Style and Indexicality

- Variation and Categories
- Symbol, Icon, Index
- Style and the Indexical Field
- The Honey Badger
SOCIOLINGUISTICS HAPPY HOUR

Thursdays at 5:30  THE SINK
1165 13th St. 13th &Pennsylvania
The Standard Language Market (again)

Class as defined locally (again)

% use of acrolectal variants in singular pronouns

Networks (again)

And goats (again)

What’s class to kids?

Ethnographic study in Detroit Suburban high schools


The Demographics of the Detroit area

Courtesy of Rob Frederick (Indiana)
J/B Class

Category Affiliation and Father's SEI
(p<.001)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Father's SEI</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of Speakers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>burnouts</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>jocks</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Burnouts
a working class culture

- Urban Oriented – networks, destinations
- Reject institution as basis of social lives
- Consciously have-nots
- Egalitarian and solidary
  - Share goods, services and problems
- School of hard knocks
- Lay claim to adult prerogatives
• Urban area only for institutional engagement
• Base networks and activities in school
• Wear the latest fashions
• Hierarchical and cautious social relations
• Emphasis on projecting stable, healthy image
• Collegial relations with adults
Jeans at lunchtime

2.6

3.0

2.9

3.7

courtyard

3.5

2.6

3.0

2.9

3.7

cafeteria

Wide Bells 4
Flares 3
Straight Legs 2
Pegged Legs 1
laughs at it
Northern Cities Shift (o)

iy
i
ey
ε
ae
o
ay

uw
u
ow
oh

on
Northern Cities Shift (oh)
Northern Cities Shift (uh)

iy
  I
ey
ε
ae

uw
  u
ow
  ^
  oh
  a
  ay

lunch
Northern Cities Shift (e)

- iy
- i
- ey
- e
- ae
- a
- ay
- u
- ow
- uh

seventeen
Northern Cities Shift (ay)

typing
Detroit /ay/ raising

/ay/ in Belten High

![Graph showing the comparison of /ay/ usage in Burnout Girls, Burnout Boys, Jock Girls, and Jock Boys. The (ay) sig is .000.]

- Burnout Girls: 0.8
- Burnout Boys: 0.7
- Jock Girls: 0.2
- Jock Boys: 0.3
Negative Concord in Belten High

Bar chart showing:
- **Burnout Girls**: Approximately 40% negative concord
- **Burnout Boys**: Approximately 45% negative concord
- **Jock Girls**: Approximately 5% negative concord
- **Jock Boys**: Approximately 20% negative concord
Urban Variables

- /ay/ sig=.000
- /e/ sig=.013
- /uh/ sig=.006
Non-urban Variables

[Bar chart showing the comparison of burnout and jock groups for girls and boys, with significance levels indicated for each group.]
Second Wave:
Developing the local picture

- Ethnographic studies of geographically defined communities
- Variables as indexing locally-defined categories
- Local categories as reproducing macrosiologlical categories
- Style as acts of affiliation
So how do you explain these data?

Exposure hypothesis:

• Burnouts go to Detroit more than Jocks, and are exposed more to urban speech.
• Hence they lead Jocks in urban changes.
• Burnout girls go to Detroit more than Burnout boys?
• Jock boys go to Detroit more than Jock girls?
Category orientation hypothesis:

- Burnouts in general go to Detroit more, so urban changes mark Burnout category.
- Burnout girls identify more as Burnouts than Burnout boys.
- Jock boys identify more with Burnouts than Jock girls.
Cruising

Courtesy of Ron Roosevelt
Cruising and the use of urban variables

1 ‘burned-out’ burnouts

2 ‘regular’ burnouts

3 ‘partying’ jocks

4 jocks

5 in-betweens
The Courtyard

Let me think. Okay. Us – you know like the burnout – yeah bye. Like the – wait bum me one – the burnout chicks, they they sit over here, and then the like the jocks chicks they sit like around here. And then
By that door?
No like in the middle. And then um
Who are the jocky chicks that hang out in the courtyard?
I don't know. Just, you know, weirdos. And then there's like um the guys, you know, you know, like weirdos that think they're cool. They just stand like on the steps and hang out at that little heater.
By the door yeah right.
"Hey." And then the poins are inside in the cafeteria, cuz they're probably afraid to come out in the courtyard.
Who sits where in the Courtyard

- Cafeteria
- Courtyard

Sitting arrangements:
- Wide Bells: 4
- Flares: 3
- Straight Legs: 2
- Pegged Legs: 1
1 ‘burned-out’ burnouts

2 ‘regular’ burnouts

3 ‘partying’ jocks

4 jocks

5 in-betweens
/ay/ raising by network cluster

- Burned-out burnouts
- Regular burnouts

Jocks & jocky in-betweens
Negative concord by network cluster
% Negative Concord
So what are variables doing?

Are they marking categories, and people just aligning themselves with respect to those categories?

If so, then we need a multiplicity of categories and a multiplicity of ways of aligning with those categories.

At what point does it become futile? (and by the way, this does not mean that categories aren’t important.)
Suppose, instead, that those variables are carrying fine-grained meanings.

The sign modalities

Symbol
(convention)
Icon
(resemblance)
Index
(contiguity)
Indexicality

• The property of sign vehicle signaling contextual “existence” of an entity (Silverstein 1976:29).

  – deictics (“that,” “this”)
  – tense (“then,” “now”)
  – 1st person pronoun (“I”)
  – honorifics – social relationship
  – regional dialect – social identity
  – “once upon a time…” – speech genre
わ(WA)  
“female-exclusive” utterance ending form


**direct index**  
(domain of affect)
- softness

**indirect index**  
(domain of gender)
- femininity

What mediates them?
Indexical Order

*n*-th order

- Any *n*-th order indexical presupposes that the context in which it is normatively used has a schematization of some particular sort, relative to which we can model the “appropriateness” of its usage in that context. At the same time, there will tend to be a contextual entailment… regularly produced by the use of the *n*-th order indexical token as a direct consequence of the degree of ideological engagement users manifest in respect of the *n*-th order indexical meaningfulness (Silverstein 2003:193-194)

Indexical Order

\(n+1^{\text{st}}\) order

- Once performatively effectuated in-and-by its use, the \(n\)-th order indexical form can itself also be conceptualized as well in terms of its \(n+1^{\text{st}}\) order indexical relationship to context. That is, it is as though a coterminous indexical form presupposes as well a transcendent and competing overlay of contextualization possibly distinct from the \(n\)-th order one with which we began…. \(N+1^{\text{st}}\) order indexicality is thus always already immanent as a competing structure of values potentially indexed in-and-by a communicative form of the \(n\)-th order, depending on the degree of intensity of ideologization (Silverstein 2003:194)
“Women use ‘wa’ because it sound gentle and soft.”
“‘Wa’ sounds gentle and soft because women use it”
Towards an indexical field for /ay/

white
urban-oriented
burnout
urban-whites
street-smart
tough
Revisiting dh-stopping in New York City
/\th,\dh/\, ethnicity, and beyond

NORTHERN CALIFORNIA:

WISCONSIN:
ROSE, MARY. 2006. Language, Place and Identity in Later Life, Linguistics, Stanford University: PhD.

LOUISIANA:

NEW JERSEY:
ECKERT, PENEOLOPE. today. Sheer native intuition.
### Possible indexical order of /th,dh/

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>New Jersey</th>
<th>Wisconsin</th>
<th>California</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Italian</td>
<td>German</td>
<td>Chicano</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>urban working</td>
<td>farmer</td>
<td>gang</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>class</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tough</td>
<td>hard-working</td>
<td>tough</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>working</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Indexical field of /th, dh/ in NJ

- tough
- cool
- NJ Italians
- emphatic
- working class
- uneducated
There’s nothing linear about indexical orders

Variation must account for fluidity in a serious way:

• The fluidity of time and change
• The fluidity of situation
• The fluidity of social space and interpretation
### Style

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>NCS older, fronting</th>
<th>NCS newer, backing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>æ &gt; eœ</td>
<td>a &gt; æ</td>
<td>c &gt; a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>æ</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>jock boys</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>jock girls</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>burnout girls</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>burnout boys</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- æ > eœ
- a > æ
- c > a
- ð > ð
- ay > oy
- ñ > ñ
- negation
Bricolage: the process of building a system out of a pre-constrained set of units

"In its old sense the verb bricoler applied to ball games and billiards, to hunting, shooting and riding. It was, however, always used in reference to some extraneous movement...and in our own time the 'bricoleur' is still someone who works with his hands and uses devious means compared to those of the craftsman.....(p.16)"
"The 'bricoleur' is adept at performing a large number of diverse tasks; but, unlike the engineer, he does not subordinate each of them to the availability of raw materials and tools conceived and produced for the purpose of the project. His universe of instruments is closed and the rules of the game are always to make do with 'whatever is at hand', that is to say with a set of tools that is always finite and is also heterogeneous." (p.17)

"..the decision as to what to put in each place also depends on the possibility of putting a different element there instead, so that each choice that is made will involve a complete reorganization of the structure, which will never be the same as one vaguely imagined nor as some other which might have been preferred to it." (p. 19)
Preppies with attitude

Bricolage at Paly High
Bricolage included

• Segmentation
• Reinterpretation
• Recombination
• Change in the stylistic landscape
Meaning is never fixed


The many uses of /t/ release

Sometimes I swear. Um other times I don’t. Especially not when there are little kids around. Especially not then.

Me and Ondine got grounded for this. So Ondine wrote it in her diary and Mom found out.

I said Brad and Robert. Robert.

Stupid

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Released /t/</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Medical</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barbecue</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>P=.010</td>
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</table>

/t/ release by gay medical student in two situations.
Acoustic Character of Bursts Across Situations

- Duration
  - Professional: 0.4
  - Social: 0.9

- Intensity
  - Professional: 0.8
  - Social: 0.9

Normalized Value (Relative to Vowel)
empty: could not have appeared

releases
falls
falsetto

white: did not appear (but could have)
black: did appear

small: relatively weak
large: relatively strong
Key: Shape of points indicates variable; size of shape represents strength of acoustic realization, according to number of standard deviations in relation to mean (averaged across all acoustic measures).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Releases</th>
<th>Rises</th>
<th>Falsetto</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>▲ 2 above</td>
<td>● rise</td>
<td>● 1-2 above</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▲ 1-2 above</td>
<td>◇ different variant</td>
<td>● 0-1 above</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▲ 0-1 above</td>
<td></td>
<td>● 0-1 below</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▲ 0-1 below</td>
<td></td>
<td>● 1-2 below</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▲ different variant</td>
<td></td>
<td>◇ different variant</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
beginning

cont.

cont.

cont.

Key: Shape of points indicates variable; size of shape represents strength of acoustic realization, according to number of standard deviations in relation to mean (averaged across all acoustic measures).

Releases
- ▲ >2 above
- ▲ 1-2 above
- ▲ 0-1 above
- ▲ 0-1 below
- ▲ different variant

Falls
- ■ >2 above
- ■ 1-2 above
- ■ 0-1 above
- ■ 0-1 below
- ■ 1-2 below
- ■ different variant

Falsetto
- ○ 1-2 above
- ○ 0-1 above
- ○ 0-1 below
- ○ 1-2 below
- ○ different variant

Gay Diva
Courtesy of Robert Podesva
The Honey Badger

What styles is Randall drawing on, and what resources go with those styles?