actually very supportive, but they often don’t know what I’m talking about.

Oh yes, and then I go back into my welfare mode, and think bloody hell, you should do that. So I think it’s an interesting issue in the sector of changing hats and having sort of repositioned yourself, depending on who you’re talking to and under what circumstances.

Dawn

Here there is an awareness that anchor shift influences and is affected by the language that organisation used to describe its activities:

So, marketing for me is easier than fundraising. I’d sooner market than fundraise. We’re out there saying what it is, but you’re not out there, ...we’re selling on strengths rather than selling on weaknesses.

This, what I'm finding is, we sort of start there and people say, oh yeah well this sounds reasonable and they try it and they think, bloody hell, we're not like this, we're people who care about people, we'll come back where we're caring and sharing and we stay for a little while and OK, she's telling us we've got to get out there and do it again so we'll y'know, we'll change our strategy and we'll go out holding hands and we'll venture and we'll get to about there and think, we like it back here again we'll just stay down here. So the steps stay around the middle line and every now and then you might get a little wind and you might get up there briefly and then come back again...Even though they, they believe that we got past that hurdle I think it's still a problem for the organisation. I think the history keeps coming through and I think it's because people are confronted every day with the reality of people's vulnerability. So they're talking to the tenants, they're looking at the poverty, they're dealing with the fact that uh, you can't get a generic service as happened this morning, to do an injection with somebody, you have to go with that person and take them to that place because of the disability. And I think that the difficulty of being immersed in that and then coming out of that and immersing themselves in a different frame of reference is very difficult.

This last narrative piece is remarkable because it pinpoints the dynamic nature of anchor shift. In other words, staff in Integrate Inc. confronted starkly contrasting worlds depending on which 'hat' they were wearing at that moment. Clearly a parallel to Dougherty's (1992) thought worlds, this example demonstrates how deceptive organisational fluidity can be to social agency. What appears to be increasing

organisational capacity was camouflaging deep-seated uncertainty and barriers to staff effectively managing their own anchor shift.

History and staffing changes

Anchor shift was present early on in the organisation's history by virtue of decreasing funding and survival imperatives. The Chief Executive Officer's perspective on what happened to the organisation when it experienced the first wave of this change indicated how difficult that was for some staff members. This comment came in response to a question about what it meant for the organisation:

We lost our entire staff. Um. When we moved into [small business] and went from the welfare ethos of little old lady and she's got a dirty floor and she really wants her shopping done and she wants her dog washed and oh, yes, we'll do those things as well. And, it was no, you won't do those things, we're paid to actually clean her bathroom. That's all we'll do. But she's got these other needs. Yes, she does, we can't do that. What do you mean we can't do that? We have to do that. You're just immersed in money, all you're interested in is money. Yes, this is true. It pays your salary. No, but we're really here about the people. You're not looking at the people's needs, you're looking at the organisation's needs, you've sold out. So, we actually lost all of our key staff over a probably three year period. Staff changeover, lost all staff early on.

Dawn

And later, explaining how she was attempting to deal with ongoing tensions of this anchor shift for some staff members:

Now, the strategy I'm looking at the moment is to try and say OK, these people don't do that well. What we have to

do is overlay those skills, keep those skills, cuz they're important, they're important skills for this, and that's our core business. These are supporting our core business. However, if we don't make a success of this we don't have a core business. So, that reality then allows people to try this, try this bit out. But, they still get nervous about it. So we need to have somebody in the place who doesn't see a problem with this, but who can work in a non-government organisation. We've tried it a couple of times in both programs in the past and it hasn't fitted well.

One individual who expressed a sense of not having a conflict over the anchor shift occurring in the organisation did so here in the context of her own career objectives:

Um, I think when I first got hired, they did explain to me that they'd shifted from just being, relying upon government funding to looking for small business ideas and these had proved to be the most successful. ..so I've never really had I guess the dilemma that everyone it seems to me preceded the decision in other dimensions. It was probably like, "Oh God how can we ask people for money when they really need help." And I'm, I don't really struggle with that.

Kerri

The examples above reflected tangible changes in the organisation's development. Anchor shift is even present in an organisational decision around the evolution of Integrate Inc., in a name change that was explained in the annual report thus:

...our Special Resolution tonight where we are proposing to change our name to [] not only more accurately describes our increasingly broad based approach towards supporting people in their own homes to remain/become

part of their community, but also reflects our move to connect and collaborate with all stakeholders...

This is critical as a signifier that the organisation had moved on, even though some individuals might retain reservations about the path of evolution. It is doubly symbolic because a name change was public acknowledgement of where the organisation currently stands. It is a different entity than when it first embarked on the for-profit path.

From one perspective, anchor shift is a powerful indication of the evolution of Integrate Inc. from a fully government-funded operation on the road to some type of fiscal self-sufficiency. There is evidence that an understanding of anchor shift has enabled the manager to make decisions about future staffing mix, especially regarding the retention of key skills while simultaneously recruiting a more business-oriented individual to run the 'hard core' marketing side of the organisation. On an individual level, awareness of these changes served to mitigate at least some of the confusion and fear that development has precipitated.

Conversely, anchor shift can also serve to destabilise social agency and organisational capacity. For example, if anchor shift occurred more rapidly at one level of the organisation than another (e.g. the Board), then there may be a schism in how individuals in the organisation react. Another possible implications of anchor shift might be a move too far in the other direction and subsequent loss of organisational direction, or detrimental role confusion for individuals that results in loss of productivity or even increased rates of turnover.

6.3 WEAVING THE THREADS

This section connects linguistic threads to one another and explores some unique aspects of Integrate Inc. as it comes to terms with for-profit changes to its operations. The model is shown in Figure 7 below.

6.3.1 Leadership and anchor shift

The most salient feature of this case is the complete infiltration of the entire organisational discourse by two linguistic threads, leadership and anchor shift. Although for the purposes of explanation it is important to distinguish them as significant elements of discourse in their own right, their most important contribution to the life of the organisation is in their ubiquitous presence in every other linguistic thread.

The leadership of the organisation sets the tone of integration, which promoted stronger social identification with a growing number of stakeholders beyond traditional client groups. Staff development, initiated and implemented by the leader, reinforced changes in institutional context, advanced opportunities to practice and routinise language matching, solidify boundaries of intra-organisational communication and encourage exploration into previously taboo territory of marketing the service. Leadership is also connected to anchor shift. For example, the leader prefers ‘marketing’ to ‘fundraising’ for the precise reason that fundraising places the organisation in ‘welfare mode’ and therefore at a power disadvantage in comparison to those funding it.

Anchor shift has also insinuated itself into all the other linguistic threads. It can be perceived through the fear with which some staff members approach ‘business-like’ activities and so reflect negative social identification of ‘we’re not like them.’ It is acknowledged in changes to the institutional context of nonprofits and singled out as the change that has been most difficult to effect on an individual level. It even inserts itself into intra-organisational communication patterns by signalling a divide between those who have rapidly adapted to changing exigencies and those who have not.

6.3.2 Organisational documentation

One of the most striking elements of discourse in this organisation was the degree to which the interview data and the organisational documentation corroborate and enhance one another. In this organisation, the language in the documentation incorporates many of the tensions in the linguistic threads of the interview discourse. The President’s Report clearly indicates an acknowledgement of social identification, language matching, understanding the relationship-building process, recognising the institutional context, leadership and anchor shift. These excerpts from the annual report sum up

much of the story of Integrate Inc. and its transition from a purely nonprofit entity into the hybrid described in this chapter. The language of core values, shifting needs, clear direction from the top, an understanding of incremental change are all present in this report and therefore tells a snapshot story of the organisation. The reports of the Chief Executive Officer, Managers and Co-ordinators are similarly revealing.

...In reviewing the evolution of our organisation, it seems to me that there have been three distinct phases.

Phase 1 Person centric, idealism. A passionate belief in supporting people with disabilities to establish their independence and integrate into the broader community was the core value that drove the Organisation in its infancy. This core belief remains to this day as our over-riding *raison d'être*.

Phase 2 Organisational self-sufficiency With the reduction in government funding, it became apparent that the very survival of the Organisation depended on developing income generating services. Thus, [two small businesses] were skilfully developed, not only as fee generating businesses, but as services that were congruent with and which extended our initial core activity. This required a substantial shift in managerial mindset and skills acquisition. In terms of organisational values, there was a need to accept that one could still make money without compromising on our tenant/customer centricism...

Phase 3 Collaborative empowerment ...

Each phase in our journey thus far has required a substantial transformation in the way in which we manage our organisation.

The congruence is much more pronounced in Integrate Inc. than in any other case studies conducted. There are several possible reasons for this, but by far the most probable is the role of leadership in Integrate Inc. As has already been described, the forceful leadership and accompanying social agency of the Chief Executive Officer served the organisation well in terms of its ability to grapple effectively with a rapidly changing funding environment.

All of this was very positive for Integrate Inc.'s organisational capacity. Although there were still hidden political agendas in interpersonal relationships, the organisation was clearly aligned from the top language of proactive social agency, adaptability and strong adherence to the primary mission of the organisation. There remained instances of linguistic deference to the corporate world; however, the discourse of Integrate Inc. is firmly attached to its base of power that puts its organisational capacity in a strong position.

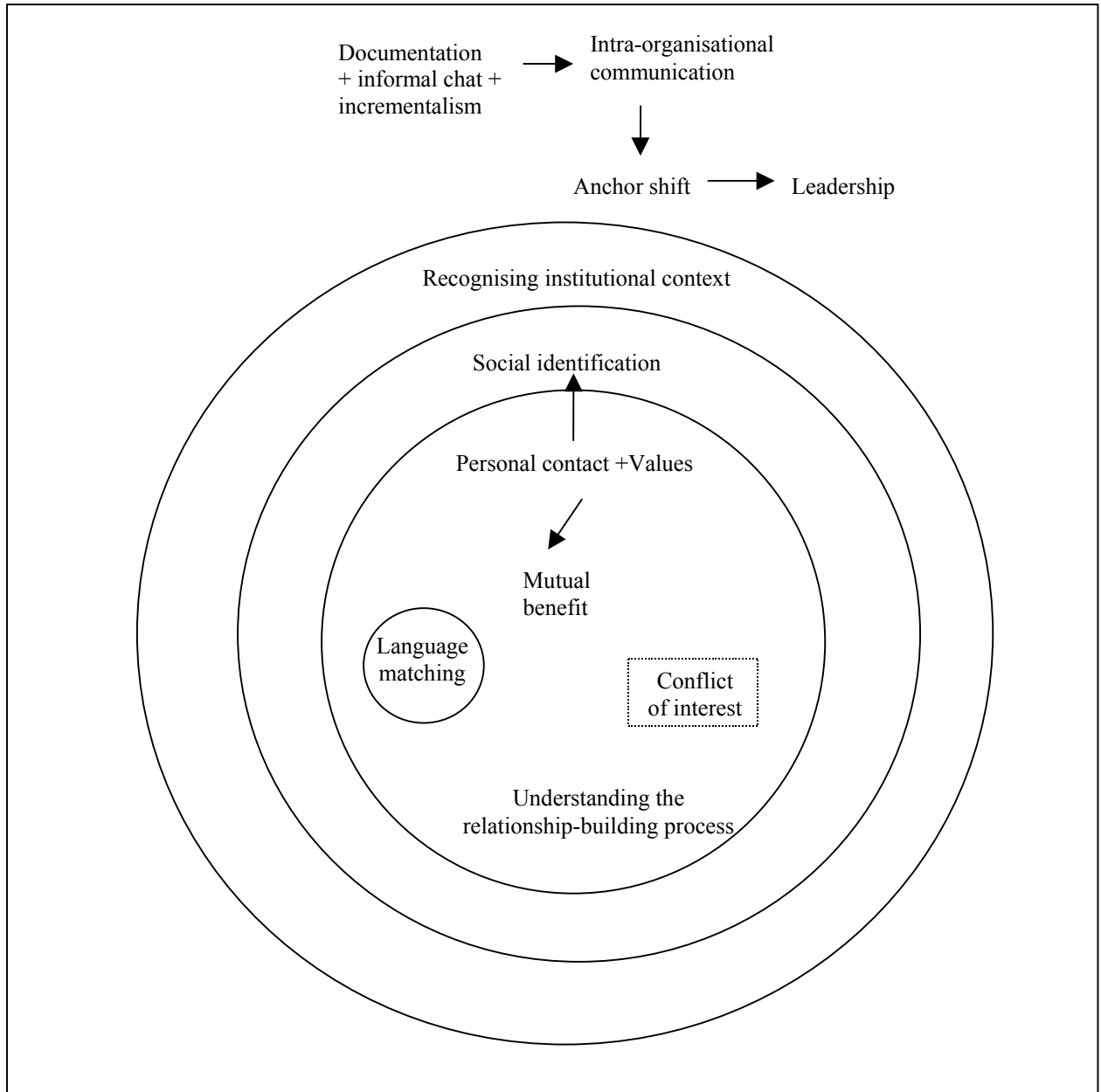
6.3.4 Other webs

Within the understanding the relationship-building linguistic thread, sub-themes networked in intricate patterns as well. Personal contact was linked to mutual benefit because it offered staff members the opportunity to feel connected to those with whom they were developing partnerships. Values were important here too, as they facilitated personal contact by providing a shared platform upon which to construct reciprocal relationships. In addition, as explained in the personal contact sub-theme of understanding the relationship-building process, personal contact smoothed the way for strong positive social identification with other stakeholders in the organisation and a variety of external customer bases.

The next chapter outlines the findings from the fourth case study, The Welfare League.

Figure 7:

Integrate Inc. Linguistic Threads Model



CHAPTER 7: THE WELFARE LEAGUE

7.1 OVERVIEW

The Welfare League has a history of more than 150 years of providing assistance to disadvantaged groups. In addition to direct service, the League is involved in projects that promote opportunity and social justice. Over the past century and a half, it has been at the forefront of new initiatives to provide services to individuals in need of an array of social and financial support.

The primary project under consideration in this chapter is funded primarily through The Welfare League, but has significant sponsorship from corporate partners. The Welfare League itself is funded through a range of government subsidies, corporate donations and private philanthropy. Four corporations, a federal government body, the Premier's Department and one charitable foundation fund the project. In-kind support was received from more than three dozen other organisations including private and public institutions. The project employs two Directors and a project co-ordinator. The project began in 1999 and had an initial funding base for three years. Although the focus in organisation was the major initiative underway at the time, the chapter contains references to other support arrangements with business.

One of the features of The Welfare League is that it is compartmentalised. In addition to this project, there are four main areas of concern. Offices throughout metropolitan Sydney, operating under a number of different names, are linked to The Welfare League. However, this decentralisation of services means that not all employees will be aware of the activities of other segments of the organisation.

In contrast to the first three organisations selected for this research, The Welfare League was a large nonprofit community services institution. However, the particular issue in this chapter dealt with a single project managed by two directors inside the organisation and thus was not connected directly to other nonprofit/business links that the large entity had. The relationship studied here was project-based and the two staff members

involved in the project were interviewed, both Directors of projects in The Welfare League. Richard was the primary leader for the project being sponsored by a large corporation and Amanda had responsibility for a broader corporate support program for the organisation.

7.2 ANALYSIS

7.2.1 Language matching

Language matching is the process through which staff in the nonprofit mirror speech patterns, jargon or communication styles of their business contacts. The process may be deliberate or unintentional, and when conscious it was usually motivated by the need to create opportunities for collaboration and sponsorship on business terms. Although it occurred much less frequently than was the case for organisations like the Care & Share Association or Nightlight, there were a few examples in the discourse of The Welfare League. One area of the discourse where it did appear in this organisation was in how the informants ‘sold’ their project to potential corporate sponsors. In one passage, Amanda described her vision of ‘good business’ thus:

I mean, I talk about good business. And, I think good business has stopped being just delivery of the service, of the best service, the best product and it’s going to making the most profit...and that’s what good business has gone. And I think it’s a mistake because delivering the best service ultimately does bring you the profits. I don’t believe it doesn’t bring you the profits. It may not be as much, y’know you might have a little bit less, but in the long term I think that actually builds up to be as good as the other one...or even more.

This was an interesting passage for two reasons. Firstly, it simply illustrated Amanda’s knowledge of the need to ‘talk good business’ to representatives whose organisations

have very different objectives than the one she was attempting to promote. She intentionally used an approach of language matching to gain consideration by possible corporate sponsors. However, the second half of this excerpt demonstrated another underlying motivation for language matching. Amanda introduced the idea of ‘good business’ and then went on to say how she defined ‘good business’ in a slightly different way than the immediate results, profit-oriented outlook that sometimes she associated with for-profit institutions. This is borderline ‘language recruitment,’ a linguistic thread that will be discussed further in the next section.

Informants also used the business catchall language of ‘strategy’ to convince corporate entities to engage in the project. Here is an example of that from Richard:

Y’know there’s no real strategy within the [corporate] to do that. So we’re going to go back to them and say well here’s a, here’s an opportunity to have a strategy...

Again, here was data illustrating how language matching can facilitate relationship-building. Note that this evidence does not preclude the use of the word ‘strategy’ in nonprofit language; it simply demonstrated that interviewees understood the value of using communication styles that were familiar and comfortable for their business counterparts in a collaborative environment.

Acknowledging the need to mirror business requirements, Amanda said:

If you talk on their terms then you’re not asking for a handout, but it’s a mutual business deal, then you have to...

Overall, informants used language matching in The Welfare League purposefully to accomplish their organisational and project goals. There was no evidence of unconscious language matching in this organisation. In fact, the discourse shows that there was no need for unconscious language matching, because both ‘nonprofit’ language and ‘corporate’ language sat comfortably side-by-side in The Welfare League. The ‘matching’ that occurred was internal matching—the language of strategy, mutual

benefit and business practice had already been inculcated into the fabric of the project itself. This was interesting because it provided the first hint of a direct connection between deliberate use of business language and social agency in The Welfare League. Informants not only acknowledged what they were doing; they did so without any sense of conflict or confusion. Unlike organisations in which the shift occasioned by language matching was accompanied by a perception of betraying nonprofit principles (e.g. Nightlight), in The Welfare League informants moved with ease in both linguistic worlds.

7.2.2 Language recruitment

The most startling result from an analysis of The Welfare League was the process through which interview data and organisational documentation purported to ‘recruit’ business partners into nonprofit language and thus closer to this way of thinking.

A cousin to language matching, language recruitment is a linguistic thread with an element of language appropriation. The definition of language recruitment is a situation in which nonprofit staff members actively engage attempt to influence for-profit language use.

In this case, the two directors embody the often mutually exclusive language worlds of nonprofit and business enterprise. Richard spoke of community; Amanda spoke most frequently of viability and mutual benefit. Nonetheless, both placed a high premium on the importance of maintaining strict adherence to values of the project that focused on fundamental social change. As agents of organisational capacity, these two individuals were able to marshal their commonalties and harness their differences into a complementary team. Language recruitment was a good example of this in The Welfare League. The passage quoted above, in which Amanda explored the boundaries of her definition of good business and attempted to lure businesses into that way of thinking was one good illustration of the language recruitment principle.

The other tools that The Welfare League used in its quest to recruit corporate bodies into the nonprofit discourse were its organisational legitimacy and history. Unlike some smaller organisations without a high profile, The Welfare League’s reputation was put

to good use in bolstering the social agency of Richard and especially Amanda in dealings with corporate bodies. As a large organisation with strong historical foundations and widespread name recognition, The Welfare League had the advantage of standing as an authority in the community services sector. This position facilitated Amanda and Richard's attempts to recruit corporates into the language of service and long-term community-focused strategies by enabling them to gain access to individuals outside the regular channels of business representatives responsible for sponsorship dollars. Language recruitment became a much easier proposition because the Directors were more easily able to select those who would be receptive.

This last point is significant because it shows how language recruitment is both narrative and structural. As a process, it is based on the communication strategies employed by nonprofit staff. However, it is structurally constrained by those people's ability to communicate directly with corporate employees who would be responsive to language recruitment and offer an inside track contact into the organisation. Therefore, the limitations of an organisation's access affect staff opportunities to employ this tool and subsequently affect their social agency by restricting the circumstances in which they are able to act.

Organisational documentation

In the discourse, organisational documentation was almost an extension of the language recruitment narrative described above. The brochure for the project acknowledged the sponsors and detailed the structure of the initiative, but it did so in language that remained anchored in the world of social values. Words such as 'community', 'connectedness', and 'pioneer' were echoed in the message that social progress should be pursued in parallel with economic prowess and development.

This link between the organisational documentation and the discourse in the informants' interviewees was a positive indicator of organisational capacity because it demonstrates the strong legitimacy with which the organisation is able to imbue a case for nonprofit value-dominated projects. In other words, there was no sense that the project was anything other than an exercise in community-building with the caveat the mutual benefit should be an integral part of any engagement with the business world. The

documentation mirrored the way in which staff were able to incorporate both business and traditionally nonprofit values into the development of this initiative. Section 7.2.6 on anchor shift in The Welfare League explores this idea further.

7.2.3 Social identification

Like other case sites, social identification in this organisation referred to the extent to which staff in the nonprofit perceived that they were connected to people in the corporate world. This social identification could be demonstrated by a simple ‘we’/‘they’ dichotomy or more complex metaphors for proximity or distance. Social identification occurred in The Welfare League in a series of interrelated mechanisms clearly articulated in the discourse. There were two main issues in social identification: community directionality and the business case.

Community directionality

By definition, directionality is the source and target trajectory of a particular interaction. In this case, community directionality refers to the sub-theme in the discourse of The Welfare League that outlined how the organisation and the very project in which it was engaged was designed to promote understanding, acquisition and practice of a set of common values. The community directionality of social identification in The Welfare League was unique among the cases in that the focus was on bringing corporates into the socially responsible fold. Per methodological imperative, this community directionality finding was tested on previous and subsequent cases, but it appeared only here. Instead of passively accepting the directionality of social identification and viewing some people as part of ‘us’ and others as lost to the nebulous corporate ‘them’, this project sought to directly influence individuals from all sectors to confront serious social issues together.

The driver behind this directionality was individual transformation and excerpts from the discourse illustrated this principle of community directionality:

Particular with corporates, they know that, they know there’s something else but they don’t know what it is.

And then suddenly they get confronted with it and then they know what it is.

Richard

Community is that I'm doing something with you. And I say, it's charity being replaced by compassion. Because charity is that act of doing, in all my largesse giving you something. Compassion is actually doing with, you're building a relationship with. And that's where the power of encounter really comes in...I believe changes your map of reality.

Richard

But it's basically for me it is about the basic form of human existence is community. In my view. And, and, my feeling is particularly over the last 20 years that there has been such an enormous change in our view of how live, brought about by the socio-economic policies. Rightly or wrongly, they've taken place, and I think in a globalisation y'know, arena, we can't be very much different from other countries. So it has taken place, and there's been a lot of advantages that have taken place because of that. But there's a lot, there's a big downside as well. And my view of it is, because the way it's been structured, and the divide is taking place, inevitably that the glue that binds society together is starting to come unstuck, social capital.

Richard

Community directionality is important because of the impact it has on reflecting and enhancing social agency in the organisation. The director of this project started from the premise that there are underlying similarities between those working in the community sector and others whose primary experiences have been in for-profit enterprises. Beyond the inter-sector debate, this pre-supposition also required confidence in their

ability to work towards mutual understanding and reciprocity. Consider Richard's comments about his vision for the future and the acknowledgement of work to be done with hope rather than despair:

I think true altruism is where you don't expect any, it's like unconditional love. That's how I would describe it. Where, if you get a return it's, it's not, you're not going into it for any return whatsoever as a by-product. Corporations don't think that way in this country...but the codicil to all that is that I would say that most corporate leaders haven't got that message yet. So think it might take 10-15 years down the track.

And in two related descriptions of how that might occur:

Because I was saying, I don't think we're ever going to have the true partnerships that we've been talking about unless we can see into each other's soul. Unless...and we wouldn't use these words, but there's something about taking away the veneer of I'm the career corporate person and I can only think this way, and actually getting underneath that to find the core person. Cuz that's the only way you can connect, you don't connect with veneer.

By encounter. Really by encounter and by continuing the dialogue.

This exchange was an excellent example of the power of language, both within The Welfare League and between it and its corporate connections. In the discourse, Richard's conviction of the potential for this conversation, this dialogue to create positive outcomes through social identification and community directionality was mirrored by his own social agency in using language as a tool for transformation.

Organisational capacity was clearly a contributor as well as a recipient in the mechanism through which community directionality was conceived, implemented, monitored and enhanced. On the one hand, The Welfare League had to have had a certain reserve of capacity to understand its potential as a catalyst. On the other hand, the results of community directionality to change minds one at a time in corporate 'careerists' was powerful testament to how this process is itself an agent for organisational capacity growth.

Business case

The Welfare League also sought social identification through the business case for relationships with nonprofits. Some excerpts below offered evidence from the data of this sub-theme of social identification. Richard outlined his view of how this might be communicated and accomplished:

And we're suggesting that there's a cause-related marketing opportunity for the [corporate] to come in and be the leading partner for that program. A true partnership this time, where um, their managers can be involved, they can actually set up...what can we do for our communities while using that as a model. So it's actually exploring the boundaries of community work...

Well, in the sense of, in the end, why should they be mutually exclusive, particularly going back to, y'know the triple bottom line that in the end, if you can satisfy customers and the customers are satisfied because they know that they're buying from a more society-caring organisation, I mean the money comes as well as the feel-goodies, y'know, feel good. So it really was an object lesson to me to start that discussion that opportunity to happen.

And again in this exchange with the interviewer:

Certainly you cannot use you cannot use the mumbo-jumbo of the social sector, because it just turns them off. If you start talking, the word inequality is an almost an emotive term...so what so you get them on the wrong side, what we're gonna have to work on I think is how do we help corporates be better citizens and therefore have a better bottom line? I think that's that, we're not saying we want to take your money we're actually saying we want to help you get even more wealth, but by doing that you are actually being a much more co-operative partner in society.

Interviewer: A sort of bridging...

Yes, yes, that's right. I think, in any partnership you need to have a long courtship, maybe that's what we're talking about.

The drivers for social identification through the business case were stratification and selection. This element will be further elaborated in the section on personal contact, but a brief overview here will suffice to explore how staff in The Welfare League used stratification and selection to control to whom this message of the business case was presented. In one instance, Amanda described the process through which one individual was found to be unsuitable for the business case approach. With a strong showing of assertiveness and social agency, combined with an understanding of the importance of the business case in social identification for the relationship, she sought out an alternative contact who would be more approachable from this angle. She narrated the experience thus:

And that's always a problem, what to give in return and now I've gone to them with a cause-related marketing. The problem there is that the person in the job, Community Relations person, he's a part of the [corporate

community support] program. The [corporate] has this...And it's actually something different, should be in the marketing department we would be working with their marketing department to develop it. But it doesn't kind of, so we're going up to Melbourne tomorrow to talk, because it's, he's in a different world, he doesn't kind of comprehend that you can actually overhaul a company's image [] by a cause-related marketing approach. You can actually, but it costs a lot of money and it's a major endeavour. And [] he just sees us, fitting into that. He doesn't see...but I think actually for the [corporate] it would be a lot better to see this as a whole comprehensive marketing opportunity...I'm sort of struggling with the, with the lack of vision...I may not be able to...I went to the person in Sydney, what do you think and he liked it. I don't know, I have to convince him...

Through a process of stratifying (e.g. identifying more and less suitable candidates for the cause-related marketing pitch) and selecting (e.g. setting up a meeting with a person in a position of sufficient authority to make decisions on the proposal), Amanda created an opportunity to improve the relationship through increased social identification. Instead of coping with a person who was not amenable to the further development of the project in way that would promote The Welfare League organisational capacity and self-sustainability rather than continued dependence on influxes of funding, the organisation was able to maneuver itself into a second chance for the program. As Amanda noted at the end of the excerpt above, there was no guarantee of success. Nonetheless, this process of creating options is clearly evidence of social agency in action.

In social identification in The Welfare League, the dual pronged approach in the discourse of community directionality and the integration of the business case into the organisation served another important purpose. Individually, they worked to enrich the perceptions that The Welfare League staff involved in the project had about their

relationships with corporate enterprises and individuals. However, even more important was the collective role of community directionality and the business case in blurring further traditional sector boundaries. Social identification in The Welfare League was on its way to describing inclusive discourse that did not enumerate differences between business and nonprofit—not because there were no perceived distinctions but because the basic values of humanity and reciprocity outweighed their divergence.

Difficulties remain and the linguistic thread of social identification in The Welfare League discourse is a long way from describing a unified front for socio-economic convergence and progress. Nonetheless, the seeds were planted in this critical linguistic thread.

7.2.4 Intra-organisational communication

Intra-organisational communication is the linguistic thread that defines how staff members in an organisation share language and ideas about the nonprofit's relationship to business. It did not appear explicitly in the discourse of The Welfare League.

Exclusion & inclusion pathways

One possible explanation for the lack of this thread in the data has to do with the fact that only three individuals were involved in the project. Of those three, only two had dealings with the corporate side, because the other person was limited to an administrative capacity. As has already been explored in the sub-theme on exclusion and inclusion pathways, there were clearly delineated role boundaries at The Welfare League that precluded other staff members from becoming involved. Amanda and Richard took full responsibility for the projects and communicated most frequently with one another in this area. Unlike smaller organisations, where staff members may be called upon to perform a variety of roles that span the range of services offered by a nonprofit, The Welfare League's organisational structure was strictly divided along project or client-base lines. This meant that although other staff members may have been aware of the large sponsorship deals, there were exclusion pathways that limited their exposure to this set of business relationships.

Another factor that contributed to the lack of this linguistic thread was the strong parallel authority and social agency demonstrated by both Amanda and Richard. As has already been explored, they both recognised the need for business and nonprofits to develop closer proximity, but they each outlined slightly different approaches for successful integration of language, intent and implementation of these types of partnerships. Although their practical outlook did not differ substantially, Amanda's language was more business-oriented and Richard's more individualistic and values-based. Thus, although some of the language around for-profit relationships was shared between them, their commitment to personal value sets and strong individual perceptions of social agency on their own terms overshadowed the merging of their distinct discourses.

7.2.5 Understanding relationship-building process

Besides social identification, understanding the relationship-building process was the most prevalent and important linguistic thread in this organisation. This linguistic thread is defined by the informants' awareness of the processes underlying a developing interaction between themselves and a for-profit institution. Recognition of this linguistic thread was evident in response to almost every question asked in interviews and informants repeatedly referred to aspects of this thread in their discussion of others. In The Welfare League, there were five factors in the discourse on understanding the relationship-building process, which are then explored below. These were personal contact, mutual benefit, values, incrementalism and future alliances.

Personal contact

Personal contact refers to one-to-one networking and relationship-building that is evident in the interviews with informants. It appeared in the discourse in three ways: as a description of the inception of the relationship; as a point of negotiation and change and finally as a factor in the development of the relationship.

This sub-theme of understanding the relationship building process first surfaced as an explanation for how the relationship began. One informant asserted:

But I think, if I can be blunt, it was probably, it was probably a mateship. Our president...knew someone at the [corporate] and said, um, look, we're starting up this new program, we need some financial help. I think it's as simple as that. Um, I think it has developed since that though.

Richard

In this excerpt, the interviewee described the importance of personal contact as a catalyst for the relationship in the first place. A second element of this sub-theme was the multiplicity of links and the use of these various links in different ways according to need.

There's several connections...[] they've also got a, I don't know what you'd call them but a sponsorship/marketing person who we deal with quite a lot. He's the first point of contact. But we also deal now quite a lot with the State Manager in NSW.

Richard

The problem there is that the person in the job, Community Relations person, he's a part of the [community] program. The [corporate] this...And it's actually something different, should be in the marketing department we would be working with their marketing department to develop it. But it doesn't kind of, so we're going up to Melbourne tomorrow to talk, because it's, he's in a different world, he doesn't kind of comprehend that you can actually overhaul a company's image by a cause-related marketing approach. You can actually, but it costs a lot of money and it's a major endeavour. And [] he just sees us, fitting into that. He doesn't see...

Amanda

This factor was linked to social agency in The Welfare League. Both Richard and Amanda were aware of the differences between communicating with one contact or another. In particular, Amanda used this knowledge to attempt negotiation of a more comprehensive and ongoing relationship with the for-profit.

Finally, personal contact appeared in the awareness of turnover and the negative effect that can have on the developing communication between individuals as representatives of their organisations. Amanda explained:

So that's the second, good communication. And nurturing the relationship. Often the problem is community relations people tend to, there's high turnover in the job...so that's always a problem. Y'know they been in it a year and then they go to another job and then you start again. Nurture the relationship there and then it goes. And that, and here too, people leave and it's not the same.

Mutual benefit

Mutual benefit is the degree to which reciprocal advantage as a result of the project to be jointly undertaken by the nonprofit and the for-profit is a significant factor in their interactions. It appeared frequently in The Welfare League discourse. Excerpts that illustrate this included:

...well the perceptions are, you give us the money and we, y'know we spend it and we report back to them. They get a little bit of publicity and they get a few saying you've been part of an innovative, sort of that connection, the [corporate's] supposed to be innovative. But I think they use it to the full.

Richard

And this exchange:

Amanda: And now [another corporate connection has] come to us and said we'll give, I'll give the [The Welfare League] a certain percentage of, from sales, like cause-related marketing if you introduce me to a number of other. So I said, I can do that. So I've rung. That's an interesting one.

Interviewer: What do you think about that?

Amanda: Yeah, well, I think it's fine. Well, I'm not getting into selling anything, there's, I draw the line. But I have no problem, I know what he's selling, and I told them, when I rang people look the reason is he'll give a certain percentage to the [Welfare League]. So I see that as a trade-off and I have no problem with that but I will not, I will not get into that...it makes a difference because I know him and I know that um, although he wants something for it I know that he's got certain ideology...

Although in the first example above some cynicism seeped through, the majority of instances of mutual benefit were stated matter-of-factly and pragmatically. Informants viewed mutual benefit as a matter of course rather than an ethical dilemma, and so were able to monitor the reciprocity involved and intervene to stabilise and develop the relationship if need be, as in the example below:

I think a good one [relationship] is where there is mutual benefit because it becomes self-sustaining. It's um, not something where you expect something for nothing, y'know charity, we don't want that, we want to set up things whereby, and this is the visit with [corporate] tomorrow is I mean, I think they feel that they want a bit more and that's quite right. We have to work out ways in

which to give that to them. And that's basically, if it's of mutual benefit and constant communication, to know, because things change, they shift [] and then to know...it's much better to say hey, look what's happening we're not getting much out of this. I would much prefer that.

Amanda

This ability to manipulate mutual benefit is a good indicator of high social agency and proactive organisational capacity in The Welfare League. Informants recognised the power of the mutual benefit argument and integrated it into their own way of viewing their projects linked to business. It is important to note that mutual benefit was not just a linguistic phenomenon. As in other cases, mutual benefit had tangible consequences for the success or failure of inter-organisational collaboration.

Values

Values are the ethical underpinnings of an organisation's and individual's sense of morality. They refer to the attitudes and beliefs integral to a person's sense of the way the world should be. The sub-theme of values was explored through the section on social identification, because of their close ties to one another and the experiences of Richard in relations to values, the nonprofit sector, business and a changing society as a whole. In this section, the discussion on values is confined to how this emphasis on ethos strengthened organisational capacity and supported active social agency.

Values dictated the types of organisations that Amanda approached for possible linkages as well, as in these two excerpts from the interview with her:

You have to keep your values pretty much up front and know that there are certain boundaries you can't cross. Well, you can't go to a tobacco company...unless you know exactly, you just can't. You have to be careful.

You've got to phone and tell them. You do your research on the company, you do your research and you, you,

you're up front about what you do and if it doesn't fit. And you often don't, you don't approach companies you don't feel...you tend to go to companies that uphold its values.

These passages were important because they demonstrated how strong social agency on the part of a staff member can shape the relationships that nonprofits have with business. Rather than a simple grasping for support out of financial desperation, in The Welfare League the responsible individual was able to be discerning about the links she pursued and nurtured. This proactive decision-making on her part also contributed to a decreased chance for critical power imbalances between The Welfare League and its corporate counterparts in the project because of the knowledge that Amanda could terminate relationships that might be detrimental to the organisation.

The values sub-theme points to The Welfare League's empowerment in its pursuit of opportunities with business. Probable reasons for this flexibility were its size, history and legitimacy in the community combined with the inclusive discourse of social identification illustrated earlier in the chapter. Strong adherence to values facilitated by the knowledge that this large nonprofit would be able to use its reputation to initiate other relationships. Nonetheless, the social agency demonstrated by this individual was a significant factor in the organisational capacity of The Welfare League in the area of values and corporate links.

Incrementalism

Incrementalism is the gradual development over time of a relationship. In The Welfare League, incrementalism emerged in the discourse as a critical part of understanding the relationship-building process. Unlike other cases, such as Integrate Inc., where incrementalism was part of the discourse on intra-organisational communication, at this site the bulk of gradual development discourse centred on the process of changing the corporate's perceptions of the nonprofit and its mutual projects. Examples included the following:

[it's] conservative and it takes a long time before you can change...

Richard

...I think, in any partnership you need to have a long courtship, maybe that's what we're talking about.

Richard

It's a slow process.

Amanda

Of the development of another relationship Amanda said,

...[corporate name] that's an interesting one...they've been supporting us. And now he's come to us...we had, we have helped him...but he doesn't know how to operate business. So what we did we just put him in contact with a couple of people who could...an introduction. He went to see them, and I don't actually know what happened but obviously they took it. So um, and, that was great...And now he's come to us and said we'll give, I'll give [The Welfare League] a certain percentage of, from sales, like cause-related marketing if you introduce me to a number of other. So I said, I can do that. So I've rung. That's an interesting one.

Incrementalism also crept into the discourse at a much broader level in terms of changing social expectations of business. Richard explored this element in this way:

Oh, I think it's coming, I think it's coming because I think the whole um, the consciousness level of what people expect is rising. I think it's a new age, the age of consciousness, where stakeholders are gonna be higher up the importance level than just shareholders. Where stakeholders like the environment, y'know...and it's actually, you can see it happening in Europe, and it's

certainly in America. It's starting here, by law there's now got to be an environmental audit...no. It's when, I think, there's a long way to go but I think there's a start. Cuz I think the consumer particularly, and some of the shareholders are wanting more than just financial return they're looking for social return...what we're gonna have to work on I think is how do we help corporates be better citizens and therefore have a better bottom line? I think that's the, we're not saying we want to take your money we're actually saying we want to help you get even more wealth, but by doing that you are actually being a much more co-operative partner in society.

Incrementalism in the discourse pointed to the understanding of the need to nurture relationships. This is another good example of high social agency on the part of informants, who took an active role in creating, sustaining and promoting these relationships over the long term. Like mutual benefit, incrementalism is both a narrative description of the process and an acknowledgment of the realities of relationship-building. As such, it reflects the existing situation as the 'medium' of the message and also contributes to the social construction of a gradually progressing, developing relationship for all parties involved.

Future alliances

One of the issues in understanding the relationship-building process linked to incrementalism was the recognition that future alliances might look quite different from current projects in which The Welfare League was working with a corporate sponsor. One of the informants articulated this understanding like this in response to a question about developing a fuller partnership:

... I wouldn't say it's a robust relationship. I mean, they give us the money...But apart from that and apart from [] and sometimes calling each other up or us calling up them basically, there's not a, I cannot say it's a

partnership. It's true to say that without that [money] that the program would be much worse off, but we're not doing to it together. Not in [current project]. I think there's a great possibility we'll be doing it together in the [future initiative].

Richard

This element of discourse was important to organisational capacity because it reiterated how present relationships do not necessarily constrain future opportunities into the same mould. Informants' understanding of the potential to transform the way in which The Welfare League interacted with corporates in planned initiatives was also a reflection of their own sense of control and social agency with respect to the relationships with business. They were not simply riding the tide of the current relationship—they were actively planning the structure and process of the next relationship.

7.2.6 Anchor shift

Anchor shift is defined as the extent to which the organisation and its members are able to create alternatives that embrace the corporatisation of a once purely nonprofit entity. One of the interesting aspects of The Welfare League was the lack of direct reference to anchor shift in the discourse. There are several possible reasons for this linked to the other linguistic threads in the narratives of informants in this case. Firstly, the career paths of both informants with experience in corporate and nonprofit sectors had already prepared them for the need to navigate both worlds in developing this project with the business partner. This tangible, practical experience would have lessened the negative effects of any anchor shift they might have experienced internally and thus shifted it out of their conscious discourse. Secondly, the strong 'recruitment' trend described above may have mitigated any issues that informants might have through the aforementioned power imbalance in favour of the nonprofit.

The positive social agency associated with a directive focus on understanding and leading the relationship-building process (especially the constant reference to values of The Welfare League) coupled with practical knowledge of how to maintain that boundary in the face of funding dilemmas served both staff members and the

organisational well. In this case, the lack of anchor shift suggested a successful transition to an organisation that can maintain its integrity and create opportunities to co-opt the balance of power into its own corner. The informants did not experience detrimental anchor shift because they had firmly rooted themselves and the organisation in both the corporate ethos of the business deal and the nonprofit emphasis on social values.

7.2.7 Recognising the institutional context

Recognising the institutional context refers to awareness by interviewees of the environment in which they and their entire organisation were operating. It is the linguistic thread that refers to the broadest set of challenges and opportunities. Both informants recognised and articulated the context in which their organisation was working towards project funding. Of the general move in nonprofit services Amanda said:

It's certainly a trend. Not for-profit is moving much closer to become part of business.

Richard also asserted his understanding of the practice of short-term project funding by saying that their sponsors and other corporates don't usually fund for more than three years, and on the basis of this institutional context knowledge he added:

So, in three years, we're given three years to try and make it self-funding...Cuz we know that [corporate] probably won't stay with [us] after the third year. So we're looking for someone else and very much based on cause-related...

This understanding filtered through to the practices and strategies that Richard and Amanda employed to target other funding opportunities and increased their social agency by cementing their understanding of the realities of the external environment to the needs of their organisation. Recognising the institutional context is a structural factor, not simply narrative. Informants' discourse is replete with reference to very real circumstances of funding restriction, broader economic and social indicators and the

degree to which these constraints affected their choices regarding this and other sponsorship opportunities.

7.3 WEAVING THE THREADS

The graphic representation of this case appears in Figure 8 at the end of the chapter. Language matching was tied to anchor shift because the discourse of informants reflected a conviction that change was on the way in the broader society and that business would come to be more socially accountable in the same way as nonprofits had been forced to become fiscally accountable. The complementary language matching inside The Welfare League could be a ‘template’ for broader blurring of the boundaries between economy and society in the nonprofit and private sectors.

As in several other cases, the sub-themes in the understanding the relationship-building thread were not all equal contributors to the process. In The Welfare League, incrementalism, future alliances and personal contact combined to increase the significance of values to organisational discourse. The process of gradual development, added to the potential for subsequent mutually beneficial relationships, was nurtured by the informants’ ability to identify suitable contacts and nurture those networks into fruitful exchange. This reciprocal enhancement was accompanied by the link between mutual benefit and the parallel values of nonprofit social consciousness-raising and business acumen.

Values, personal contact and language recruitment were all tied to positive social identification in this case. Firstly, as with other organisations the combination of a shared value base and beneficial personal contacts were important for a sense of ‘being on the same side.’ Secondly, language recruitment served the dual purpose of actively engaging business in the nonprofit world without negating differences and actually co-opting corporate individuals to the third sector values of service and community.

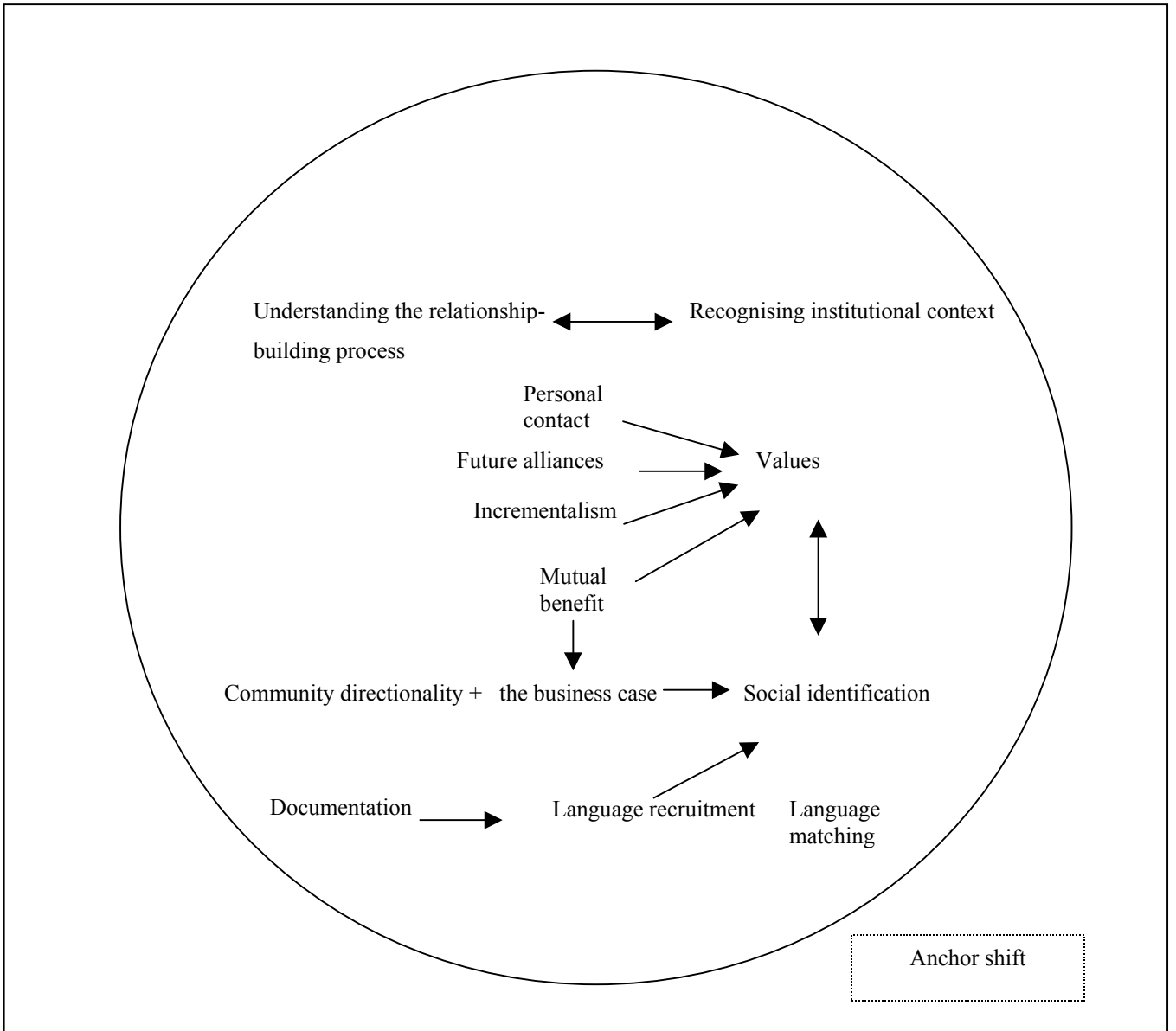
Recognising institutional context, while an important element of discourse in its own right, was intimately connected to understanding the relationship-building process in this organisation. In fact, the strategy for initiating, modifying and enhancing those relationships with corporate entities was predicated on some pre-existing informant knowledge about the 'state of affairs' in the funding environment and in the changing expectations for nonprofits.

A distinguishing feature of the project studied in The Welfare League was that it received the Prime Minister's Award from Community/Business Partnerships. This elevated the status of the project in the eyes of participants, but did not appear to affect the social agency of informants in this study. When asked about the presence of a commemorative plaque hanging in the reception area of the organisation identifying this success, Richard simply dismissed it as irrelevant. Because these findings are based on an analysis of the discourse and experiences of the staff in the nonprofit and not on some external perception of what was significant for the organisation's relationship with business, this aspect of outside recognition has been omitted from further discussion. Nonetheless, this distinction warrants mention as part of the introduction to The Welfare League and underscores possible elements of increased legitimacy of the organisation in its dealings with potential corporate partners in the future.

In the model, anchor shift has been separated from all the others because it is not directly observable in the discourse. However, as indicated in the explanatory section on this linguistic thread, the silence on anchor shift is salient because it reflects the organisation's successful integration of both worlds. This case illustrated that the discourse does not have to reflect 'true partnership' to be characterised by a nonprofit's ability to maintain much of the power. Social agency, commitment to values and previously established organisational legitimacy were much more instrumental than an elusive concept of 'partnership' in creating in The Welfare League an organisation that is already successfully navigating the threats and opportunities presented by changing times.

Figure 8:

The Welfare League Linguistic Threads Model



CHAPTER 8: WORKWELL

8.1 OVERVIEW

Workwell presented yet another way in which a nonprofit organisation can be involved with for-profit enterprises. As the employment arm of a large nonprofit, Workwell worked with employers to place people with disabilities into permanent jobs in the Sydney area. Two salient points, one to do with history and the other with organisational operation, are important to understand before proceeding with the analysis.

Recent history has significantly changed Workwell. It had been operating as a semi-independent entity for a number of years when the parent organisation decided to re-integrate it managerially into the larger nonprofit. This involved eliminating a layer of middle management and placing at the head of Workwell a manager who had been employed in the parent institution for just over three years. In conjunction with this historical change, the operational mandate of Workwell provided for some subsidies for employers who take on clients from the organisation. These subsidies were government funded, and therefore a pre-existing incentive for the for-profit to develop a relationship with Workwell.

Despite these waves of independence and then re-integration into the parent organisation, Workwell maintains a significant individual presence apart from the larger nonprofit. It has its own Web site, and it is interesting to note that the name of the parent entity only appears one level down from the main page. On the parent page, Workwell was identified by a generic geographical marker as an employment service. This illustrates that the tension between its prior independence and its new position under the control of the parent organisation still exists for Workwell

Workwell was funded through a federal government block grant. As of January 2001, the organisation was funded through a trial case-based funding program. The Manager at Workwell came from the parent company. He had been with Workwell for about six

months at the time of interview and with the parent organisation for about three and a half years before that. The office employs six full-time staff. The Manager (Rob), the Training Co-ordinator (Frank) and the Project Co-ordinator (Jenny) were interviewed for this study.

The linguistic threads identified and analysed in this chapter include language matching, social identification, intra-organisational communication, documentation, understanding the relationship-building process and recognising the institutional context.

8.2 ANALYSIS

8.2.1 Language matching

Language matching is the degree to which individuals shift their way of speaking to mirror corporate communication styles. In Workwell, this linguistic thread appeared frequently. One of the recurrent phrases was ‘core business’, which indicated a sense of private sector language in the operation of Workwell, as when Frank said, ‘for running the core business of this services’ in reference to the employment placement. Here is another excerpt from Frank describing his work to the interviewer:

So uh, what I, I, I’m in a business which basically selling product which is not quite right. Alright? Now, we know that, and all of those who actually using that product, I uh, talking about product of uh, labour from a person...

This language matching, as well as the last example in this section, were later explained by Frank’s reference to himself as ‘coming from a corporate background.’

Here was another example of the use of ‘marketing’ terminology:

We have a dual approach. Firstly we do some canvassing, some marketing, some general marketing, we’ll approach

businesses, do a presentation on what our service is about...for the future. They second style is marketing a particular client. So we have a client with particular, possibly...and we approach that organisation. Not so much in marketing specific clients but general marketing. We identify organisations, look for a key person, contact them first make an appointment go along, do spiel, we just look for any avenues that we may be able to assist them, promote our benefits to them.

Rob

This language matching is interesting because the linguistic thread occurred in both content and process. The individual words of 'spiel', 'promotion' and 'marketing' were indicators of language matching, but moreover, the process that Rob described above illustrated a degree of awareness of the process of a 'sale.'

A third example of language matching emerged in a dismissal of the differences between what people who received services were to be called. Rob made the specific point that they were 'job seekers', but this exchange between the interviewer and Frank offered a different perspective in the discourse related to language matching:

Interviewer: I dunno if you call them participants, do you call them clients do you call them customers...? The people you support...

Rob: Doesn't matter.

Frank's perception of language matching was much more ingrained in his narrative than that of his colleagues, to the point where he did not use a consistent label for the group of people with whom he is working to place them in employment.

In Workwell, language matching was linked to social agency. Frank used language matching as a matter of course and Jenny demonstrated deliberate adeptness at using the discourse of business. Although they approached it differently, both informants'

discourse indicated comfort with the language (in terms of both content and process) across both nonprofit and private sectors. Their ability to match language enhanced their possibilities of successful networking and placement, thereby strengthening their individual perceptions of positive outcomes and proactive engagement with business.

Language matching appeared frequently in the documentation and in the organisational symbols observed on site. All of the documentation except one clients-only brochure contained references to both nonprofit values and business concerns. On the front window of the organisation a by-line proclaimed ‘working with business, the community and government’, giving precedence to for-profit links but maintaining a service focus. A small, framed plaque in reception proclaimed the ‘Facts About Customer Service’, and to the right of the desk a large multi-coloured banner read:

Figure 9: Workwell Core Values

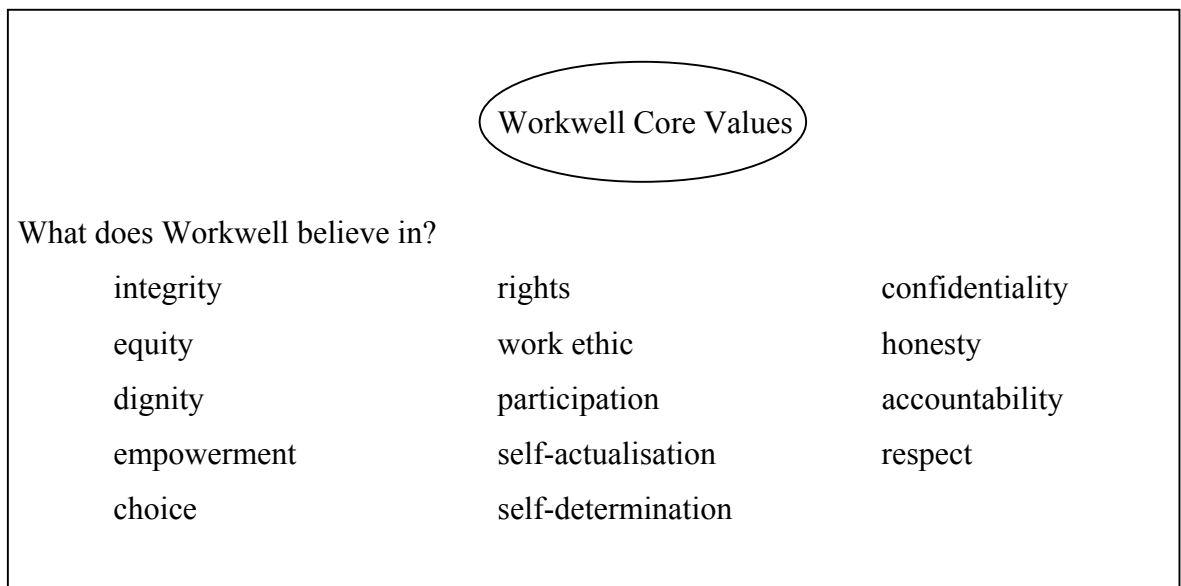
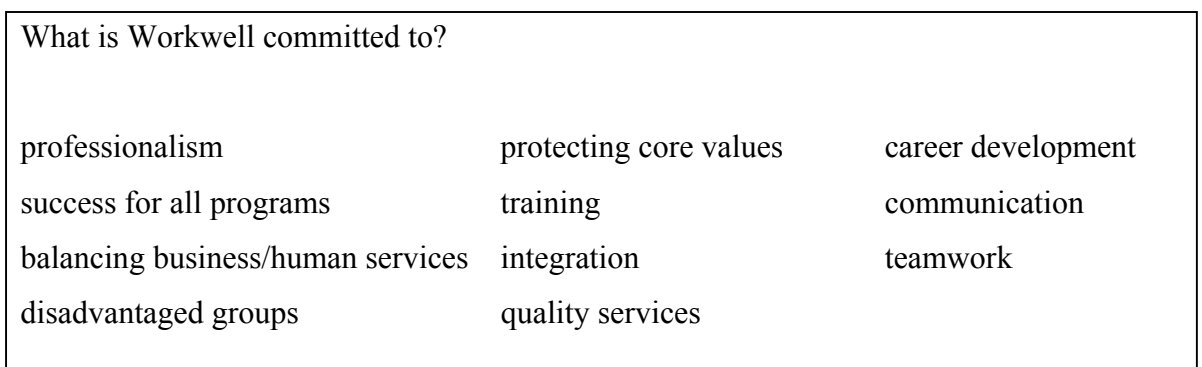


Figure 10: Workwell Commitments



The first half of the banner is dedicated to intangibles, whereas the second half focuses primarily on actions and objectives. Language matching is most evident in the language of commitment on the second half of the banner—words like ‘professionalism’, ‘training’ and ‘quality services’ sit comfortably side-by-side with phrases including ‘protecting core values’, ‘balancing business/human services’ and ‘disadvantaged groups.’ Language matching like this had a positive effect on organisational capacity, because the values incorporated both traditional nonprofit and emerging business principles into a single statement of intent. Organisational capacity was enhanced because of the explicit recognition of the need to include business relationships with the focus on clients needs. This acknowledgement meant that Workwell was operating in an open framework in terms of the types of relationships it would pursue, rather than becoming mired in any possible tension of working with corporates.

This language matching was duplicated in the organisational documentation, where phrases targeted at the private sector like ‘the total business solution’ and ‘quality workers, quality service and quality follow-up’ are placed on the same page as ‘we want to be on your side, fighting for you and with you.’ Documentation and symbols have been viewed as indicators of organisational culture (Gagliardi 1999, p. 316-318).

Language matching is primarily narrative. However, individuals with corporate or business backgrounds have structural reasons for communicating in this way. A history of business connections, such as what Frank described, is itself a routinised, habitualised factor in how people speak to one another. This implied that although language matching focuses on words and phrases from the nonprofit matching for-profit communication, it can be ingrained in an individual’s prior experience rather than a conscious effort to build rapport with a current or potential for-profit partner.

8.2.2 Social identification

Social identification was the extent to which interviewees in the nonprofit identified with and shared understanding with for-profit representatives. Informants in Workwell had strong social identification with the corporate organisations with which they work.

Although most of the examples given in interviews were of positive social identification, negative social identification emerged as a thread here as well. However, because all of the examples of negative social identification were linked to values, this part of social identification will be detailed in the section on understanding the relationship-building process.

The need for closer approximation of business processes was one way in which informants expressed social identification. Here's one example:

[Workwell's new initiative] have to have an Advisory body. And I called just uh, friends from the various corporate sector who already indicated they willingness to participate in that advisory body to run our fee for service business which I'm charged to establish when I come back from overseas...Even though I have great respect to my skills and abilities, I realise my limitation and restrictions. So I call people in to consult when I have to have a certain decision I need to exchange information, how other people thinks. So I can actually drew the line, what would be the best for my service, what would be the best direction to go. So that is the advisory body role, to give me some uh, forum, where I can consult my doubts, my thoughts, my directions and how they see this. And then through my reflection, through my analytical reflection, I have to come into a certain decision which is informed enough to hope that it's the right decision. And the decision made you dunno, but you can hope. So better, better picture that's all. So give me a little help to see the big picture...to decide the detail.

That's, that's basically that's my intention to call all of those expertise in who, who have money to invest but who also have a special to help the community organisations to develop some sort of business

perspectives and operate a little bit more effectively. Uh, and, not only businesslike but some sort of sense in it so for example in our organisation, what I observed here is just a tremendous wasting money. A lot of money wasted because of people who charged for running the core business of this services, having no business sense whatsoever and no experience how to run a business. They usually have some good judgement and common sense, but have no idea how to run the business...

Frank

In this excerpt, Frank examined the ways in which he connected to corporates in terms of a new project that is just beginning in the organisation. The social identification was clear in Frank's awareness of the value of input from a different perspective and the need to work with rather than in opposition to these forces of change. The sense of an 'inclusive we' to denote a group in which he included himself was a strong indicator of collaborative intent and high social identification. It was also linked to social agency, because high or positive social identification on this project meant that discussion would focus on action and implementation rather than on the competing frameworks of individuals involved.

Another common aspect of positive social identification was also connected to the receptiveness with which business organisations and individuals reacted when presented with the proposal to hire a person with a disability. Data from interviewees included the following remarks:

Now I going to approach [manager], he doesn't know yet, with another person who we would like to place over there. So they have some sort of receptive way now, to deal with this.

Frank

Well, not so much personally. ... yeah so they're very supportive, one person training there now we're just about

to send off another person. And they support people with disabilities generally.

Jenny

...she asked what do you do? I told her and she said, “well where's my disabled person?” Within two days we'd booked somebody in. A young client of ours who's now working in the reception of [swimming centre]...

Jenny

Well it's looking at resources for the organisation. Well, I'm at developing a network with Drake to see if they'll take us on as a special project to assist with direct employment placement of clients. Alternatively, whether they just, I mean we, we've yet to, now, I knew somebody this is how a woman networks, and a mother...

Jenny

This last example is of particular significance. In mid-sentence, Jenny said ‘whether they just, I mean we, we’ve yet to...’, making a deliberate transition from the adversarial ‘they’ to an inclusive ‘we’ that marked a linguistic shift to even stronger positive social identification. This conscious social identification illustrated how a perception that she was on the same side as her business contact completely changed the meaning of the sentence for both interviewer and interviewee. Moving herself from an opposition stance (they) to a collaborative stance (we) again changed the emphasis from what 'they' had or hadn't done to what could be accomplished together.

Social identification was a significant part of Workwell's discourse for several reasons. Firstly, as has already been explored in language matching, in at least one case the informant came from a corporate background. Secondly, the relationships developed require a substantial time commitment from both employers and Workwell staff to facilitate the employee's entry into the workforce before, during and after placement. Although this was clearly linked to the personal contacts that interviewees had with individuals in the corporate sector, the social identification that surfaced in the discourse

was a distinct component of this relationship building because it promoted opportunities for Workwell to work ‘with’, not ‘against’ potential employers. Finally, social identification provided a platform upon which to build mutually beneficial relationships and promoted trust and longevity in collaboration.

Social identification is primarily a narrative construction. However, in keeping with McHoul’s notion of language as an object, this discourse resulted in tangible changes in relationships that individuals at Workwell had with their corporate counterparts (McHoul & Clegg 1987).

8.2.3 Intra-organisational communication

One of the areas in which both interview data and documentation were almost silent is on the question of intra-organisational communication. This omission was significant because it told part of the story of Workwell as an organisation struggling to come together after a difficult structural and cultural transition.

Both Frank and Jenny mentioned that the organisation was in the process of relocating. When the interviews were conducted, the office was in the process of being packed up and moved to a different site. This shift was seen by one informant as an opportunity to enhance organisational integration.

In terms of intra-organisational communication on the way relationships with employers were to be developed, the data showed very little. Although social agency appeared unaffected by this lack, organisational capacity could easily be damaged or at least diluted as a result. One of the stories narrated by Frank demonstrated the previous lack of alignment between Workwell and its parent company:

...and they have a warehouse in [a northern suburb]. And the General Manager was in America when I approached the floor manager... placed a guy into the warehouse for permanent employment, and uh, and uh, we used a subsidy form which made the guy some sort of work trial that’s the time, that’s the name of the program, but

basically the person can work in the employer, in the employment without the, any cost for the employer. And everything arranged by government and this service so it's, basically what the employer can get is a free labour. However, because of the arrangement with the floor manager was towards a permanent employment, I was pretty confident to place the guy into that subsidy program because I knew that the person I supported he will succeed and he will demonstrate good attitude, he has a wonderful sense of humour, good skills and uh, I had no problem, other than he obviously visible, you can see that he has some restrictions, physical. And when the General Manager came he stopped the program and said, but he waited until the program has ended so ah, and he said that this guy doesn't fit to the company's culture. That was his words. I was really, really devastated. So I wrote a letter to the mother company to the U.S. And I said what I experienced and I encouraged the manager of this place at the time to write, sign that letter. And we sent [it]. It became a huge issue...this is three years ago actually, just before Christmas. And just before my promotion. [Laughter] Well, I can tell you, because of that that General Manager was evidently not happy with this and he actually approached our CEO at that time. So they get...but, it ended up I never get promoted and I get some verbal warning. So it was a backlash for me.

The issue of greatest salience for Frank in this exchange was the result for his client. However, underlying that is an important clue for the reason behind discursive silence on intra-organisational communication at Workwell. In this scenario, Frank made a decision to confront what he considered to be irresponsible and unethical behaviour on the part of a corporation. As described, Workwell was part of a much larger nonprofit organisation, although until recently it had run quite independently from its parent entity. Here, Frank described how he was disciplined by Workwell's manager after the

head of the larger organisation reacted, even though the manager himself had signed the letter of complaint sent to the business. In other words, although at the time Workwell was ostensibly a separate group, this situation led to a 'reining in' of Workwell. Since then, the parent organisation has made substantial changes to Workwell's structure and operational independence by stripping a layer of middle management and replacing the manager with someone who had been working directly for the larger entity. Although it is difficult to pinpoint this particular instance to the broader changes instituted at Workwell, the experience led to Frank distancing himself from his co-workers in the organisation. Coupled with dramatic turnover since the reorganisation, this data explained the absence of intra-organisational communication in Workwell.

The second issue is that strong intra-organisational communication promoted the development of a cohesive, coherent approach to relationships with business. This in turn would lead to consistency in the image projected to business and assist Workwell in using its existing networks to pursue other opportunities. Although it appeared in Workwell that each individual was pursuing an assertive, proactive policy with potential employers, the organisation as a whole did not communicate an integrated strategy for nurturing these ties.

One of the mitigating factors that may have lessened the impact of this potential danger to the organisation was its renewed proximity to the parent organisation because of the legitimacy of an established institution. However, in this case the balance between social agency on the one hand and organisational capacity through limitation and control on the other is very delicate. It would be disastrous for Workwell's organisational capacity to lose the dedication and assertiveness that characterises current individual approaches to business, as that would result in a loss of power for the nonprofit in relationship to for-profit enterprise. Nonetheless, the name recognition carried by increasing closeness with the parent organisation will stand Workwell in good stead as it grows.

8.2.4 Understanding the relationship-building process

Of all the linguistic threads in Workwell, understanding the relationship-building process was the most fully developed in informants' discourse. Questions about the

way in which they perceived their roles in relationship for-profits elicited rich, detailed narratives full of stories of the interactions. In many cases, brief excerpts of the dialogue were insufficient to convey the depth through which this linguistic thread carried the discourse. Therefore, this section contains some longer examples of the narratives to illustrate how informants constructed their understanding of the relationship-building process. Nonetheless, even these longer pieces of the conversation fail to convey the degree to which this linguistic thread had infiltrated the discourse of Workwell.

Four sub-themes—conflict of interest, personal contact, mutual benefit and values—made up the linguistic thread of understanding the relationship-building process. Each is explored separately in this section and the connections are drawn out in the last part of this chapter.

Conflict of interest

Conflict of interest occurred in only one place in the discourse of Workwell. Asked about how he discerned which employers might be suitable and what would happen if they weren't, Frank stated:

...Now that's also an indication this is not quite the people I'm really looking...and then I go into a little bit more investigative manner so I find out why, why, why, whys and where is the bottom line and then I feel no is not good, the attitude is not right. So when the purpose is other than the social and ethical issues which I'm very keen to hear. Then I, I really don't like to pursue the placement. So that's the way I, I do qualify.

The main point of significance for conflict of interest in Workwell is that lack of concern informants felt about making decisions that might lead them to lose potential employers. As is evident in this example, informants held to strong social agency in determining whether or not a situation would be suitable for their clients. In fact, conflict of interest was exhibited here as the avoidance of circumstances that might compromise the core business of the organisation. Another factor was that informants

recognised that not all corporate organisations offered the type of support and commitment required by Workwell to successfully place a person into employment. This deliberate evasion of conflicts of interest by choosing not to place people for placement's sake led to an increased sense of control over the relationships with business that would have been very different had informants conveyed a sense of desperation about finding the right business partners. As with other cases, conflict of interest reflected real concerns for the welfare of clients as well as experience with unsuccessful placements in the past.

One of the reasons for the small role conflict of interest plays at Workwell is the mechanisms that brought business and the nonprofit together. This will be explored further in the mutual benefit sub-theme, but it was directly related to the type of relationship that the organisations pursued with one another. Rather than being in direct opposition to one another, they were in concert because successful placement would result in reciprocal advantage. Therefore, whether or not there would be an eventual conflict of interest resided in the informants' ability to select appropriate corporate partners. In this sense, it was also related to social agency because interviewees were actively involved in screening potential business connections for suitability to their clients.

Personal contact

Personal contact was pervasive in Workwell discourse. Every case of successful relationships offered by informants contained multiple references to the individual in the business who had facilitated the process of career-oriented job opportunities for Workwell clients. Examples included:

...And through my personal contact I find uh, an organisation who doing innovative locks and all sorts of technical things. And the engineer is [contact], and he, he was very receptive when I explained that I have a lovely guy who would love to have something to do to put together things...So, I explained to [contact] that I had

this guy and we have an interview and we placed him into a process line...

Frank

And that's why it's good to have a supportive employer that can look past some of those barriers. Y'know, if you haven't got someone who's prepared to do that, and accept some of the, some of the little things that may happen, some of the little things that...the person's not going to be successful...It'll usually come down to the supervisor or the manager of the section.

Rob

And the source of the contact:

This is a woman's network. I have three children, my children are in after school care, I have a mum that I knew, I have children with learning difficulties and mums talk. You set up other sorts of networks when you have children who are disadvantaged who struggle through school, we support each other because well, it's not an outright classified major disability but it is. The school system doesn't really accommodate your kids. And anyway, I was talking to one of the mums gone back to work now and I said yeah, so have I so we started talking and she said, "Oh I've gone back to [employment agency]" and I said, "Oh I've gone back to [Workwell]." Next thing, let's have a coffee and set up, let's set up a working relationship, we like each other, we want to have coffee together, we never get a chance to have this coffee together, now finally...what's our agenda? We have talked about our kids, different treatments different schools, even in the corridor rushing through a school...that is starting to establish itself.

Jenny

The reasoning behind using personal contact also emerged:

Part of it's a gut feeling, the person, the person's attitudes. It's very very individual, in a way, they're the director, it's their lives... It's very hard work for us to find employers. Really to make it easier where we have a network of willing employers that just makes it a lot easier for us, like my swimming school lady she's willing to take someone else.

Jenny

Personal contact served three main purposes in the discourse of building relationships with potential employers. Firstly, it offered the initial point of interaction for informants to discuss employment possibilities. Secondly, it reiterated the need to be selective about the types of organisations and individuals to be approached. Both of these aspects of personal contact had a positive influence on social agency of interviewees. By establishing multi-layered contacts with people who began as personal links and identifying characteristics of suitable employers, informants were better able to use their relationship-building skills for positive outcomes. This in turn bolstered their confidence in their ability to source employers. Finally, it began to establish networks of employers and thus contributed to increasing organisational capacity by placing multiple clients into a single employment site.

Personal contact is both narrative and structural. On the one hand, links to individuals and the subsequent rapport that developed is created by the communication between them. Informants' recognition of these networks reinforced their significance and created strong themes of social agency in the discourse. On the other hand, the practical aspects of problem-solving and negotiation were facilitated by the concrete presence of another person with whom informants felt that could communicate effectively. This dual nature of language as both medium and outcome of an interaction was clearly demonstrated in the personal contact sub-theme.

Mutual benefit

Mutual benefit was also a strong sub-theme in Workwell. Informants stated their views about the need to create reciprocal relationships in a few different ways. Firstly, the need for an acknowledgement of limitations clients might have on their working conditions in this comment from Frank:

Well, I basically offer partnership, that's the way I see it. So uh, what I, I, I'm in a business which basically selling product which is not quite right. Alright? Now, we know that, and all of those who actually using that product, I uh, talking about product of uh, labour from a person who have various restrictions, physical and cognitive and so forth...All of these products are not performing 100% or if they performing 100% it's because the employment developed for they particular conditions and only allocated those tasks which meet with the 100% performance level. Now, having said that, uh, to, the employers' perspectives, there's only one way I can say to establish such an employment with a real and non-tokenistic level is if the sort of faultiness is revealed, fully. And we work towards a common good rather than profit-orientated perspectives.

The benefit to the workplace and broader society as a result of their work was another arena in which informants' discourse illustrated mutual benefit, as in these two examples. The first was the placement of an individual who has become a highly productive employee and the second focused on the development of a fee-for-service training initiative to promote workplace diversity:

Um, cut it short, he's now one of the very best worker in that factory and not as a foreman, but an assistant foreman, he actually works so effectively that doesn't need any, any support and the workplace developed some sort of sensitivity toward people with disabilities.

Frank

Um, that created a link between the community services and the corporate sector. All of those who come to that could be...linked to the service from the corporate sector. Um, the corporate sector, the employers um, and various businesses, have people who coming from different kind of backgrounds. The workplace diversity is happening. So the workplace diversity needs education because the workplace is not ready to adopt such a variety of workers coming into the workforce. Now, because of that, I think we have a very good chance to establish a fee for service training program to educated workplaces, workplaces how to deal with people from various backgrounds and how to manage workplace diversity in a cost-effective way. I have my own experience here, and I still have it, where Australia has no idea what kind of human resources they waste every minute of the year by ignoring the people who coming from various kind of countries all around the world bringing a lot of expertise and knowledge and different perspective and they don't utilise them.. They just simply ignore them...in a positive way I can see, because the understanding going to be deeper and also the money going to be more readily available through the fee for services, and more likely been able to provide better quality service or more service or servicing more people. So I think that it going to push the service into a, a different phase and a better phase.

Frank

Traditional notions of mutual benefit also surfaced in Workwell discourse in the form of awareness of business needs.

You know your environment, you've got to look at what works for the employer, we've got to, we're there to match needs, so, um, yeah I would see that as, well, you develop relationships or partnerships... Um, well, I'd have the job description, we're looking for a match, I have the person that matches your needs, I'm given you some financial incentives, I'm giving support, if the person is successful in the job most likely they'll stay because they know how hard it is for them to get other jobs, they put a good deal into making it work, um so we've got reliability. Or I might talk about areas, such as long-term support, we're there to help the person the whole way through, we might do publicity on sort of what you've done, sort of promote your business etc...

Jenny

... And how do we cater for those special needs, but also, remembering that businesses have financial obligations to shareholders and how do we, how do we meet the two. And I guess, a business has a job to do. We've got get the job, we've got to make money, if they don't... We've got to be able to say to them OK, we're here to take a different approach, maybe the job carve [a technique to 'carve out' pieces of a job that can be adapted for a person with a disability] approach to support a person with a disability. You will end up with someone who's productive in that particular job, you will get the benefits...

Rob

Finally, mutual benefit also emerged in narrative about personal benefits for people in business careers making difference to individual lives:

For her, she would like to see [corporate employment agency] take some time for people with, disadvantaged

job seekers not just cream job seekers...Something's that a little bit more, that sort of sense of personal ownership, and I see it as another chance for our clients...

Jenny

All three variations on mutual benefit were connected to social agency and organisational capacity for Workwell and staff members interviewed. Mutual benefit placed the disadvantaged job seekers in a position of having something to offer, which improved Workwell staff's sense of achievement and future potential. This sub-theme also emphasised the practical approach that staff took to accessing job opportunities and further developing the organisation's role in changing societal attitudes about workers with a disability or broader issues of diversity.

Mutual benefit, like personal contact, was also characterised by both narrative and structural factors. Cognitive proximity from reciprocal advantage, coupled with tangible benefits to both sides should placement be successful demonstrated the significance of mutual benefit.

Values

In the discourse about their relationships with for-profits, informants frequently referred to their values. This sub-theme plays out predominantly in disclosure about individual values, but is also present in the question of organisational values. Consider Frank's response to what makes a good corporate partner:

So if we not focusing on the money only, but we focusing on what we do and what is the outcome other than monetary or financial outcome, then we are in business. If I won't be able to establish that sort of ground, foundation, I just walk out...Yeah, yeah, I just walk out. That's the very test if you uh, a Director and you looking for the money only, I walk out. I even not going...Basically one thing is very much of, of the importance, whether they want to abuse the system. So if they after some subsidies and a certain period of time,

then out of question. Alright, because I'm not going to place a person even for a work experience to a place where they want to abuse the system. I just simply not talking to them. I know the industry is not like that, but uh, that's me. So don't take it as a gospel for the industry. That's me, very much of me, so that's my ethical conduct...I always felt passionate towards these social issues...

Another informant commented on the factors affecting selection of businesses:

With a lot of our guys it's targeting business who will be supportive...I guess it's in their staff that's going to support our, our client...whether there's a certain structure there for our staff, for our client to be supported whether their staff is prepared to take a little bit extra time particularly in the initial stages. Uh, yep, I guess things like that.

Rob

And the third informant echoed this sentiment about the importance of the work in which they were engaged:

I think it's just, y'know you have confidence in what you, in what you have, what you do, a real strong belief in what you do and its worthwhileness...And you know whether it's right for your organisation...

Jenny

Once again, social agency was clearly tied to the values sub-theme. The examples above are evidence that staff in Workwell not only embodied these sensibilities but were driven to act on them in ways that maximises potential positive results for their clients and their organisation. In the first, Frank reiterated his power to choose the businesses with whom he worked. In the last, Jenny articulated the need for confidence and careful

selection of potential partners. This data illustrated that the discourse reflected and was supported by active engagement in the process of identifying, initiating and pursuing corporate links. Furthermore, this social agency was deeply seated in the values of the staff in Workwell and the organisation itself.

8.2.5 Leadership

One of the elements of discourse that was conspicuously absent from this case was leadership. Each of the informants, including the Manager at Workwell, spoke of their own 'leadership' in terms of initiating contacts and creating opportunities for links with for-profits. However, there was no clearly defined thread of individual thrust from the top about how this should occur. Rather than directive, as in Integrate Inc. for example, leadership at Workwell was facilitative.

The 'lack' of leadership was not necessarily detrimental to Workwell as an organisation. In fact, this approach probably negated or at least mitigated organisational restructuring turmoil. One possible reason for this style could have been that recent upheaval in terms of closer alignment with the parent company could be softened by a managerial rather than leadership focus. In other words, informants directed themselves insofar as nurturing relationships with business partners instead of being led by one person.

8.2.6 Recognising the institutional context

Recognising the institutional context surfaced as a linguistic thread in Workwell in three distinct ways. The acknowledgement of shifting funding priorities, the increased competition among providers and the changing requirements for nonprofit survival all formed part of the overall institutional context discourse.

An excerpt from the data illustrated Workwell's position as a pilot site for changing funding structures:

The other part of funding and it's been trialled is case-based funding that will eventually replace block grants...rather than lump sum. We're about to participate in the trial and the trial starts in January. We have some

questions about the trial because the funding levels here for our guys may change significantly.

Rob

Another common denominator among informants in recognising institutional context was the awareness of other employment services and changing federal policy on employment that has led to increased competition among providers for subsidies. Frank's narrative of context included this aspect:

Basically, uh basically I prepare myself with current data on the employment situation in disability field and uh, show them the unmet needs of, in numbers, and uh and also depend on what is the focus, um, usually I go for cohesiveness to create some sort of network, and uh, at the moment for example I try to create an little interest group here [for] job support...This just an embryonic stage in my mind that the whole Northern area has reasonably few employment agencies working in this field and we all separated doing the same thing all over again and I try to make it a little bit more effective to put together a little group of people from all of these service providers and and, not working against each other but working together. And trying to create some sort of, of cohesiveness...

As did Jenny's:

...um, yeah I would see that as, well, you develop relationships or partnerships we're part of the bigger network of employment providers...

Finally, in a third indication of how informants recognised institutional context in their discourse, Frank narrated how he envisioned the possibilities for nonprofit development:

Well, hopefully yes, in a positive way I can see, because the understanding going to be deeper and also the money going to be more readily available through the fee for services, and more likely been able to provide better quality service or more service or servicing more people. So I think that it going to push the service into a, a different phase and a better phase...So I think if if a community organisation wants to succeed in the 21st century they have to change uh, operational methods and attitudes. They have to diversify themselves. They cannot maintain the service rely on government funding only. They have to generate some sort of own funding as well to cover certain kind of expenses which necessary for improve to go a little bit further, expand, to provide uh, more for the people they support. So, they need to think differently and more wider picture need to, so they shouldn't focusing on little things and don't worry everything else. You have to see the whole thing, then you can deal with the details. If you not doing that, you miss the point. It's very complex situation. No one can do on his own.

Workwell demonstrated ample ability to recognise, interpret and respond to changing institutional context requirements. The tone of the discourse was optimistic rather than resigned and the staff had already begun to plan in answer to these changes. The timbre of potential was a positive indicator for organisational capacity because it showed openness to change and ready willingness to adapt to shifting conditions. Rather than passively narrating these rapidly evolving environmental conditions, Workwell informants presented the institutional context in the discourse as a an opportunity to work more collaboratively with other organisations in the future. The structural constraints and opportunities of institutional context were amply reflected in interviews with Workwell informants, as was their intention to use language to construct a meaningful response in a given context.

8.3 WEAVING THE THREADS

Workwell provided the most dense network of linguistic threads of all the cases studied. Unlike the Care & Share Association, for example, where directionality of values and mutual benefit conveyed limitations on the discourse of business relationships, in Workwell most of these arrows appeared multidirectional. This reflected the extent to which business principles and community service imperatives cohabited in the organisation. Note that this does not necessarily indicate resolution of all tensions. On the contrary, the dense web of linguistic threads in the discourse of Workwell is more indicative of an ability to recognise and address potentially detrimental issues relating to dealings with business prior to extensive relationship-building.

Although the density provided a sense of cohesion between for-profit requirements and nonprofit core concerns, Workwell's organisational capacity was nonetheless inhibited. Masked by the overlap and multidirectionality of the linguistic threads in this case was a note of individuals all working separately for the same goal. In other words, although social agency was high for all informants and they had each evolved strategies for combining business principles and nonprofit service objectives, the organisational remained fragmented. The model at the end of the chapter illustrates the tapestry of linguistic threads, but does not adequately convey the extent to which Workwell's organisational capacity was curtailed by lack of these circumstances.

Whereas in terms of its relationship with business Workwell appeared on solid footing, the discourse of intra-organisational communication told a different story of organisational fragmentation. Nonetheless, due to strong social agency partially hinging on the complex web of threads described above, staff in Workwell were able to overcome this organisational weakness to bond their individual intentions with the residual organisational values structure.

Language matching was linked to values, because those values incorporated both service and business demands. Values in turn was reciprocally connected to personal

contact, mutual benefit and social identification, forming a series of tightly overlapping circles in the model. Even conflict of interest had ties to language matching and the other elements of the understanding the relationship-building process thread, because it demonstrated how staff used their knowledge of mutual benefit requirements and language matching to assess company suitability.

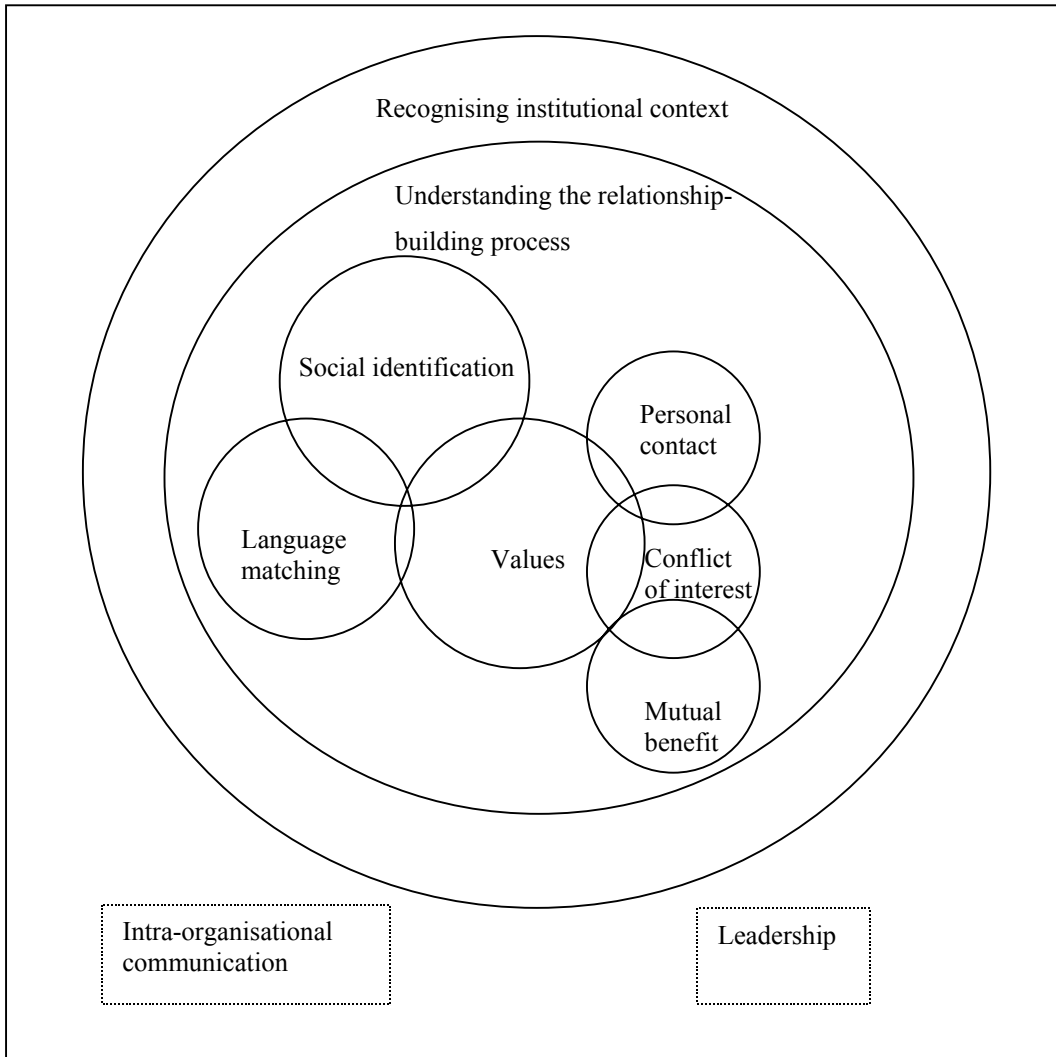
Leadership was outside the main model of linguistic threads and is represented inside a dotted box to mark its absence or struggle to take hold. It was closely connected to the schism between strong social agency on the one hand and a loosely affiliated organisational structure on the other. Changes in organisational management and cultural indicators at the time of observation indicated that stronger leadership had been the intent of the parent organisation, but this did not appear to have eventuated.

Finally, staff were clearly aware of the institutional context in which they operated and had developed sophisticated, empowered strategies to deal with changes in funding, shifting opportunities for their clients and a new environment for their organisation.

After determining that the case study data had reached theoretical saturation (Glaser & Strauss 1967), it was decided to proceed to the media analysis and the quantitative portion of the overall study. The next chapter outlines the results of the media analysis.

Figure 11:

Workwell Linguistic Threads Model



CHAPTER 9: MEDIA ANALYSIS

9.1 OVERVIEW

Shifting sources of financial support and higher burdens of service are two explicit structural challenges that the sector faces (Lyons 2001). These two factors are part of the institutional context: that is, the legal, political, social and economic environment in which organisations operate. Organisations are limited by the milieu in which they work, and embedded in and constrained by these broader circumstances or institutional context (DiMaggio and Powell 1991).

However, there is a third area of context that may have an impact on nonprofit organisations and their staff—the media. There has been substantial research into the media and its effects on those who consume the information as well as the influence of the media to shape public debate (Biagi 1996; Bryant & Zillman 1993). Others have focused specifically on the analysis of media as discourse (van Dijk 1988). Although the media is far from being the only measure of public perception, it is one useful gauge. It has also played a powerful part in formulating the debate (Hiebert 1999; Chesebro & Bartelsen 1996; Gurevitch 1995). In terms of portrayal of nonprofits in relationships with business, the media both reflects and helps to construct how these third sector organisations are viewed and view themselves.

There is one area of discourse in the media that is of increasing importance in the changing funding schemes. As government withdraws from being the primary funder of many nonprofit organisations, one of the ways in which nonprofit organisations address resource shortfalls is through relationships with business. This chapter describes and analyses the results of a media analysis in the area of relationships between nonprofit organisations and for-profit firms. As one aspect of localised institutional context, the media provides a foil against which to understand and theorise about the individual and organisational dimensions of the research. It represents a segment of the environment in which nonprofit staff and organisations operate and enhances the understanding of those levels of analysis. Others have also used the media as part of the discourse around a particular social phenomenon (Hardy & Phillips 1999).

Thus, the primary focus of the media analysis is to deepen understanding of the public sphere in which these organisations operate.

During fieldwork, there was a second objective for the media analysis. It was to provide critical information to address one of the research questions:

3. Does the media aspect of the institutional context of relationships in which nonprofits operate affect the social agency of individuals and the capacity of nonprofits?

The outcome of the media analysis was not to answer this question. Rather, it resulted in creating a fuller, more detailed picture of the context in which relationships between nonprofits and for-profits operate. This is not a tangential aspect of the complete project. In fact, the media analysis played a critical role in identifying elements of the discourse that may have affected the nonprofit organisations. Nonetheless, for reasons explored below, there is little definitive evidence of the direct, measurable effects of the media on those organisations. For those reasons, the modified question answered by the media study is as follows:

How does the media portray relationships between nonprofits and business? What implications, if any, does this portrayal have for nonprofit organisations and their staff?

Many communication researchers have noted the difficulty of successfully measuring the effects of the media (Anderson & Meyer 1988; Biagi 1996; Winston 1986). As has already been noted, the primary thrust of the research is to describe and understand the experiences of staff in nonprofit organisations engaged in relationships with for-profits. Therefore, instead of focusing on the effects of the media, this chapter is more concerned with the role of the media as part of the environment in which inter-sectoral relationships develop. This component of the research focuses on establishing the environment in which nonprofits and their staff operate in terms of media portraits of their organisational experience. The analysis was not designed to answer definitively

this research question. Rather, it was developed and included to ensure that the research addressed the issue of media context at the level of actual content instead of relying solely on second-hand reporting from informants on their perceptions of the media. Where appropriate, the media analysis points to some possible effects on organisational capacity and social agency.

In summary, this chapter represents a differentiated analysis in its own right. The media analysis is one way in which to describe context as it relates directly to the experiences of individuals and organisations. As documented in the case studies and demonstrated by interviews, nonprofit staff are aware of elements of context such as legal constraints, funding limitations and political agendas. The focus of this chapter is particularly on the sometimes unacknowledged undercurrents of public attention on the subject of these relationships, and the way in which nonprofit staff and organisations are characterised in these accounts.

9.2 METHODOLOGY

The focus of the research is predominantly on business and nonprofit links. However, for the media analysis the scope was broadened to encompass adjacent areas of concern. To build a coherent narrative of that relationship it was necessary to conduct the media analysis on a wider platform. To this end, the following areas were included: philanthropy/donations, characteristics of welfare organisations/nonprofits and client populations, privatisation and competition for contracts. In addition, because of the interest in the changing federal tax system during this period, pieces about tax legislation as it pertained to both nonprofit organisations and business philanthropy were also examined.

The sample was drawn from media to which nonprofit staff in organisations in metropolitan Sydney had most immediate and opportune access. The timeframe for the analysis was three years, from 1998-2000.

Because it was impractical to manually search all publications for a three-year period, the scope was limited. In order to identify the sample from the newspapers and television programs, standard public access databases with search engine capability were used. Although not all search protocols for database match exactly, the same set of key words was inputted to catalogue appropriate material. From conversations with colleagues and professionals in the nonprofit arena, a list of words was generated that would reflect with a high degree of accuracy the spectrum of materials required. In other words, it was the intention of the data collection phase to access a broad range of media pieces that might refer to the relationships between business and nonprofits. Focusing only on one descriptor of a nonprofit organisation, for example, might have resulted in missing some important articles. By generating a list that included a variety of referents to inter-sectoral collaboration, it was more likely to be comprehensive in its search coverage. The list of words included alliance, benevolent organisation, business, CBO (community-based organisation), charitable institution, charity, community organisation, civil society, donation, donor, foundation, funding, fundraising, giving, NGO, nonprofit, partnership, philanthropy, privatisation, third sector, volunteer, and welfare.

The other advantage of this strategy of selecting a list of words to search on, and then applying these constraints to all media sources, was that it ensured that the same range of articles or television programs from each source was identified. This approach also minimised the chance that articles would be missed in the data collection phase, because all media sources were subjected to the same search criteria.

Major market print media used in the study included the *Sydney Morning Herald*, the *Sun-Herald*, the *Daily Telegraph*, the *Australian Financial Review*, the *Age* and the *Australian*. In addition, several newsletters that are commonly read in nonprofit community service organisations in Sydney were included, such as newsletters from the Community/ Business Partnerships Commonwealth Initiative, the Australian Council of Social Services (ACOSS) and the Council of Social Services of New South Wales (NCOSS). Finally, transcripts and tapes of some television programs from the Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC) were also analysed. Resource limitations prevented use of external researchers to conduct archival research of radio programs

over the three-year period. The analysis was conducted on a total of 78 articles and television programs.

9.2.3 Process of analysis

In order to maintain continuity across data sources, the structure of discourse analysis was maintained by focusing on the themes, patterns and content of the data. This is the part of media discourse that van Dijk (1988) calls ‘macropropositions.’ In this modelling of the process of media as discourse, macropropositions combine into ‘macrostructures’. These are analogous to the sub-themes of the research amalgamating into linguistic threads. Using a similar process to that employed in the case studies, linguistic threads and sub-themes were identified, examples were collated and then these were linked to threads based on empirical chains of evidence in the data.

As will become obvious throughout the chapter, some of the narratives are similar to those identified in the case studies. However, like the case studies, the media analysis was part of the inductive phase of the research; therefore, it was important to remain open to the possibility of new patterns emerging from the media data.

Because all of the media were either hard copies of articles, videotapes or transcripts of television programs, all material was coded by hand.

One additional aspect of analysis for the media section that was deemed critical was some compilation of descriptive statistics from the data. These included a small number of frequency tables connected to linguistic threads, which are referred to in the text. Several authors have pointed to the impact of frequency of exposure on internalised values (Biagi 1996; Anderson & Meyer 1988). The extent to which characterisations of nonprofits and nonprofit staff contained common denominators is an important part of understanding how this image might affect the social agency of individuals and the organisational capacity of nonprofits. In other words, it was important to quantify some aspects of the analysis in order to ascertain to what degree that particular viewpoint appeared in the print or television media about nonprofits.

9.3 ANALYSIS

Linguistic threads refer to themes that appear repeatedly in the media discourse, and emerge from the data during the inductive phase of analysis. In this analysis, the linguistic threads that occurred were language matching, social identification and understanding the relationship-building process (comprised of the sub-themes of conflict of interest, personal contact, mutual benefit and values). Linguistic threads were deconstructed from the data and then recombined to illustrate how the themes in the media discourse were connected to one another to tell the story of nonprofit/for-profit relationships. After examining how each linguistic thread was present in the data, the discussion section will address how linguistic threads overlap and combine to form coherent ‘stories’ of how nonprofit organisations are portrayed in their relationships with business enterprise.

9.3.1 Language matching

Language matching in the context of the media analysis is the linguistic thread through which language traditionally reserved for the for-profit sector is applied to nonprofit organisations. In other words, the propensity of language dealing with nonprofit organisations to reflect business terminology. Language matching appeared in twenty-five of the seventy-seven articles/programs studied.

...charities, by their very nature, are unusual economic units.

(Sydney Morning Herald 9 December 1999, p. 18)

“The corporate involvement [with a nonprofit organisation] is very much a business deal...”

(Sydney Morning Herald 11 June 1998, p. 29)

The community sector is being corporatised and refashioned in the image of a new economic paradigm where market forces and individual choice reign supreme.

(*IMPACT*, Raysmith 2000)

...a charity's 'commercial activity' which is deemed to occur when something is sold at more than 50 per cent of its 'market value' or 'costs of supply' will attract the GST, even though all profits help fund charitable services.

(*Sydney Morning Herald* 7 December 1999c, p. 1)

The services were to be axed after a cost analysis found they were not part of the "core business" of Red Cross NSW...

(*Sydney Morning Herald* 4 August 1999,
p. 8)

...in a deal...

(*Australian* 21 February 1999, p. 4)

...charity market...

(*Sun-Herald* 14 November Williams 1999, p. 39)

Contracting out and competition...

(*Sydney Morning Herald* 30 December 1999, p. 11)

"...downsizing of [civil] society through the course of the twentieth century..."

(*Compass: People Power Part 3—Civil Society,
Government and Corporations* 23 April 2000,)

Every one of these articles contains references to processes and structures that in the past have been more closely associated with the private sector—that is, the language matching occurs almost exclusively in one direction. Language traditionally associated with business enterprise was used to describe nonprofit organisations.

Of all the data, only two interesting counter-examples emerged. One showed ‘reverse’ language matching, or language traditionally applied to nonprofit organisations being applied to corporations. The other illustrated how language matching can be used to promote a political agenda.

The reverse language matching comes from a sub-headline for an article on tax incentives to corporations. It reads simply ‘Canberra *bestows businesses* with a tax gift to encourage them to give.’ The words in question, italicised for emphasis, are a curious mixture. Contrary to traditional language, where the nonprofit is the sole recipient, in this headline the private sector has become the passive beneficiary of a government. The double use of ‘gift’ (from government to business) and ‘giving’ underscores the dual role of business here—to receive and in receiving ‘pass on’ the benefits to the ultimate recipient, the nonprofit sector.

Although it is difficult to ascertain the intention of the writer in this example, the most probable source of this disjuncture between traditional business language and the language of ‘giving’ is rhetorical effect. That is, the author uses language usually reserved for notions of ‘charity’ or ‘welfare’ and applies it to business being on the receiving end to create a sense of dissonance and surprise for the reader.

The second counter example in the language matching linguistic thread is the material produced in the name of Community Business Partnership, including their Web site and newsletters. The Prime Minister’s initiative in Community Business Partnership is ‘a representative group of Australians committed to encouraging and enhancing partnerships between the corporate and community sectors.’ (<http://www.zip>.

partnership.com.au, 7 July 2001) Its principal aim is to nurture and support inter-sectoral partnerships between business and nonprofit. All of the newsletters and the material on this Web site are replete with attempts to distinguish the contributions of the business and nonprofit sectors using their own respective language frameworks. A message from the Prime Minister John Howard sums up the tone of that particular discourse:

World-wide, partnerships are fast becoming a potent force for change. In Australia, we have a dynamic, thriving business sector and we have a compassionate, caring community sector. In partnership, and with the enthusiastic support of the government, these sectors have the capacity to regenerate our communities. They have the potential to take us into the new millennium with renewed confidence in our ability to create the kind of society we want to live in.

(Community Business Partnership Newsletter July 1998,
<http://www.partnership.zip.com.au/newslet>, cited
November 2000)

It is interesting to speculate on the reasons for this conscious language matching. Although it appears the intended message is one of alliance, the effect is actually to further separate the two sectors that this entire initiative is attempting to bring together. In this interpretation and by extension, business is not compassionate or caring and the community sector is neither dynamic nor thriving. Obviously, this has an effect on both sectors in terms of their conceptualisation of themselves.

There is distinct irony in this language matching for the nonprofit. The majority of the discourse, as illustrated above, is about the nonprofit ‘smartening up its act’ [read: becoming more business-like] and transforming the way it conducts itself to adapt to the corporate mode. And yet, at the hub of the Community Business Partnership discourse is the exaltation of ‘unique’ features of the nonprofit sector that distinguish it from business—the very qualities that are viewed increasingly with disdain as formal

business processes of contracting, tenders and efficiency performance indicators prevail. This juxtaposition of competing images and frames of reference has an impact on a nonprofit's capacity and the individuals who staff the institutions.

This strong trend in language matching exclusively in one direction is another mechanism that drives the 'business first' institutional context. Business is exhorted to contribute, but it is the nonprofit organisations' language of collaboration and compassion that is being replaced by demands to compete and become increasingly efficient at the risk of decreasing responsiveness.

Not all of the effects of language matching are negative. It may have practical benefits to organisations learning to function in a changing world, given that nonprofits' best 'strategy' for survival is to adapt to rapidly shifting conditions. By enabling nonprofit staff and organisations to visualise themselves as 'business units', this language matching engages them in the broader dialogue of change. The question then becomes what is lost in the process of gaining business acumen.

Nonetheless, the power structure remains clear. The predominance of unidirectional language matching remains rooted in government and private sector terms, with the third sector struggling to keep the pace.

9.3.2 Social identification

Another parallel linguistic thread that appeared in both case study data and the media analysis was social identification. Social identification is the process by which individuals in different sectors or organisations across sectors experience an affinity with and close linguistic association with another. Social identification can be both high/positive or low/negative. Examples of social identification in the media worked three ways: word or phrase association, development of individual to individual empathy and metaphorical inter-organisational cohesion.

In the media analysis on relationships between nonprofit organisations and for-profit firms, there are several examples of positive or high social identification. In these cases, single words signalled commonality:

‘bring [the worlds] together’

(Sydney Morning Herald 27 November 1999b, p. 7s)

‘partnership’

(multiple sources)

Individual to individual empathy surfaced in narratives like these:

‘Professor Lyons says nonprofits are sustained by millions of ordinary people...’

(Australian Financial Review 24 August 1998, p. 6)

‘ “I believe they [participants in a leadership program from nonprofit/business sectors] will form a powerful network and will be the social innovators of the future” ’

(Sydney Morning Herald November 1999b, p. 7s)

And finally, the following are examples of positive social identification using metaphorical inter-organisational cohesion:

‘calling for “a new social coalition”...’

(Sydney Morning Herald 27 March 1999, p. 3)

‘ “If we don’t, I fear the growing rift between rich and poor will destroy us all. It’s no good being well off if you don’t have a stable society.” ’

(Sydney Morning Herald 26 January 1999, p. 8)

Positive or high social identification reinforces the idea that there are common goals that unite all of us. The power of this for the nonprofit is that it counters the marginalisation of the people whom the third sector serves and builds tunnels and bridges rather than checkpoints and walls. It also asserts reciprocity and sharing of intellectual as well as financial resources, such as the last two examples above in which the process of educating one another serves the additional function of bringing the two entities closer together.

There are examples of negative social identification using metaphor, single words and individual empathy as well.

Inter-organisational metaphor and single words

‘Australia’s corporate heavyweights have pursued a hardhearted agenda.’

(Sydney Morning Herald 17 April 1999a, p. 45)

In Australia, we have a dynamic, thriving business sector and we have a compassionate, caring community sector.

(Community Business Partnership media release, July 1998, <http://www.partnership.zip.com.au>, cited November 2000)

Individual empathy

Three hundred and fifty guests dug deep into their pockets to help the charity...’

(Daily Telegraph 17 February 1998, p. 17)

‘One of the preconceptions people have is that children and teens with drug/alcohol dependency have brought the problems on themselves.’

(Australian Financial Review 19 October 1999, p. 41)

These examples illustrate the ‘us/them’ distinction with which many nonprofit organisations have to contend.

More evidence for negative social identification is in the quantitative analysis. The word ‘charity’ was present in over half of the 78 data elements studied. Of course, the argument is not that media should not have referent to specific types of organisations. In fact, it is important for the ‘story-telling’ function of the news to identify and distinguish actors in their accounts. However, the connotations of ‘charity’ imply a position of passivity, which is historically grounded in the development of the sector in Australia over the last few centuries. Other descriptors that may be less value-laden, such as ‘third sector,’ ‘non-profit,’ or even ‘community organisations’ were much less likely to be used to classify this diverse group of institutions.

Here is a single counter example of negative social identification that appeared to work differently from the others:

‘The creative powers of design students were harnessed by charities...’

(Australian 21 July 1999, p. 44)

9.3.3 Understanding the relationship-building process

This linguistic thread refers to the way in which the discourse of the media aspect of the institutional context reflects an understanding of the relationship-building process between for-profit and nonprofit organisations. In other words, it deals with the development of links between these two sectors. Understanding the relationship-

building process comprised four sub-themes: conflicts of interest, personal contact, mutual benefit and values/mission.

Conflict of interest

Conflict of interest was the least common sub-theme in this linguistic. It is interesting to note that conflict of interest was a common linguistic thread in the interviews, but appeared a single time in the institutional discourse. The example, taken from an article in an internal publication, was the following:

Extensions of more normal commercial enterprises into areas of social obligation, however, can be more fraught.

(IMPACT, Raysmith 2000)

The one example of conflict of interest is in fact an acknowledgement of difficulties in the other direction—that is, in terms of the problems that corporations may face in attempting to become more socially responsible. There is an insinuation that there are inherent difficulties in integrating business with social obligation, but there is no similar assertion in any of the print media or television coverage that points to the same types of conflict of interest as the informants clearly stated. The media discourse is completely silent on the issues of differences in the purpose, operations and outcomes desired by community versus corporate enterprises.

Personal contact

Journalism is about story telling and stories require protagonists. As part of the linguistic thread of understanding the relationship-building process, the personal contact sub-theme plays a significant role in the media discourse. Examples include:

I believe those of us who have done well have an obligation to put something back in to the country...

(Sydney Morning Herald 26 January 1999, p. 8)

In Dubbo, he [a leadership program participant from the corporate sector] confronts rural squalor, the effects of bank closures and the changing economy. He is deeply moved by the plight of rural Australians.

(Sydney Morning Herald 27 November 1999b, p. 7s)

We [the Macquarie Foundation] give a strong bias to charities and campaigns where members of the staff are involved personally, whether it be giving money or donating time and effort to make things happen...it makes the staff feel good that we have a foundation that helps them do the sort of things they are doing privately.

(Business Review Weekly 4 June 1999, p. 87)

One businessman who has inspired others wanting involvement in community programs is John Fitzgerald.

(Sydney Morning Herald 20 November 1999, p. 118)

Personal contact in the media symbolised both a literary technique for special interest stories and a reflection of the degree to which individual involvement of for-profit staff affects their perceptions of the nonprofit sector. In the first instance, using personal stories in newspaper articles serves to generate interest. As a literary technique, personal stories are a narrative device that help link the reader to the piece and persuade them of the argument that the journalist is trying to convey. Much of the news is about the story—and the story of organisations working together is crystallised using personal experiences of people involved in the work. Secondly, the prevalence of the personal contact linguistic thread illustrates how business people's involvement in the community sector colours their perception of that group of organisations.

Mutual benefit

The mutual benefit sub-theme appeared in 24 articles/programs out of 27 total that exhibited this linguistic thread. Some of the most prominent examples are:

A report to be released in December by Global Communication Strategies states that an organisation's social policies and responsibility are of "overwhelming concern" to the public...social policies and responsibility are one of seven factors affecting corporate reputation.

(Sydney Morning Herald 20 November 1999, p. 118)

Rafter...said there was too much money in sport and hoped setting up a charity would help lift its image.

(Sydney Morning Herald 5 February 1999, p. 5)

More companies are finding that they can do well by doing good.

(Business Review Weekly 4 June 1999, p. 84)

Engaging in philanthropic activity, as part of a commitment to corporate citizenship will have many benefits, not the least of which are benefits for the company. It is a case of 'values delivering value.' It is argued that an active philanthropic program will help attract and maintain the loyalty of shareholders and employees. In essence, corporate philanthropy is good for business.

(‘The future of philanthropy’, IMPACT 2000)

The commonality among all of these varied examples is clear. There is a strong sense of mutual benefit as a significant part of the media discourse on relationships between business and nonprofit organisations.

Values/mission

As part of the broader linguistic theme of understanding the relationship building process, values or mission indicators show how closely or distantly related these concepts are in the media to the way in which nonprofits and for-profits interact. Of the four sub-themes in this stream, values/mission appeared less frequently than mutual benefit or personal contact but more often than conflict of interest. Values/mission patterns were present in fourteen of the pieces.

Dawn Smith: I wonder if the companies know what their shareholders think, because I see the shareholders as a microcosm of the whole community and in the many years in this business, what I've discovered is that there are givers in the community and there are takers.

(7:30 Report 23 December 1999)

Inspired by his dad...Pat Rafter launched his own children's charity yesterday aimed at helping street youth get off drugs... "I got a lot of these values from mum and dad, especially the father who was big into giving," Rafter said.

(Sydney Morning Herald 5 February 1999, p. 5)

In these examples, the emphasis on values and mission emerges in three ways: linked to community expectations, linked to personal values and closely tied to mutual benefit.

The media discourse shows how companies are portrayed as responding to shareholder concerns. In this language, community expectations clearly have an effect on whether

and how for-profits engage with nonprofit organisations, as can be seen from the first two excerpts above. The second common hub of discourse is the storytelling of one individual's values, such as in the Pat Rafter example above. Finally, close association with mutual benefit is a frequent precursor to the emergence of values/mission in the discourse, as with the last example here (see examples 3, 4 and 5 in the mutual benefit section).

One crucial observation is that of the instances of value/mission in the fourteen pieces, more than two-thirds focus on how the corporation might fit philanthropy into its company goals. In other words, the discourse on values has at its centre the for-profit institution. This is an interesting turn in the debate because it focuses on one half of the supposed emerging 'partnerships' in the area of values/mission. The article itself may be about both parties, but the scrutiny remains on how corporations operate and how they might adapt and extend their missions to commit to 'corporate citizenship.'

There are exceptions to this. The brief on developing partnerships from the government-sponsored Community Business Partnerships mentions nonprofit values. The Compass television piece on the development of Civil Society in the Philippines expends considerable energy exploring the values of those individuals and community groups that struggled against an oppressive regime.

And as with conflict of interest, mutual benefit and personal contact, there are distinct differences in the way that 'internal' sector publications such as peak body newsletters portray values/mission and the way in which the broader media pose the general debate about the place of nonprofit organisations in society. However, even the internal publications focus discourse about relationships between nonprofit and for-profit institutions on the corporate side. Here is one selection that was first introduced in the last section:

Engaging in philanthropic activity, as part of a commitment to corporate citizenship will have many benefits, not the least of which are benefits for the company. It is a case of 'values delivering value.' It is argued that an active philanthropic program will help

attract and maintain the loyalty of shareholders and employees. In essence, corporate philanthropy is good for business.

(‘The future of philanthropy’, *IMPACT* 2000)

Once again in this example the emphasis is on how corporate involvement with nonprofits can benefit the company.

9.3.4 Other themes

In addition to the linguistic threads presented to this point, there were three other themes that occurred in the media discourse analysed. They are included here as supplementary to the main body of the analysis because, although they are not directly related to questions of language and power in business/for-profit relationships, they contribute to a comprehensive account of the discourse in the media. In other words, they are part of the ‘story’ of the media coverage, but they did not have direct bearing on the questions posed for this study. The three additional themes are government as mediator, politics and the GST and comparisons with the United States.

Government as mediator

The discourse of government as mediator stems from two converging lines of discussion. First is the positioning of the government as initiator on this topic. Consider the following excerpts from different sources:

The Prime Minister...said last night he had asked the Community Business Partnership advisory group...to suggest ways to promote wider use of such schemes, “including through any appropriate government incentives”...he said the Government’s efforts to promote philanthropic giving were already encouraging greater levels of generosity from individuals who wanted to give back to their community.

(Australian Financial Review 20 November 2000, p. 3)

The Prime Minister's Awards for Excellence in Community Business Partnerships...aim to foster and facilitate a tradition of Australian business, individuals and community organisations working together in partnership for mutual benefit and the benefit of the Australian community.

*(Community Business Partnership media release
June 2000 <http://www.partnership.zip.com.au>, cited
November 2000)*

The government, in the person of the Prime Minister, is presenting itself as the broker of and initiator of these relationships. Even though at first glance the second and third examples may appear to be describing the government in a development rather than initiator role, it is clear from the sequence of events that the Community Business Partnership advisory group is an extension of the government and that the government is the initiator of awards. The government is the source of the concept of partnerships and the guiding hand behind them.

This 'government as supportive provider' in the relationship is the second element of discourse that appears frequently. However, in every case it should be noted that in fact the impression one is left with is that it is the government that initiates all of these relationships. Here is one example:

...\$10,000 in federal funding to assist in further development of their partnership.

(Age 27 March 1999, p. 7)

Only in examples of philanthropy or partnership in which the government is not mentioned (of which there are fewer than a handful) is this not the case.

Interesting counter-examples were floated in materials that are most likely to be accessed only by nonprofit staff members. This discourse theme of government acknowledged changing roles over time. One example from the ACOSS organisation shows how nonprofit organisations are beginning to re-evaluate the role of government for themselves and the people with whom they work:

For two generations we have placed great store in the mechanisms of the state to protect the weak, provide for people in times of need and create a safe and socially just society. These mechanisms are still important and gains of the past must be defended, but new progress will not come through these means. It will be civil society linked to new organisational structures that will provide the new energy and new advances.

(*IMPACT* Raysmith 2000)

Another example that may have had broader appeal was derived from the Compass television program, which positioned the ‘old debate’ as a struggle between the market and the state and the emerging ‘new era of people power’ of the market versus ‘the power of ordinary people, individuals and community groups’ (Compass Part 3).

These examples show that the discourse may be changing, but it is still dominated by the sense of government as an authoritarian, omnipotent power that makes decisions for the third sector.

Politics and the GST

During the period of this media analysis, changing tax regimes occupied a large space in the media surrounding nonprofit organisations. Headlines such as ‘Howard offers charity breaks’ (*Sydney Morning Herald* 27 March 1999, p. 3), ‘Howard’s \$51m punt on galloping philanthropy’ (*Age* 27 March 1999, p. 7), ‘Backlash over GST cash grab from charities’ (*Sydney Morning Herald* 6 December 1999b, p. 5) and ‘GST repackaged in the name of charity’ (*Sydney Morning Herald* 10 December 1999, p. 1) are good

illustrations of how the politics of nonprofit organisations were brought to the forefront in the tax debate.

The politics of this debate are intriguing. Most of it pivots on the power struggle between the public and third sectors. There is the traditional government/opposition tension in which each is vying for the support or at least political silence of nonprofit organisations, as in these exchanges in the same publication over the course of a few days:

The Labor Party is expected to exempt charities from the GST as part of its promised ‘rollback’ of the tax if elected.

(Sydney Morning Herald 6 December 1999b, p. 5)

The Federal Government attempted yesterday to short-circuit a week of sustained attack by charities on the GST, pledging an extra \$40 million in assistance and a package of legislative amendments to soothe their concerns.

(Sydney Morning Herald 10 December 1999, p. 1)

There is an undercurrent of paternalism in the discourse here. Phrases like ‘to soothe their [the ‘charities’] concerns imply a need to control or dampen to the voice of the sector. This need to ‘cut a deal’ to put nonprofits in a position of acquiescence is clearly part of the broader perception of nonprofits as ‘subject to’ rather than active or at least consultative participants in the process of their taxation. In fact, one editorial opinion piece identifies this complexity:

The major charities, by and large, have believed the GST brings no advantages to them. The broad social advantages from tax reform are remote; the hassle of new compliance regimes is very immediate. As long as that attitude prevails, the Government has a problem. It must explain and persuade. Instead, it has adopted a clumsy

and self-defeating solution. It has offered assistance to charities to help offset the cost of their compliance with the GST—as it has with other organisations. But it has made such assistance conditional. The draft contracts sent to charities include this requirement: “the [charitable] organisation shall favourably acknowledge the contribution of the Commonwealth to the organisation in any correspondence, public announcement, advertising material or other material produced by, or on behalf of, the organisation.” If not, assistance will be withdrawn. This clumsy, intimidatory document should never have been issued.

(Sydney Morning Herald 9 December 1999, p. 18, editorial)

Comparison with the U.S.

One minor but nonetheless telling element of the governmental discourse is the comparison of the Australian context with the American situation. There are two sides to this discourse as well. On the one hand is the notion that the U.S. is ‘ahead of’ Australia in the areas of philanthropy and corporate citizenship. On the other hand, there is a tendency in the data to differentiate Australia from the American context to explain levels of donations, especially in the corporate arena. Some examples of the comparison and examples of both approaches follow.

While we’re giving more than ever to charity, our yearly average of just \$210 a person is well below that of the U.S. (\$900) and Britain (\$400).

(Sun-Herald 14 November 1999, p. 39)

Historically, Australia has primarily relied on government to fund social needs, retirement incomes and health...Australia does not have a strong culture of

giving. In 1995 the Industry Commission estimated the value of donations to charity at 0.5% GDP, less than half of other developed countries and only a quarter of the United States.

(NCOSS News 1999, vol. 26 p. 11)

Although there are exceptions, philanthropic tradition in Australia is not strong, especially when compared with the United States. Gonski has figures that show Americans gave the equivalent of \$143 billion to charity in 1997. Australians gave \$3 billion in the year to June 30, 1998. “Even if you say that America has 10 times our population, these figures are stark,” he says. A recent survey by Perpetual Trustees, which found that Australians give \$100 a head to charity each year and Americans \$600, confirms the less generous nature of Australians.

(Business Review Weekly 23 April 1999, p. 75)

The comparison sub-theme has an effect on both of nonprofit staff members and nonprofit organisations. On the one hand, there is the vague urgency of needing to ‘catch up with the Americans’ in the area of corporate philanthropy and partnerships. On the other hand, the discourse of how ‘different’ Australia is and how historical factors have contributed to diminishing social returns from business and individuals is defeatist. Nonprofit organisations working in a media context that blithely states ‘that’s the way it is and only government can change it’ while struggling to deal with the reality of decreasing funds and increasingly stringent economic demands are in a schizophrenic situation. If nonprofit organisations compare their ability to generate support with matching American organisations ahistorically, they might lose sight of the contextual differences that have created dissimilar third sector environments in the two countries. However, if they rely on the discourse in the media that ‘explains away’

levels of donations and cites a lack of ‘giving culture’ in Australia, nonprofit institutions are left with the task of accepting the status quo.

Another way to think about this dissonance is to imagine how staff inside the organisation understand their organisational environment and how this affects the way in which they carry out their work. There are two separate and conflicting messages:

1. We are less than America and so should catch up
2. Australia is unique and therefore our situation is unchangeable

If the first is ‘true’, or taken for true by staff, then the goal should be to aggressively pursue corporate funding. If the second is held to be ‘correct’, then staff are remanded to passivity because no amount of education, outreach or work on their part will change the culture of non-giving that, according to the predominant discourse, permeates Australian society. Neither of these options allows for semi-independent development of the nonprofit sector as a crucial part of our social fabric. The conflict between nonprofit as recipient and nonprofit as active player is clearly illustrated in this linguistic thread.

Expectations play a significant role in this discourse. The component of comparison with the United States might serve to explain some of the nonprofits’ reluctance to negotiate assertively for their own self-interest in the relationships with for-profits. Unlike the American context, where the expectation is that business will engage in community support and development, the Australian context to date has only harboured a hope that this might become the case. In other words, when an Australian nonprofit organisation contemplates relationships with business, the media context of how different we are to the United States might in fact contribute to the sense that the third sector must play by the private sector’s rules if it is to gain access to resources.

The effect on nonprofit organisations of these three sub-themes—government as mediator, politics and the GST and the comparison with the United States—is inextricably linked to the power structures reflected, reinforced and disseminated in the media.

The power structure is evident. Government controls the situation and business contributes. When business contributes, it is praised; when the government awards ‘support’ for nonprofits, it is praised. But there is little acknowledgement of the active role of nonprofit organisations in general consumption media.

In the area of the role of government, there was little or no acknowledgement that nonprofit organisations can take a proactive stance in relation to partnerships with business. There were a few pieces that pointed to corporate philanthropy—but these were focused on the for-profit, not the role of the nonprofit.

9.4 WEAVING THE THREADS

The data presented here clearly illustrates that the media discourse of nonprofit/for-profit relationships has some impact on individual staff members in nonprofit organisations and on the organisations themselves. This section answers the research question in the affirmative in three ways. Firstly, it shows how all the linguistic threads link together and includes a model that demonstrates how these themes interact and overlap to illustrate how media coverage can undermine the nonprofits and those working in the sector. Secondly, there is some discussion on the differences among how internal, external and bridging media affect nonprofit organisations. Finally, this section examines the overall implications of findings for nonprofit organisations and the staff members working in them.

9.4.1 Linking the linguistic threads

The theme of understanding the relationship process envelopes the rest of the patterns, covering both sub-themes within itself and other linguistic threads. In the data, language matching is closely aligned with roles of the sector. Language matching denotes directionality--that is, from where the initiative is perceived to spring on nonprofit/business relationships. In this link, there are mixed messages to the third sector. The first is a demand that nonprofits take initiative--all the language of the private sector in the institutional context points to this as increasing institutional imperative, but the opposite force is the insinuation of government as a mediator. In fact, there are other private sector intermediaries emerging from the discourse as well.

(*NCOSS* February 2000, vol. 27, p. 8). The effect on this fusion of language matching and roles is to render invisible non-corporate language.

Relationships between nonprofit organisations and business appear to prosper with stronger bonds between the language of personal contact and social identification. The mechanism between these two linguistic threads appears to work like this:

1. Personal contact provides a 'face' for philanthropic endeavour.
2. 'Face' facilitates positive social identification by localising the issue and offering individuals outside the sector concrete opportunities make a difference.
3. Positive individual relationships between staff or client populations in the nonprofit and corporate partners increase social agency on the part of the nonprofit staff by promoting the inherent value of the work in which all are jointly involved.

One of the more ironic connections in the data that made up the media discourse is the polar opposite effects of the sub-themes of values/mission and mutual benefit. The mutual benefit and values/mission sub-themes are coupled in the discourse in starkly competing ways. On the one hand, nonprofit organisations benefit when some corporate values mirror the empathetic tones of the third sector to balance financial goals. There may be overtones of social identification and this could 'plug in' to the mechanism outlined above. This pattern does appear. These sub-themes tie the reasons that corporates might engage in socially responsible behaviour (mutual benefit) to internal motivators.

The irony is not in the link itself. It is in the one-sided acknowledgement of the link. The media discourse itself is quick to recognise community expectations of corporate entities, especially possible differences between shareholder values and strict profit accounting. The discourse further acknowledges how these expectations influence corporate action. However, the absence of mediated community expectations of nonprofits resonates strongly--the conversation about 'what community organisations are supposed to do' is missing. Adaptations of corporations are lauded; adaptations from nonprofits are largely ignored.

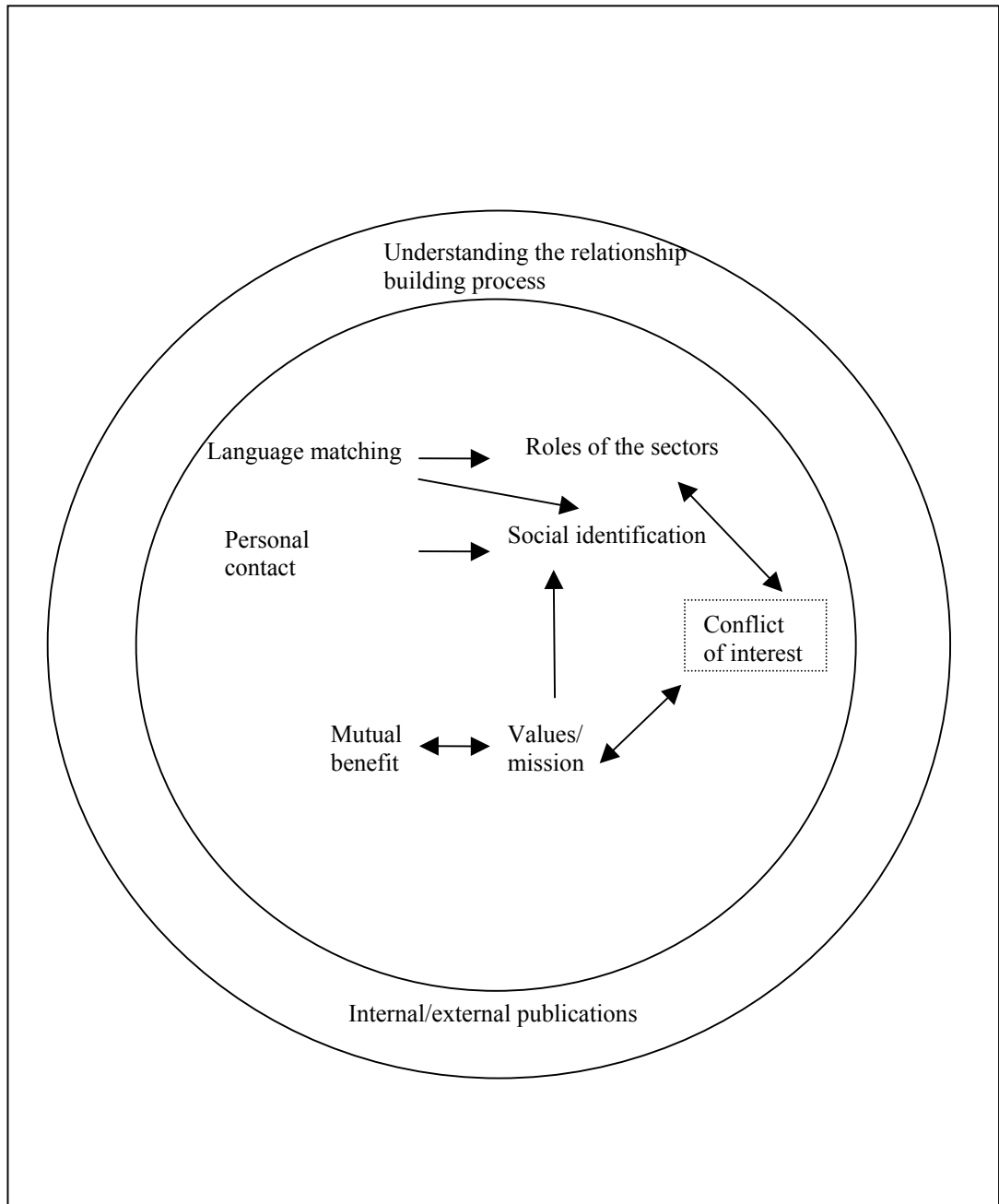
The effect on nonprofit organisations is clear. Their language has either been modified beyond recognition or appropriated by the corporate sector to signify 'citizenship.' They are required to operate in an economic climate that rewards strategies and objectives that detract from their intrinsic purpose. The media discourse reflects and magnifies this dilemma.

Although the conflict of interest sub-theme appeared only once in the 78 data elements studied, its absence is critical to understanding and modelling this phenomenon. It is mapped as 'dotted line' bubble on the model to indicate its significant omission in the media discourse.

A graphic representation of these links among linguistic thread appears in Figure 12.

Figure 12:

Media Discourse Linguistic Threads Model



9.4.2 Internal, external, bridging: the source of publications

Throughout the chapter, examples have been offered of differences between internal and external publications that made up the data sources for the media analysis. This section examines some of those distinctions in more detail, defines the boundaries of the different publications and draws some broader conclusions about the implications of these differences.

The issue of source of data is one overall indicator of the macro-distinctions in the media discourse. As discussed in several instances, the differences between broad appeal publications and more narrowly distributed field-related materials are present in social identification, understanding the relationship building process, roles of the sectors and language matching. Recognising this disparity is crucial to describing and analysing the scope of the media as they apply to nonprofit organisations and their staff.

Initial coding resulted in a binary split between publications for broad public consumption and other pieces destined solely for nonprofit audiences. This internal/external difference was identified after coding all the documentation and classifying the material. In fact, the data used for the media analysis were two sets of ostensibly similar content but with different audience bases. Therefore, the ‘internal’ publications as ‘quasi-organisational documentation,’ meaning that in fact those publications are a layer between internal organisational material such as brochures and purely institutional media such as broad-based newspapers with wide public circulation. In one interpretation, they form part of the institutional context in which nonprofit organisations operate because they are outside the parameters of one organisation’s development and control. This view would hold that any material not produced directly by the organisation is environmentally contextualised outside that group. Nonetheless, there is a permeable barrier level of media that straddles the divide between institutional and organisational discourse.

The data show that these quasi-organisational documents promote capacity of nonprofit institutions through language of adaptability, initiative and positive development. One example from *IMPACT* that illustrates this is:

Given this context we are seeing a number of changes in community services ranging from the introduction of user pays, to competitive tendering, to the aggregation of service delivery organisations. These developments need not be all negative. If they [the organisations] can develop sound organisational principles, good work practices, community connectedness, a capacity to cross-subsidise, and an ability to combine advocacy, co-ordination, prevention, and community development with the narrow output measures for which they are funded, they may establish interesting new models of community enterprise...often those coming with business expertise underestimate the expertise of the community sector.

(IMPACT Raysmith 2000)

Conversely, the broader material from large circulation newspapers is much more likely to further notions of nonprofit organisations as less capable than their business counterparts or at the very least inefficient, such as in this example here:

The Red Cross's regional office at Campbelltown will shut in October, along with the school volunteers program, another community service program...Despite assurances from the Red Cross that alternative programs would be sought for clients, staff said this might not be possible...would not reconsider the closures...

(Sydney Morning Herald 4 August 1999, p.8)

Upon further analysis, a third classification of data was uncovered. That is, in addition to internal and external delineation, the material emanating directly through the Government initiated Community/Business Partnerships actually served as a bridging source, where it attempted to combine both of the discourses into a single conversation. Here is an example:

World-wide, partnerships are fast becoming a potent force for change. In Australia, we have a dynamic, thriving business sector and we have a compassionate, caring community sector. In partnership, and with the enthusiastic support of the government, these sectors have the capacity to regenerate the communities. They have the potential to take me into the new millennium with renewed confidence in the ability to create the kind of society we want to live in.

(Community Business Partnership Newsletter July 1998, <http://www.partnership.zip.com.au/newslet>, cited November 2000)

The effect of this ‘bridging’ data source has already been introduced. The implication is that the community sector is neither dynamic nor thriving. However, even more significant than that are the differences in the discourse among the internal, external and bridging sources that constitute the media analysis. These distinct narrative are clues in understanding how the institutional context in which nonprofit organisations operate can impede the capacity of nonprofit organisations and adversely affect staff. From the data, the stories might be summarised like this:

- ❖ Internal publications
 - nonprofits are capable of change
 - nonprofits can be flexible

- ❖ External publications
 - nonprofits should conform to economic standards
 - nonprofits should change to fit the environment

- ❖ Bridging publications
 - nonprofits should take initiative for partnerships
 - nonprofits should ensure mutual benefit

The narratives extracted above provide insight into the conflicting context in which nonprofit organisations operate and the utility of the media analysis of identifying these threads. Of note is that stories from external and bridging material tend to be more normative, with a focus on what nonprofit organisations should be doing to cope with change. There is no discussion about whether or not that change—from social to economic paradigm—has any possible long-term negative effects on the way society works.

In the internal publications, on the other hand, two messages stand out from the rest. There is definitely the ‘positives of possibility’ notion that non-profit organisations are capable of surviving and thriving in the new climate. This could impact positively on how third sector organisations see themselves because it promotes active participation in the change.

Secondly, there are remnants of the discourse of protest against the trends of corporatisation of every facet of life. For example, the columns on tax change were strongly opposed to legislative shifts based solely on economic imperatives (Davies 2000). But these voices are fading, and they are not present in the specific debate in the media about relationships between nonprofit and for-profit organisations.

The differences in the discourse among internal, external and bridging material from our data sample indicate more fundamental questions about the nature of relationships between the sectors that influence nonprofit organisations and their staff. Silences and omissions from both internal and external sources, combined with strong normative statements from the bridging material flowing from the government, perpetuate an adversarial climate in which the word ‘partnership’ is a veneer painted over starkly different discourses. The classification of data sources that emerged from the media analysis identified, clarified and exposed these peculiarities.

9.5 IMPLICATIONS

There is distinct irony in the language matching in the media discourse for the nonprofit. The majority of the discourse, as illustrated above, is about the nonprofit ‘smartening up its act’ [read: becoming more business-like] (Horin 1999a, p. 45) and transforming the way it conducts itself to adapt to the corporate mode. And yet, at the hub of the Community Business Partnership discourse is the exaltation of ‘unique’ features of the nonprofit sector that distinguish it from business—the very qualities that are viewed increasingly with disdain as formal business processes of contracting, tenders and efficiency performance indicators prevail. This juxtaposition of competing images and frames of reference has an impact on a nonprofit’s capacity and the individuals who staff the institutions.

Equally, the strong trend in language matching exclusively in one direction is another mechanism that drives the ‘business first’ context. Business is exhorted to contribute, but it is the nonprofit organisations’ language of collaboration and compassion that is being replaced by demands to compete and become increasingly efficient at the risk of decreasing responsiveness.

In terms of language matching, not all of the effects of language matching are negative. It may have practical benefits to organisations learning to function in a changing world, giving that nonprofits’ best ‘strategy’ for survival is to adapt to rapidly shifting conditions. By enabling nonprofit staff and organisations to visualise themselves as ‘business units’, this language matching engages them in the broader dialogue of change. Nonetheless, the power structure remains clear—the predominance of unidirectional language matching remains rooted in government and private sector terms, with the third sector struggling to keep the pace. The question then becomes what is lost in the process of gaining business acumen.

Most cases of social identification were negative. This worked against the nonprofit organisations because it emphasised the differences between sectors and the ‘us/them’ boundaries between organisations. However, an illustration of the opposite effect (page 239) shows how a subtle shift in language can change the power dynamic of a relationship. This phrasing works in the nonprofits’ favour because of the use of the word ‘harness’, which implies an active, directive role for the third sector organisation.

Social identification as a linguistic thread in the media discourse is important because it sets up the predominant lens through which to view inter-sectoral relationships. As has been shown, the power of the media to present either collaborative or competitive models of these relationships has a direct bearing on how the wider community perceives nonprofit organisations; in turn, this public opinion may affect how the third sector is funded, evaluated and judged.

It is of grave concern to nonprofit organisations that the discourse is almost completely silent on the issue of conflict of interest. This omission is just as important a part of the discourse of the media context as the most frequently illustrated linguistic threads, because it demonstrates the power of silence. There is no recognition in the media discourse of the potential struggle that nonprofit staff face when they are forced to accommodate rapidly changing models of funding and service provision. By ignoring this matter, the media has declared irrelevant the critical issue for nonprofits and their staff as to whether or not for-profit involvement might have negative consequences for the organisations. The result is the almost blanket acceptance in the media discourse of the inevitability of the market-driven framework prevailing.

In terms of the next linguistic thread sub-theme, personal contact places nonprofit organisations in a strong position in the institutional context. In some cases, they are seen as organisations that have something to teach outsiders—the value of community, for example, or the sense of belonging. These contribute to nonprofit organisations' capability to attract interest and generate support for their work by focusing on the positive outcomes for both target groups and external participants, whether on a financial contribution or direct volunteer basis.

Mutual benefit is likewise important, because recognition of how collaboration can benefit both parties is for the most part a positive aspect of the discourse for the organisational capacity of nonprofit organisations. Increases in the frequency with which corporate citizenship or social responsibility is seen as a reciprocal process rather than strict philanthropy offers nonprofits the opportunity to negotiate with companies on the basis that both will emerge with some expectations satisfied and benefits accrued. There is no doubt that characterising these relationships as equal or at least mutually

desirable shifts the balance of power somewhat in the nonprofit's direction, at least insofar as 'donors' are no longer giving away something for nothing. The mutual benefit theme has embedded within it a transaction process that requires negotiation from both parties.

However, the frequency with which mutual benefit appears disguises one possible detrimental effect of this sub-theme. One of the disturbing issues is again based on the differences between internal media material to which only nonprofit staff have access and broader circulation publications. Issues of corporate image and financial bottom line figure most prominently in the large newspapers; issues of adaptation and learning business skills from for-profits appear almost exclusively in the publications targeted to third sector professionals. The discourse may be two-way, but the presentation of specific benefits is not. There remains an normative current of 'We're giving money away so we should be getting something for it' from the corporate perspective that undermines the communal benefits of organisations whose primary focus is the development of civil society. This has implications for nonprofit organisations and the individuals within them because their work continues to be valued on the economic scale in the media discourse rather than on its own terms.

The one-sidedness of the values/mission sub-theme in relationships to links between nonprofits and for-profits may create problems for the staff of the nonprofit organisation. References to corporate mission are numerous, whereas reference to the value basis for nonprofit organisations appears much less frequently. By virtue of omission, the value of the service to society that nonprofit organisations provide compared to for-profit missions that integrate philanthropy is quietly ignored. This is a dangerous situation for the third sector—because in the media, visibility is all and public opinion holds substantial power over decisions in the political arena.

The media analysis presented here supports the proposition that the messages have substantial, potentially harmful implications for nonprofit organisations involved in relationships with business. Messages in print and on television continue to reflect and contribute to the uneven power dynamic between nonprofit community services organisations and business in Australia. Nonprofits are affected by a discourse that simultaneously proclaims the advantages of 'partnership' and undermines the

opportunities for equal collaboration between these two sectors. In an economic rationalist climate that sees public funding decreasing and competition for scarce resources escalating, the media discourse around relationships between nonprofits and for-profits shows that this path of collaboration can be just as treacherous.

Having completed all the case studies and the media analysis, the next chapter describes the results of the quantitative analysis of questionnaire data.

CHAPTER 10: QUANTITATIVE TRIANGULATION

10.1 PURPOSE

Although the bulk of the work undertaken in this research is qualitative, a quantitative component was included in order to provide triangulation confirmation of findings from the in-depth case studies. A detailed analysis of the relative advantages and constraints for qualitative and quantitative can be found in the chapter on methodology. At this point, it is sufficient to reiterate that the primary purpose of the quantitative study presented here is to support or contradict case study findings. A secondary objective was that it might also point to novel theoretical considerations.

In terms of the comprehensiveness of a research endeavour, triangulation is a key concept in attempting to assess the integrity and value of the work. By combining meticulous, highly-focused discourse analysis to the case studies with broader input from other organisations, the depth and impact of the theoretical concepts and practical applicability are increased. The overlapping qualitative and quantitative research provide a system of checks and balances that form a firm foundation upon which to draw conclusions (Leonard 1994). As such, the quantitative study is not intended to provide broad generalisability that might be possible from extensive representative sampling. Rather, it is a measure of triangulation against previous case study results.

The most significant reason for including a quantitative piece in the overall research study was to create this holistic approach to the topic. However, within the quantitative work itself a pilot project was also initiated. The purpose of the pilot study was two-fold. Firstly, it provided the canvass on which to develop, implement and test a questionnaire. Both in terms of formatting and theoretical importance of items included in the questionnaire, this pilot offered a small-scale trial of the study instrument, analysis and presentation. Secondly, the pilot provided the transition for the researcher from a clearly social constructionist, interpretivist agenda to a methodology and mindset that requires very different skills and attitudes. In other words, the pilot was a re-

introduction to positivist methodology as well as an instrument for discerning the most theoretically appropriate items to include in the more extensive questionnaire.

10.2 METHODOLOGY

In developing the sample for this quantitative portion of the study, consideration was given to theoretical applicability and resource issues.

10.2.1 Selection of cases

Several issues arose in the process of compiling a purposive sample of data for the quantitative study. All of the case studies were conducted on community service sector organisations in metropolitan Sydney. Therefore, in order to triangulate findings from the qualitative work that would be consistent with appropriate limits on the range of organisations, the selection of organisations for questionnaire focused on this narrow group. That is, the sample would be drawn from community service organisations in urban Sydney.

As with the case studies, organisations represented the full spectrum of relationships with for-profit business, from internal enterprises to long-term project-based partnerships. One individual from each organisation was asked to complete the questionnaire. Purposive sampling was used to identify appropriate sources of data for the questionnaire. From a database of enquiries about the Masters of Management (Community Management) program at the UTS and a list of first-year enrolled students, 123 possible informants were nominated for the final questionnaire. The sample for the pilot was a research methods class in which the researcher was co-lecturer.

This process of purposive sampling conformed to resource constraints on the project because it enabled the researcher to readily obtain data in a timely, accurate manner. However, this did not mitigate the stringent criteria by which organisations were included or excluded from the original pool of possible informants. As described above, all of the organisations had to conform to geographical and core activity requirements in order to be part of the questionnaire. Because the most important function of this questionnaire was triangulation, not generalisability, strict adherence to

statistical measures were not essential for this part of the project. Therefore, traditional measures of confidence levels and confidence intervals were not applied here.

10.2.2 Developing questions

All questions in the questionnaire are directly linked to the significant findings from case study work. As with the case studies, the main building blocks of the questionnaire were the linguistic threads. These threads were intended to be tested (either confirmed or not confirmed) in the confines of a more controlled quantitative environment using the questionnaire tool. In addition to the linguistic threads that were the basis of much of the discourse analysis in the case studies, other demographic information including organisation size, types of service offered and position of respondent. Where case studies were exploratory and iterative, building successively on each one and recursively analysed, the questionnaire was strictly an exercise in verification.

Closed- v. open-ended items

A combination of closed- and open-ended questions were included in the questionnaire. For statistical manipulation, a Likert scale was used to represent theoretically relevant items about linguistic threads that emerged from the case studies such as personal contact, intra-organisational communication, language matching, social identification and leadership. The purpose of these dual question types was to monitor the extent to which respondents used similar or different language to describe their overall experience with for-profit interaction, depending on whether that language was provided for them from a selection or whether they had to generate it for themselves. The use of this technique is explored further in both the full-scale and pilot study results sections. Other open-ended items (that were later categorised and coded) included position of the person completing the questionnaire, length of association with the for-profit and types of services offered.

10.2.3 Analysis

Analysis of the data was carried out using version 9.0 of the statistical software package SPSS. All data was entered by the researcher and the same statistical tests were

performed on both pilot and overall questionnaire data. These included frequency tables and correlation testing using Spearman and Pearson coefficients.

The use of frequency tables in the results was an important part of the analysis because they helped to break down the demographic and open-ended detail into manageable categories for further scrutiny. The Spearman co-efficient is useful as a starting point because it is used on ordinal variables. Data on all variables is ranked and then the Pearson co-efficient is calculated from the resulting values. In turn, the Pearson co-efficient is defined as:

A measure of linear association between two variables. Values of the correlation coefficient range from -1 to 1 . The sign of the coefficient indicates the direction of the relationship, and its absolute values indicates the strength, with larger absolute values indicating stronger relationships.

(Pearson Correlation Coefficient General Description, accessed 10 July 2001)

Coefficient testing for the pilot was carried out in a 25 by 25 matrix that looked at all possible bivariate relationships between Likert scale items. For full scale data, the number of items was reduced to 15 and the analyses varied accordingly.

One- and two-tail significance tests were carried out for both Pearson and Spearman coefficients. The logic behind choosing only one of those types is predicated on whether or not a prediction has been made as to the direction of the difference (e.g. positive or negative) (Diekhoff 1992). Although the direction of the difference could have been determined in advance for some of the correlation under consideration, such as the link between personal contact and values, other theoretical issues were less clearly articulated in the case study data. Therefore, both one- and two-tail significance tests were used on the data. For this research, then it is important to be 'concerned with critical regions on both ends of the t distribution' (Diekhoff 1992, pp. 121-122) for some links (and would therefore rely on the two-tailed test) and on the upper or lower regions for some other relationships. However, using two-tail tests also has the

advantage of offering the possibility of surprise results that run contrary to theoretical inclinations or assumptions based on case study data.

No causal relationships were explored in the analysis, and findings are limited to correlation effects.

10.3 PILOT STUDY

As outlined in the introduction, the pilot study was carried out prior to refinement of the final questionnaire for distribution.

The sample for the pilot study was based on the convenience sampling method. As a lecturer in the Masters of Management (Community Management) program at the University of Technology, Sydney, the researcher had access to a class of research students. The questionnaires were distributed anonymously to students as part of an in-class research exercise on questionnaire development. Importantly, the researcher gathering the data was not in the classroom at the time of questionnaire completion or the subsequent discussion about improvements to the questionnaire. These comments were collected by the lecturer co-ordinating that subject and subsequently conveyed to the researcher.

Students completed the questionnaire and then participated in a class discussion on its structure, presentation and content. Some wrote comments directly onto the questionnaires themselves; others made verbal suggestions that were then collected by the teacher in the classroom. They were given minimal instruction on how to complete the questionnaire and were not informed until after they had finished whose work was being critiqued.

10.3.3 Developing final study instrument

Changes to the questionnaire dealt with concerns of formatting, clarity and relevance. One of the major complaints about the questionnaire presented for the pilot study was that the formatting was confusing, difficult to follow and cumbersome. Students

pointed to misaligned items and split-page questions as examples of issues that would need to be resolved for the final questionnaire. Some students indicated that improper formatting also made them less likely to complete the questionnaire because it made it appear inconvenient and lengthy.

Closely related to issues of formatting was the question of clarity of items included on the questionnaire. Informants complained of double negatives, multiple sets of directions and a lack of introduction to the purpose of the study prior to completing the questionnaire. There was also some confusion about specific wording of some questions. For example, because the questionnaire was aimed at both individuals working in nonprofit organisations with relationships with business and those without, two sets of directions were given regarding answering the first section of the questionnaire. Some data had to be labelled invalid because students did not understand directions and simply wrote 'N/A' or left most of the items blank. Other students noted that some questions appeared redundant or simply poorly worded.

The third area tagged for improvement during the pilot phase of this quantitative research was the relevance of certain questions. These issues were dealt with in the first instance by re-wording or omitting some items and by a comprehensive introductory letter to the research.

10.3.4 Final questionnaire format

The final questionnaire incorporates formatting suggestions from informants, informal feedback from colleagues on a number of subsequent drafts and a series of decisions about the theoretical import of certain items. Considerations of length (no more than 30 items total) were also important because of the time constraints on willing participants in the study.

After analysing cross-correlation among all items to which respondents selected 'strongly agree,' 'agree,' 'undecided,' 'disagree' or 'strongly disagree,' several statements were discarded. Some of these were deleted simply due to lack of relevance (e.g. the media question, which in this case did not adequately convey perceptions of the institutional context). Others were deemed redundant or simply not useful to the

outcome of the questionnaire. One good example of the latter was the item that asked informants to tick words with which their organisations referred to itself in internal documents. Although in a case study situation this type of information might provide valuable detail on the internal discourse of an organisation, for the questionnaire this item did not contribute to confirmatory or contradictory results of concepts uncovered during the inductive phase of the work. Still other changes to the questionnaire included splitting some items into two (e.g. the question of organisational size) and re-formatting the Likert scale to make answering more convenient.

Finally, it is important to note that items that were never selected by the pilot group were not discarded solely for that reason. In other words, where questions were deemed theoretically significant (even though they might not have been statistically significant in this sample) they were left in the final version of the questionnaire, in anticipation of either confirmatory or contradictory results to expected outcomes in the full-scale questionnaire distribution. Copies of the information letter final questionnaire appear in Appendix C.

10.4 RESULTS

The results are based on a total of 57 questionnaires.

Demographic indicators in the data showed a variety of organisations, positions held and types of relationships with for-profit firms. More than a quarter reported working for very large institutions, with 26% emanating from very small workplaces. All respondents were from community services organisations, with a range of activities from aged care to youth programs. Both religious and secular projects were represented.

Geographically, almost three quarters were identified as 'local' (metropolitan Sydney), 11% as 'state-wide', 8% as 'national' and 6% as 'international.' Activities ranged from aged care to children's issues. No religious organisations were represented.

Activities between nonprofits and for-profits varied as well. In some cases, the relationship included only donor support; in others, full-scale integration of corporate volunteers into the nonprofit organisation occurred. Thirty-one out of fifty-seven or 55% of organisations were engaged in some type of link with the business sector. The length of relationships spanned from 3 to 72 months—this bimodal distribution indicated the 6- and 12- month relationships were most common. However, one added complexity to understanding the duration of these relationships was the fact that many of them were ongoing at the time of the questionnaire.

Seventy-four percent of the respondents were in at least middle management, with several holding the highest executive officer position in the nonprofit organisation. However, there were also outlying data including a volunteer services co-ordinator and direct service workers.

10.5 THEORETICAL TRIANGULATION: SUPPORT FOR CASE STUDY FINDINGS

Overall, this quantitative aspect of the work provided substantial triangulation for case study material. In many cases, the questionnaires confirmed theoretical development that emerged from the grounded theory approach taken in the first part of the research. Using the one- and two-tail Spearman correlation coefficient statistics as the primary source for analysis (with Pearson as a secondary source, as indicated in the methodology), much of the Likert scale correlation also supported theoretical connections that surfaced during the case studies. All correlation reported here was statistically significant at the 0.01 level. This section is divided into a number of subsections, each focusing on a particular aspect of the results from the questionnaire.

10.5.1 Inconsistent language and organisational capacity

There was clear evidence of the role of language in the way that relationships between respondents' organisations and for-profits are constituted. Results indicated a double standard for what relationships 'were supposed to be like' and the experiences of those staff members involved in them. This appeared to be indicated by differences in the

answers to closed versus open questions. More than 63% of informants selected positive descriptors for the closed selection question asking them to identify how a relationship with business can be most accurately described. In contrast, when asked to generate an open-ended response to that same question, 39% gave positive descriptors. This minority used terms like ‘mutually beneficial’, ‘supportive’ or ‘collaborative’, echoing the options provided in the closed question. Others used a range of adjectives with indisputably negative connotations including ‘fraught’, ‘disposable’, ‘subservient’, ‘tug-o-war’ and ‘ugly.’

A further example of the tension between these two descriptions of the relationships is the result of a question that asked respondents to select from a list of nouns (rather than adjectives) that best characterised the connection. Choices included ‘alliance,’ ‘altruism,’ ‘charity,’ ‘contract,’ ‘donor support,’ ‘mutual benefit,’ ‘partnership’ or ‘philanthropy.’ The least popular selections were ‘philanthropy’, ‘altruism’ and ‘charity’. ‘Partnership’, ‘alliance’, ‘mutual benefit’ and ‘donor support’ were the four most frequently selected. In other words, even when informants used negative terms to answer the open-ended question, they might use a word with positive connotations such as ‘partnership’ or ‘alliance’ to describe the situation. The table below summarises responses to this question from both the pilot and final samples:

Table 4: Frequency Table #1

	Frequency	%
Description		
Alliance	8	14.0
Altruism	0	0
Charity	5	8.8
Contract	5	8.8
Donor support	13	22.8
Mutual benefit	15	26.3
Partnership	8	14.0

Philanthropy	0	0
Publicity	2	3.5
Other	1	1.8
Total	57	100

This dissonance between a sense of how informants feel they ‘should’ characterise relationships with business and how they actually perceive them is strong evidence for the role that language plays in defining these relationships. Language also reflects their ambivalence and is important because it points to some sense of organisational duality. In other words, staff members are torn between expected attitudes toward the issue of partnership with business and their concerns about what that really might mean.

Several interesting conclusions can be drawn from this data. Firstly, the information illustrates a confirmatory tendency toward the proposition that language creates and is reflected by the situation between the two organisations. Most importantly, however, it supports the evidence found in case studies of the two different worlds about this phenomenon that nonprofit staff in community services organisations inhabit. On the one hand they portray these relationships positively. On the other hand, they demonstrate serious misgivings about the effect of these connections on their organisations, or at least acknowledge that ‘partnerships’ are not always what the word appears to mean. This has consequences for organisational capacity because it reflects Dougherty’s ‘thought worlds’ (1992). As demonstrated by the inconsistencies in reporting on what relationships are ‘like’, the internal and external perceptions of nonprofit staff are mismatched, and this has adverse affects on the organisation’s ability to develop and adapt.

10.5.2 Personal contact and values: ties to language matching, social agency and organisational capacity

Personal contact with someone in the for-profit was connected to deliberately using language to relate to for-profit staff, an increased ability to pursue organisational mission and an individual feeling of increased control of work-related responsibilities. This reflects the finding of ties among personal contact, language matching, social

agency and organisational capacity. In other words, when informants felt a personal link to a for-profit staff member, they were also likely to report increased organisational capacity to fulfill core business activities and a sense of have more power over their role at work. Table 5 shows the standard deviation, maximum and minimum and means for each variable. Table 6 shows the numbers for this correlation using the two-tailed Spearman:

Table 5 Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
ACTIVE	52	1.00	5.00	2.5192	1.0935
AWAYMISS	51	1.00	5.00	2.8627	1.4835
BENEFIT	52	1.00	5.00	2.7885	1.2100
CONFLICT	51	1.00	5.00	2.7255	1.1150
CONTROL	49	1.00	5.00	2.3878	1.1331
CORPRES	53	1.00	4.00	2.7925	1.0806
EFFVALS	52	1.00	5.00	2.6731	1.2943
FINANCE	51	1.00	5.00	2.5882	1.4167
FTE	22	1.00	5.00	2.5909	1.2212
INCOME	22	1.00	5.00	2.6818	1.2105
LEADERS	50	1.00	5.00	2.6400	.9848
MISSION	53	1.00	5.00	2.4340	1.1182
OPPOSITE	53	1.00	5.00	2.9245	1.1577
ORGVALS	53	1.00	5.00	2.7736	1.2956
PERSCONT	53	1.00	5.00	2.4528	1.0843
POWER	53	1.00	5.00	2.6604	1.4928
RANGE	22	1.00	5.00	1.5000	1.0118
RELATING	52	1.00	5.00	2.4615	1.0565
RELEDESCR	20	1	8	4.90	1.77
STAFFDIS	52	1.00	4.00	2.2885	1.1434
SUCCESS	51	1.00	5.00	2.5490	1.0453
Valid N (listwise)	17				

Table 6: Correlational Table #1

	Relating	Mission	Control
Personal contact	0.413	0.574	0.407

In addition to the evidence for connections among these four linguistics threads, the values theme emerged in the quantitative questionnaire as well. The perception that the

nonprofit organisation and the for-profit organisation shared similar values was in turn positively correlated with personal contact, organisational capacity, and social agency. This data can be summarised as follows:

Table 7: Correlational Table #2

	Personal contact	Mission	Control
Values	0.479	0.346	0.520

10.5.3 Elements of success: personal contact, positive social identification, active engagement and leadership

In an umbrella question about the outcome of the relationship, participants were asked whether they perceived the relationship to be successful. Perception of the relationship as successful was positively related to leaders' ability to facilitate the process for line staff and active engagement on the part of the nonprofit with the relationship. This is interesting in two ways. Firstly, it supports the case study result of the role of leadership in assisting staff to make successful transitions and to mitigate the negative effects of anchor shift for the organisation and those working in it. Secondly, it links success or perceived success with the degree to which the nonprofit organisation is working with (not just 'receiving from') the business sector institution. It also illustrated that personal contact is correlated with being on opposite sides (negative social identification). This is demonstrated in Table 8, as is the result that active participation was more likely to result in a sense of success at least some of the time.

Table 8: Correlational Table #3

<i>PILOT</i>	Leadership	Active	Personal contact
Success	0.522	0.627	0.380

Table 9: Correlational Table #4

<i>PILOT</i>	Opposite sides
Personal contact	0.563

The most likely explanation and interpretation for these links, which are evident in the case studies as well, could be related back to increased organisational capacity and social agency arising from shared vision for the project at hand. This supports the idea that staff working in direct personal contact with for-profit employees may be more actively engaged in the project. This in turn may lead to an increased sense of their own social agency and efficacy. All of this is supported by leadership that assists with the transitions required to successfully navigate a partnership with the private sector. Organisational capacity is positively affected in this scenario both because of the increased social agency of individuals and because of the consequences of success itself, which could be postulated to provide a ‘map’ for future successful relationships.

10.5.4 Power dimension: personal contact and social identification

The questionnaire showed positive correlation among power, organisational values and personal contact. In other words, where there was a sense of shared values the informants reported that the nonprofits were more powerful in the relationship; also, personal contact positively linked to nonprofit power. The summary table looks like this:

Table 10: Correlational Table #5

<i>MAIN</i>	Values	Personal contact
Power	0.337	0.456

This finding parallels case study results as well. Leaders were also strongly correlated with individuals perceiving themselves to be more in control as a result of the relationship, intra-organisational communication and shared organisational values. However, because of the possible self-identification of informants as leaders themselves, the results for the leadership item’s connection to all of these other variables is suspect. It may have simply been an ‘over-reporting’ of the degree to which

‘the leadership in our organisation has helped staff to accept and value links with the for-profit.’

10.5.5 Cost/benefit analysis, the effect on organisational values and organisational capacity

Two areas of evidence that demonstrate some of the negative consequences of inter-sectoral collaboration appeared in the correlation statistics as well. Some respondents who felt that the cost to the nonprofit organisation was greater than the benefit from the relationship also gave responses that were positively correlated with an effect on organisational values.

Table 11: Correlational Table #6

	Effect on values
Cost	0.602

This effect on values was also correlated with moving away from the organisation’s mission:

Table 12: Correlational Table #7

	Away from mission
Effect on values	0.753

This indicated that where the nonprofit organisation is perceived as being harmed, one of the ways in which this damage is reported by nonprofit staff is in a shift in values. Given the degree to which the nonprofit sector can be defined and differentiated precisely by an adherence to the principle of ‘centrality of values’ (Lyons 2001), this is far from insignificant in terms of the implications for nonprofits. A movement away from its set of strongly held values is dangerous to the organisation because it implies a loss of crucial aspects of its defining characteristics. The organisation may still be ‘functional’; however, it will never be the same, having lost defining portions of its identity. This is an indication of possible injurious outcomes of some relationships for the organisational capacity of the nonprofit organisation.

There may also be consequences for social agency of nonprofit staff from this connection between costs and effects on organisational values. As reported in a study on careers in the third sector, nonprofit middle managers are more likely than those in the private or public sectors to prefer ‘making a difference’ over security, personal advancement or high salary (Onyx 1993). Therefore, any inter-sectoral partnership that appears to threaten the value base of the nonprofit organisation will probably have adverse effects on the staff whose primary motivation for choosing to work in that organisation derives from the values it espouses.

10.5.6 Conflicts of interest and negative social identification

Another element of the quantitative questionnaire clearly mirrors concerns raised in case study interviews—that is, that conflict of interest is positively correlated with being on opposite sides. Although it only appears significant in the pilot study, this ‘opposites’ question is a measure of negative social identification, and the correlation demonstrates some link between the sense of ‘us’ versus ‘them’ and the possible conflicts that can arise for individuals and organisations out of that adversarial characterisation of the relationship.

Table 13: Correlational Table #8

<i>PILOT</i>	Opposite sides
Conflict of interest	0.376

10.6 THEORETICAL EXPANSION: UNDERSTANDING ‘SURPRISES’ IN THE QUANTITATIVE DATA

As stated in the methodology chapter and reiterated at the beginning of this one, the purpose of the quantitative questionnaire was two-fold. The detailed presentation of supportive findings above fulfilled the first aspect of that goal, which was to provide triangulation for case study data and some confirmation of findings. However, the

second and perhaps even more crucial objective for the quantitative questionnaire was to expand and adjust the theory that was developed out of this research.

Some of the confounding results in the data are probably a result of interpretive error on the part of the respondent or an insufficient number of items to deconstruct adequately the complex issues under consideration. However, there are two questions in particular that provided guidance in the fuller development of theory.

The first was simply one of omission, but nonetheless critical for theoretical accuracy. In the pilot study, the question about the media and institutional context was deemed confusing or unspecific by several respondents, and was therefore discarded as unreliable. This recognition led the researcher to think more carefully about the role of institutional context and to conceive of the media not as an indicative element but as a representation of some of the public perception environment in which nonprofit organisations operate. This shift in perspective from ‘the media as institutional context’ to ‘the media as (sometimes blurred) reflection of context’ allowed the researcher to address the phenomenon more comprehensively on an individual and organisational level. The effect of this shift in focus did not undermine the usefulness or importance of a media analysis; in fact, it heightened the awareness of the media in and of itself rather than as a part of anything else. This was an important shift in thinking that might not have taken place without the quantitative questionnaire as part of the broader work.

The second opportunity for theoretical expansion from the questionnaire data also came out of the pilot study and is focused on two questions that were later discarded in favour of more pressing concerns. The result that the following two questions were negatively correlated gave rise to other possible interpretations of the role of anchor shift that were not identified in the case study phase. The questions sought Likert scale responses to the following statements:

1. Strong resistance remains among staff in our organisation
2. In general, staff in my organisation share similar views about the relationship

And the correlation in the pilot study was as follows:

Table 14:

Correlational Table #9

	Similar views
Resistance	-0.591

The negative correlation appears to show that where the perception is that of a fragmented workplace in which multiple, conflicting views about the relationship with the for-profit are present, strong resistance tends to appear as well. Of course, as a simple correlation there can be no causal assumptions in this analysis of the bridge between the two statements. Nonetheless, there is the possibility that the absence of shared anchor shift—that is, the extent to which the organisation and its members are able to create alternatives that embrace the corporatisation of a once purely nonprofit entity—can be accompanied by resistance to the for-profit relationship.

The quantitative component of the research presented here supports the evidence for case study findings and provides useful triangulation. Using both the evidence here and all the case study material, the next chapter culminates in the development of a theory of language and power in nonprofit/for-profit relationships.

CHAPTER 11: THEORY, SIGNIFICANCE AND CONCLUSIONS

11.1 OVERVIEW

The final products of the five case studies, media analysis and quantitative data analysis are two-fold, and the work presented here culminated in the development of significant contributions to the field on both theoretical and methodological fronts. Firstly, the models and theory offer a new window from which to examine, understand and map nonprofit relationships with for-profits in Australia; secondly, the concept of linguistic threads opens up methodological doors to bridge organisational communication metaphors and augment existing qualitative analysis tools. This chapter presents the theory by progressively building the models, illustrates the importance of a broader frame of reference for language and organisational collaboration, reviews the importance of linguistic threads as a methodological advancement and argues a variety of perspectives from which the work could be extended, developed and refined. The contributions and significance of this work are summarised thus:

- ❖ Theoretical
 - Models
 - ◆ Process theory
 - ◆ Static state model
 - Extensions to literature
 - Circuits of language

- ❖ Methodological
 - Linguistic threads

There are three major theoretical contributions to emerge from this work. The first consists of two models—a process theory representation of language and power in nonprofit/for-profit relationships that has evolved from an inductive approach to the research questions and a static state model as an amalgamation of linguistic thread interaction presented in each of the chapters on individual case studies. These two models represent the first level of theorising on the topic. The second area includes various extensions to current literature. The third is the integration of the first two into

an overall theory of the circuits of language that characterise the processes through which the nonprofits studied here engaged with their for-profit counterparts and the role of language in reflecting and shaping these experiences. Each of these three theoretical contributions will be explored separately in the sections below.

11.2 BUILDING THE PROCESS THEORY MODEL: THROUGH LANGUAGE AND POWER FROM LINGUISTIC THREADS TO INDIVIDUAL AND ORGANISATIONAL EFFECTS

All of the theory building began with a series of questions. To reiterate the research questions were as follows:

1. Does the language used by nonprofit staff and in organisational documentation relating to relationships with for-profits reflect and contribute to the reproduction of the power relationship between the organisations?
 - 1a. What elements of vocabulary, narrative structure and syntax constitute a 'language of inequality' between the private and third sector?
 - 1b. How is this language different in genuine power-sharing relationships?
 - 1c. To what extent is this linguistic space shared across nonprofit organisations engaged in similar relationships with for-profit firms?
 - 1d. How is the structure of that language transmitted throughout the organisation?
- 2a. Do relationships affect the organisational capacity of nonprofit organisations?
- 2b. Do relationships affect the social agency of individuals?

- 2c. If so, to what extent can balanced power-sharing arrangements contribute to increased organisational capacity and/or social agency?
3. Does the media aspect of the institutional context of relationships in which nonprofits operate affect the social agency of individuals and the capacity of nonprofits?
 - 3a. To what extent are staff members in the nonprofit aware of the constraints on them of this aspect of institutionalism?

In order to ascertain whether or not the research effectively answers these questions, it is important to maintain methodological consistency by beginning with the data. The process theory model will be built using the research questions as a guide and the data gathered from cases as the links in the chain of evidence.

In framing the theory, it is very important to solidify and reassert assumptions about language and definitions of linguistic threads upon which these results were based. The primary construct of this research is language. As such, it is crucial to identify how language was defined and understood in the context of the interviews conducted in the case studies, the quantitative triangulation and the media analysis. Secondly, linguistic threads that emerged from case study analysis were defined iteratively as data was collected and applied to all the cases.

Language was conceptualised as having two important properties. Firstly, that language was material and tangible (McHoul & Clegg 1987) and as such could be studied as an object. Secondly, language is both a medium and an outcome (Clegg 1987; 1999). It both shapes and reflects existing social reality. This definition of language enabled the research to be conducted on discourse that mirrored and simultaneously created the way that staff perceived the relationship of their nonprofit organisation to business.

Each linguistic thread was carefully defined to maintain consistency when ascertaining whether or not that particular thread was present in material from cases other than in the

one in which it was first identified. The alphabetical list in Table 15 gives brief definitions for each linguistic thread. More detailed descriptions of these are contained in Chapter 3. Major linguistic threads are denoted in bold and specified in section 3.6.

In the development of the theory in subsequent sections, examples are selected from the case studies and the questionnaire to support and develop the ways in which linguistic threads combined to form an integrated picture of the process of language and power in nonprofit/for-profit relationships. A summary of which linguistic threads appeared in each case is a useful overview of the prevalence of these threads throughout the whole research process. It appears in Table 16.

Table 15:

Definitions of Linguistic Threads

NAME (Major threads in bold)	DEFINITION
Anchor shift	The extent to which the organisation and its members were able to create alternatives that embrace the corporatisation of a once purely nonprofit entity
Intra-organisational communication (with sub-themes informal chat, inclusion versus exclusion pathways, documentation and incrementalism)	How the language of the relationship was transmitted throughout the organisation.
Language matching	How staff in the nonprofits studied matched language of their for-profit counterparts
Language recruitment	A type of language matching, the process through which some nonprofits in the cases studied actively sought to induct corporate partners into the nonprofit language space.
Leadership	Focuses on an organisational leader's influence on the relationship of the nonprofit to the for-profit.
Recognising the institutional context	The extent to which staff recognised the social, political, economic and/or legal environment in which their organisation operated
Social identification	The extent to which informants understood and identified with

	individuals in the for-profit
Understanding the relationship-building process (with sub-themes personal contact, values, conflict of interest, mutual benefit and future alliances)	How staff understood the way in which the relationship was developed

Table 16:

Prevalence of Linguistic Threads in Data

Linguistic thread	Care & Share Association	Nightlight	Integrate Inc.	The Welfare League	Workwell	Quantitative Study
Anchor shift		✓	✓			✓
Intra-organisational communication	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
Language matching	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Language recruitment				✓		
Leadership		✓	✓			✓
Recognising the institutional context	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Social identification	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Understanding the relationship-building process	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

11.2.1 Research Question #1: language and power

1. Does the language used by nonprofit staff and in organisational documentation relating to relationships with for-profits reflect and contribute to the reproduction of the power relationship between the organisations?

The major findings regarding this question are as follows:

1. There are strong similarities in the elements of language of nonprofits engaged in relationships with for-profits
2. There is a discernible pattern of discourse of nonprofits engaged in relationships with for-profits
3. There is a distinct linguistic space around these relationships
4. Language reflects and contributes to the power relationship between the organisations in the inter-sectoral collaboration

This question is best answered from the bottom up. The last sub-question in this array focuses on intra-organisational communication. The data clearly shows how the language is transmitted among staff members in the nonprofit organisation. Firstly, as was the case with the Care & Share Association and Integrate Inc., intra-organisational communication occurs in two ways—through documentation (as when David from the Care & Share Association learned about the insurance program from previous documentation), inclusion/exclusion pathways and informal chat, as when staff members from Integrate Inc. were observed in conversation about how to balance the needs of the small business enterprise with their core nonprofit activities.

Sub-question 1c requires comparison among cases to identify how much of this postulated ‘linguistic space’ is shared across the community services sector and the organisations selected. The question is:

- 1c. To what extent is this linguistic space shared across nonprofit organisations engaged in similar relationships with for-profit firms?

There are two related answers to this research question. Firstly, as has been illustrated by the extent to which linguistic threads re-appeared throughout the field work with cases, there are strong similarities in the elements of the language of nonprofits engaged in relationships with for-profits. For example, organisations as diverse as Nightlight, a small local nonprofit organisation, and The Welfare League, a large, broad-based organisation, shared many linguistic characteristics when staff were asked to describe their experiences. In both cases, personal contact and values were linked to one another in that the nonprofit individuals who had direct contact with their business counterparts noted some similarity in the views about the relationship. In addition, there was explicit reference to mutual benefit from Amanda in The Welfare League and Carolyn in Nightlight. Although the degree to which mutual benefit figured in the respective discourses varied (in this example, Amanda's sense of mutual benefit figured much more prominently than Carolyn's), the data demonstrated that linguistic space can be shared even between organisations that might appear very different. The questionnaire provided further evidence of shared language about the relationship. One example of this was that 26.3% of respondents to the questionnaire selected 'mutual benefit' to describe the relationship in a closed question.

The second important point is that although there is substantial overlap in the elements of discourse labelled using linguistic threads, there are unique aspects to every case. Nonetheless, the basic 'shape' of the discourse is remarkably similar throughout all of the data.

There is a caveat to this question. In fact, the data does not show substantial differentiation in linguistic characteristics of organisations based on the type of relationship (e.g. sponsorship, internal business enterprise, cause-related marketing) that the nonprofits had with for-profit firms. Rather, the most salient differences among organisations are predicated on other issues identified using linguistic threads. For example, in the Care &

Share Association, the organisation had identical ‘types’ of relationships with Biz1, Biz2 and Biz3. Nonetheless, these relationships differed markedly according to nonprofit staff. In that particular example, issues such as negative social identification reflected and reinforced the perceived opposition from some for-profit partners, while positive social identification smoothed the way for a more productive relationship. This is further evidence that a linguistic space exists unique to the environment in which nonprofit organisations find themselves when confronted with the desire or necessity to engage with for-profit firms, and that the language both reflects and contributes to the power arrangement between organizations.

This leads into an answer for questions 1, 1a and 1b:

1. Does the language used by nonprofit staff and in organisational documentation relating to relationships with for-profits reflect and contribute to the reproduction of the power relationship between the organisations?
- 1a. What elements of vocabulary, narrative structure and syntax constitute a 'language of inequality' between the private and third sector?
- 1b. How is this language different in genuine power-sharing relationships?

The linguistic threads themselves offer both ‘negative’ and ‘positive’ connotations. A ‘language of inequality’ is most clearly visible in particular permutations of the linguistic space that focus on negative connotations of some of these linguistic threads. For example, in Nightlight, negative social identification with the corporate sector and a strong sense of possible conflicts of interest plainly identified the power dynamic between donor and recipient. Metaphors of combat versus cooperation, the us/them dichotomy and discursive echoes of value non-alignment are all elements of this language world that mirror and constitute an ongoing power differential in some cases. For example, in the Care & Share

Association informants used co-operative metaphors for their relationship with Biz1 and combative descriptors for their relationship with Biz3. And in Workwell, Frank was more likely to use confrontational language whereas Jenny used language of positive social identification.

Tables 6 and 8 in the quantitative analysis chapter show similar relationships between personal contact and organisational values and personal contact and a sense of being on opposite sides. This is important because it shows that the phenomenon of these issues being linked is more widespread in the larger population of nonprofit organisations than just in the five cases studied in depth. This is mirrored in the significant correlation found between personal contact and organisational values and values and a sense of being on opposite sides.

Another example using conscious language matching also demonstrated the perception on the part of nonprofit informants of a power differential between the organisations. When Barbara from the Care & Share Association made the direct, intentional choice to use language matching in a telephone conversation with a for-profit counterpart, she was both acknowledging the power differential that existed between the organisations and using deliberate linguistic tactics to shift this influence.

The language of the nonprofits exhibited yet a third option for organisations engaged with for-profits, and this response was both a reflection and a driver for increased nonprofit power in the relationship. As an excellent illustration of the latter tactic, The Welfare League's use of 'language recruitment' to co-opt their business associates into a more values-based relationship reflected and contributed to a changed power structure between the organisations. As Richard became more aware of the power of language to create stronger bonds with his business counterparts, he used language recruitment more deliberately to enhance his organisation's position in relation to the for-profit. The ability to 'language recruit' represented a pre-existing state of strong or high social agency, in that the informants believed that they could be in a position of power in relation to the for-profits with whom they collaborated. However, the process of language recruitment itself

helped to constitute a power relationship in which the nonprofit deliberately sought to embed its values into its for-profit counterpart. Unfortunately, because language recruitment appeared only in this case study and was not picked up in the analysis of the quantitative data, it is difficult to ascertain how widespread the phenomenon of language recruitment is. Nonetheless, the case of The Welfare League demonstrated the language reflects and creates the reality in which nonprofit organisations and their staff operate. Furthermore, it illustrated that power relations are fluid and that language as a medium and an outcome can play a role in redefining them.

11.2.2 Research Question #2: social agency and organisational capacity

- 2a. Do relationships affect the organisational capacity of nonprofit organisations?
- 2b. Do relationships affect the social agency of individuals?
- 2c. If so, to what extent can balanced power-sharing arrangements contribute to increased organisational capacity and/or social agency?

The major findings regarding this question are as follows:

1. Language reflects and contributes to the constitution of relationships between the nonprofits studied and their for-profit ‘partners’
2. This language also reflects and helps to create the positive and negative effects on social agency and organisational capacity

Having established that relationships between nonprofit and for-profit organisations are characterised by a distinct linguistic space, that this linguistic space reflects and contributes to power differentials between organisations, that the language is transmitted through the organisation and that it is at least partially shared across a number of nonprofit organisations, the next step in building a theory of language and power in these inter-

sectoral relationships is to articulate how social agency and organisational capacity are affected through the medium/outcome of language

According to the data collected for this research, the answers to questions 2a and 2b are a resounding ‘yes’. Language reflects and contributes to the constitution of relationships between the nonprofits studied and their for-profit ‘partners’, and this language also reflects and helps to create the positive and negative effects on social agency and organisational capacity. Therefore, this section will examine consequences from the most significant linguistic threads for nonprofit social agency and organisational capacity.

The major linguistic threads that emerged from the cases with primary theoretical significance were social identification, language matching, anchor shift and leadership. Each of these is explored separately below. Broader elements of discursive cohesion and the feedback loop to power differentials between organisations completed theoretical development from this data.

Social identification

There are various examples of how personal contact and parallel values increased social identification (e.g. Care & Share Association and Biz 1, Barbara and the lawyer at Integrate Inc. and correlation in Chapter 10). In turn, this social identification increases social agency because it enables the nonprofit staff member to perceive themselves ‘on the same side’ and collaboratively attempting to achieve similar goals. Success is also linked to personal contact in significant correlation in the quantitative study.

At the Care & Share Association, positive social identification helped to facilitate relationship-building with Biz1 and made collaboration with Biz2/Biz3 much more difficult. Integrate Inc.’s discourse contained some examples of social identification, although because much of its for-profit activity was in-house it did not show as clear boundaries as some other cases. Nightlight informants demonstrated almost uniform negative social identification with for-profit contacts, aside from one marginally positive

social identification example the leader of the organisation when describing a personal relationship with one donor.

In Workwell, Frank exhibited negative social identification with some of his corporate associates where Jenny showed positive social identification. This difference was linked closely to the perception of informants as to whether or not business counterparts shared goals and values with Workwell.

As explored in its own chapter, The Welfare League presented a more complex arrangement of social identification concerns. The organisation and the individuals in it took two apparently contradictory approaches to social identification and united them into a powerful tool for increased organisational capacity. Using a combination of community directionality and an acknowledgement of the business case for corporate relationships, the informants began to blend these two discourses. Unlike the other cases, which showed an either/or approach to social identification, The Welfare League attempted the both/and course.

Language matching

Using Dawn at the Care & Share Association as an exemplar, it is easy to see how conscious language matching both reflects and contributes to increased social agency. In deliberately matching the way in which her for-profit counterpart might approach a difficult business call, she managed to assert herself in a way that would not have been achieved by using traditional, value-driven, nonprofit language.

In the case of Dawn, language matching has positive consequences for her in the organisation. However, there is a potential dark side to language matching that would require further study to verify. Subconscious language matching could indicate co-option of nonprofit language. This convergence with business language could be a precursor to shifting or lost identity of the third sector. As Lyons (2001) argues, the values focus is one of the primary identifiers of a distinct third sector. The loss of this marker could have serious consequences for community services and social issues in Australia. However, this

remains speculation at this point. Regardless of the impact of its intentional or subconscious uses, language matching is a crucial linguistic thread in the discourse of nonprofit organisations in relationships with for-profits.

All cases in this work exhibited language matching to some degree. Kerri at Integrate Inc. showed an understanding of the language of marketing, and Amanda from The Welfare League consistently used business language to explore ways to collaborate with private sector organisations. Frank from Workwell also appreciated how language matching created an environment in which to negotiate with potential employers.

Anchor shift

As exemplified in Integrate Inc., anchor shift is a key factor in consequences to individual social agency in a nonprofit organisation with respect to its relationships with for-profits. In that case, when the nonprofit initially moved to create internal business enterprises there was almost complete turnover as a result. Individuals were unable to make the ‘anchor shift’ to a new way of thinking. Consequently, they experienced dissonance and a sense of increasing helplessness in the face of change and their response was to leave Integrate Inc. The senior manager at the organisation also reported the ‘cycle of incapacity’ and limited permanent advances for some current staff members to complete the anchor shift required for them to have increased social agency, as they remain entrenched in what has become out of necessity an obsolete way of operating. On the other hand, positive anchor shift resulted in increased social agency for the executive officer at Integrate Inc.

Although it was first identified in Integrate Inc., subsequent application of the anchor shift linguistic thread demonstrated that it appeared as an element of the discourse in Nightlight as well. In the case of Nightlight, anchor shift was demonstrated by its opposite. Staff understood the major differences between traditional nonprofit and for-profit organisational orientations and deliberately chose not to adopt a more business-like world view for the purpose of inter-sectoral collaboration. These choices were clear in Nightlight informants’ discourse of placing themselves firmly on the ‘nonprofit side.’

In the pilot quantitative study, questions were posed regarding the connection between resistance from staff to the relationship and the degree to which staff held similar views about the relationship. The significant negative correlation indicates that when staff sense a fragmented workplace on this issue, resistance is more likely to appear. Although the connection is not unequivocal, there is a link between the absence of shared anchor shift and resistance to the for-profit relationship. This could also have ramifications for organisational capacity because staff would not be united in their working towards sustainable relationships with business if that was what was required for organisational survival.

Leadership

There are two types of leadership, facilitative and isolationist, that had opposite effects on organisational capacity and social agency, respectively. Using the tools of deliberate intra-organisational communication in the form of frequent informal chat sessions, the facilitative leader at Integrate Inc. fostered an environment in which both business activities and traditional service roles could co-exist. Although as indicated above in the section on anchor shift these attempts to assist staff to make the transition were ongoing, they had some effect on current staff interviewed who expressed little dissonance at their roles as both service providers and marketing professionals (e.g. Kerri's discourse in Integrate Inc.) This in turn increased organisational capacity because individuals were able to be effective in both areas.

In the case of Nightlight, isolationist leadership led to decreased social agency. This occurred because the senior manager was the only member of staff to have any contact or dealings with for-profit organisations. Other members of the organisation did not have the opportunity to develop personal contact with business counterparts, and so their knowledge of the nonprofit/for-profit links was very limited. Although it could be argued that staff preferred this distance from the 'dirty' side of resource development, the positive effect of personal contact on social agency in other cases (e.g. Care & Share Association, The Welfare League) suggest that isolationist leadership precludes opportunities for positive social agency to develop.

On the other hand, it could also be the case that facilitative leadership such as that which appeared in Integrate Inc. has the potential in the long-term to co-ordinate all staff efforts in the direction of understanding the exigencies of a changing funding structure while not experiencing a sense of betraying the organisation's core values. Unfortunately in the quantitative study, it was difficult to isolate the effect of leadership because more than 80% of respondents were themselves in middle management or higher. This factor might have skewed responses to questions dealing with leadership because it was based on self-reporting and not triangulated by observation or supported by other informants' contributions.

Power

Finally, the data indicated a loop back from social agency and organisational capacity back to power, thereby closing the theoretical circle of language, power, and effects on nonprofit staff and organisations. A recognition of and commitment to mutual benefit appears to lead to more equitable power arrangements. Increases in social agency and organisational capacity (e.g. in The Welfare League through language recruitment, in the Care & Share Association through recognition of mutual benefit and in Integrate Inc. through anchor shift) resulted in at least some increases in power for the nonprofit organisation through increased capability to act in their own interests. On the other side, decreases in social agency and organisational capacity resulted in decreased power to the nonprofit in the case of Nightlight. This was illustrated by informants who felt ill-equipped to engage the for-profit in negotiating a 'good deal' for the nonprofit and who were more likely to tolerate the donor/gratitude model of inter-sectoral relationships. This is a good example of the link between language and power that has emerged from the research. The quantitative study supported this link between language and power as well. Here a sense of shared values was correlated with more power to the nonprofit. The statistics also point to a significant link between the cost of the relationship to the nonprofit and an effect on its values. This in turn was connected to organisational capacity.

However, there is another complexity of this relationship that has to do with whose social agency is affected. In the case of Workwell, for example, high social agency for Frank but decreased organisational capacity overall led to less power for the nonprofit. In contrast, even though some other individuals in the organisation experienced great difficulty in reconciling their experiences in the nonprofit with the requirements such as marketing that heralded the organisation's move into internal business ventures (i.e. the Executive Director's report of the struggle to bring all staff members along, see Figure 6), the fact that the senior manager at Integrate Inc. was able to maintain and increase her social agency actually resulted in greater organisational capacity than might have been expected. As is explored in the section on leadership, the internal power of individuals in the organisation was also related to what degree of impact their own levels of social agency would have on the overall organisation. In the case of Integrate Inc., this could be explained by the fact that the leader, who had high social agency, was also mostly responsible for direct contact with business counterparts. Therefore, her high social agency resulted in the organisation being represented by someone who's capacity to act positively on her own behalf filtered through to organisational capacity. This is an example of how the position of people in relation to the for-profit and to internal power structures affects how social agency of a particular individual will influence overall organisational capacity.

11.2.3 Research Question #3: the media factor

3. Does the media aspect of the institutional context of relationships in which nonprofits operate affect the social agency of individuals and the capacity of nonprofits?

The major findings regarding this question are as follows:

1. The main message of the media was to ignore possible conflicts of interest between organisations and advise nonprofits to engage in 'partnership'

2. Although institutional context did form an important part of the discourse in nonprofit organisations, the media aspect of this area was not sufficient in itself to characterise the complex environment in which informants and their organisations operated
3. Overall, informants had a sophisticated acknowledgement of many elements of institutional context beyond the media issue

Three related issues emerged from the case study data in initial fieldwork and the media analysis conducted on print and television sources.

The major finding of the media analysis was that it tended to ignore inherent conflict in the values and objectives between sectors. In the case of inter-sectoral relationships, media accounts focused on the benefits to be gained without acknowledging the sometimes treacherous road that collaboration can be. In the external media, there was also a strong current of advice to the nonprofit sector to become more business-like in pursuing these relationships and to act more like private enterprise.

The second is a methodological limitation that constrained the extent to which the media analysis could fully answer the research question. Almost all informants gave at least passing acknowledgement to the institutional context as whole. Everyone interviewed appeared to have an awareness of the changing political, legal, social and economic environments in which nonprofit organisations find themselves. This understanding is reflected in the static average model of how linguistic threads worked together, presented in section 11.3. Thus, although institutional context did form an important part of the discourse in nonprofit organisations, the media aspect was only part of informants broader understanding of the complex environment in which they and their organisations operated.

However, this apparent limitation also provided valuable insight into the extent to which staff members held in their world views a sense of all of the contributing factors that make up their institutional environment. In other words, their exposure to and knowledge of what the media perspective was on nonprofit organisations was one component of much broader knowledge of the changes in funding arrangements, legislative reporting

requirements or social shifts that directly affected their work. For example, Kerri at Integrate Inc. mentioned in passing the legal changes affecting the way disabilities services were offered. In one sense, this example was typical of the way in which informants demonstrated a 'taken for granted' sense of the institutional context in which they and their organisations operated. Although not directly related to the media, this type of disclosure was an important clue about the rich understanding that many informants exhibited of the way in which the legal, political and social environments affected their organisations.

In terms of theoretical development, this discovery was crucial to the decision to relegate institutional context to a backdrop of theoretical utility rather than a cornerstone of it. In other words, the very fact that all informants gave at least passing appreciation of their institutional context removed that element from the equation of trying to understand whether and how language and power affect the social agency and the organisational capacity of nonprofit in relationship with for-profit.

The final issue was the results of the media analysis itself. From the evidence, it is not possible to declare with certainty the exact effects on social agency or organisational capacity of the media discourse around nonprofit organisations. Nonetheless, it was a useful aspect of the study that provided some insight into the media portrayal of nonprofits. In this light, the media analysis may have effects on the organisational capacity and the social agency of staff working in nonprofit organisations. Negative social identification, which leads to a primary point of view of nonprofits and for-profits in competitive rather than collaborative relationships, could affect nonprofit organisational capacity because public perception has broader political implications that could influence how nonprofits as a whole are supported. Other elements of discourse, for example articles that portrayed nonprofits as squandering public money, were other instances in which the language in the media could have wider impact on the sector as a whole. On the other hand, positive social identification (usually associated with personal contact) could contribute to increased organisational capacity if that perception of collaboration extended to public shifts in support for a particular nonprofit.

As a result of the answers to the research questions, and in direct consequence of the data collected and analysed, this round of grounded theory resulted in a modified process model that incorporated all elements of the theory developed in the previous sections. In addition to the obvious additions of linguistic threads as the medium and outcome of changes to social agency and organisational capacity, this theory model is clearly differentiated from the initial theoretical heuristic presented in Chapter 2 because it does not assume a particular power dynamic. Clearly, the power differential is a consequence of specific case characteristics and it would be incomplete to assume one type of power relationship. In this way, it fits Clegg's circuits of power model well (1989), with episodic, facilitative and dispositional power describing some elements of the power dimension. The final process theory model is shown in Figure 13. The further implications of this type of language/power process model are explored in section 11.5.

11.3 THE MODELS OVERLAYED: A 'TYPICAL' ARRANGEMENT OF MAJOR LINGUISTIC THREADS

For reasons that have been explored in the earlier theory-building sections of this chapter, each case has a unique formation signature of how the identified linguistic threads are positioned relative to one another. Nonetheless, a careful extraction of the major commonalties among all models has made it possible to devise a typical static state model for the cases presented here.

There is substantial utility in this exercise. Firstly, a single model provides a blueprint against which to measure and understand future work that takes as its starting point the preceding theory of language and power in nonprofit/for-profit relationships. Secondly, it is a ready reference source for comparing the way in which current case studies diverge from the 'norm'. Finally, this average formation is the static state representation of the process theory model, with all drivers and effects omitted from the figure.

Figure 13: A Process Theory of Language and Power in Nonprofit/For-profit Relationships

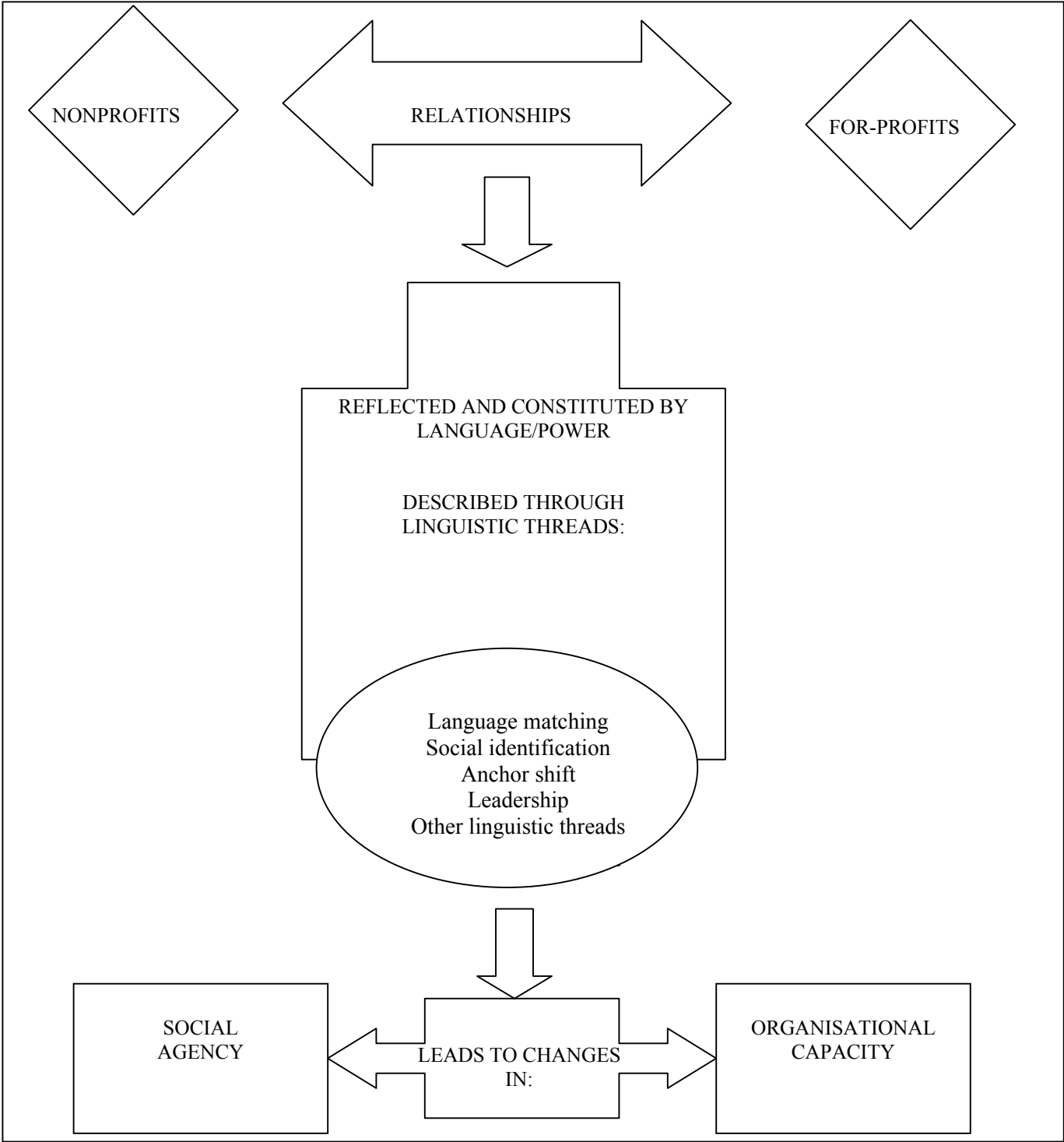
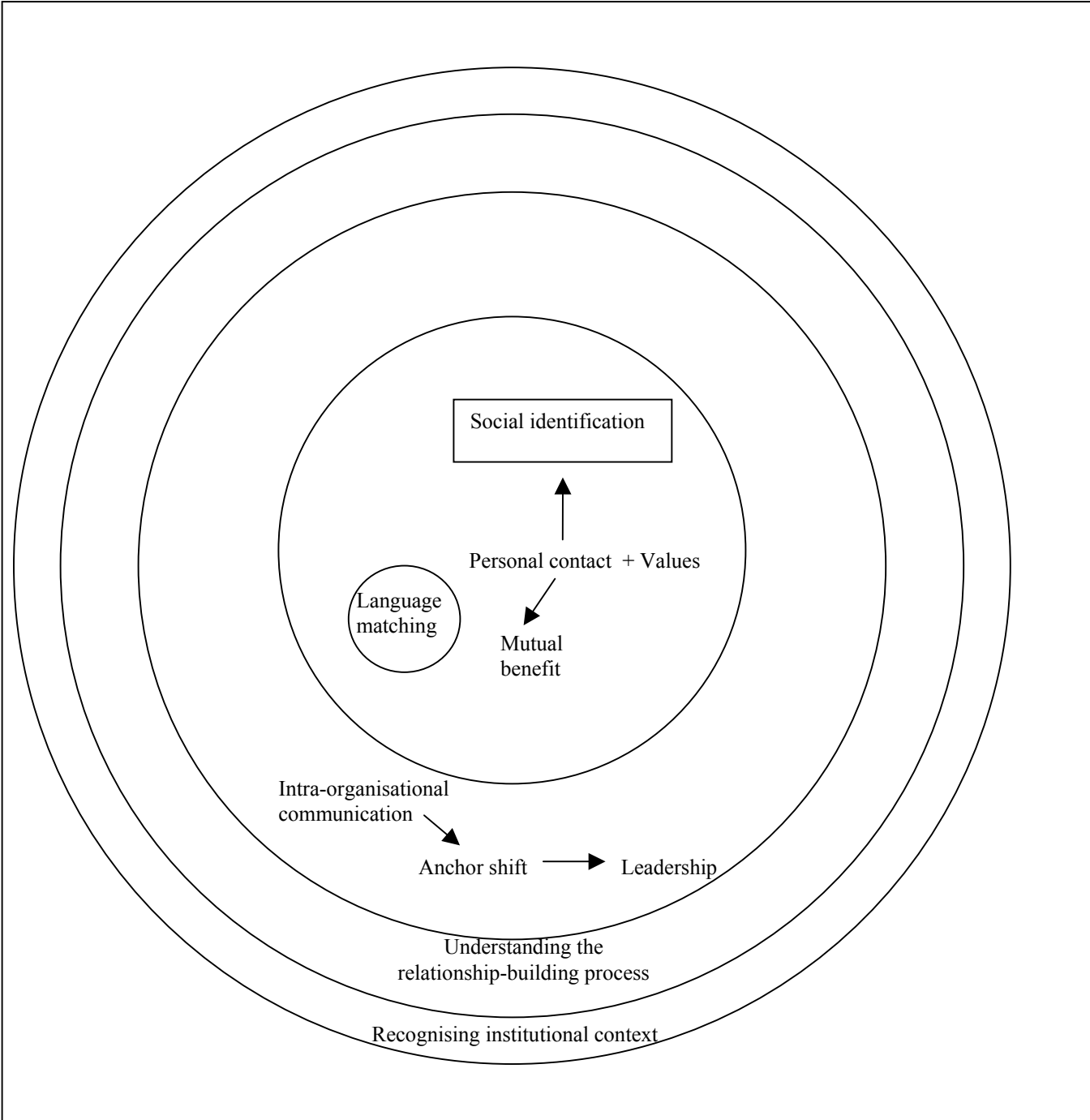


Figure 14:

Average Static State Linguistic Threads Model



There are four clear similarities among all case studies that are evident in this amalgamated model. Firstly, language is clearly exhibiting features of what Fairclough calls ‘discursive practice’—that is, that language reproduces social relations but also creates them as it evolves (1992). The quantitative results and patterns that emerged from responses there echo this dual function of language in relationships between nonprofits and for-profits. All cases to some degree exhibited recognition of an institutional context that constrained their ability to act freely but also gave them opportunities and challenges that required innovative responses to funding crises. For example, Barbara at the Care & Share Association account of the history of the organisation demonstrated understanding and acknowledgement of the external political, legislative and funding changes that had affected the organisation over its first decade of existence. Stephen at Nightlight also mentioned changes in funding related to institutional shifts. This relates back to the larger question of language as structure and/or language primary driver of the social construction of reality. The work presented in this study demonstrated that language performs both these functions. In the case of institutional context, language is primarily a mirror of existing external conditions. In the model and across all the case studies, institutional context was an underlying condition of all nonprofit/for-profit relationships and is represented as the largest concentric circle.

At the next level ‘down’ in the concentric circle model lies the linguistic thread of understanding the relationship-building process. Within this thread, close bonds among personal contact, mutual benefit and values sub-themes have been illustrated in the case studies and echoed in the questionnaire. These links indicate personal contact with someone in the for-profit is more likely to be associated with shared values, and that both of these in turn would probably result in a higher commitment to mutual benefit from a negotiated relationship.

Understanding the relationship-building process is modelled within the broad environment and informant recognition of institutional context because everything that happens between staff of the nonprofit and for-profit is moulded and constrained by the legal, political, social

and economic environment. For example, when informants were asked in the questionnaire what was their motivation for engaging in collaboration with for-profit, almost 75% said financial concerns. It follows that respondents understand the relationship within a particular institutional context.

Thirdly, language matching and social identification are also embedded in understanding the relationship-building process, although not necessarily connected to individual sub-themes within that linguistic thread. For example, in deliberate language matching, informants used their understanding of the relationship-building process to manipulate the interaction with for-profits to their advantage. Even in the subconscious use of this linguistic thread, language matching was a critical element in the development of the relationship because it marked either parallel language use between organisations or sharp linguistic contrast. Language matching is shown in a bubble by itself in Figure 14 to indicate that although it was often connected to the overall process of understanding the relationship-building, it was not usually associated directly with any sub-theme such as values or personal contact. Social identification was also a ‘proximity thermometer’ in a similar way. The degree to which nonprofit informants identified with their for-profit counterparts was indicative of the closeness engendered by the relationship.

Finally, the roles of leadership and anchor shift are bound securely to processes of intra-organisational communication in some cases. Leadership and anchor shift are affected by and affect the degree to which nonprofit staff discuss with one another their concerns and opportunities in relationships with business. Most frequently, these elements are encircled in the concentric pockets of understanding the relationship-building process and recognising the institutional context as well. It is important to note that although leadership and anchor shift appeared in only two out of the five case studies and in the quantitative sample, when they were present they played a large role in determining the relative impact of the relationship on staff social agency and organisational capacity. Taken together, leadership and subsequent successful anchor shift are critical elements in whether or not the nonprofit will successfully navigate the power relations between itself and any business partners.

This is the average static state model for this sample of cases in this context. The next section explores how a theory of language and power in nonprofit/for-profit relationships adds to existing literature across a number of fields.

11.4 SIGNIFICANCE TO VARIOUS BODIES OF LITERATURE: WHERE DOES THE THEORY FIT?

In addition to the model of language and power in nonprofit/for-profit relationships and the consequences to social agency and organisational capacity, this theory clearly aligns itself with some existing research, challenges other work and expands the knowledge bases in a number of areas. This section describes where gaps in various bodies of literature have been at least partially filled by the research described in the thesis and by the model that has resulted.

More specifically, this research echoes, extends and sometimes challenges work into the following:

1. Third sector in Australia
2. Nonprofit/for-profit collaboration
3. Emerging forms of support to nonprofits
4. Power and philanthropy
5. Language and power

11.4.1 Third sector in Australia

One of the more obvious contributions is the implementation of this project in the unique Australian context. Although Australia shares many characteristics of language and culture with its English-speaking cultural neighbours where much more extensive research into the third sector has been done, namely the U.S. and the U.K., there are historical, geographical

and cultural peculiarities that require a body of literature to call its own. This theory does not claim universal application at this point; rather, it seeks to use a new lens of language and power to understand Australia's urban community sector. The focus on staff experience in the sector adds to work conducted by Onyx (1998), which found that values is a primary motivation for working in the nonprofit sector, by exploring their experiences in an organisation that has embarked on the path toward relationships with business.

This contribution is embedded in the context of the unique historical and socio-economic features of the Australian nonprofit landscape and as such uses work by Lyons (1998, 2001) and Onyx (1993; 1999).

It is possible to speculate on the utility of similar studies conducted elsewhere in the future (see section 11.7 in this chapter for more detail) but there is as yet no data to bear out the theory in other contexts.

11.4.2 Nonprofit/for-profit collaboration

This theory and the research underpinning it both support and contradict existing work into collaboration. Taking into account the work that has been done on collaboration, this study is the first to use language and power to study nonprofit/for-profit relationships in this way. Looking at collaboration more broadly and then nonprofit/for-profit collaboration more specifically, this section details the similarities and differences between the language and power theory presented here and previous work on collaboration.

On the subject of collaboration, many of the findings of power differentials creating difficulty for ensuring successful partnership reflect some of Barbara Gray's research. She wrote that shared power is required for the relationship to move from 'latent conflict' to collaboration. This notion of latent conflict is echoed in the interviews. For example, in Nightlight there is some relationship with business but the majority of staff interviewed expressed distrust of the for-profit and frustration with the power inequity.

The research presented here shows something even more than latent conflict, and that is recognition of ongoing conflicts of interest between the nonprofit and the for-profit. It is not necessarily that undisclosed conflict is the problem, but the existence of fundamental conflicts of interest that bar true collaboration. Nightlight fell into this position, and in fact in that case informants held fast to the inherent contradictions between themselves and the private sector as a critical part of their organisational identity. Therefore, this work illustrates that acknowledged conflicts of interest can be just as deadly to effective collaboration as can Gray's notion of latent conflict.

Furthermore, Gray noted that 'when some stakeholders can exercise substantial power over others, the weaker parties must first develop their capacity as stakeholders.' (1989, p. 119). The work on language and power extends this notion of developing organisational capacity by illustrating how the language can perpetuate the power mismatch between organisations and even how language can be used as a vehicle for shifting the power balance. Language recruitment of the business partners in The Welfare League is an excellent example of this theory explaining how weaker parties might gain greater control of the situation as Gray indicated they should.

Another area of some resonance between Gray's work and the theory outlined in this chapter is the issue of features that are indispensable for collaboration. For example, Gray's concept of parallel interdependence might be interpreted in this research as an analogue of mutual benefit—a sub-theme that has shown itself to be ubiquitous in the understanding the relationship-building process linguistic thread. One of the other key points here is that interdependence does not have to be completely equal to be of use in developing collaboration. For example, in Workwell the informants depended heavily upon employers to provide job opportunities for clients. Although employers need workers, the level of dependence of Workwell was higher in many cases on the employer than vice versa. Nonetheless, the combination of other factors in that case such as small financial incentives for employers mitigated the inequality somewhat.

Another macro-level synergy between this research and others can be found in Alexander's conceptualisation of collaboration as a process. However, where his work focused more directly on the strategies, tools and structures of collaboration, this work fills in the gap of process. In other words, this research portrays collaboration in action and the role of language in that process, instead of a static picture of organisations working together.

Both Paul (1995) and Kingma (1995) stated that definitions of success are crucial for inter-sectoral collaboration. This theory extends this notion in two ways. Firstly, using language as a key driver of the relationship, it is clear that definitions of every aspect of the relationship are critical for positive outcomes, and not just definitions of 'success.' This is saliently demonstrated by the confusion experienced between the Care & Share Association and Biz3 over the timeframe for rolling out a particular product. In other words, definitions of concepts and processes are both part of understanding the relationship-building process.

In a working paper in 1998, Lyons speculated that the relationship between business and the third sector had been steadily moving from the model of 'support as philanthropy' through the phase of 'support as business transaction' into the potential of 'support as corporate citizenship.' Although in recent years there has been much closer attention made to the side of the equation with corporate giving in the spotlight (Centre for Corporate Public Affairs 2000; Birch 1998; Sillanpaa 1999), the work here on case studies and questionnaires from the nonprofit side suggests that the transition is not as direct as Lyons suggested. Certainly, as Lyons argued, the advent of economic rationalism introduced the second transaction model. However, it is evident from the case studies here that all of these models, including the third of corporate citizenship, are simultaneously present in the nonprofit/for-profit landscape. There may be some linear development, but the models supplement rather than completely supplant one another. This is an important distinction because it illustrates the complexity of relationships that many nonprofit organisations may have with business and precludes sounding the premature death knell for either traditional philanthropic support or efficiency driven economic transactions. And although from the business standpoint the corporate citizenship rhetoric might be becoming more fashionable than the two 'old' ways, 22.8% of informants from the questionnaire still selected 'donor

support' as the best descriptor for the relationship, suggesting that the old model is alive and well.

In a similar vein, this concept was acknowledged and developed in a paper at the 1999 Australia and New Zealand Academy of Management (ANZAM) Conference (Onyx, Lyons & Booth 1999). Detailing Austin's three stages of the 'collaboration continuum' (philanthropic, transactional and integrative), this paper focused on the role of social capital in social partnerships. Although the focus of this thesis is not social capital per se, the section excerpted below cements this work firmly to the research presented in this theory:

The flow of resources is normally reciprocal in the long term...social partnerships in particular appear to be motivated partly by the emotional connection that individuals make with a shared commitment to a social mission and to their counterparts in the other organisation (Austin 1999). The personal relationships are the glue that binds the organizations together.

(Onyx, Lyons & Booth 1999, p. 5)

There are mirror images of three distinct linguistic sub-themes from the understanding the relationship-building process in this quote. Mutual benefit, shared values and personal contact all appear in this dense section as critical to the formation of social capital, and social capital is argued to be a key component of successful social partnerships. The empirical case studies and quantitative results both reflect and extend the contention that these three elements are important for positive collaborative outcomes. For example, in the Care & Share Association, the relationship with Biz1 had probably progressed towards the third integrative stage. A strong personal relationship, shared values with for-profit counterparts and a commitment to mutually beneficial outcomes were in place; however, at the time of fieldwork it was difficult to conclude that the two organisations had aligned their core missions. Another important similarity is that Onyx, Lyons and Booth do not assume that all relationships will progress through Austin's three stages.

There is one way in which this research differs sharply from the contention of organisations needing to mature into social partnerships that Onyx, Lyons and Booth espouse, and that comes back to definitions of successful relationships. As illustrated by the case studies, there were a range of relationships with business in which nonprofit staff members were engaged and no single prescriptive model can account completely for the success or failure of those collaborative efforts. Certainly, trends identified using linguistic threads uncovered commonalities and patterns in the consequences of these relationships for social agency and organisational capacity. There were similarities in the mechanisms of language and the resulting relationships. Nonetheless, it is critical to maintain an open mind about the types of relationships that might work for a given set of organisations in particular circumstances.

There are two ways in which this research enhances and redirects discussion around Huxham and Vangen's work on relationships between public and nonprofit organisations (1996). The first is that many of their findings—difficulties in accessing resources, communication concerns and power inequities—were also reflected in the nonprofit/for-profit data in this research. The broad themes that they offer in their paper are present in many of the case studies and questionnaire responses.

The second is directly concerned with the 'plea for good communication' which the authors report that their informants expressed. One of the ways in which this language and power research extends this idea of communication is that the combination of linguistic threads and the ways in which they connect with one another to affect social agency and organisational capacity begin to explore what constitutes 'good' communication. In other words, communication that has high levels of positive social identification might be construed as 'good' communication because the resulting perception is that the organisations are on the same side. As a caution, the argument here is not that language causes this positive social identification, but that it reflects and contributes to it. Huxham and Vangen identify that communication needs to be 'good'—the research presented here

xplores what ‘good’ (or at least collaborative in the perception of nonprofit informants) communication sounds like.

11.4.3 Emerging forms of support to nonprofits

One significant deviation from current research is how this theory contradicts Dees’ (1998) assumption that nonprofits are continually and willingly subjugated by the dynamics of the relationship with business. The negative effects on social agency and strong resistance to business relationships in the Nightlight case study clearly illustrated that this ‘willingness’ may actually be a lack of social agency to engage proactively with business. In other words,

Another subtlety that emerged from this work was the difference between placing motivation as a paramount concern and shifting the importance to mutual benefit. Hemphill (1995) stated that the motivation for corporate philanthropy in a cause-related marketing (CRM) situation is self-serving rather than altruistic, and there was the implication that this was not appropriate. However, the theory presented here actually points to mutual benefit as a strong indicator of a relationship that is working well. In other words, motivation may be important as an indicator of shared values (which figures prominently in this model), but the fundamental motivation is not as important as the negotiated power platform between the two organisations. The Welfare League is an excellent example of this as it strives to expand its programs using mutual benefit as the primary ‘carrot’ for business involvement.

The other area in which this work adds to current research is its exclusive focus on the staff perspective of changing nonprofit financial resourcing. It does not contribute to quantitatively cataloguing what types of support are becoming more common in the Australian context (although case studies encompass the range of possibilities from internal private enterprise to single sponsorship deals), but this work does illustrate that these changing financial considerations and the innovative arrangements that may accompany the shift have a considerable impact on the nonprofit organisations studied. Furthermore, it is the specifics of the way language and power interact and the precise impact on social

agency of these emerging forms, rather than a simple ‘positive or negative’ label on the relationship.

11.4.4 Power and philanthropy

The theory presented here adds interesting caveats and possible development to work done by Emenhiser (in Hanson 1997) on philanthropy as the acquisition and consolidation of power. Although this theory showed that sometimes the outcome is an accrual of power on the for-profit side (for example, some of Workwell’s relationships with business partners who hold power over employing clients), it does not support the notion of deliberate accumulation of power by the for-profit. More frequently, the motivations of the for-profits as reported by nonprofit staff appeared to be advertising or reputation enhancing through community involvement. This is a different picture from Emenhiser’s stance that for-profits intentionally engage in philanthropy in order to develop power bases.

Rather than support this straightforward connection, this theory of language and power in nonprofit/for-profit relationships offers a model that is a complex array of the interplay of language and structural constraints on a relationship between ‘donor’ and ‘recipient.’ Pointedly, this work argues that power is not a static component of a philanthropic relationship, but a fluctuating element that can be focused, reflected and defined by language.

11.4.5 Language and power

In terms of language, the theory both uses as an initial assumptions and strongly supports through case study and questionnaire data that ‘language as medium and outcome’ argument put forth by Clegg and others (Clegg 1989; McHoul & Clegg 1987). It demonstrates that language both reflects and constitutes reality for individuals working in nonprofit organisations that are attempting to build relationships with for-profits.

The theory also alludes to sense-making as a process of integrating multiple, sometimes conflicting messages for decision-making by individuals and organisations (Miller, Hickson & Wilson 1999, p. 43-47) with a focus on the experiences of nonprofit

organisations engaged in sense-making around relationships with business. For example, the process of ‘discursive cohesion’ at both an individual and organisational level, factors for increased social agency and organisational capacity respectively, is itself a sense-making exercise. Discursive cohesion is the (subconscious) process of aligning one’s inner and outer conversational worlds so that conflict is decreased.

One way in which discursive cohesion is achieved is through anchor shift. In itself, anchor shift is an important extension to Dougherty’s thought worlds and provides a linguistic mechanism that explains how different internal and external ‘thought worlds’ can be aligned and constructively channelled. Two excellent but opposite examples of this in the data appeared in the same organisation, Integrate Inc. Dawn, the senior manager in the organisation, was able to shift easily between a focus on the needs of clients in the target group of the organisation and the need for concurrent business ventures. Her discourse reflected comfort with this transition; on the other hand, she reported that her entire staff left when Integrate Inc. initially took up the position of engaging in business practices that clashed with what most employees at the time viewed as core organisational values. Dawn was able to protect and enhance her social agency in part due to her discursive cohesion—she understood that there were different requirements for different parts of the job and she undertook to be completely immersed in those two worlds without experiencing severe disorientation. The contribution of anchor shift and discursive cohesion, then, is a description of the effect that the successful transition in this process has on social agency and organisational capacity. However, this is not to say that she reconciled all the contradictions in those competing paradigms. Rather, she learned to live with the dissonance and to compartmentalise them into appropriate ‘drawers’ of nonprofit/for-profit attitudes.

In terms of power, although it illustrates that in some instances the power issues in the cases could be aligned with one power theory over another (see Chapter 4 for an exposition of Clegg’s circuits of power (1989) and how they related to the case). It is more significant to note simply that power circulates and is variable, and that language is one driver of this shifting flow. The theory adequately accommodates an emphasis on the relationship

between power and language rather than on static interpretations of either construct by using the device of linguistic threads to analysis the data. This process searches for changes in social agency and/or organisational capacity to indicate changes in power differentials. The focus on this liminal area of interplay between language and power, rather than on the direct, tangible outcomes of inequity are a shift away from single-model interpretations of power in organisations.

As one paragon of this approach, Clegg's circuits of power provided the foundation for this type of multidimensional understanding of how language and power interact. The theory and empirical work presented here support the model and extend it into a new domain, that of inter-sectoral relationships.

11.5 CIRCUITS OF LANGUAGE: LANGUAGE/(CHOICE)/POWER/FLOW

The sections outlining the process theory and the static state model for the data collected through this research are maps for understanding *what* occurs to individuals in the nonprofit and to the organisation itself when engaging with a for-profit. The referral back to the literature shows where those models fit into existing work. However, the broader implications of these discoveries are the most critical aspect of the grounded theory.

Although the details of how linguistic threads are woven throughout cases when language and power intersect in the relationship are critical, there are deeper, more significant effects of language on organisations that operate in these types of inter-sectoral relationships.

These are concerned with *how* language operates.

The most important theoretical contribution of this work is that it has uncovered 'circuits of language' (to borrow Clegg's 'circuits of power' analogy (1987)) that explain how individuals in organisations use language. Language is used to reflect reality, but it is also used to re-create it as individuals engage in sense-making about their environments and reposition themselves in relation to their organisations. Circuits of language explain how language flows through a relationship in a series of decision points. At each point, informants made conscious or subconscious choices about their discourse in their relationships with the for-profit. Language flows through these circuits as a result of

decisions, which lead to shifts in power between the organisations. Another important consequence of this flow is that it changes the context and the dynamic of the relationship at every circuit intersection. This process results in the circuits of language becoming a series of language/(choice)/power/flow interactions at the intersections of decision points. Note that choice is in parentheses in the circuits of language theory. This is because choice is sometimes exercised deliberately in language use and sometimes in less evident ways. It may be part of the language/power/flow diagram in certain cases where language is being deliberately employed for change, but choice may also be limited by existing structural constraints or even by lack of awareness of the power of language on inter-organisational relationships.

Fundamentally, the use of language by participants in the case studies in relation to their organisations' links to for-profits is an exercise in addressing contradictions. Nonprofits and businesses are not natural partners. Differences in values, mission, core reasons for existence and employee rationale for working there are ever-present in the case studies. Even when nonprofits appear to have a sophisticated understanding of these challenges, the contradictions appear in multiple guises.

Language as represented by the discourse of linguistic threads is the set of circuits through which individuals deal with these contradictions. Depending on the decision and use of language in a particular situation, language may reinforce or diminish these differences. For example, if social identification is a circuit, the two options are negative or positive social identification. High or positive social identification brings at least the individuals involved closer together, weakening the differences between organisations. In contrast, negative social identification widens the gap between the nonprofit and the for-profit.

It is these circuits of language that demonstrate the flow of language and power in inter-sectoral relationships. As language constructs meaning in a given context, that context changes slightly. By operating on reality, the language modifies it. These continuously altering conditions are part of the process of circuits of language.

One example from The Welfare League demonstrates this quite well. Amanda recognised the differences between business imperatives and the nonprofit’s funding requirements. She used language matching and social identification to bridge those differences. However, in speaking about other potential partners, she reiterated the need to reflect on the organisations’ different approaches and work through them. In other words, Amanda used a ‘circuit of language’ in social identification to allow the relationship to flow to the next step, but she understood that those circuits might also present obstacles to future collaborations with other organisations.

In the example above, a language circuit was employed to deal constructively with inherent inter-organisational contradictions. Language circuits were used to block further possibility of collaboration in Nightlight in an example of a different way to deal with contradiction. Nightlight informants held to their negative social identification with businesses despite some understanding of the issue of mutual benefit. In that case, the perceived danger to the organisation of ‘giving in’ to the private sector outweighed any desire for long-term collaboration. Table gives other examples of how circuits of language affect the nonprofit staff and the organisations in which they work (# means ‘associated with’). These summarise some of the relationships explored in more depth in section 11.2.

Table 17: Language/(Choice)/Power/Flow: Circuits of Language

Care & Share Association	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> conscious language matching #↑ social agency
Nightlight	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> conflict of interest # ↓ social agency AND ↓ organisational capacity # ↓ power to nonprofit isolationist leadership # ↓ social agency
Integrate Inc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + anchor shift # ↑ social agency intra-organisational communication # ↑ organisational capacity facilitative leadership # ↑ organisational capacity
The Welfare League	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> social agency AND ↑ organisational capacity # ↑ power to nonprofit language recruitment # (↑ social agency)/ ↑ organisational capacity

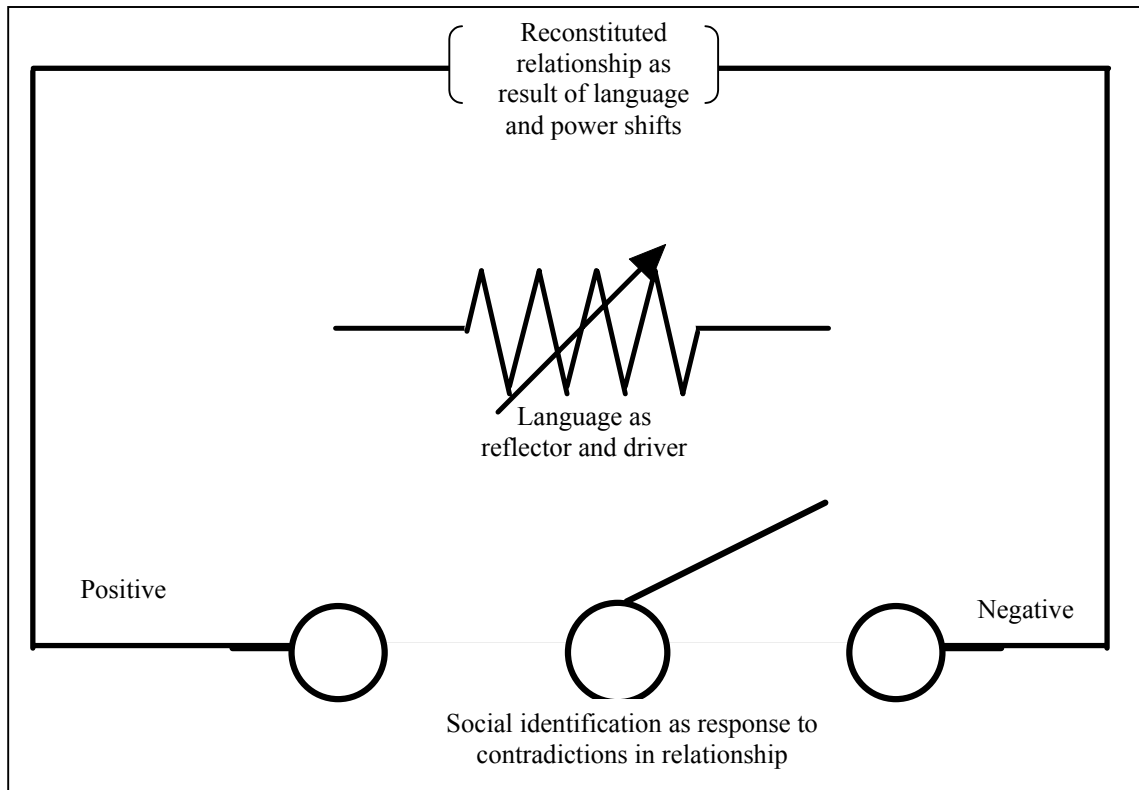
Workwell	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • social agency BUT ↓ organisational capacity # ↓ power to the nonprofit • individual discursive cohesion # ↑ social agency
-----------------	--

An illustration of what the circuit might look like will serve to further clarify the concepts of circuits of language. In Figure 15, social identification is used as the ‘intersection’ of the circuit. Where the result of choice and structural constraints result in positive social identification, those consequences are mapped to the next series of intersections; where the result is negative social identification, a different set of implications arise.

The circuits of language metaphor incorporates three crucial elements of the theory of language and power in nonprofit/for-profit collaboration. Firstly, it rests on the assumption of varying degrees of conflict and ingrained contradictions in the types of organisations characterised as nonprofit and for-profit. Secondly, it offers the option to exercise choice of language, limited by structural constraints and individual awareness. These choices are very important, because they influence the power structure between organisations. For example, in dealing with the contradictions between nonprofit and for-profit values, each case presented here and the individuals within it exercised the choice to frame their responses quite differently. The Care & Share informants focused on the personal relationships to minimise value differentials. Nightlight acquiesced to the differences without engaging in collaboration in order to protect their organisational integrity and individual values. Integrate Inc. for the most part held two separate frames of reference and worked to move between the two. The Welfare League engaged in a process of trying to understand the goals of collaboration as the search for broader common humanity and Workwell tried to promote its own ‘business-like’ behaviour. Although these are organisational simplifications for individuals who may have reacted differently from their co-workers in the organisations, the range of reactions to the same issues of contradiction in inter-sectoral collaboration illustrates how circuits can combine to create scenarios of relationships that range from the committed to the non-committal.

Thirdly, the circuits of language theory underscores the critical finding that language and power flow through the interactions that nonprofit staff have or perceive themselves to have with the private sector.

Figure 15: Circuits of Language



The discourse of the case studies presented here embodies a series of parallel and serial circuits. In the case of serial circuits, the circuits of language repeat at the point where language reconstitutes and re-frames the relationship at the top of the diagram above. In parallel circuits, other linguistic threads combine to have an effect on the relationship. The elements of discourse may not have direct bearing on one another, but in parallel they combine to have overall implications for the organisation. The discourse of the nonprofits studied are a mix of serial and parallel circuits. For example, in Nightlight, conflict of interest lead to decreased social agency. The conflict of interest circuit and the isolationist leadership circuit in parallel had discrete but cumulative effects on the social agency and organisational capacity of the case, which led to decreased power to the nonprofit.

11.6 METHODOLOGICAL CONTRIBUTION: LINGUISTIC THREADS

Before proceeding to the contribution, a brief reflection on the limitations of the methodology is useful. Although the case studies provided a strong data set that enabled significant analysis, it may have been useful to incorporate a longitudinal elements to the work. In other words, subsequent interviews with the same set of informants may have provided a more comprehensive picture of their experiences of the relationship ‘in motion.’ Nonetheless, the work presented here and the contribution of linguistic threads is significant from the methodology as the study was conducted.

The section on methodology, Chapter Three, has already argued directly for the case of linguistic threads. This section summarises those arguments and positions linguistic threads as a significant contribution derived from this work.

The recognition of a need for a new tool came early in the development of the research. Initial engagement with discourse analysis resulted in a critical insight into how communication and language would have to be understood in order to engage directly with all of the complexity of language and power in nonprofit/for-profit organisations. A brief attempt to select one metaphor for communication resulted in stilted, narrow thinking; instead, linguistic threads provided a platform to observe, interpret and analyse multi-metaphoric conceptualisations of communication.

As a convergence of language as conduit, discourse and voice, linguistic threads are a multi-level tool of analysis that enabled research to be conducted using several different approaches to the phenomenon. Furthermore, this cognitive stance was useful for theoretical development because it precluded or at least prevented premature closing of categories and oversimplification of data. This openness to theoretical diversity is well-known as a precursor to successful theory-building (Eisenhardt 1989).

It is very important to note that the argument is not that linguistic threads might just ‘replace’ traditional processes of thematising. Rather, they act as yet another tool in the arsenal of researchers of language in organisations to identify, document, analyse and interpret how discourse operates in a given context. In fact, as with many tools of research, the import of linguistic threads is increased when they are combined with more traditional methods of qualitative analysis such as the identification of nmus (natural meaning units) or meaning condensation (Lee, T.W. 1999). This was demonstrated in the cases presented here.

As a new qualitative research tool, linguistic threads are a significant development. They allow researchers to examine a communication act from a myriad of perspectives, each with its own way of making sense of the discourse and reflecting organisational ‘reality.’ For example, two different ways of conceptualising language metaphorically are ‘conduit’ and ‘voice.’ If language is viewed as a conduit, the focus would be on information transmitted by the words. This is useful as one way to understand language, but it is also limited because it constrains the way in which communication can be explored, explained and understood. On the other hand, if language is given the representative qualities of the ‘voice’ metaphor, the focus would be directed toward the relationship between the two actors and the positions of one respective to the other rather than on the words as strict channels through which information is exchanged. Questions surrounding research that takes as its linguistic metaphor ‘voice’ might be prone to ask questions regarding the power relationship between communicating actors, the absence of some ‘voices’ from the discourse or the prevalence of another. Linguistic threads are more than a new phrase—they are a practical, useful device for understanding, mapping and interpreting discourse in organisations from multiple perspectives, and as such can be added to the canon of significant methodological development in this area.

Section 11.6 details issues for future consideration and research and includes potential future uses of linguistic threads in a variety of research settings.

11.6.1 Explaining intuition: ‘threads’ as the appropriate analogy for new analytical tool

The preceding section describes the purpose, function and utility of linguistic threads. However, there is one element of explanation of the development of this tool that was only explored in detail towards the end of the research process. This is the underlying question: why ‘linguistic thread’? Why select that particular term to signify this mechanism and what is gained from choosing precisely the appropriate phrase?

The first half of the phrase ‘linguistic thread’ is easily explained. The work was conducted using discourse analysis, with strong emphasis on the role of language in the reflection and creation of reality. Thus it follows logically that the adjective for this specific tool be ‘of language.’

The second half, ‘thread,’ is more complicated. The most superficial argument might say that it was selected by chance—that the researcher was looking for a convenient label for a confounding concept and happened on a one-syllable metaphor that seemed to fit. However, that would be simplistic. In fact, the selection of the word ‘thread’ is intricately tied to an argument that has been put forth convincingly by Hofstadter in *The Analogical Mind: Perspectives from Cognitive Science* (eds Gentner, Holyoak & Kokinov 2001). Hofstadter wrote:

One should not think of analogy-making as a special variety of reasoning (as in the dull and uninspiring phrase “analogical reasoning and problem-solving,” a long-standing cliché in the cognitive science world), for that is to do analogy a terrible disservice. After all, reasoning and problem-solving have...been at long last recognized as lying far indeed from the core of human thought. If analogy were merely a special variety of something that itself lies way out on the peripheries, then it would be but an itty-bitty blip in the broad blue sky. To me, however, analogy is anything but

a bitty blip—rather, it's the very blue that fills the whole sky of cognition—analogy is everything, or very nearly so, in my view.

(p.499)

Although this tangent may at first appear irrelevant, it is in fact crucial. Hofstadter placed analogy at the centre of cognition, illustrating how this process is a window onto the mind through language. This explanation is included to demonstrate that the process of analogy, of likening something to something else because of perceived (but not always acknowledged) shared properties is central to the way the mind works and as such is fundamental to clarifying why the selected phrase is used to signify an analytical tool.

Thus, an exploration of 'why thread' can be accomplished by exploring the analogical properties of the word in the following sequence:

1. Dictionary/thesaurus definitions
2. What does it do?
3. What does it do it to?
4. How does it do it?

The latest edition of Roget's International Thesaurus (Chapman 2001) gives as some synonyms to 'thread' words including 'string,' 'fibre,' 'filament,' 'strand,' 'yarn,' 'twine,' 'cord,' 'motif,' 'theme' and 'plot.' The first seven of these refer to physical objects and the last three are related to the metaphoric use of the word, connotations which already point to some answers for questions two, three and four in the list above.

And the on-line Macquarie Dictionary (<http://www.macquariedictionary.com.au/>, accessed 09/07/01) defines it thus:

1. a fine cord of flax, cotton, or other fibrous material spun out to considerable length, especially such a cord composed of two or more filaments twisted together. **2.** twisted fibres of any kind used for sewing. **3.** one of the lengths of yarn forming the warp and woof of a woven fabric. **4.** a filament or fibre of glass or other ductile substance. **5.** something having the fineness or slenderness of a thread, as a thin continuous stream of liquid, a fine line of colour, or a thin seam of ore. **6.** the helical ridge of a screw. **7.** that which runs through the whole course of something, connecting successive parts, as the sequence of events in a narrative. **8.** (*plural*) *Colloquial* clothes. --*verb* (*t*) **9.** to pass the end of a thread through the eye of (a needle). **10.** to fix (beads, etc.) upon a thread that is passed through; string. **11.** to form a thread on or in (a bolt, hole, etc.). --*verb* (*i*) **12.** to make one's way, as through a passage or between obstacles. **13.** to move in a threadlike course; wind or twine. **14.** *Cookery* (of boiling syrup) to form a fine thread when dropped from a spoon. --*phrase* **15.** hang by a thread, to be in a dangerous or precarious position. [Middle English, from Old English *thraed*]

These references are initially useful because they point to both tangible descriptions of 'thread' as well as some connotations and symbolic uses of the word. It is the symbolism that is of most interest here.

Thread can be used to connect objects (as a button to a jacket or the panels of a quilt) or to close gaps (as in wool used to darn holes in socks). In the theoretical use of the term, linguistic threads connect aspects of the discourse to one another and close a gap in the understanding of how language relates to the relationship between nonprofit and for-profit.

Another important detail of this assertion about threads ‘tying together’ is that thread can be used to link objects that are quite dissimilar from one another, like a button and a jacket, but that once linked take on new functionality (it can be buttoned up to keep out the cold). In the same way, linguistic threads can weave apparently disparate elements of discourse to demonstrate an overall pattern or linguistic space.

The caveat to ‘thread’ is that it is not like ‘glue’ in the sense that it does not bond two or more objects or ideas into one. Each part of the object being linked to another by a thread retains its original character while becoming part of a new whole. An example of this might be using thread to sew a sleeve onto the body section of a suit. The sleeve is still a sleeve, but by using thread it can also become part of a new unit, the suit. Thus it is important to note that linguistic threads can denote elements of discourse, and when linked in a pattern those elements can become part of a larger template for organisational discourse. Nonetheless, those threads remain separate entities as well as forming part of the larger picture.

There is a temporal or continuity aspect to the word ‘thread’ as well as its properties for bonding together objects or concepts. That is, as illustrated by the third definition in the dictionary excerpt, ‘thread’ implies something that is a unifying element in a set through time (thread of conversation) as well as space (needle and thread).

This exploration of ‘linguistic thread’ as an analogical extension of using a new tool to analyse discourse is significant because it demonstrates the cognitive underpinnings of the choice of that phrase to refer to the major methodological contribution of this research.

11.7 FUTURE DIRECTIONS & BROADER IMPLICATIONS: WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

Although this research study is based on solid theoretical and methodological foundations, limitations in current work and discoveries from it provide ample scope for future

development. Three areas—theoretical, methodological and pragmatic—offer significant opportunity for extension of the thesis presented here.

11.7.1 Theoretical

In the first place, there exist theoretical issues that have been subsumed or relegated to second-class standing by limitations in scope that would considerably enlarge this work. There are four areas in theoretical development that might emanate from this thesis: quantitative generalisability; organisational characteristic analysis; examination of less prevalent linguistic threads; and institutional context studies.

The first and most obvious step in theoretical refinement resides in quantitative testing of the current model. This would complete the ‘inductive/deductive’ research cycle and offer a different type of validity to the grounded theory that is the mainstay of the thesis presented here. It might result in uncovered theoretical threads that were not identified in this study; it would certainly provide a secondary source of support and legitimacy for the theory itself. Furthermore, it would be a good opportunity to identify how widespread the phenomenon of inter-sectoral collaboration is—data that could be parlayed into efforts to develop this crucial area of community well-being and sustainability. One good example of this might be to study the language recruitment phenomenon, because of its demonstrated effect on the social agency and organisational capacity of the collaborative project in The Welfare League.

Organisational characteristic analysis could be conducted either quantitatively or qualitatively, although might be more efficiently completed using such large-scale survey instruments as described above. As has already been mentioned, this research shows that even organisations that are very different from one another can have similar discourse and experiences in their relationships with for-profits. Nonetheless, a study focusing distinguishing language and power relationships between nonprofits and for-profits on the basis of organisational characteristics might result in interesting theoretical extensions to this work. There are a number of dimensions upon which inter-sectoral analysis might be based. These might include type of service, current partnership status, type of relationship,

size of organisation, geographical location and/or scope, length of leadership tenure, education and/or experience of staff, board involvement in management and organisational development and organisational culture.

Secondly, a deeper understanding of how the list of organisational characteristics would extend the current theory by exploring differences in the relationship between language and power across organisational types. If the results were substantially similar to those presented here, a study of organisational variation might provide generalisability for the current theory. If, on the other hand, results were substantially deviant in the exploration of language and power between different organisations, it might offer further refinement or possible predictive capacity for the theory based on organisational characteristics.

Thirdly, the data from this study is rich in ‘minor’ linguistic threads that might prove useful in future work. Initial linguistic threads that were discarded upon further data collection and analysis as not central to the phenomenon at hand such as ‘intent versus implementation’ or ‘future alliances’ are good examples of such elements. These were not critical to the final theory, as the cascading, iterative process of case selection and analysis demonstrated; however, a study that explored one of these minor linguistic threads in detail might result in a connecting model to that presented here or an extension to existing theory. The other advantage of studying one of the relatively ‘unimportant’ linguistic threads is the possibility it might afford to understand more clearly why that particular element played a role in some cases and not in others.

A fourth element for theoretical expansion could be found in the area of institutional context. Although the structures and effects of institutional context are acknowledged and incorporated into this theory, there remain vast gray areas of knowledge in the area of the institutional context of nonprofits in relationships with business. These institutional context studies might take as a starting point institutional or neoinstitutional theory. This might be in the form of conceptualising institutionalism from a variety of perspectives, as Tolbert and Zucker did in their chapter in Clegg & Hardy’s *Studying Organization* (1999). In fact, institutional theory offers an extensive array of theoretical possibilities in the area

of context for this phenomenon. Issues of structural covariation, organisational symbolism and three identified processes of institutionalisation (habitualisation, objectification and sedimentation) might also play a role in this type of theoretical dilation. In turn, institutional studies might serve as a springboard to cross-cultural work that use the methodological advances described below to compare countries' experiences in this area.

11.7.2 Methodological

Secondly, as has been described in the section on methodological contributions, the linguistic thread as an analytical tool could offer a number of possibilities for further research. Clearly, it is not limited to the narrow subject of inter-sectoral relationships, and thus could be applied to existing data sets of discourse in all areas of social science in order to uncover deeper processes of discourse than simple thematising. Of particular use in studies of organisational communication, linguistic thread analysis could supplant or supplement traditional processes of understanding and deconstructing data. It might also bridge a gap between communication studies academics and those who study other types of organisational phenomena such as culture, knowledge or risk-taking behaviour. Linguistic threads could be used productively in cross-cultural studies as well because they compare 'oranges and oranges' by focusing on the internal language dynamics of an organisation before creating links between it and other organisations like it in other countries.

11.6.3 Pragmatic implications: What does this all mean?

Finally, there are practical considerations for the possible broadening of this work into projects that result in positive outcomes for relationships between nonprofits and for-profits. One possible extension would be to examine variation between different types of relationships in nonprofit/for-profit collaboration. Furthermore, action research efforts could be instigated to not only understand and examine the language issues in a nonprofit organisation but deliberately engage staff members in a reflexive process of improving that relationship. This type of direct action might have beneficial consequences for both nonprofit and for-profit organisations as they learn to acknowledge how their uses of language reflects and shapes the partnerships they are able to build.

Third sector researchers working closely with staff in an action research model would be in a position to promote more equitable power arrangements through constructive, consensus-based manipulation of several of the identified linguistic threads. For example, armed with an understanding from this theory of the connection between facilitative leadership and staff ability to experience anchor shift, researchers could work with nonprofit organisations to explore what anchor shift means to individuals and what the relationship with business means to the organisation itself. This acknowledgement might result in increased social agency for staff in the same way that facilitative leadership assisted some staff in Integrate, Inc. Another possibility for action research using the linguistic threads as a basis for discussion might be to introduce the concept of social identification to explore with staff the implications of either negative or positive social identification for themselves, their organisation and the prospects for their relationships with for-profits.

In addition to the possibility of ameliorating a nonprofit's current relationship with a business, this pragmatic approach might in fact increase the nonprofit's organisational capacity in the direction of being more able to target, select and monitor for-profit firms that would make 'good' matches. In other words, rather than simply attaching themselves to whichever for-profit is willing, a directed action research project might have as its goal developing the 'how-to' knowledge for nonprofits to play more proactive roles in seeking partnerships with the private sector.

Another area of learning that an action research project might address would be sharing the results of the media analysis with nonprofit staff to help them understand the role of public perception in their work. This might take the form of a series of forums for discussion about public relations concerns or individual organisational development projects. In all likelihood, there are differences in the 'media savvy' of nonprofits—this distribution of knowledge might be co-opted in an action research project that paired organisations with media expertise with those that are less focused on public relations. There might be objections from organisations that have political stances that resist working within the media framework; nonetheless, an action research project that assisted those organisations

that wished to become more familiar with public relations concerns could also have a strong impact on the overall media context in which nonprofits operate.

On an organisational level, it is not difficult to see how an extension using action research embedded with clear objectives might benefit nonprofits involved. However, there are also deeper societal and inter-sectoral changes that might evolve from this type of future work. For example, if the process were replicated across dozens of organisations working in a particular community, it is possible that the entire power base of that area would be shifted away from a strict ‘economic rationalist’ model to one that incorporates the social economy as a desirable (perhaps even indispensable) part of community life. With that development, community members from all sectors might experience the possibilities afforded by equitable collaboration.

With the models of process and static state discourse the project demonstrated what language and power intersections look like in some nonprofit/for-profit relationships. But the circuits of language and the concept of linguistic threads offer much greater opportunity for structural and discursive reform of the societies in which we live. The circuits of language are not a tool for manipulation by one sector over another—they are in fact a recognition of the linguistic and cognitive processes that we all share when operating as individuals and in organisational structures. Every time we engage in circuits of language in organisational discourse, we reconstruct, reconfigure and re-interpret relationships with organisations and the individuals working in them.

The metaphor of circuits also provides an element of choice, to counter the sometimes debilitating aura of determinism or pessimism of ‘that’s just the way it is, nothing can change.’ Collaboration is about understanding one’s own and one’s potential partners’ choices at a particular circuit, appreciating the structural limitations on that choice and acting together to promote understanding, negotiated co-operation and social change. The impact of large-scale changes in nonprofit power as a result of awareness of circuits of language could be tremendous. But the argument for this type of shift is not a zero sum game.

In fact, it is less about for-profits relinquishing power than about offering nonprofit organisations and businesses an opportunity to operate in healthier, more sustainable communities. As one author wrote ‘...there is no business which flourishes in a social desert.’ (Kolind in Zadek, Hojensgard & Raynard 2001, p. 132). It’s not just about ‘corporate social responsibility’—it’s about ‘community social responsibility’, collaboratively working to improve the lives of everyone in the aggregate, one inter-sectoral relationship at a time.

APPENDIX A

Paradigm and Methodology Definitions

Assumption

An assumption is something taken for granted or a supposition.

Dialectic

The concept of dialectic pertains to the nature of logical argument. Refers to the reciprocal influences of various positions upon one another, with each holding within it the basis of the others’ transformation.

Epistemology & Ontology

Epistemology is the branch of philosophy that investigates the origin, nature, methods and limits of human knowledge. Ontology is the study of being; of first principles; of elemental parts.

Idiographic & Nomothetic

Idiographic pertains to the study of the individual case. Nomothetic refers to the search for general laws or structures.

Paradigms & Praxis

A paradigm is a set of concepts shared by a community of scholars or scientists; a framework of principles around which a specific body of thought is organised. In its simplest form, praxis is a set of examples for practice. Praxis is a type of social interaction that incorporates a dialectical relationship between theory and practice. Theoretically-informed-action leads to action-informed-theory in continuous spirals of change.

Research

Research is the diligent and systematic inquiry or investigation into facts, principles, attitudes, motivational meanings and other subjective/objective dimensions of the social and natural worlds.

Methodology

Methodology includes the systematic processes and procedures that a research project follows in order to collect pertinent data, analyse it within an appropriate framework and offer credible results.

Data, data collection and data analysis

Data are basic units of information. Data can be numerical, as in a survey, but they are not limited to numbers. The transcript of an interview is data, as may be attitudes, actions and observations of the researchers themselves. The type of data will depend largely on which methodology is selected. Data collection is the process of gathering information. The form of data collection depends on methodology and the research questions. Data analysis is the process of scrutinising the data for patterns, anomalies, explanations or further avenues of questioning.

Credibility

In the context of this analysis, credibility is a measure of how consistent research is with the paradigm it espouses and the methodology employed. Not to be confused with validity, which deals with the extent to which data reflects what is actually being studied.

Empirical

This is another word that has been appropriated into the popular vocabulary as inherently quantitative and positivist. In fact, empiricism in the social sciences can be defined as a systematic series of steps to answer a research question (Devine & Heath 1999).

Politics

Structural relationships of power and influence, prevailing organisational and/or societal attitudes, special interests, bureaucratic processes and interpersonal networks that affect research projects from the design to the evaluation stages. Depending on methodology and underlying assumptions, politics may become part of the research process and analysis.

Resource issues

Resource issues are constraints in the environment that place limits on the amount of time, money and human resources dedicated to a research project. Resource issues are an important consideration from the design and proposal stages of research, because they will affect the scope, depth and potential consequences of research. They may also affect methodological choices.

Scientific method

Hoover and Donovan (1995) define the scientific method as a 'model inquiry that proceeds by steps that include:

The identification of variables to be studied

A hypothesis about the relation of one variable to another or to a situation

A reality test whereby the hypothetical relationship is measured and compared with results that would demonstrate the absence of a relationship

An evaluation in which the measured relationship is compared with the original hypothesis and generalisations are developed

Suggestions about the theoretical significance of the findings, factors involved in the test that may have distorted the results, and other hypotheses that the inquiry brings to mind

(p.36)

APPENDIX B

Subjective		Objective
Nominalism	(ontology)	Realism
Interpretivism	(epistemology)	Positivism
Voluntarism	(human nature)	Determinism
Idiographic	(methodology)	Nomothetic

(Based on Burrell and Morgan 1979)

APPENDIX C

CONSENT FORM - STUDENT RESEARCH

I _____ (*participant's name*) agree to participate in the research project on language and power in third sector/private sector alliances being conducted by Meryl McQueen of the University of Technology, Sydney. Meryl's contact details are as follows:

Phone: 9514 5311

Fax: 9514 5833

E-mail: meryl.mcqueen@uts.edu.au

I understand that Meryl is conducting this research as part of her PhD studies. I understand that the purpose of this study is to describe the experiences and perceptions of staff in nonprofit organisations that are involved in relationships with for profit businesses. I know that these interviews are the first level of investigation, which will also include a deep study of organisations and how the media views these types of collaboration.

I understand that my participation in this research will involve an interview with Meryl that will last between 1/2 hour and 1 1/2 hours. I also understand that there may be an opportunity for follow-up conversation, but I am under no obligation to participate. The time and place of the interview will be mutually agreed, and I can cancel my participation at any time. I also understand that the interview may be audio taped for ease of transcription and analysis, but that I may request an interview not to be taped or for portions to be excluded from discussion.

I am aware that I can contact Meryl McQueen or her co-supervisor Mark Lyons (9514-5344) if I have any concerns about the research. (Jenny Onyx, Meryl's primary supervisor, will be available after July 15th on 9514-5311.) I also understand that I am free to withdraw my participation from this research project at any time I wish and without giving a reason.

I agree that Meryl McQueen has answered all my questions fully and clearly and that we have established mutually agreed protocols for any further communication.

I agree that the research data gathered from this project may be published in a form that does not identify me in any way.

Signed by

____/____/____

Witnessed by

____/____/____

NOTE:

The University of Technology, Sydney Human Research Ethics Committee, has approved this study. If you have any complaints or reservations about any aspect of your participation in this research which you cannot resolve with the researcher, you may contact the Ethics Committee through the Research Ethics Officer, Ms Susanna Davis (ph: 9514 1279). Any complaint you make will be treated in confidence and investigated fully and you will be informed of the outcome.

Final survey

1. Type of services provided by organisation: _____

2. Position of person completing the survey: _____

3. Date: _____

4. Number of full-time employees in the organisation (please tick only one):

a) fewer than 2	
b) 3-5	
c) 6-15	
d) 16-25	
e) 26 or more	

5. Annual income of the organisation (please tick only one):

a) less than \$75,000	
b) \$76,000-\$250,000	
c) \$251,000-\$1 million	
d) \$1.1 million-\$3 million	
e) more than \$3 million	

6. The range of the organisation is best described as (please tick only one):

a) local	
b) state-wide	
c) national	
d) international	

7. Please write a brief description of the relationship that your organisation has with for-profit activities. Relationships can include donations, internal small business enterprise, sponsorship of a particular project or cause-related marketing. If you have multiple relationships, please select just one and describe it here.

(Note: if your organisation is not currently in a relationship with a for-profit firm, please go to question #10 and answer all the remaining questions as you would envision a potential relationship between your organisation and a for-profit. In other words, please reflect on what such a relationship might be like and answer accordingly).

8. How many months did the relationship last? Is it ongoing? _____

9. The relationship with business can be most accurately described as (please tick only one):

a) Beneficial/Helpful/Supportive	
b) Collaborative/Co-operative	
c) Competitive	

d) Constraining	
e) Difficult/ Frustrating	
f) Risky	

10. If I had to select one word that most accurately describes the relationship with the for-profit, it would be _____

For questions 11-27, please circle the number that best describes your reaction to the statement using the following scale:

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
1	2	3	4

11. In the relationship, our organisation holds more power than the for-profit	1	2	3	4
12. If financial considerations were not an issue, our organisation would still be in partnership with a for-profit	1	2	3	4
13. When I speak to staff in the for-profit, I try to use words and/or language to which they will readily relate	1	2	3	4
14. As a result of this relationship, I feel more in control of my responsibilities	1	2	3	4
15. In the relationship, I often feel that our organisation and the for-profit are on opposite sides	1	2	3	4

16. This relationship has increased our ability to pursue our mission	1	2	3	4
17. I have discussed the relationship with the for-profit with other staff members in my organisation	1	2	3	4
18. I feel a personal connection with at least one person from the for-profit	1	2	3	4
19. I believe that for-profit organisation and our organisation share similar values	1	2	3	4
20. The corporate sector has a responsibility to the nonprofit sector	1	2	3	4
21. I have experienced a conflict of interest as a result of this relationship	1	2	3	4
22. Our organisation is an active participant in the relationship	1	2	3	4
23. This change has resulted in a move away from our core mission	1	2	3	4
24. This relationship has had an effect on our values	1	2	3	4
25. The leadership in our organisation has helped staff to accept and value links with the for-profit	1	2	3	4
26. This relationship has been a success	1	2	3	4
27. Overall, our organisation has benefited from the relationship more than the for-profit	1	2	3	4

28. The primary motivation for engaging in this relationship is (please tick only one):

a) Financial	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Political	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Other (please specify): _____	<input type="checkbox"/>

29. I think that the relationship can most accurately be described as (please tick only one):

a) Alliance	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Altruism	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Charity	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Contract	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) Donor support	<input type="checkbox"/>
f) Mutual benefit	<input type="checkbox"/>
g) Partnership	<input type="checkbox"/>
h) Other (please specify): _____	<input type="checkbox"/>

Thank you very much for your participation in this survey. Please return to:

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University of Technology, Sydney
School of Management
PO Box 222
Lindfield NSW 2070

The aggregate results will be published in the form of a
doctoral dissertation and will be available by mid-2002.

APPENDIX D

Free Nodes for Initial NVivo 1.1 Analysis

- 1 conflict of interest
- 2 flexibility
- 3 focus (later anchor) shift
- 4 for-profit
- 5 funding
- 6 future alliances
- 7 history
- 8 incrementalism
- 9 inst context
- 10 language matching
- 11 leadership
- 12 longevity
- 13 mission
- 14 mutual benefit
- 15 nonprofit
- 16 organisational capacity
- 17 personal contact
- 18 philanthropy
- 19 social agency
- 20 social identification
- 21 staff
- 22 understanding relationship building
- 23 values
- 24 power
- 25 power/dispositional
- 26 power/episodic
- 27 power/facilitative
- 28 language
- 29 language/narrative discourse
- 30 language/narrative discourse/balance
- 31 language/narrative discourse/imbalance
- 32 language/structural discourse
- 33 language/structural discourse/balance
- 34 language/structural discourse/imbalance
- 35 staff notes
- 36 staff notes/willingness to disclose
- 37 staff notes/willingness to disclose/high disclosure

38 staff notes/willingness to disclose/moderate disclosure
39 staff notes/willingness to disclose/low disclosure
40 staff notes/voice modulation
41 staff notes/voice modulation/even voice
42 staff notes/voice modulation/uneven voice
43 staff notes/rapport
44 staff notes/rapport/excellent rapport
45 staff notes/rapport/good rapport
46 staff notes/rapport/average rapport
47 staff notes/rapport/poor rapport
48 staff notes/body language
49 staff notes/body language/defensive body lang
50 staff notes/body language/open body lang
51 staff notes/body language/neutral body lang
52 staff notes/reliability
53 staff notes/reliability/high reliability
54 staff notes/reliability/low reliability
55 Field visit
56 Field visit/location
57 Field visit/layout
58 Field visit/point of access
59 Field visit/interview list
60 Field visit/documentation
61 Field visit/schedule
62 Field visit/culture
63 Field visit/follow-up
64 Field visit/advantage
65 Field visit/disadvantages
66 Field visit/improvement
67 Field visit/done well

APPENDIX E

Interview Protocol

Introduction

What is your position in the organisation? Tell me a little bit about your role.

How long have you worked here?

What do you know about the links between your organisation and the business?

Language, social agency, personal perceptions

How has this relationship affected you personally?

What do you think about relationship?

How would you describe the relationship?

How do you feel about the relationship?

Can you think of an example of a situation when you were pleased with the relationship?

Can you think of an example when you felt frustrated by the relationship?

Can you think of a situation in which co-workers expressed satisfaction/dissatisfaction w/ affiliation?

What do you think is the general feeling among staff about the relationship?

If you had to use one word to describe the relationship, what would it be?

Have you had other experiences in community services engaged with private sector?

Organisational capacity

Did you have expectations for what might change in either your job or the organisation when the relationship started?

Has anything changed in your day-to-day responsibilities since the affiliation began?

How has this relationship affected the organisation?

Has this relationship had any impact on the people you serve?

Implications of relationship

How did it start? Do you know who was involved in setting it up?

What do you think were the reasons behind it?

At what stage of the process did you find out about the relationship?

How much contact do you have with the private firm?

In your mind, is the relationship a successful one? Why or why not?
What makes it successful?
Do you think this relationship will continue for another year? 3? 5? Why or why not?
If you could change the way the relationship works, how would you improve it?

Context

Do you think relationships like these are becoming more common for nonprofits? Why or why not?
Do you know of other organisations that are engaged in similar associations?
To your knowledge, has your organisation made any public statements about the tie?

APPENDIX F

Alias	Title/position
<i>Care & Share Association</i>	
Melissa	Project Manager
Anne	Project Officer
Barbara	Director
David	Insurance Officer
<i>Nightlight</i>	
Stephen	Executive Director
Carolyn	Caseworker
John	Caseworker
<i>Integrate Inc.</i>	
Dawn	Chief Executive Officer
Linda	Manager
Kerri	Program Co-ordinator
Janet	Program Co-ordinator
<i>The Welfare League</i>	
Richard	Director
Amanda	Director
<i>Workwell</i>	
Frank	Training Co-ordinator
Rob	Manager
Jenny	Program Co-ordinator

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