

Style and Social Identities



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Style and Social Identities

Alternative Approaches to
Linguistic Heterogeneity

edited by

Peter Auer

Mouton de Gruyter
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Preface

This book has various sources. Its first and early roots were a colloquy on “Acts of Identity” held at the University of Freiburg in 2002 which, in turn, emerged from a research project on the “Linguistic symbols of ethnic identity” (*Sprachliche Symbolisierung ethnischer Identität*) co-directed by the editor and Christian Mair within the framework of the Research Institute (*Sonderforschungsbereich*) “Identitäten und Alteritäten” (SFB 471). Some of the papers presented at the colloquy are contained in the present volume, while others have been published in Christian Mair (ed.) *Interactional Sociolinguistics and Cultural Studies* (a thematic issue of *Arbeiten aus Anglistik und Amerikanistik* 28-2). A second and equally important source of input for this volume was a Panel on “Identity and Style” organized by Werner Kallmeyer and myself at the 2003 International Pragmatics Conference in Toronto. A number of chapters of this volume were presented first as papers to this Panel. However, there are also additional chapters written especially for this publication.

My thanks go to Werner Kallmeyer, who not only co-organized the Toronto Panel with me but also helped in recruiting the contributors to the present volume, and provided stimulating intellectual input on communicative social style. I would also like to thank Monica Heller who suggested including the book in the LPSP series and guided me with her advice through the editorial process which, in this case, was not without obstacles. Finally, my thanks go to Hanna Beier and Elin Arbin who substantially helped in the copyediting.

Contents

Preface	v
Chapter 1	
Introduction	
<i>Peter Auer</i>	1
Part 1. Bilingual styles and social identities	
Introduction to Part 1	
<i>Peter Auer</i>	25
Chapter 2	
Language alternation as a resource for identity negotiations among Dominican American bilinguals	
<i>Benjamin Bailey</i>	29
Chapter 3	
Style and stylization in the construction of identities in a card-playing club	
<i>Anna De Fina</i>	57
Chapter 4	
Being a ‘colono’ and being ‘daitsch’ in Rio Grande do Sul: Language choice and linguistic heterogeneity as a resource for social categorisation	
<i>Peter Auer, Jacinta Arnhold, and Cintia Bueno-Aniola</i>	85
Chapter 5	
Names and identities, or: How to be a hip young Italian migrant in Germany	
<i>Christine Bierbach and Gabriele Birken-Silverman</i>	121
Chapter 6	
Socio-cultural identity, communicative style, and their change over time: A case study of a group of German–Turkish girls in Mannheim/Germany	
<i>Inken Keim</i>	155
Chapter 7	
Bystanders and the linguistic construction of identity in face-to-back communication	
<i>Kathryn A. Woolard</i>	187
Part 2. Monolingual styles and social identities – From local to global	
Introduction to Part 2	
<i>Peter Auer</i>	209

viii *Contents*

Chapter 8

Aneurin Bevan, class wars and the styling of political antagonism

Nikolas Coupland213

Chapter 9

Identity and positioning in interactive knowledge displays

Grit Liebscher and Jennifer Dailey-O'Cain247

Chapter 10

Style online: Doing hip-hop on the German-speaking Web

Jannis Androutsopoulos279

Part 3. Identity-work through styling and stylization

Introduction to Part 3

Peter Auer.....321

Chapter 11

Playing with the voice of the other: Stylized *Kanaksprak* in conversations
among German adolescents

Arnulf Deppermann325

Chapter 12

Identity and language construction in an online community: The case of 'Ali G'

Mark Sebba361

Chapter 13

Positioning in style: Men in women's jointly produced stories

Alexandra Georgakopoulou393

Chapter 14

The construction of otherness in reported dialogues as a resource
for identity work

Susanne Günthner419

Chapter 15

The humorous stylization of 'new' women and men and conservative others

Helga Kotthoff445

Chapter 16

A postscript: Style and identity in interactional sociolinguistics

John J. Gumperz and Jenny Cook-Gumperz477

Index503

Chapter 1

Introduction

Peter Auer

This volume presents a collection of studies which focus on heterogeneity in linguistic practice such as the use of more than one language within a conversation by bilingual speakers, the use of different grammatical, phonological or lexical options for realising one linguistic category, within what is generally considered to be one language, or the selection of features from various linguistic systems (such as dialects) which are structurally closely related. In this sense, all the papers in this volume deal with phenomena which fall within the core domain of sociolinguistics as they are known from variationist sociolinguistics, (social) dialectology, or research on bilingualism. That the subtitle of this book nonetheless refers to alternative approaches implies that the way in which they investigate heterogeneity does not follow the standard pattern of research methodology in variation studies though (cf. Chambers, Trudgill and Schilling-Estes, eds., 2002 for a useful summary). The reason for abandoning these established methodologies despite their undeniable success is, for many of the contributors to this volume, a certain uneasiness about the (growing?) neglect of social meaning and how it is created through language in variation studies. The present volume focusses on two relatively recent concepts of sociolinguistic research which have a potential for remedying this neglect: social identities and (social) style. This introduction aims at introducing these two terms and their relevance for sociolinguistic studies on linguistic heterogeneity.

1. Identity/Identities

1.1. Collective identities

The linguistic concern with identity began with an interest in collective rather than social identities, i.e. with the discourse of ‘languages’ as the ‘natural’ reflexes of national identities, as it started in the 18th and gained momentum in the 19th century. In a way, this discourse uses the notion of

identity in a metaphorical sense, modelled on the discourse of the individual as defined by his or her, self-reflexive sameness.¹ Collectivities are treated as unique quasi-beings which express their identities through certain features equally unique to them. Among these features, the national (standard) language has a privileged role.

The idea that collective identities and languages are connected in an essentialist way has been a key concept of European modernity; it underlies the formation of the European nation states and continues to be deeply rooted in our language ideologies. According to this idea, each collectivity (particularly a nation, or a Volk) expresses its own individual character through and in its language. The term 'essentialist' is justified here since it is assumed that there is a 'natural' link between a nation and 'its' language. Against this view, the dominant paradigm in the social sciences today is more or less radically constructivist. Collectivities – nations, but also ethnic or social groups – are no longer assumed to 'naturally' exist, for instance on the basis of genetics (race), ancestry (blood) or birth (social class), but are seen as social and ideological constructs (see Niethammer 2000 for a summary of the arguments) which, in the European tradition, happen to rely on language.

The discourse of European nation-building has been thoroughly investigated (see, e.g., Anderson 1983; Hobsbawm 1990). Nation-building is not only a matter of the past but continues to be in progress in parts of Eastern and particularly south-eastern Europe. Examples such as the (re-)creation of Croatian and even Bosnian as independent national languages also make it clear that language has not lost its prominent role in this discourse. However, collectivities other than nations may also use language in order to establish their identity (and may equally fall into the essentialist trap). Bilingual minorities are an example. Instead of the national standard varieties, it is now the specific ways in which the majority and/or the minority language are spoken, as well as the various mixing and switching styles, which are considered to be the straightforward, 'natural' expression of the bilinguals' identity. Frequently, a simple iconic relationship between 'mixed' or even 'hybrid identities' and 'mixed' (or fragmented?) languages and an equally iconic relationship between fuzzy language boundaries and fuzzy group boundaries is assumed.² The link between these linguistic practices and the collective identity appears as self-evident as the link between a standard language and a nation was in the nationalist discourse of the 19th century (and beyond). Again, language – albeit in different forms – is assumed to be 'determined' by the nature of the collectivity to which it belongs. And once again, this equation of language and the identity of a col-

lectivity fails to capture the way in which collectivities are constructed (through language and other means of expression).

1.2. *Social identities*

However deep the link between linguistics as a discipline and the discourses about collective identities may have been, collective identities are not the topic of this volume. We are not interested here in the discourses (in the Foucaultian sense of the word) in and through which collectivities are defined, justified, delimited against each other, etc., and how languages are used as arguments in these discourses. Rather, we are interested in the construction and management of *social* identities in interaction. Here, the categorisation of participants in an interactional episode as social personae is an issue, not the definition and delimitation of collectivities.³

Social identity work of this kind is linked to social-communicative practices and needs to be investigated as such. A good deal of sociolinguistic and sociological research has addressed the question of how terms for social categories (such as 'male', 'upper class', 'Jewish') are employed in conversation and how their link to category-bound activities/characteristics is exploited as a resource for creating social and interactional meaning.⁴ This explicit categorisation work plays role in some of the papers in this volume (such as the ones by Liebscher and Dailey O'Cain, Deppermann, Georgakopoulou or Günthner), but no role at all in others (such as Auer, Arnhold and Bueno-Aniola or Coupland). Once again, the employment of category names to refer explicitly to the person whose identity is at stake, or the naming of category-bound activities which make such identity-related categories inferrable, is not our main concern. What will really take us to the heart of sociolinguistic research is another issue: to what extent can participants mobilise heterogeneity within or across the linguistic system(s) of their repertoire – grammar, phonology, lexicon – in order to symbolically express their social identities? How can social identities be accomplished, not by explicitly categorising people and by explicating category-bound activities/characteristics, but by selecting one variable realisation over another (for instance in the inflectional system of English or in the vowel system of German, one language instead of another in a speaker's repertoire, or one lexical expression instead of another) where these realisations have no denotational-semantic content whatsoever which could be the basis for this accomplishment?

1.3. “Acts of identity”

The interest in (social) identity and its linguistic-communicative ‘management’ has become mainstream in sociolinguistics during the last decade, but its roots are older. It was as early as 1982 that Gumperz and Cook-Gumperz edited a book in which they state programmatically (1982: 1, our emphasis):

We costumarily take gender, ethnicity, and class as given parameters and boundaries within which we create our own social identities. The study of language as interactional discourse demonstrates that these parameters are not constants that can be taken for granted but are communicatively *produced*. Therefore to understand issues of identity and how they affect and are affected by social, political, and ethnic divisions we need to gain insights into the *communicative processes by which they arise*.

Even before Gumperz and Cook-Gumperz, Robert Le Page introduced his notion of “acts of identity”, coming from a different perspective and a background in creole studies (cf. Le Page 1978; Le Page and Tabouret-Keller 1985). His model plays a considerable role in a number of papers in this volume. Its main components are summarised in Sebba’s chapter. In a nutshell, Le Page claims that our socio-stylistic choices are made in order to conform to the behaviour of those social groups we wish to be identified with. Le Page’s model was conceived as an alternative to correlational sociolinguistics as it was about to emerge in Labov’s work in New York City at the same time (Labov 1972). While the latter reduced the individual to multiple memberships in a social class, gender and age group, respectively, which were seen to determine his or her linguistic behaviour, Le Page foregrounded the individual as an actor who – within certain limits – chooses his or her affiliations and expresses them symbolically through language. But Le Page’s acts of identity also anticipated important aspects of the constructivist approach to social identities. He dissolved the unity of the individual as a social actor into an array of acts of identification.⁵ He thereby transformed identity into identities, and thus reanalysed sociolinguistic variables from symptoms into symbols (cf. Le Page and Tabouret-Keller 1985: 182).

Le Page views incumbency to social categories as an achievement; it is informed by the situation in which it occurs, and lacks the kind of trans-situational stability (reflexive equivalence) which the very notion of iden-

tity presupposes. Le Page's acts of identity thus have little to do with identity in the traditional sense of the word. The stress is on 'acts', not on identity: it is these acts that bring about those only seemingly reliable features which social actors ascribe to themselves and to their fellow interactionalists as features of the social world taken-for-granted. Note that this questions the validity of constructs such as 'social class', 'gender', 'ethnicity' and the like which are no more (but also no less!) than lay categories which we use in order to make sense of the social world around us.

A final point bears mentioning: in Le Page's terminology, a speaker "projects" an image of him- or herself when s/he wishes to identify with a (real or imagined) social reference group. But Le Page also stresses that such projections seek and need to be reinforced by others. If the speaker receives this reinforcement, his or her behaviour may become more regular, or "focussed." On the other hand, if acts of identity are not met with positive feedback, the speaker's behaviour will tend to remain (or become) more variable ("diffuse").

From a modern viewpoint, some parts of Le Page's model are of course debatable. To begin with, there is a touch of overdone individualism in Le Page's approach. Le Page does acknowledge that our autonomy as speakers to create "systems for ... verbal behaviour" is restricted by four "riders" – i.e.:

(i) the extent to which we are able to identify our model groups, (ii) the extent to which we have sufficient access to them and sufficient analytical ability to work out the rules of their behaviour, (iii) the strength of various (possibly conflicting) motivations towards one or another mode and towards retaining our own sense of our unique identity, (iv) our ability to modify our behaviour (1978: 15).

However, there is good reason to believe that there are further constraints on the autonomy of the speaker which could be modelled along the lines of Bourdieu's notions of habitus and field (to mention just one possibility) and which involve issues of power and hegemony (cf. Bourdieu 1979). Also, the idea of a "unique identity" is at odds with the identity-in-interaction approach outlined above according to which acts of identity are situationally occasioned and therefore potentially conflicting (even contradictory) across situations.

Another problem with Le Page's model may be even more important. Some of the linguistic choices which are made by speakers by reference to the factual or imputed behaviour of a certain social reference group are systematically non-affiliative, i.e. they are made in order *not* to be subsumed under the respective membership category. These acts have been

widely discussed in the recent sociolinguistic literature under headings such as crossing, mocking, styling/stylising, parodying, etc. (cf. the contributions by Deppermann, Günthner, Kotthoff, Bailey and others in this volume). The distinction between affiliative and non- or even disaffiliative stylistic choices is not a trivial one (cf. Coupland, this volume, and Woolard, this volume). One may even go one step further: the use of a particular feature which is associated with a certain social group is open to an affiliating as well as a disaffiliating interpretation. The preestablished association between linguistic variants and social reference groups as such can be questioned. In fact, speakers may re-create their own social identity by drawing on linguistic materials taken from various groups and rearranging them into a new 'style'. We will come back to this approach to identity as stylistic performance (stylisation) in section 3 of this introduction.

For the time being, we can summarise the discussion of Le Page's model as follows. It is necessary to differentiate between the social group A from whose (stereotyped) linguistic behaviour a linguistic act of identity draws its semiotic resources, and a social group B with whom the speaker wishes to identify. A (linguistic) act of identity can then be defined as the selection of a linguistic element which indexes some social group A and which is chosen on a particular occasion (in a particular context) in order to affiliate oneself with or disaffiliate oneself from a social group B. A and B often but do not necessarily coincide.

Of course, Le Page's early model has not remained the only approach to identity-formation through linguistic choices. Widely used is, for instance, Harré and van Langenhove's theory of social positioning (1991) which forms the theoretical basis of Liebscher's and Dailey O'Cain's as well as Georgakopoulou's chapters in the present volume. Coming not from (socio-) linguistics (like Le Page), but from social science, the authors propose an alternative approach to social categorization which is more flexible than traditional role theory and also emphasizes the negotiable nature of self- and other-positioning. Consequently, the focus on linguistic indexes to categorization is less strong here.

Although some linguistic features are linked in the most straightforward way to a social or ethnic category, a region or a milieu, their meaning is always open to situational revision, transformation, and refinement. The best-known of these reinterpretations is the case of regional to social indexing. Variable features indicative of some regional provenance of the speaker are often metonymically extended to some (stereotypical) attribute imputed to speakers of that region which eventually comes to index a social attrib-

ute. A case of such a reinterpretation is Canadian raising as described in Labov's classic study of Martha's Vineyard in which a regional feature of Atlantic coast island dialects (raising of the onset in the diphthong /ay/) is reinterpreted and takes on a new, social meaning: it symbolises the speaker's stance toward mainlanders (cf. Labov 1963 and Eckert's 2004 interpretation of his results). Linguistic features therefore do not 'mirror' social identity categories in the simple sense of the word (cf. Cameron 1990).

A simple lexical example can show this. In the pre-unification period, *Zielsetzung* was a purely 'East German' lexical item for '(West) German' *Zielstellung* ('aim'): West German dictionaries (such as DUDEN 1973) only listed the latter word (while the East German *Handwörterbuch der deutschen Gegenwartssprache* had both). Given this clear association of the word *Zielstellung* with East Germany, what does it mean if somebody uses the word today, say, in a written document in a company? A simple view of language as an index to social identity would lead to the conclusion that the writer wants to claim/invoke his or her East German identity by using an East German word, even more so as the general trend has been to replace East German by West German words. However, although this is one possibility, there are other ways in which this particular lexical choice can come to index (in a given situational context and in a given community of practice) the user's identity:

- The writer may have used the East German word 'innocently', i.e. without knowing about its identity-rich potential. She or he may not be aware of the lexical difference at all and not be able to interpret the lexical variation at hand in social terms. Depending on who the recipients are, the lexical choice may then remain irrelevant for social categorisation (for 'innocent' readers), or it may assume a non-intended meaning (when the readers ascribe East-Germanness to the writer against his or her intentions, and perhaps against his 'real' background).
- The writer may have used the East German word 'metaphorically' i.e. in order to invoke an East German 'voice' although he or she is known to be West German. Here, we would be dealing with a kind of crossing (cf. Rampton 1995; Auer 2006; Quist and Jørgensen 2007). For readers who share this knowledge about the writer's background, a 'double-voicing' becomes visible in which the writer's 'real' voice and that of the East German influence each other (cf. Voloshinov 1929).
- The writer may want to pretend to be East German, in some kind of role-play as is not infrequent in internet chat communication (and doubt-

lessly in other contexts as well). In this case, a social identity is ‘faked’. To complicate things even further, the recipient may know and take into account that in the type of activity at hand (e.g., chats), identities can be and even tend to be faked.

- The East German word may have taken on a different meaning in the community of practice in which it is used (for instance, it may be a fashionable way of speaking which indexes up-to-dateness, but not East/West German background).

What these alternative interpretations show is that often, there is no way of describing the indexical value of a linguistic variable (i.e., its capacity to point to a social category) without looking into the conversational and situational context in which it is employed. In addition, the interpretation of a linguistic feature is often supported by (and sometimes only made possible on the basis of) its co-occurrence with other features with which it forms a social style. We will turn to this issue in section 2.

1.4. Social identities in interaction

The critical appraisal of Le Page’s models of “acts of identity” of the last section leads us to an approach to social identities which is grounded in interaction. Such an approach is not new and has been proposed by several sociolinguists (starting with Gumperz and Cook-Gumperz in their “interactional sociolinguistics”, cf. the quotation above). The basic principles upon which the identities-in-interaction approach is based are summarised by Antaki and Widdicombe (1998: 3) as follows:

- (i) Having an identity means “being cast into a *category with associated characteristics* or features”; incumbency in this category may both be claimed by a participant of an interaction and ascribed to him/her by co-participants.
- (ii) Identity-relevant activities in interaction are “indexical and *occasioned*”, i.e., they cannot be understood unless their embedding into the conversational and larger context at hand is taken into account.
- (iii) Identity as an occasioned and achieved category incumbency needs to be *made relevant* in an interaction in order to become consequential for it; this holds for brought along and brought about identities. In accordance with ethnomethodological principles, the analyst’s task is to

reconstruct this ‘making relevant’ of a category. It need not imply the overt naming of an identity-relevant category, but can be achieved through symbolic means.

- (iv) ‘Having an identity’ is *consequential for interaction*, since the respective category is linked to category bound expectations of action; this consequentiality may become visible in a shift of footing of the interaction; however, it may also lead to the somewhat trivial consequence that ‘nothing special’ happens precisely because co-membership is established.
- (v) This consequentiality opens up the possibility for the analyst to reconstruct the identity-relevant category in question from category bound activities.

Of course, speaking of the occasioned nature of identity is not to be taken to mean that identity-relevant categories have no reality outside the interaction. In fact, their interactional relevance hinges on (more or less) shared social knowledge. This has been shown compellingly in Harvey Sacks’ work on membership categorisation (Sacks 1972; cf. Watson 1997); one of the upshots is that many categorisation devices are duplicatively organised such that bringing into play one social category evokes the antonym as well.⁶ Sacks, in turn, relied on older approaches particularly in the tradition of Alfred Schütz and his theory of types (Schütz and Luckmann 1975). The more general point is that identity-work is very often done by referring to alterities – the construction of some ALTER through which one’s own identity is indirectly highlighted.

The multi-faceted nature in which variants are employed and interpreted as indexes to social identity has been investigated empirically in recent sociolinguistic research (e.g. Ostermann 2003; Podesva, Roberts and Campbell-Kibler 2002; Schilling-Estes 2004; Zilles and Cambell 2005). These studies analyse the choice of linguistic variants within their conversational and social context, often in ways analogous to the investigation of code-switching in conversation (cf. Ostermann 2005, drawing on Auer 1995). The way in which these studies link up with more traditional, quantitative studies of linguistic variation still remains to be discussed. It is obvious that it is at odds with a correlationist view of sociolinguistic structure, but not necessarily with quantitative methods which may be useful and even necessary to establish the common knowledge against which a single case of variable selection may become meaningful.

Identity work in interaction is – as stated above – the work invested by participants in ascribing and claiming incumbency to social categories or Schützian types. To narrow down this focus somewhat, Zimmerman (1998: 90f.) suggests distinguishing between discourse, situational and transportable identities, each of which is characterised by “different home territories”, i.e., by a different temporal reach and contextual constancy. *Discourse identities* such as ‘current speaker’, ‘teller of a story’, ‘repair initiator’ would not normally be subsumed under identity relevant categories in the everyday use of the word. They are, however, intimately linked to Zimmerman’s *situational identities* which are bound to particular, mainly institutional agendas (and informed by the respective schematic/frame knowledge which are the blueprints for acting within these institutions); thus, an ‘interrogator’ at court will have access via his or her situational identity to other discourse roles than the ‘interrogated’; the ‘examiner’ at the university will have different discourse roles at his or her disposal than the ‘examined,’ ‘student’, etc. Most central for the sociolinguistics of identity work in interaction, however, is Zimmerman’s third type, that of *transportable identities*, by which he means “latent identities that ‘tag along’ with individuals as they move through their daily routines”, often based on “physical or culturally based insignia”. It is these transportable identities which are meant when we speak of ‘social identities’ in the following. Zimmerman’s model is drawn on in particular in Woolard’s chapter in the present volume.

Treating orderly selection from heterogeneous linguistic resources as a way of symbolising identities in interaction also raises a number of *methodological issues*. Here are just a few of them.

One obvious question is whether all variable realisations can be treated in the same way or whether the approach is limited to salient features (Labov’s stereotypes) – those features of which members of a given speech community are more or less aware. Clearly, these do not exhaust the range of heterogeneity in language. Linguistic heterogeneity may be socially patterned (for instance, across social class, gender or age) without speakers being aware of it. It can be argued of course that awareness does not equal salience. But we are then faced with the methodological issue of how to establish salience, and how to prove co-participants’ orientation a certain identity-relevant category. (For instance, one would want to be careful not to conflate Le Page-type symbolic identification with a certain prestige group with mechanistic accommodation to a particular co-participant’s speech.)

Another methodological problem refers to the suitability of single variable analysis for the investigation of linguistic acts of identity. While variationist studies often focus on one particular variable, interactionally oriented studies usually provide a more holistic picture of a web of interrelated features which is used by a given speaker on a given occasion. This constellation of features may or may not shift over the course of an interaction. This question has received some attention recently and brings us to the notion of sociolinguistic (social, communicative) style.

2. Style in sociolinguistics

2.1. *Style as a holistic concept*

Sociolinguistic discussions of style often start with a critical appraisal of Labov's concept of contextual styles (Labov 1972, cf. Coupland 2000 for a critique) and then open up the perspective to theories of social and cultural styles which have played an important role in ethnographically oriented, interactional sociolinguistics and linguistic anthropology over the last years. But in fact, Labov's linear style dimension which is constructed to capture speakers' monitoring of their own speech production has little if anything to do with modern studies on style in sociolinguistics; the latter follow a very different rationale. In these studies, style is seen as a concept which can overcome the shortcomings of single-variable studies and can integrate linguistic variation (in the narrow sense of the word, i.e. Coupland's "dialect style", 2000) into a comprehensive theory of the ways in which choices on all levels of semiotic organisation relate to social practices of sense-making, categorisation, and identity management (cf. Rickford and Eckert 2001: 1). Despite earlier pioneering attempts to move from traditional stylistics (with styles as objects) to a theory of social style and stylisation (with styles as processes, cf. Hinnenkamp and Selting, eds., 1989), and to revise the Labovian approach to variation (Bell's theory of audience design, 1984, which owes much to Le Page's acts of identity), style did not make its big appearance on the stage of sociolinguistic research until the 1990s. A number of aspects are important to understand the relevance of style for sociolinguistic research.

First of all, social style is a holistic and multilevel phenomenon. It directly challenges the more traditional approach to linguistic variation which

usually focusses on single variables. As the “California Style Collective” (incl. P. Eckert) stated in an influential paper at NWAVE 22 (1993): “We are defining style as a clustering of linguistic resources, and an association of that clustering with an identifiable aspect of social practice. ... Rarely can an individual variable be extracted from this style and recognized as meaningful; variables carry such meaning only by virtue of their participation in identifiable personal or group styles” (Manuscript: 14).

Exactly how broad styles need to be defined in order to capture relevant linguistic and social practices is open to debate. It is generally assumed that social-communicative styles, in addition to language choice and linguistic variation in a narrow sense, include prosodic patterns, but also verbal practices of categorisation, pragmatic patterns such as politeness, preferences for specific communicative genres, rhetorical practices, etc. Often, the notion of social style is also taken to include embodied features of verbal and nonverbal actions (voice quality, facial expressions, gesture, ‘expressive body language’) as well as aesthetic choices (‘taste’) in appearance, clothes, etc. In the widest sense, style becomes similar to life-style as described by Bourdieu as the surface correlate of habitus (1979 [1984: 171 *et passim*]). Note that any notion of style which includes preferences for certain genres, rhetorical patterns, etc. goes beyond variation studies which are usually restricted to referentially (denotationally) neutral variables. It is obvious that ‘style’ in the sense of different “ways of speaking” (Hymes 1972) implies more than saying the same thing in different ways. In fact, what can be said and what cannot be said is a central part of a social-communicative style.

The sociolinguistic analysis of style claims, then, that the social meaning of linguistic heterogeneity does not (usually) reside in individual linguistic features but rather in constellations of such features which are interpreted together. If we hear somebody ‘speak posh’, ‘speak like a havak’ (immigrant youth, see Deppermann, this volume) or ‘speak like an old Nazi’ (Günthner, this volume), we do not interpret single variables but a gestalt-like stylistic expression.

Having said that, we immediately need to add that stylistic analysis can also be less comprehensive than traditional variation studies. First of all, there are situations in which a single word or a single vowel can function as a shibboleth – no holistic style analysis, and no statistical averages are necessary to arrive at this interpretation. Perhaps more important, there are many social-communicative styles in which certain features stand out as the most salient ones which are, for instance, used as mock features in stylisa-

tion and crossing. These strategies of social discrimination through language reduce complex styles, but in such a way that they are still easily recognisable. In sum, style in modern sociolinguistic theory is a concept which mediates between linguistic variability and practices of social categorisation of self or other: linguistic variability is seen as a resource for constructing socially interpretable and interpreted styles (Eckert 2004: 43). In doing so, style filters out certain variables and attributes special status to others. Or, to take the perspective of the speakers: participants' representations of styles combine unambiguously indexical core features with fuzzy borders.

But style is not only a holistic and multilevel phenomenon, it is also *socially interpreted*. There is social knowledge involved about how to relate constellations of features to social groups, milieus, life-worlds, etc. How is this knowledge organised, how does it come into being, and how does it relate to communicative practices? At the heart of the answer to this question are processes of opposition-building. Social communicative styles can be considered the outcome of communities' adjustment to their ecological and social-political environment; they have a fundamentally strategic grounding. Social positioning, i.e. finding one's place in society, is one of its motivating forces. Seen from this perspective, styles are constructed so as to build up contrasts between 'us' and 'them', as shown in many studies from Norbert Elias (1939) to Pierre Bourdieu (1979). Or, as Judith Irvine put it recently: "Whatever 'styles' are, in language or elsewhere, they are part of a *system of distinction*, in which a style contrasts with other possible styles, and the social meaning signified by the style contrasts with other social meanings" (2001: 22). The ecological nature of style as a way to position oneself or others in social space implies that the knowledge about relevant oppositions and (consequently) social meanings is in itself socially distributed: what from a distance may look 'all the same' may display a filigrane pattern of distinctive differences when seen under the looking-glass of the social groups directly involved. Here, social space is not organised differently from geographical space (cf. Auer 2005): the raising of std. /ai/ (> MHG /i:/) to [æi] in Swabian and to [əi] in Lake Constance Alemanic may sound all the same for a speaker from Hamburg or Munich, since no relevant oppositions are at stake other than between 'Swabian' and 'Northern standard German' or 'Bavarian'; but for speakers in the area itself, the distinction is an unmistakable index to Swabian vs. Badanian affiliation which has played an important role for regional and political identity-building for a long time.

2.2. *Style as social practice*

However, neither Elias, nor Bourdieu nor Irvine give us a clue about how this process of opposition-building is grounded in practice. Features are combined into holistic meta-signs, and they are invested with social meaning through talk; styles emerge from discourse – but how? Explicit social categorisations may serve to establish shared knowledge about how certain constellations of verbal and non-verbal features can and should be socially interpreted. These cooccurrences of overt categorisation and (often stylised) displays of behaviour can link identities and styles and establish indexing relationships between them. But in a community of practice which already shares knowledge about how certain agents stereotypically perform activities, social identities can be indexed (contextualised) by these features alone. On the other hand, explicit self- or other-categorisation which is not supported by stylistic evidence is difficult to imagine. Claims to incumbency in a social category must receive evidence from social style: categorisation without style – without indexing – does not work.

Penelope Eckert has argued in a series of recent publications (see Eckert 2004, 2000, 1996) that style-building occurs in smaller sections of the life-world, which she calls “communities of practice” (after Wenger 1999). The emergence of local styles in such a social environment involves opposition-building, and often the profiling of the opposing spheres (‘we’ and ‘they’) by exaggeration (see Deppermann, this volume; Günthner, this volume; Kotthoff, this volume). Eckert argues that styles are always “processes of bricolage”. In this bricolage, elements from other styles are incorporated (appropriated) as resources which come from “a broad sociolinguistic landscape” (Eckert 1996). But although they carry social meaning (being part of other social styles), this meaning is not simply imported but changed and adapted, sometimes even subverted or converted in stylisation. For instance, Keim (2002) describes how an adolescent girl of a Turkish immigrant background in Germany uses broken *gastarbeiter* German in interaction with her mother. As Keim shows, no identification with the social group of her mother is intended (with whom it is associated in general socio-stylistic knowledge). Rather, the *gastarbeiter* style is subverted to provide the girl with a means to distance herself from her mother. Eckert argues that the origin of social styles lies in individual acts of linguistic choice such as this one. And surely, styles are adapted to changing contexts. However, even though the interpretation of a particular linguistic choice may be locally established and valid, we believe that there needs to

be some consistency in the choice of semiotic features in order for it to be considered a sociolinguistic style in its own right. The construction of a style within and for a community of practice requires *continuity* of semiotic practices across situations. How much continuity is required, and how much variability is possible across situations unless a style become unrecognisable is an open empirical question.

3. Outlook on the following chapters

The following fifteen chapters explore the link between social identity and (social-communicative style) in more detail. They draw on multilingual contexts (in the first part), variation within a single language system (in the second part), and they address issues of styling the other (in the third part). Each part of the book is introduced by a short theoretical and methodological chapter. In the final chapter, John Gumperz and Jenny Cook-Gumperz frame modern sociolinguistic research on identities in the development of the discipline at large and discuss some main points and open questions.

There are two recurring themes which run through the whole book. One is the question of which linguistic variables can become part of social-communicative styles, and thereby serve to positioning the speaker in social space. The first part of the volume looks into bilingual contexts in which switching between or mixing of the two languages indexes some kind of social (self- or other) categorisation. In language choice and code-switching, it may be the mere fact of choosing one language over the other which indexes social categories. Often it is not only the social identity of the speaker but also (or even dominantly) that of the addressee which is at stake here. But some chapters in this part of the book also show that code-switching may be part and parcel of a social-communicative style which includes other stylistic choices, such as the way in which the two languages are spoken. (Standard vs. dialect is an important distinction here.) In yet another case, it is the specific way in which the two languages are combined which becomes relevant as a social index. In the second part of this volume, the linguistic variables used for identity-display and identity-ascription partly fall under the rubric of what could be investigated using the established methodology of variation studies (such as phonetic features), but the papers in this section also make it clear that a style- and identity-oriented approaches quickly go beyond the limits of this approach. Most of the papers in this section include stylistic features which would not

easily fit into the quantitative paradigm, such as politeness strategies, lexical choices, including technical terms and categorizations, and discursive routines and phrases. The chapters in the third part of the book address cases of stylizations in which the linguistic portrayal of the other serves to construe the identity of the self. In these cases, single variables, often used in an exaggerated way, can take on very dense social meanings. But again, several of the studies included in this section show that the traditional variables considered in variation studies are not sufficient to account for the linguistic basis of social categorization; this holds in particular for prosodic stylizations.

The second theme which runs through the chapters of this book is the link between contextualised practices of identity-display and identity-ascription which can and need to be described in their interactional contexts, and their place in/relevance to society at large. Most contributors to this volume subscribe to a (semi-)constructivist point of view according to which small-scale processes of social categorization are constitutive for the working of society; but they would equally agree that social actors which take part in these processes are subject to often unconscious and 'habitualized' constraints. Identity-relevant features may be performed in a context-creating, sometimes intentional way, but they may also be part of the 'habitus' of a speaker which is cannot be manipulated easily. Some papers address these issues directly, such as Inken Keim who argues that style is linked to success in the school system, or Nikolas Coupland who shows the tension between class-based (miners), regionalised (Wales) and milieu-related (power élite) stylisations in Nye Bevan's political speeches in postwar Britain. Other papers refer more indirectly to larger-scale processes of social marginalisation (Auer *et al.*; Deppermann; Bailey) and the rebellion of the marginalised against it (Bierbach and Birken-Silverman; Sebba); to fundamental schisms in a society (East/West Germany: Lieb-scher and Dailey-O'Cain; Catalan/Castilian: Woolard; 'Nazi' vs. 'good' Germans: Günthner); to the interaction between global and local social processes (Androutsopoulos) and to gender as a fundamental orientation line in society (Georgakopolou). The major structurations of modern societies, from social to ethnic, from global to local, from gender to class, are all reflected in and translated into the socio-linguistic practices of style-formation and identity work in everyday interaction; but they are also formed by these practices which are the site where social structure and its cognitive representation in the individual meet.

Notes

1. We are not concerned with the justification of this discourse about individual identities here, as this has its own cultural and historical embedding.
2. Cf. for instance: “Such mixed varieties may be seen as emblematic of the mixed cultural affiliation” (Pfaff 2003: 209).
3. This, of course, is not to deny that discourses about collective identities and the management of social identity in interaction can be related to each other; however, the link is indirect, complex, and little understood in sociolinguistics.
4. Cf. recently: Bueno Aniola (2007) on the use of the categories *Brasilianer/neecha* (‘*Brasilians*’, ‘*Negroes*’) vs. *Daitsche* by Brasilians of German descent in Rio Grande do Sul, as well as many contributions in de Fina, Schiffrin and Bamberg (eds.) 2006.
5. He and Tabouret-Keller (1985) use the term ‘identity’ in the sense of social (or ethnic) category, therefore in the plural.
6. A recent German example of how MCDs are developed and used in a community when socio-political changes make it necessary to cope with new realities is the pair *Ossi/Wessi* (an invention of the *Wende* period around 1990 for designating East and West Germans and for linking them to category-bound activities and characteristics; see Hausendorf 2000 for details).

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Part 1. Bilingual styles and social identities

Introduction to Part 1

Peter Auer

It is a curious fact that the category ‘bilingual’ does not have a straightforward identity dimension. There is no such thing as a ‘bilingual identity’ if ‘bilingual’ merely refers to the use of more than one language. Rather, in various discourses, the term ‘bilingual’ may refer to social groups in which membership is determined through very different criteria other than the use of two or more languages. For instance, in the ongoing public debate in Denmark the immigrant population (mostly with an Arabic- or Turkish-speaking background) is referred to as the ‘bilinguals’ (*tosproget*). This term appears to be both politically correct and euphemistic, but it oddly misrepresents reality: only a fraction of bilingual Danes are ‘bilinguals’ in this sense, since those who speak, for instance, Danish and English or Danish and German are excluded, and a monolingual immigrant may be considered ‘bilingual’. By contrast, ‘bilinguals’ in the Canadian context are those who speak French and English, but not those who speak, e.g., Somali and English, i.e. in this discourse, the term is restricted to the non-immigrant part of the population and to languages which play a particularly important political role for the country. It seems that in both discourses ‘bilingual’ is a synecdoche – a surface fact about a certain part of the population is used as a symbol for category membership which is based on very different (for instance, ethnic) criteria. The term serves to camouflage the basis of categorization which, for whatever reason, is not made explicit.

While it is impossible to designate a ‘bilingual identity’ on linguistic grounds alone, and the term may refer to something other than the use of two or more languages, it also goes without saying that bilingual performances and bilingual communicative styles are employed for displaying (and ascribing) identities in interaction. They are the topic of the first part of this volume.

In Chapter 2, Benjamin Bailey explores several ways in which Dominican American high school students use language to construct and make sense of their social identities in everyday interaction. Second-generation Dominican immigrants negotiate distinctive issues of identity in the United States: as a group whose members are of Hispanic, American, and to vary-

ing degrees of African descent, individuals face competing ascriptions of identity, such as 'Black', 'White' and 'Hispanic'. They negotiate these identities with and through a bilingual, multi-variety repertoire of language varieties that reflects Dominican immigrant heritage and multi-ethnic, urban United States socialization. This linguistic repertoire draws from Dominican varieties of Spanish, various American sociolects, including African American Vernacular, and forms resulting from Spanish-English contact. Using these diverse linguistic resources, individuals discursively constitute shifting 'we/they' dichotomies between themselves and others, e.g. between 'Black' and 'Spanish', 'White' and 'non-White', and 'Dominican' and 'Puerto Rican'.

As Bailey shows, the ways in which intra- and inter-group boundaries are situationally highlighted belie static one-to-one correspondences between linguistic forms and social identities. While Dominican Spanish forms, for example, are commonly associated with a shared Dominican identity, they can also be used to mark intra-group boundaries between different kinds of Dominican identities. Forms associated with AAVE can index urban American youth identities, but they can also be used situationally to highlight differences between urban and rural Dominicans.

In a similar vein, Anna De Fina (Ch. 3) investigates language, style and language choice in an Italian American Club in the United States as (part of) the social practices and activities in which processes of attribution and negotiation in identity work are grounded. She analyzes the particular identity claims that participants in an all male Italian American card game club make relevant within this context, and the bilingual strategies that they use to build 'Italian'/'American', but also gender and social role identities ('father', 'family member', 'professional', 'club member') as well as situated identities such as 'card player'. She also shows that the personae invoked through these stylistic devices do not necessarily correspond directly or consistently to the identities claimed by the participants, but may be part of local stylizations of particular identities in a particular interactional context. In the processes in which speakers project individual or collective identities, code-switching and mixing between Standard Italian, Italian dialects and English play a central role.

Ch. 4 by Peter Auer, Jacinta Arnhold, and Cintia Bueno Aniola investigates social-communicative styles and identity work in the German/Portuguese bilingual 'colonial zone' in Southern Brazil (Rio Grande do Sul). The authors investigate language choice and code alternation as well as the varieties of German and Portuguese used to characterize these styles, but they

also explore communicative (rhetorical) strategies employed by the speakers in various situations, e.g. to formulate an argument, a complaint, a problem, or give advice. Looking in detail at institutional exchanges between clients and employees at a farmers' *sindacato*, the study shows that in this institutional context, the choice of a certain style – which in this case essentially includes monolingual vs. bilingual ways of speaking – is consequential for the way in which the client is construed as a social persona and dealt with by the institution. In the given context, the selection of styles illustrates attributes of 'Germanness' and 'ruralness', in addition to institutional roles such as 'buyer'/'seller'.

Ch. 5 by Christine Bierbach and Gabriele Birken-Silverman takes a slightly different approach to bilingualism as an index of social identities. The authors look at the performed naming practices of Italian-German youth in Germany which involve the use of Italian, Italian dialects and German. Proper names are linked directly to identities. However, the authors also show that naming performances are highly context bound, recipient designed and embedded in specific discourse types and communicative genres. Especially young people – and even more so in a immigrant situation, where identity may constantly be at stake – enact 'hybrid' identities through naming and elaborating on (nick) names in a playful way. By doing so, they sometimes impersonate popular role models relevant to the (sub)culture of their age group, and they claim/invent their personal territories which are situated between those of their parents (their ethnic 'roots'), their actual social environment in Germany and the global space of cosmopolitan youth culture. These playful performances of naming not only model a personal 'profile' for each participant and eventually shape participation structure and hierarchies in the peer group, they also constitute a specific social-communicative group style.

Inken Keim's study on immigrant females in Mannheim with a Turkish family background (Ch. 6) is of particular interest because it includes issues of development and style change as the speakers grow older and adapt to mainstream societal norms. She compares two stages in the development of this group. In the first phase, the adolescent girls define their social group through a communicative style which is based on 'coarse language'. In doing so, they place themselves at the periphery or even outside of German mainstream society (what Keim calls their 'ghetto identity'), but at the same time distance themselves from the role of the 'young traditional Turkish woman' associated with their parents. This 'coarse' style is associated with the aggressiveness and roughness of the male immigrant 'ghetto', and

it makes extensive use of Turkish/German mixing in order to maximize distance from 'the Germans'. In the second phase, and as a consequence of the exclusion from the educational system which the members of the group experienced as a result of this style, the same Turkish-German young women are observed construing a different kind of identity for themselves, based on a more elaborate and polite way of speaking. They learn to alternate between these styles, and present themselves in different ways, according to the social worlds they act in.

In the final chapter in this section, Ch. 7, Kathryn Woolard addresses a highly relevant methodological problem of identity research, i.e. 'transportability'. How can identities which have become relevant in one interactional episode become relevant in a subsequent one as well? On the basis of data from Barcelona (Catalan/Castilian bilingualism), Woolard shows that it is the bystander in one encounter who may play a significantly active role in the next encounter. Linguistically displayed identities such as ethnicity can thus be exported beyond transitory encounters and reified as features of individuals through chains of participation in social networks and institutions. Bystanders' access to an encounter is partial and their standpoint is different from that of ratified participants, occurring in what can be termed 'face to back' or 'face to side' rather than 'face to face' communication. Bystanders' formulations of identity may thus differ systematically from those of participants in an encounter, even when they invoke the same interpretive rules. Individuals can find their identities are diagnosed and regimented differently by bystanders because of the structural particulars of overheard interactions.

Chapter 2

Language alternation as a resource for identity negotiations among Dominican American bilinguals

Benjamin Bailey

1. Introduction

All language is heteroglot (Bakhtin 1981) and provides individuals with resources, i.e. linguistic and discursive forms, for the negotiation of identity. Bilingual, bicultural individuals have both an expanded set of resources for these omnipresent social negotiations, and a broader range of social categories that can be made relevant through talk as compared to monolingual, monocultural individuals. On the linguistic level, bilinguals can draw forms from two languages as well as hybrid forms resulting from language contact. On the social and cultural level, many are familiar with relatively diverse cultural frameworks for interpreting and evaluating the world and positioning themselves and others within it.

This chapter explores several ways in which a group of bilingual Dominican American high school students in Providence, Rhode Island, exploit language alternation in the negotiation of social identities in everyday peer-group talk. They negotiate these identities with a bilingual, multi-variety repertoire of language varieties that reflects Dominican immigrant heritage and socialization in a multi-ethnic, low-income, urban United States context (Bailey 2001a). This linguistic repertoire draws from various Dominican and American sociolects and forms resulting from Spanish–English language contact. Like many children of international migrants, second-generation Dominicans must negotiate between the linguistic and cultural worlds of their parents and those of the dominant society. They regularly confront questions of how to situate themselves and others within these worlds and how to construct a positive self in a broader social context that disparages their linguistic, ethnic/racial, and class identities (cf. Zentella 1997: 13).

These Dominican American negotiations are particularly salient to monolingual white Americans because of the ambiguous fit of many Do-

minicans into dominant U.S. social categories and because of the relatively diverse social origins of their linguistic forms. Phenotypically, Dominicans span the categories of black and white, which are popularly understood as representing an unbridgeable distance in the U.S. (Smedley 1993; Bailey 2001b). Linguistically, they draw forms from grammatical codes that count as distinct languages (Spanish and English) and those who are socialized in low-income, urban areas also draw from African American English, which is popularly understood to imply stark social difference.

In this chapter, I first define the terms *identity* and *style* as I use them, emphasizing that both are subjectively and ideologically constituted. After a brief methods section, I describe and illustrate with transcript examples an everyday form of linguistically unmarked language alternation – code switching as a discourse mode (Poplack 1981, 1988) – that is common among second-generation Dominican youth, as well as other children of international labor migrants (Auer 1984; Gal 1988; Zentella 1997). While this form of language alternation can be considered a *style*, I argue that its social implications for identity are very different at the local, interactional level than they are in the wider socio-political context.

In each of the next three sections, I consider short sequences of interaction in which specific instances of language alternation are socially and metaphorically loaded and explicitly linked to identity negotiations. In the first sequence, a relatively dark-skinned male student switches from English to Spanish in addressing a Guatemalan American female who has been led to believe that he is Haitian rather than Dominican. Addressing this student – with whom he otherwise speaks English – in Spanish serves to bolster his argument that he is Dominican rather than Haitian. In the second sequence, two female friends code switch into Spanish to negotiate a common understanding of the term *hick*, a term they apply to a category of more recent, male immigrant against which they define themselves. In the final section, I illustrate how two Dominican American teenagers alternate between Spanish and several varieties of English to differentiate themselves along a variety of dimensions from a fellow, more-recently-arrived immigrant teenager.

The social meanings of these metaphorical code switches (Blom and Gumperz 1972) are both “brought along” to the interaction as well as “brought about” in the interaction itself (Auer 1992). They are *brought along* in that codes, and specific forms within codes, have social associations that pre-exist particular interactions. They are *brought about* in that codes have *myriad* social associations, and interlocutors creatively exploit

particular associations in situationally specific ways. Thus, a switch into Spanish can be an index of Latino identity (example 5, below) or a way of making fun of a fellow Latino immigrant (example 6, below). A switch into English can highlight comity among Dominican Americans or it can be a way of communicating differences in family class origins in the Dominican Republic (example 7, below).

2. Identity and linguistic style

I approach both identity and linguistic style as dimensions of on-going, contingent processes of differentiation rather than as static essences or meanings that inhere in social groups or linguistic forms, respectively. My notion of identity draws from Barth's (1969) seminal argument that ethnic groups are defined by the *boundaries* that groups construct between themselves, rather than the characteristics of group members. It has long been noted that individuals have multiple characteristics and allegiances, so it is the situational and selective highlighting of commonalities and differences that is characteristic of identity groupings (Moerman 1965; Cohen 1978). Identities thus center on the processes through which individuals and groups create, maintain, or diminish social boundaries, marking themselves and others as the "same"¹ or "different". From this phenomenological perspective, identity is a function of "self-ascription" – how one defines oneself – and "ascription by others" – how others define one (Barth 1969: 13).

Analysis of naturally occurring discourse is a means to understanding how individuals, as social actors, selectively highlight or diminish social boundaries and activate facets of identity. Interlocutors publicly display and continuously update for each other their on-going understandings of talk – including identity negotiations – as talk unfolds turn by turn, thereby making these negotiations of meaning visible for analytic treatment by social scientists (cf. Heritage and Atkinson 1984: 11). Since identity is a function of self- and other-ascription, the constitution of identities – through the negotiation of congruent ascriptions – can be visible in the turn-by-turn talk of individuals.

I see style in complementary, processual terms. Following Irvine (2001: 22), the key to style is *distinctiveness*. Styles draw meanings from contrast with other styles; they are themselves constituted as styles through this contrast, rather than through any inherent characteristics, just as identities

are constituted through boundary marking processes (or lack thereof). Whether two ways of speaking constitute distinct styles is a phenomenological question that is ideologically mediated. To a linguist whose perspective privileges formal categories, for example, any language alternation may be highly salient because of the alternation of two codes, thus constituting a distinctive style. To the monolingual, Anglophone majority in the U.S., English monolingualism is an emblem of citizenship and belonging, and any language alternation is an exercise in distinctiveness. To a bilingual child of international migrants, however, code switching in intragroup peer interaction is not commonly perceived by members as very distinct from speaking to such peers in English, or in Spanish, *without* alternation.

This conception of style – based on a semiotics of distinctiveness – is very different from the concept of style in U.S. sociolinguistics, which has been primarily concerned with correlations between linguistic and social variables (see Rickford and Eckert (2001) for a discussion of style in U.S. sociolinguistics and points of difference and overlap between U.S. sociolinguistic and linguistic anthropological perspectives). Social categories in this tradition have been treated as given, i.e. pre-existing any interaction, and the agency of individuals and the role of ideology in language use has been downplayed, or even denied (Labov 1979: 328).

These formulations of identity and style emphasize the discursive and situational fluidity of meanings, but negotiations of meaning are always tethered to social structure and history. Our phenomenological understandings develop in an historical world in which history is omnipresent in embodied form, as *habitus* (Bourdieu 1990: 56). Individuals only ascribe identities to themselves, for example, that are imaginable and available in a particular social and historical context, and they are only ratified in identities (through other-ascription) that social history makes available to them. Negotiations of identity thus take place within the parameters that history has imposed in a particular time and place.

Similarly, the capacity of linguistic forms to index social meanings – and thus activate a position in a social system of distinction – has bases in social history. The base-line indexical meanings of linguistic forms are not idiosyncratic but are related to actual, historical usages by speakers in particular social positions. It is only through recurrent connections between a social phenomenon or context and a linguistic form that non-referential indexical meanings are constituted (Peirce 1955). Individual speakers creatively exploit and negotiate indexical form-meaning relationships, but these negotiations rely, at one level, on conventional associations.

3. Methods

Data in this chapter come from fieldwork conducted in Providence, Rhode Island during 1996 and 1997 (see Bailey 2002). Data collection methods included ethnographic observation, over 30 audio recorded interviews with high school students, and video recording of naturally occurring interaction of six principle subjects, aged 16 to 18, in school, home, and community contexts. Selected segments of interaction were transcribed in detail following conversation analytic conventions (Heritage and Atkinson 1984). Bilingual Dominican American consultants, including the six principle subjects, aided in the transcription and translation of talk and offered interpretations and explanations of interactions.

The six principle subjects were students at Central High School, a Providence city school of 1,350 students, which is over 20% Dominican. Roughly 60% of the student body is Hispanic, with Puerto Ricans and Guatemalans comprising the second and third largest Hispanic groups. About 16% of the students are of non-Hispanic African descent, 16% are Southeast Asian, primarily first and second-generation Cambodian and Laotian refugees, and about 5% are white American. Almost ninety percent of the students at Central High School are categorized as poor based on federal guidelines, and more than half of the students officially enrolled in the 9th grade drop out by the 11th grade. The transcripts presented here are from recordings made at Central High School, except for the last one, which was made at a Friday evening Spanish language, Catholic youth group meeting.

4. Code switching as a discourse mode

Like many language practices, code switching is polysemous and multi-functional. Social and interactional functions of individual switches can range from highly metaphorical negotiations of identities, meanings, and obligations (Blom and Gumperz 1972; Myers-Scotton 1993: 84) to much less marked, local discourse management (Gumperz 1982; Auer 1984; Myers-Scotton 1993: 149; Alfonzetti 1998; Bailey 2000). Metaphorical meanings in code switching are typically generated by the partial violation of conventional associations between code and particular contexts. In cultures and contexts where codes are highly compartmentalized by domains (Kroskrity 1993) or are taken to represent particular political positions

(Heller 1992, 1995), code switching tends to be relatively less frequent and to communicate metaphorical meanings when it occurs, as it violates ideologies that link particular codes to particular and disparate social worlds.

The majority of code switches that I recorded among bilingual Dominican American high school students in peer interaction did *not* involve any evident metaphorical negotiations of identity or highlight indexical meanings of one code or another. Like children of many international labor migrants, second-generation Dominicans have access to both sending and host society languages and sociocultural roles. They straddle national, linguistic, cultural, and ethnic boundaries, embracing multiple social and linguistic worlds. With this relative lack of compartmentalization among languages and cultural worlds in their teenage lives, codes are not so conventionally linked to situations and domains as in many other situations, and metaphorical meanings are not generated by most switches.

Code switching among this group tends to be relatively frequent and unmarked, resulting in what Poplack (1981, 1988) calls “code switching as a discourse mode.” Many switches in this style of speaking serve local discourse management functions, signaling shifts in speech activity or footing or helping to maintain discourse cohesion across turns. For many individual switches in this style of speaking, it can be difficult or impossible to assign a discrete interactional function.²

The following two switches are typical of those that I recorded in interactions among U.S. raised Dominicans in that they consist of relatively short bits of Spanish inserted into interactions that are otherwise in English, the dominant language of high school students who were U.S.-born or who arrived in the U.S. during their first school years.

(1) [(JS #2 10:51:30) Janelle, U.S.-born, and Jose, arrived in the U.S. at age 8, have been chatting in English during class. Janelle describes how she had her brother-in-law, Benny, give her a ride to a fashion show practice session that turned out to be cancelled.]

Janelle: I hope I don't have fashion show practice today.

Jose: No?

Janelle: Cause yesterday I was mad, *de balde yo fui para allá*.
‘I went there for nothing’

I told Benny to take me *de balde*.

‘for nothing’

((Talk continues in English with occasional switches to Spanish))

In this example, there is no obvious function of these switches related to the structure of the discourse or to metaphorical meanings of English and Spanish. When codes are not compartmentalized by a group, the search for a function of a particular switch may be akin to trying to explain why a monolingual speaker selects one synonym or phrasing over another (Zentella 1997: 101).

In the following example, in contrast, there is a clear discourse contextualization function of the switch into Spanish, as the switch coincides with a change in footing, a temporary reframing of talk (Goffman 1979; cf. Zentella 1997: 93):

(2) [(JS #2 10:50:10) Discussing whether she needs new immunizations to do her summer job at a hospital.]

Janelle: I don't know if I – I don't know if I have to go again cause–
dizque no es verdad que
 'supposedly isn't it true that'
 after a certain time– after a certain time you have to do it again? You
 gotta get shots again?

Janelle is unsure whether she needs new immunizations before beginning her summer job. She moves from reporting this uncertainty in the first part of her turn, to directly asking her interlocutor to confirm that one needs to be re-immunized after a certain period of time. This switch from a statement to a question coincides with a cut-off of *cause* – a shift in pitch and tempo, and a change of code, from English to Spanish. Code switching is a linguistic resource – like prosody or body alignment – that can be activated to highlight this shift in footing, or communicative activity, but it does not appear to have any greater social or metaphorical meaning related to conventional associations of Spanish or English language.

Group members do not see such individual switches as metaphorically loaded or as a means to constituting a distinctive style, and many individuals are not discursively conscious of why they code switch, or that they are code switching at any given moment.³ This is not the same, however, as arguing that such code switching has no meanings or implications for social identities. One must distinguish between *local functions of particular* code switches and the more *global sociopolitical functions* of code switching *as a discourse mode* (cf. Myers-Scotton 1993: 149; Zentella 1997: 101). Regardless of whether individual code switches serve identifiable conversa-

tional functions, the discourse mode, or *style*, of frequent switching has profound implications for social identity formation in the U.S.

The meanings that one finds in such switching are largely a function of one's subject position and analytical perspective. For many monolingual adults, both Spanish-speaking and Anglophone, code switching is a haphazard jumble of linguistic elements that is emblematic of the inability to speak what those adults see as the correct language, i.e. the ideological standard (Milroy and Milroy 1985; Silverstein 1996; Lippi-Green 1997). Many academics of the last 30 years, in contrast, have celebrated the linguistic sophistication displayed in code switching (McClure 1977; Sankoff and Poplack 1981; Lipski 1985) and the social 'strategies' that some forms of it imply (Gumperz 1982; cf. Myers-Scotton 1993: 74; cf. Woolard 2004). For more sociologically and anthropologically oriented analysts, unmarked code switching as a discourse mode can be seen as a form of resistance to dominant discourses of unquestioning assimilation (Gal 1988: 259) and a means to constructing a positive self in a political and economic context that disparages immigrant phenotypes, language, class status, and ethnic origins (Zentella 1997).

Frequent switching as a *style* is always socially marked in a wider U.S. society in which being a monolingual English speaker is an ideological default against which difference or distinctiveness is constructed (Urciuoli 1996). Various nativist English-only groups, for example, have sponsored legislation to limit or prohibit the use of languages other than English in many contexts, including school, government, and workplace. This ideology is part of a larger Western tradition of linguistic purism intertwined with a belief in a primordial unity among language, race, and ethnic/national identity (see Auer, this volume). This assumed unity – explicitly claimed and celebrated by European philosophers Herder (Gal 1989: 355) and, earlier, Condillac (Aarsleff 1982; Woolard and Schieffelin 1994) implicitly underlies Western social and linguistic categorization systems.

Even single code switches can thus have great significance for identity constitution, depending on whether bystanders (Goffman 1979, see Woolard, this volume) are present who see Spanish speaking as a direct index of Latino or Dominican identities. This is particularly significant for Dominican Americans who are native speakers of English and whose phenotypes might lead others to identify them as black American or white American rather than Latino. Many such individuals report having been perceived as black American, or having perceived other Dominicans as black American, until Spanish language use called attention to a Latino identity:

(3)

BB: Who thinks you're black? White Americans, Dominicans...?

Maritza: Black Americans. It's kind of, it's kind of different, because they should know their own people. I would know who's Dominican. Actually, no, there was this guy, he's Dominican, and I thought he was black. And then when I heard him speak Spanish, I was like, "He's Spanish! He's a Dominican."

(4)

BB: Do people ask you what you are?

Francisca: They mostly assume I'm black, they never really ask, but when they hear me speaking Spanish, "Oh, what are you, Dominican? I didn't know that." They get all shocked and surprised because they didn't think that I was Dominican...

Regardless of the local conversational function of an instance of language alternation, it can be used by any bystander to position the speaker within an overall semiotic system of distinction.

5. Code switching as metaphorical resource for identity negotiations

5.1. Aren't you supposedly from Haiti?

While the majority of code switches in bilingual Dominican American peer interaction are unmarked to members in terms of social identities, some switches *are* metaphorically loaded. In the three sequences presented in this section and the following two sections, interlocutors exploit the indexical potential of particular codes or forms to claim and enact identities in context-specific ways. Such negotiations provide a window onto the workings of the local social and linguistic worlds that these young Dominican Americans constitute and inhabit through their talk.

In Example 5, transcribed below, a student's ethnic/racial identity becomes a reference point for a joke in a bilingual conversation. In this conversation, a recent Dominican immigrant, Eduardo, jokingly claims that a relatively dark-skinned Dominican American, Wilson, is Haitian. This joking claim is directed (minimally) at Claudia, a Guatemalan American, who is sitting in front of Wilson and Eduardo, and is turned around to face them. Wilson initially goes along with this counterfactual claim, but then challenges it. This interaction involves not only Eduardo teasing the dark-

skinned student, but also Eduardo and Wilson collaborating to put on another student, a Guatemalan American. Through their talk, these teenagers negotiate racial identities and meanings that are popularly understood as inherent and immutable.

Code choice and alternation play a central role in the constitution of these negotiations of identity and social meanings. The recent immigrant Eduardo, whose English is limited, produces turns only in Spanish. Claudia, who is English dominant, produces turns only in English. Wilson, an English dominant bilingual, produces two turns in Spanish and four in English during this sequence. (He produces a longer series of turns in Spanish directed at Eduardo after this transcribed section.) Wilson's Spanish turns (boldfaced) after he addresses Claudia in English have particular metaphorical import for his identity.

(5) [(WR #2 1:20:07) Setting and participants: Early in an 11th grade class period in May. There is a substitute teacher, and students are talking, flirting, and fooling around. Wilson, the student I was recording, has been speaking in both English and Spanish to various classmates. He came to the U.S. around age 7. Claudia's parents are from Guatemala. Eduardo came from the Dominican Republic as a teenager.]

Wilson: ((singing)) *dame del pollito*

'give me a little bit of that chicken'

Eduardo: *Tú no dizque ere(s) de Haití? Tú no ere(s) dominicano, Wilson.*

'Aren't you supposedly from Haiti? You're not Dominican, Wilson.'

Wilson: *Yo nací en Haití*, ((Wilson turns to Eduardo, smiling))

'I was born in Haiti'

Eduardo: //() ((motions toward camera, Wilson turns to camera))

Wilson: *//pero me crié en Santo Domingo.*

'but I was brought up in the Dominican Republic'

((Eduardo holds up both hands, palms forward, with middle and ring fingers curled down – the sign of the cuckold – behind Wilson's head; Wilson turns back toward Eduardo and hits him in the leg with the back of his open hand))

(1.5)

Claudia: So you're Haitian, huh?

Wilson: No I'm Dominican

Claudia: You were born in DR?

Wilson: Yeah

Eduardo: *Nació en Haití*

'He was born in Haiti.'

Wilson: ***En Santo Domingo.***

'In the Dominican Republic.'

- Eduardo: *E(s) haitiano.*
'He's Haitian.'
- (3.0) ((Wilson gives two lateral head shakes in the direction of Claudia.))
- Eduardo: ()
- Wilson:** *E(s) mentira, ven acá, a quién tú le va(s)- a quién tú le va(s) a creer, a mí o a e(s)to(s) do(s) loco(s)?* ((turning his head laterally first to one side then the other, indicating Eduardo and an accomplice (?) on his other side.))
'It's a lie. Come on, who are you going- who are you going to believe, me or these two crazy guys?'
- (.8)
- Eduardo: *A mí.*
'Me.'
- (1.5)
- Wilson: *Eh, 'mano* ((looking down at magazine))
'Hey, man'
- Wilson: *Azaros(o)* ((Hits Eduardo sharply on leg with the back of his hand))
'Jerk.'

In their first turns at talk in this segment, Eduardo and Wilson speak Spanish, which is the language in which they address each other throughout this class. They jokingly create a counterfactual frame in which Wilson is not Dominican, but a Haitian who was raised in the Dominican Republic. They both know that this is not true. Their Spanish language use helps to constitute a Dominican sociocultural framework for interpreting and joking about phenotype and race that is linked to historical constructions of race and nation in the Dominican Republic (Silie 1989; Duany 1994; Moya Pons 1995). In Dominican contexts, calling a relatively dark-skinned individual a Haitian is a form of ritual insult that is common among adolescent males (see examples in Diaz 1996).

Although Eduardo and Wilson are ostensibly addressing each other – Eduardo uses the second-person *tú* to address a first-pair part question to Wilson, to which Wilson responds with a second-pair part – their talk is directed to a wider audience of bystanders who understand Spanish, including Claudia. Claudia is likely unfamiliar with the Dominican social framework in which relatively dark-skinned Dominicans are jokingly accused of being Haitian.

Claudia responds to these claims by proffering a candidate understanding of Wilson's identity – that he is Haitian – in English, the only language that she is observed speaking during this class period. This repair-like can-

didate understanding may be necessary because of ambiguity regarding Wilson's identity. Eduardo and Wilson's presentation of claims about Wilson may have been seen as unserious – Wilson smiles as he asserts that he was born in Haiti and Eduardo makes a cuckold gesture over Wilson's head – casting doubt on the veracity of the claims. Claudia may also have an understanding of identity that privileges birthplace in assigning identity. After Wilson other-corrects her candidate understanding that he is Haitian, she proffers a candidate understanding of his birthplace – the Dominican Republic – that Wilson confirms.

The language choices in the first six turns here can be explained most simply in terms of language fluency. Wilson thus addresses Eduardo in Spanish and Claudia in English, but his subsequent use of Spanish for two turns (*En Santo Domingo* and *E(s) mentira, ven acá...*) to Claudia violates this pattern. This is a triadic exchange in which Claudia is Wilson's primary addressee (his gaze is oriented toward her, Eduardo has begun addressing Wilson in the third person, and Wilson addresses Claudia in the second-person), but his turns are shaped as other-corrections (Schegloff, Jefferson et al. 1977) of Eduardo's Spanish turns. Wilson's use of a code that matches that of Eduardo's utterances helps to link his turns to Eduardo's, which is of some import for countering them. At one level, this use of Spanish contributes to discourse cohesion, serving a discourse contextualization function.

Wilson's use of Spanish in addressing Claudia also has metaphorical import related to his social identity, however. The joking line that Wilson is Haitian, initiated by Eduardo, and maintained by Wilson, is so successful that Claudia displays uncertainty about Wilson's identity despite his new claim that he's Dominican. The condition upon which this verbal play and put-on is predicated – the implausibility of Wilson's being Haitian – is not recognized by Claudia. For Wilson, the distance between the joking world that he and Eduardo have constituted and the immediate world of bodies in face-to-face interaction may have narrowed too much.

Wilson's use of Spanish for a longer turn directed at Claudia (*E(s) mentira, ven acá, a quién...*) highlights his fluency in Spanish. He relies not only on the referential dimension of his words but also the indexical associations of speaking Spanish. In the Dominican Republic, the ability to speak Spanish has historically been treated as evidence of a Dominican or Latino identity (Gonzalez 1975), and in the local context, it is treated as a direct index of Dominican identity, both by Dominicans and their peers (Bailey 2000).

Identity negotiations operate at many levels in this interaction. In terms of explicit identity categories and referential meanings, it is about whether Wilson is Haitian or Dominican. In terms of affiliation and disaffiliation among interlocutors, there are shifting negotiations. Eduardo and Wilson collaborate in creating a Dominican cultural framework through the use of Dominican Spanish – implicitly affiliating with each other – to tease a Guatemalan American female by getting her to believe something that is (to them) patently not true. While this collaborative joke draws a boundary between the two males and Claudia, it is simultaneously an attempt to engage her, an effort that Wilson and Eduardo repeat many times during this class period. At the same time that Eduardo and Wilson initially collaborate in this joke, the joke symbolically differentiates between them by invoking phenotypic differences (Wilson has darker skin than Eduardo), and this symbolic differentiation seeps into the interaction itself, creating disaffiliation.

5.2. *They be like “loca, loca, epa, epa, huepa”*

In the segment of transcript in this section, Isabella models the speech of a local category of immigrants, *hicks*, in both Spanish and English, in talking with her friend Janelle. Through affecting the voice of members of this category in a marked way, she mocks aspects of their speech and identities. This segment shows that metaphorical meanings of code switching can be locally brought about. While Spanish language use is conventionally an emblem of Dominican immigrant solidarity, the code switch into Spanish in this case is used to differentiate among desirable and less desirable Dominican immigrant identities.

(6) [(JS #2 12:40:58) Janelle and Isabella are sitting outside of their school. Janelle has noticed some students staring in her direction. Their attention is likely attracted by the spectacle of her being videotaped by the adult, white researcher.]

Isabella: I like Bulivan’s dress. ((gazing at a fellow student))

Janelle: I know.

Isabella: If it was sleeveless, it’d be nicer.

Janelle: What’s up with them people looking over here, them hicks? And stuff.

Isabella: <No: hicks>. ((deep pitched, husky voice; assuming slack-faced, dull stare))

- Janelle: What do you call a hick? Cause Jose says a hick is someone ridiculous, somebody stupid. Isn't a hick someone who just came back from the country and they can't really dress, they can't speak English? And they, you know.
- Isabella: They be like *loca, loca, lle::: pa, epa::, huepa*:
'honey, honey, he:::y, alright!, alri:::ght!, alri:ght!'
- Janelle: //Yeah, right?

Janelle initially uses the term *hick* to refer to a group of students who are staring across the school grounds in her direction. Isabella then intones *No hicks*, taking on the voice of a "hick" by using a deep-pitched, husky, slow tempo pronunciation and assuming a slack-faced stare. In terms of linguistic surface features, this is not an accurate characterization of recent immigrant speech, in that recent immigrant teenagers speak more Spanish than English and speak English with distinct Spanish phonology. However, in American English, the slow tempo, monotone pronunciation, and slack face contribute to the impression of a slow-witted person. The overall accuracy of the mocking voice is less important than highlighting some features of the other's speech that are seen as emblematic of the targeted identities. Both the propositional content of her utterance (*No hicks*) as well as her marked pronunciation construct hicks as different and disparaged.

Janelle then checks her understanding of the meaning of the word *hick*, contrasting her understanding with that of her friend Jose, who understands *hick* only in terms of its local connotations of "stupid" or "ridiculous." Janelle offers a candidate understanding of a *hick* in referential terms: as someone who just came from the (Dominican) countryside, is not acculturated to urban American youth clothing fashions, and can't speak English. The fact that Janelle explicitly seeks to confirm a shared understanding of the category *hick* suggests that the meanings of such identity categories are not structurally fixed but are locally negotiated forms of attribution.

Isabella confirms Janelle's candidate understanding of "hicks" not through reference but by giving a representative direct quotation of their speech: *loca, loca, e:::, epa, epa, huepa*. She squints and scrunches her face, using a nasal, slightly high-pitched register. In English Isabella uses a deep pitch with a blank stare and slack face to mimic a hick, while in Spanish she uses a nasal voice with slightly high pitch and a tensed face, i.e. squint, wrinkled nose, and lifted upper lip. She introduces this direct quote with the African American English habitual *be*, meaning that this category of person *habitually* and *repeatedly* says things of this sort. Janelle displays

agreement with this characterization of “hicks” with an affirmative, overlapping *Yeah, right?*

This code switch into Spanish sets off directly quoted speech from surrounding talk, helping Janelle to take on the voice of a third party, which is an oft-noted discourse contextualization function of code switching. When a code switch is serving only such a local contextualization function, the code used for the quotation is not necessarily the same one that the speaker originally used, but simply one that contrasts with the immediately preceding talk. In this case, however, the code match between the quoted speech and the actual speech of members of the category “hick”, which Isabella is modeling, is of significance.

Code switching here – along with the prosodic and visual features of the quoted speech (cf. ‘marking’ in Mitchell-Kernan 1972) – serves to index a stereotyped island Dominican gender style that is being constructed as inappropriate for an American urban youth context. *Loca, loca, e:::ca, epa, epa, huepa* may be associated with the relative directness of heterosexual Dominican males and giving of *piropos* in Dominican contexts, i.e. unsolicited expressions of romantic interest and admiration directed by males to females in many Latin American contexts (Andrews 1977; Suarezorozco and Dundes 1984; Moore 1996). *Piropos* tend to be much more direct, frequent, and intense than analogous expressions in Anglo American U.S. culture, and many Anglo Americans would interpret them as a form of sexual harassment. Consultants as well as literature on Dominican gender roles (Pessar 1984, 1987; Grasmuck 1991) indicate that migration to the U.S. results in an increase in female authority in heterosexual, romantic relationships. “Hicks” not only know little English and fail to dress according to urban U.S. youth styles; they fail to adhere to appropriate local cultural frameworks and practices for heterosexual interaction.

Isabella’s code switch into Spanish allows her to capture these social associations of a particular Dominican male way of speaking and being that might be difficult to capture in English. At the same time, she displays a stance toward a particular Dominican male way of speaking, a stance that is at least partly shared by Janelle. Isabella and Janelle collaborate in coming to a shared perspective on a disparaged category, thus constituting themselves, as interlocutors in the here-and-now as the same. This disparaged category is both modeled in marked fashion and explicitly named, while the category to which Isabella and Janelle belong remains implicit. The use of a locally marked style and explicit category names for constituting an “other” against which one defines oneself may be characteristic of relationships

between linguistic style and social identities more generally (see Günthner, this volume). One's own identity and ways of speaking are generally treated as normal, natural, and unmarked, so it can be difficult to call attention to them. It is through the highlighting of boundaries – through exaggeration of linguistic features seen as emblematic of other identities – that one's own style and identities are constituted as distinct and discrete.

5.3. *C'mon, dude*

In the following segment, Alejandro and Jonathan use a variety of Spanish and English linguistic resources to negotiate identities and differentiate themselves from a third teenager, Samuel. This segment has several parallels to the last example: Alejandro and Jonathan came to the U.S. by their first school years, while Samuel, whom they tease, is a more recent immigrant; Alejandro code switches to assume a mocking voice to make fun of Samuel; and the interaction highlights comity between Alejandro and Jonathan. It differs from the last example in several other dimensions, however: urban versus rural origins in the Dominican Republic are the primary basis for differentiation, Alejandro uses an *English* language voice to mock Samuel, and Samuel is a party to the interaction. Like the other examples in this paper, this segment highlights the creativity of individual social actors in selecting from among linguistic forms and the local and interactional negotiations of the meanings of such forms.

(7) [(LD #SM 8:30:44) Jonathan, Alejandro, and Samuel are sitting next to each other in a larger circle of about 12 members at a Friday evening Catholic youth group. The adult group leader is discussing, in Spanish, upcoming summer activities for the group.]

GL: *El viernes ellas empiezan, el viernes el cuarto de julio.*
// Entonces.....

[They're starting Friday, Friday the fourth of July. So...']

Alej.: *///((chanting)) I ain't gonna be here! /u::/ DR!*

((Slaps hands with Jonathan after /u::/, then bobs his shoulders in a *merengue* style))

(1.5)

Alej. →J: *Al estilo Will Smith, al estilo Fresh Prince. Kpsh::.*
 ['Will Smith style, Fresh Prince style']

- ((Slaps hands with Jonathan, then does a synchronized over the shoulder pointing gesture with thumb accompanied by /kpʃ/ rushing sound))
- (4.5) ((Group leader continues discussing, in Spanish, the schedule of summer meetings.))
- Jon.: (to S) You going to DR?
- (.5)
- Jon.: You're ()
- Alej.: You gonna be in this *campo* ['farm, countryside']
- Jon.: ()
- Alej.: C'mon dude
((holding up his hands, palms forward; assuming a goofy expression))
- Jon.: No phone, they got telegraph
((mimes tapping and makes beeping noises))
- Alej.: *No, jugando Nintendo*
['No, playing Nintendo.]
((mimes staring at handheld game and playing slowly))
- Jon.: *Con palitos*
['With little sticks'] ((mimes tossing sticks into the air))
- Alej.: I want– I want to go to the beach–
((White voice; facing forward))
- Alej.→J: Oh, *el papá mío me dará cinco mil* () – *cinco mil pesos, loco*.
['Oh, my Dad is going to give me five thousand () – five thousand pesos, man.']
- Jon.: In DR?

Alejandro's first utterance follows the adult leader's mention of the fourth of July, a date when Alejandro will be in the Dominican Republic. He turns to Jonathan, one of his best friends, who is also going to spend the summer in the Dominican Republic, to celebrate his and Jonathan's impending trips.

This turn represents a code switch in that his most recent utterances have been in Spanish and the reference to the fourth of July that triggered his utterance was made in Spanish as well. Alejandro's interaction with Jonathan and Samuel is a separate activity from the group leader's talk, and the switch helps to contextualize it as such. Participants themselves treat it as distinct from the dominant communication by relaxing normally exigent turn-taking rules (Sacks, Schegloff et al. 1974), and extensively overlapping with the group leader's talk. However, Alejandro's use of English here also carries local metaphorical meaning. Church youth group games and Bible-study activities that involve the whole group are generally carried out