

groups

Symbol (convention)



Icon (resemblance)



Index (contiguity)

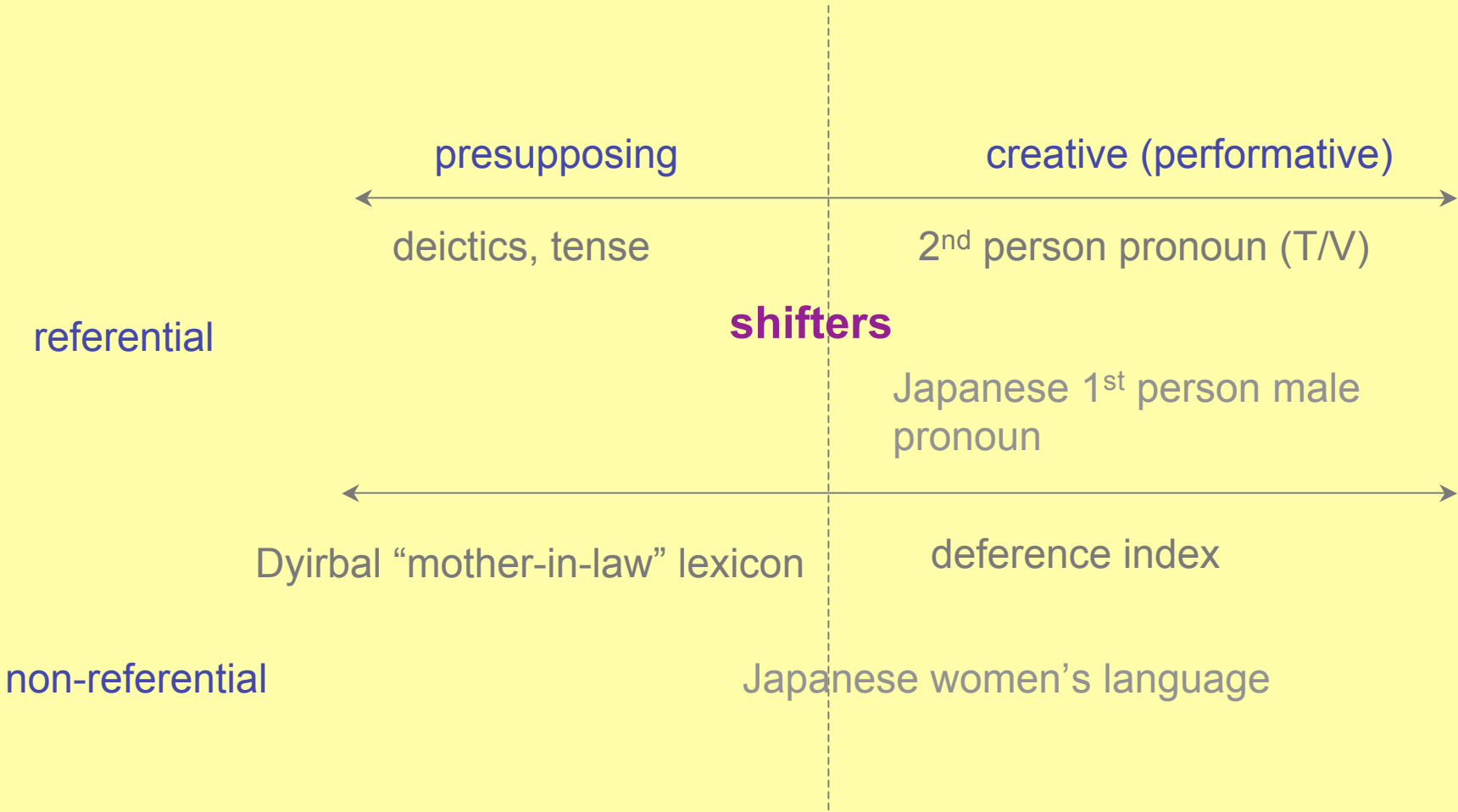


Indexicality

- 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

Functional Characteristics of Indexes

Silverstein 1976:36



“Boku” (僕)

The Male First Pronoun

prior to the 13th century

power/L

by men and women to those
in higher status

after the 13th century

power/L

only by men in the formal context

during the late 19th century

solidarity

among male college students

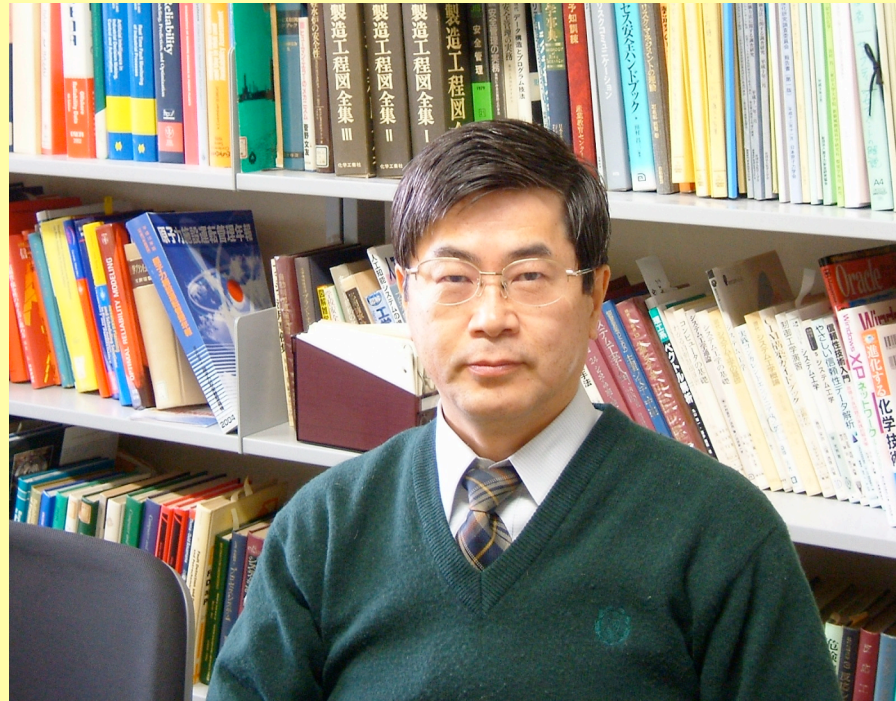
today

solidarity
&
power/H

only by men to those
on equal status and lower

entailed indexical meanings

















わ(WA)

“female-exclusive” utterance ending form

Ochs (1990)

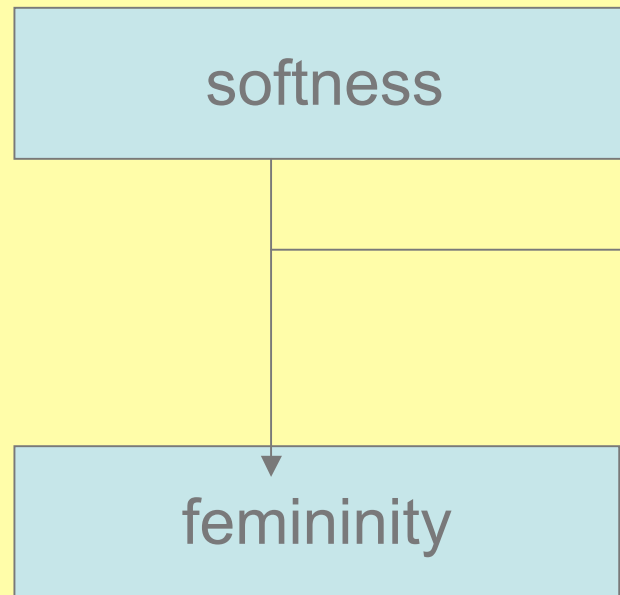
direct index
(domain of affect)

softness

What mediates them?

indirect index
(domain of gender)

femininity



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)

“Boku” (僕)

The Male First Pronoun

only by men to those
on equal status and lower

solidarity
&
power/H

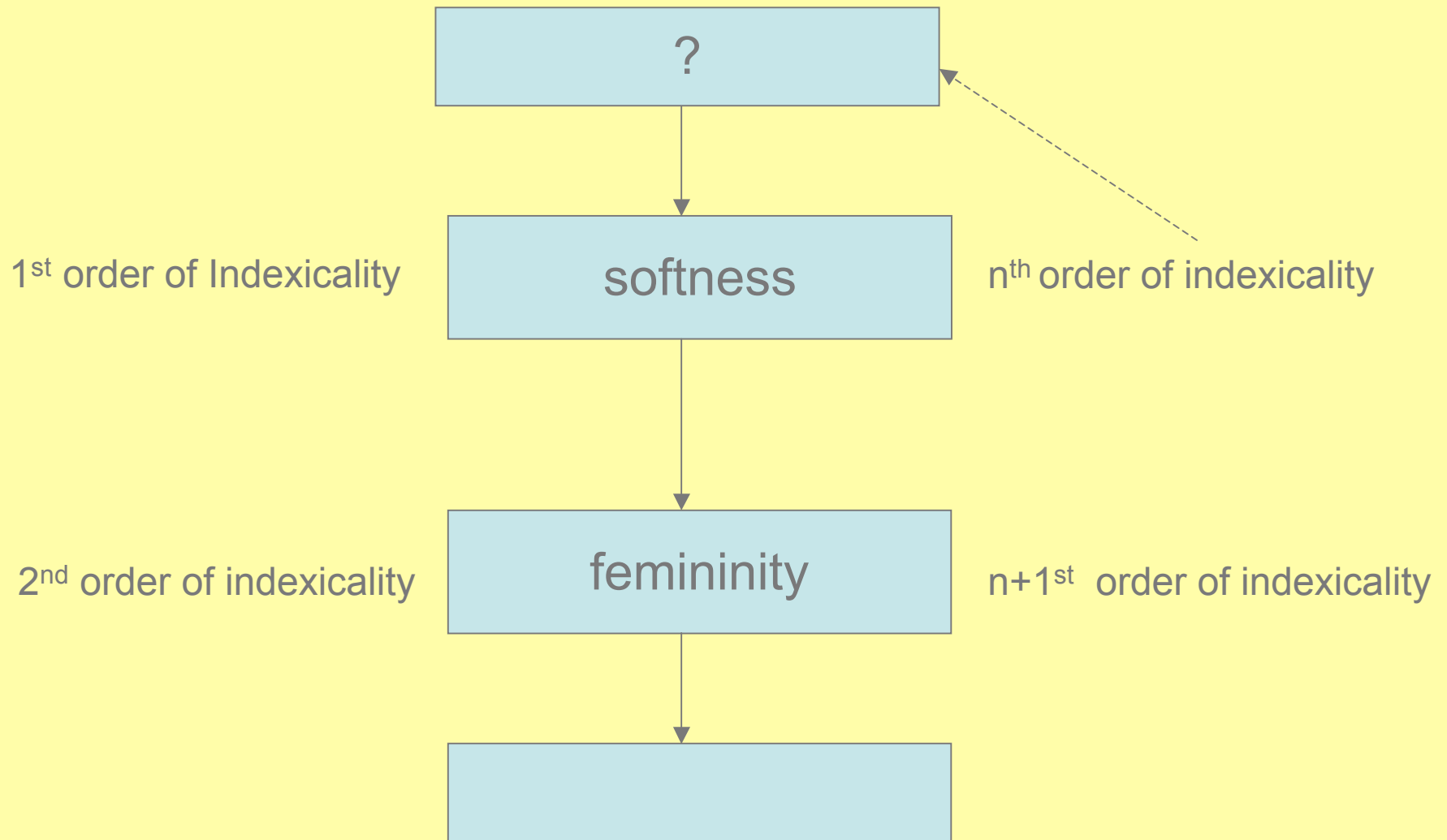
nth order of indexicality

n+1st order of indexicality

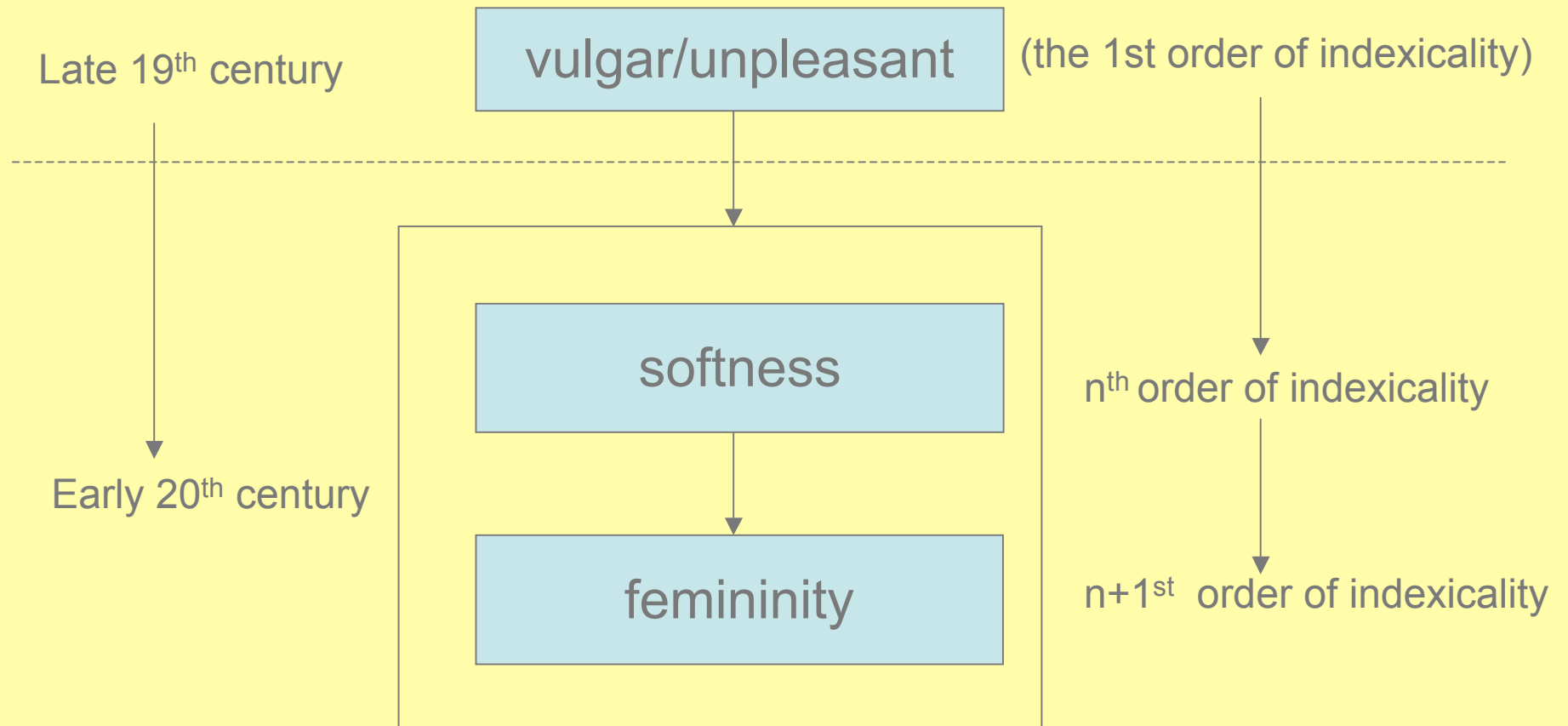
entailed indexical meanings:
class, informality, urbanity, age,
etc.

multiple meanings competing

Order of Indexicality Silverstein (2003)

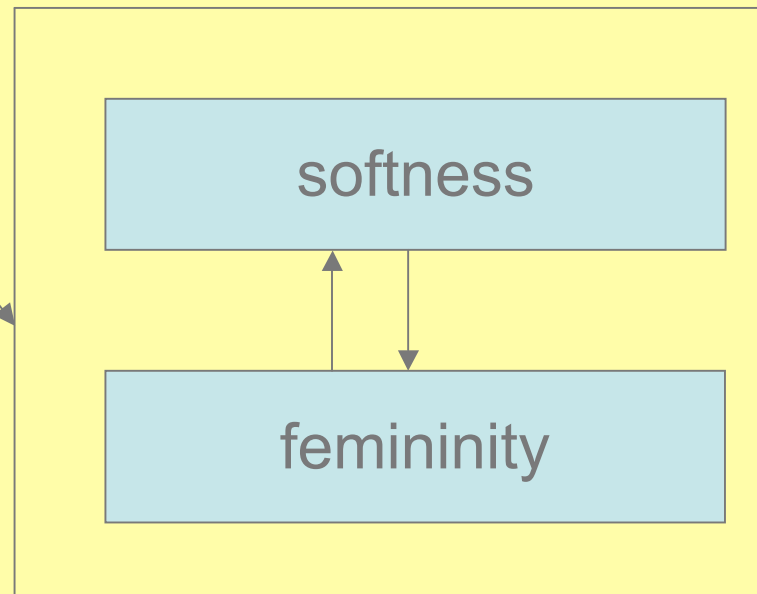


The indexical genealogy of “wa”



Dialectics of Indexical Order

language ideology



n^{th} order of indexicality

$n+1^{\text{st}}$ order of indexicality

“Women use ‘wa’ *because* it sound gentle and soft.”

“‘Wa’ sounds gentle and soft *because* women use it”

Referential index

‘Comrade’

respect, equality, resistance

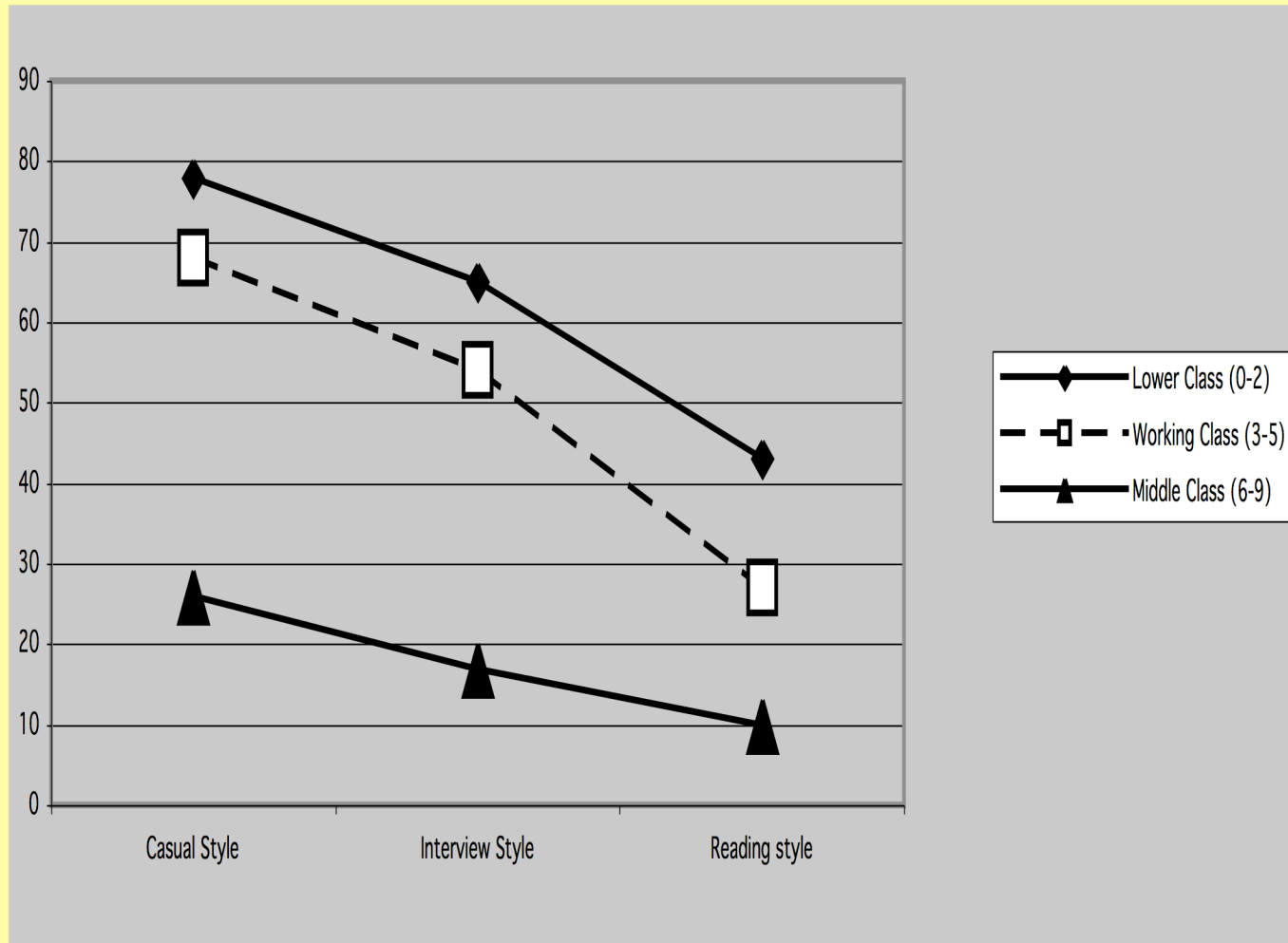


‘Member of sexual minority’

Chinese, solidarity, resistance

Wong, Andrew and Zhang, Qing. 2000. The linguistic construction of the tongzhi community. *Journal of linguistic anthropology*, 10.248-76.

/dh/ stopping in NYC

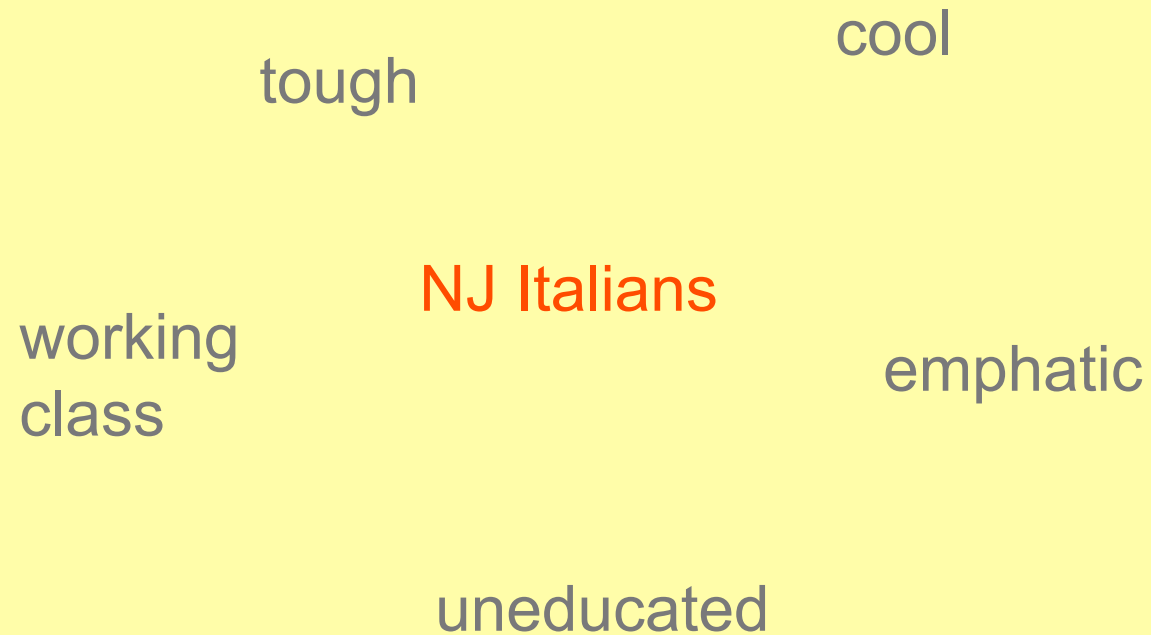


Labov, William. (1966) The social stratification of English in New York City. Washington DC: Center for Applied Linguistics. (2nd Edition 2007, Cambridge University Press)

Possible indexical order of /th,dh/

	New Jersey	Wisconsin	California
1 ↓	Italian	German	Chicano
	urban working class	farmer	gang
2 ↓			
	tough	hard- working	tough
3			

Indexical field of /th,dh/



Complex Indexicality

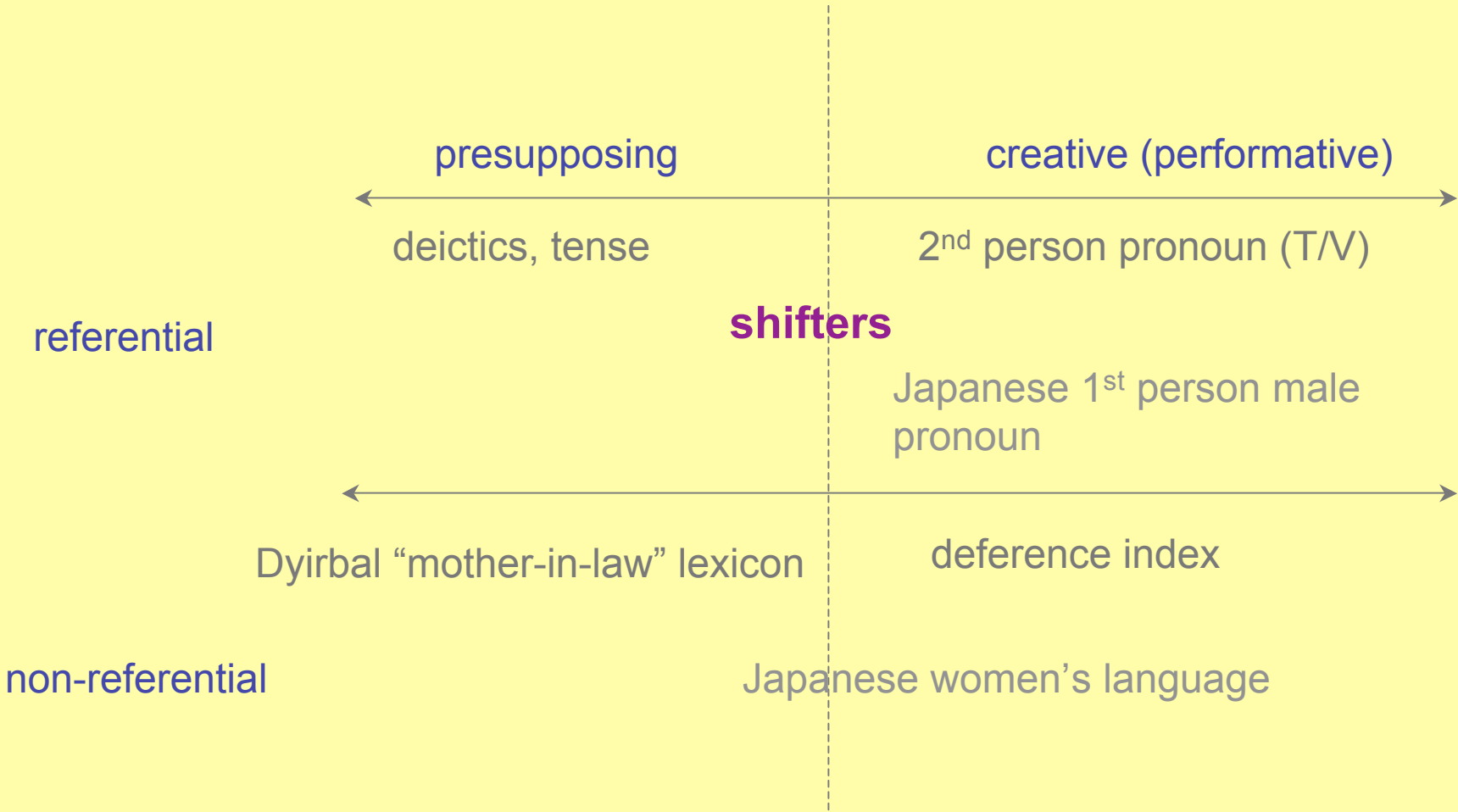
Norma: They say that the Norteñas look you up and down and that Sureñas will look you in the eye.

Sadgirl: Well I guess it depends on the person because one person will look at you **and everything**, but they'll kind of be scared at the same time. Cause they'll probably say, oh, look at her **and everything**, and if the girl turns back **and everything**, they could either back down or back up, and go, "Hey, what's on," you know?

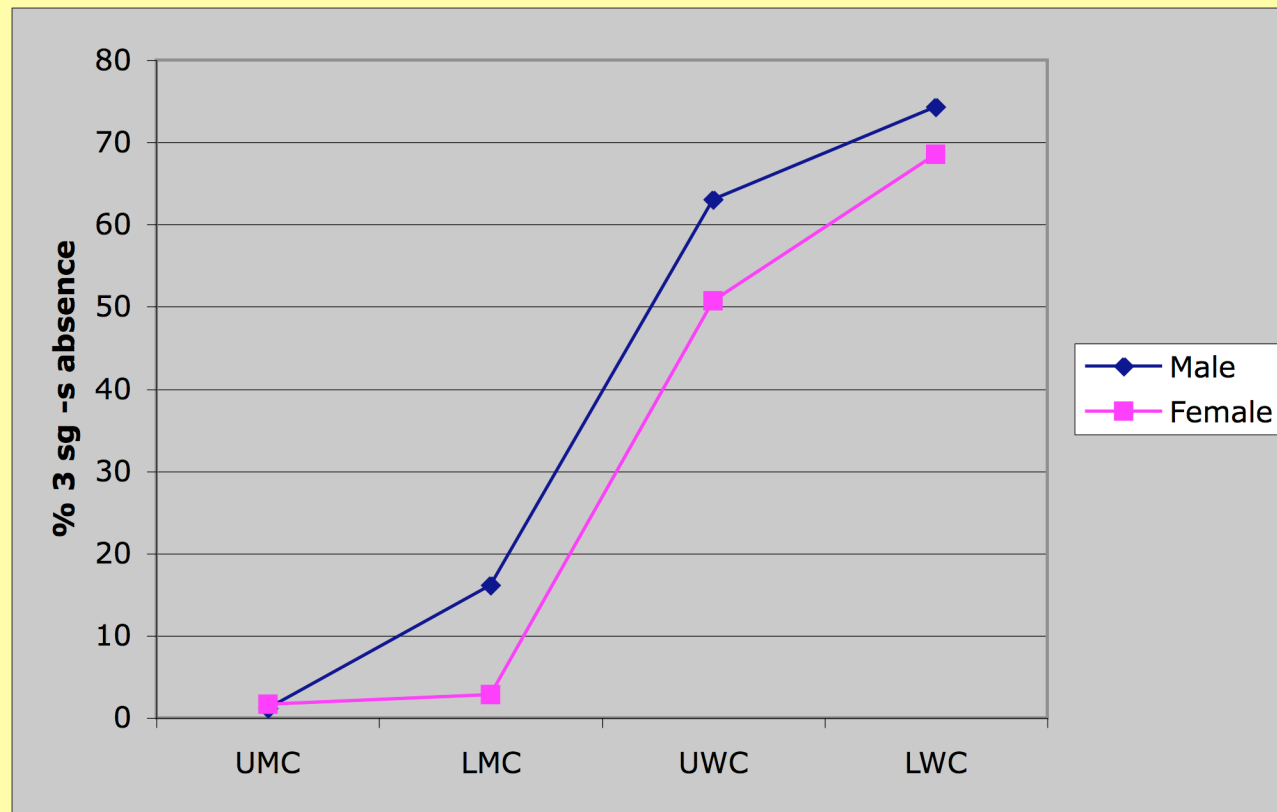
Mendoza-Denton, N. (1997). Chicana/Mexicana identity and linguistic variation: An ethnographic and sociolinguistic study of gang affiliation in an urban high school, Stanford University.

Functional Characteristics of Indexes

Silverstein 1976:36



What's being marked here?



Wolfram, W. (1969). A sociolinguistic description of Detroit Negro speech. Washington DC, Center for Applied Linguistics.

Are race, class and gender separable?

- Anita Hill's double bind
 - down-home style would disqualify her (as a woman) as a professional
 - Not using African American rhetorical strategies leaves her appearing inauthentic and “stuck-up”

Smitherman, G. (1995). African American women speak out on Anita Hill-Clarence Thomas. Detroit, Wayne State University Press.

indicators, markers, stereotypes

- Indicator: correlation with zero degree of social awareness.
- Marker: some social recognition, reflected in sharp social stratification and style shifting.
- Stereotype: subject of overt comment.

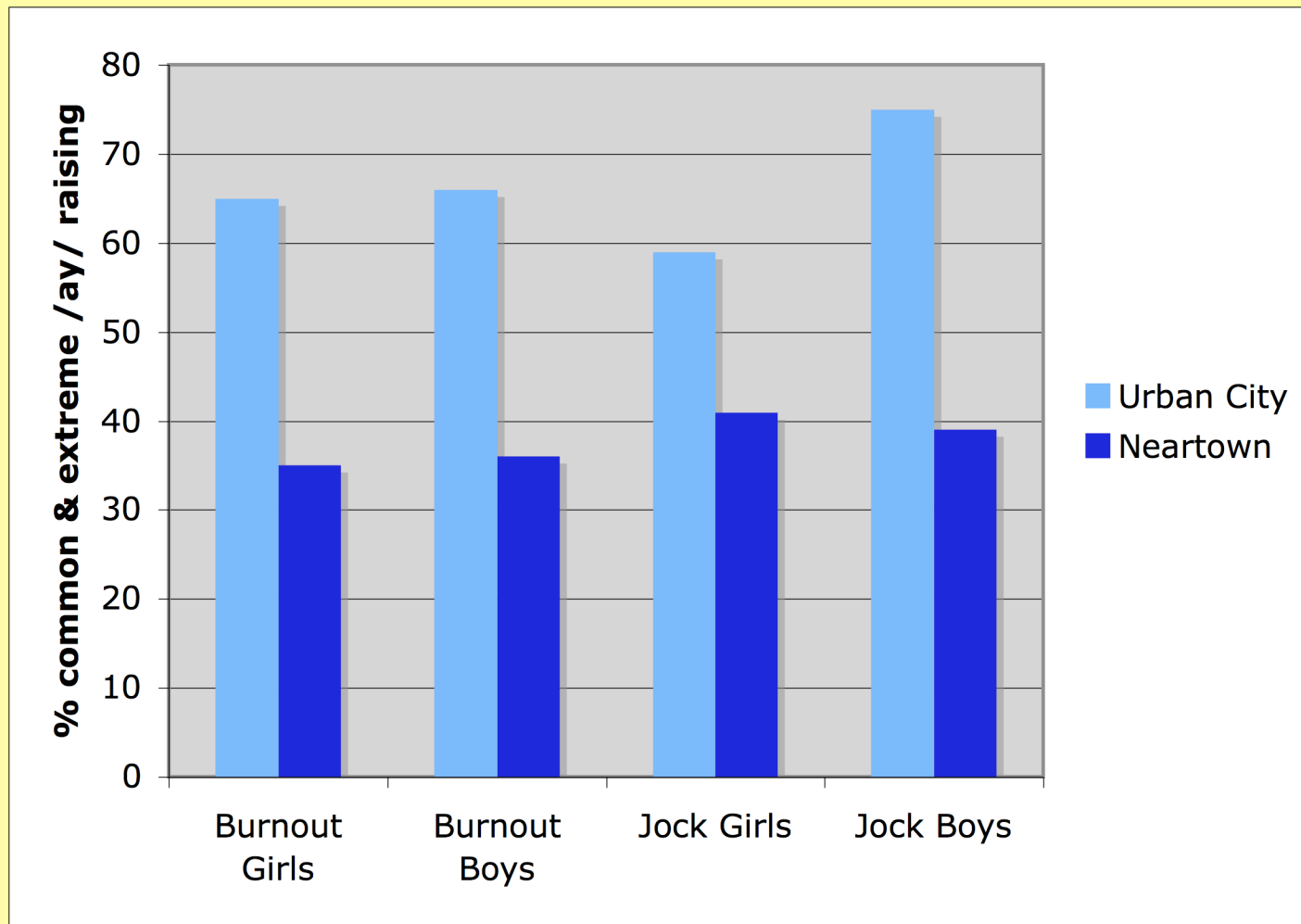
Labov, William. 2000. Principles of linguistic change: Social factors. Cambridge: Blackwell.

Semiotic processes of linguistic

Irvine and Gal (2000:37-39) differentiation

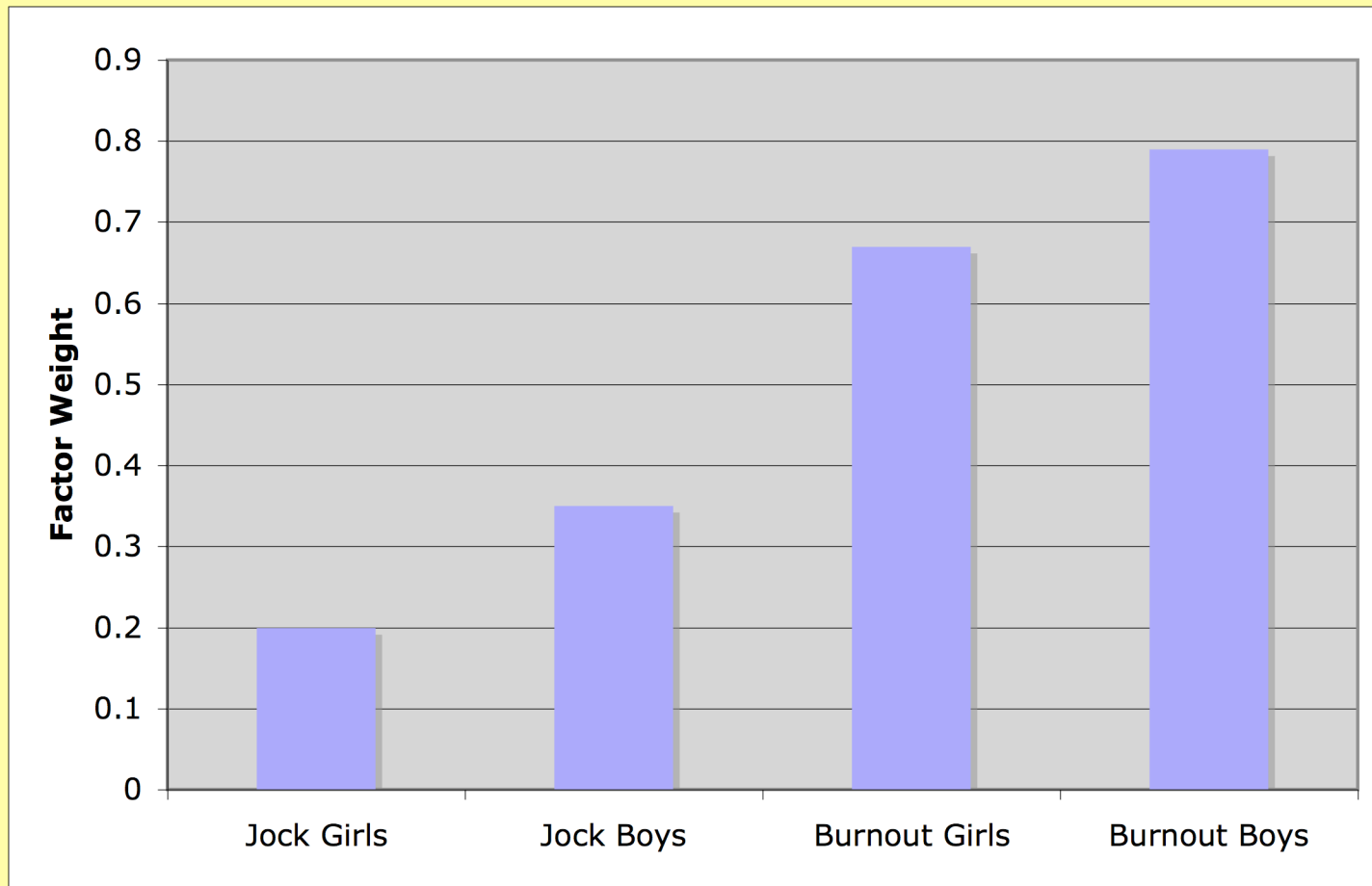
- *Iconization*: “Linguistic features that index social groups or activities appear to be iconic representations of them, as if a linguistic feature somehow depicted or displayed a social group’s inherent nature or essence.”
- *Fractal Recursivity*: “involves the projection of an opposition, salient at some level of relationship, onto some other level.”
- *Erasure*: “the process in which ideology, in simplifying the sociolinguistic field, renders some persons or activities (or sociolinguistic phenomena) invisible.”

Detroit /ay/ raising

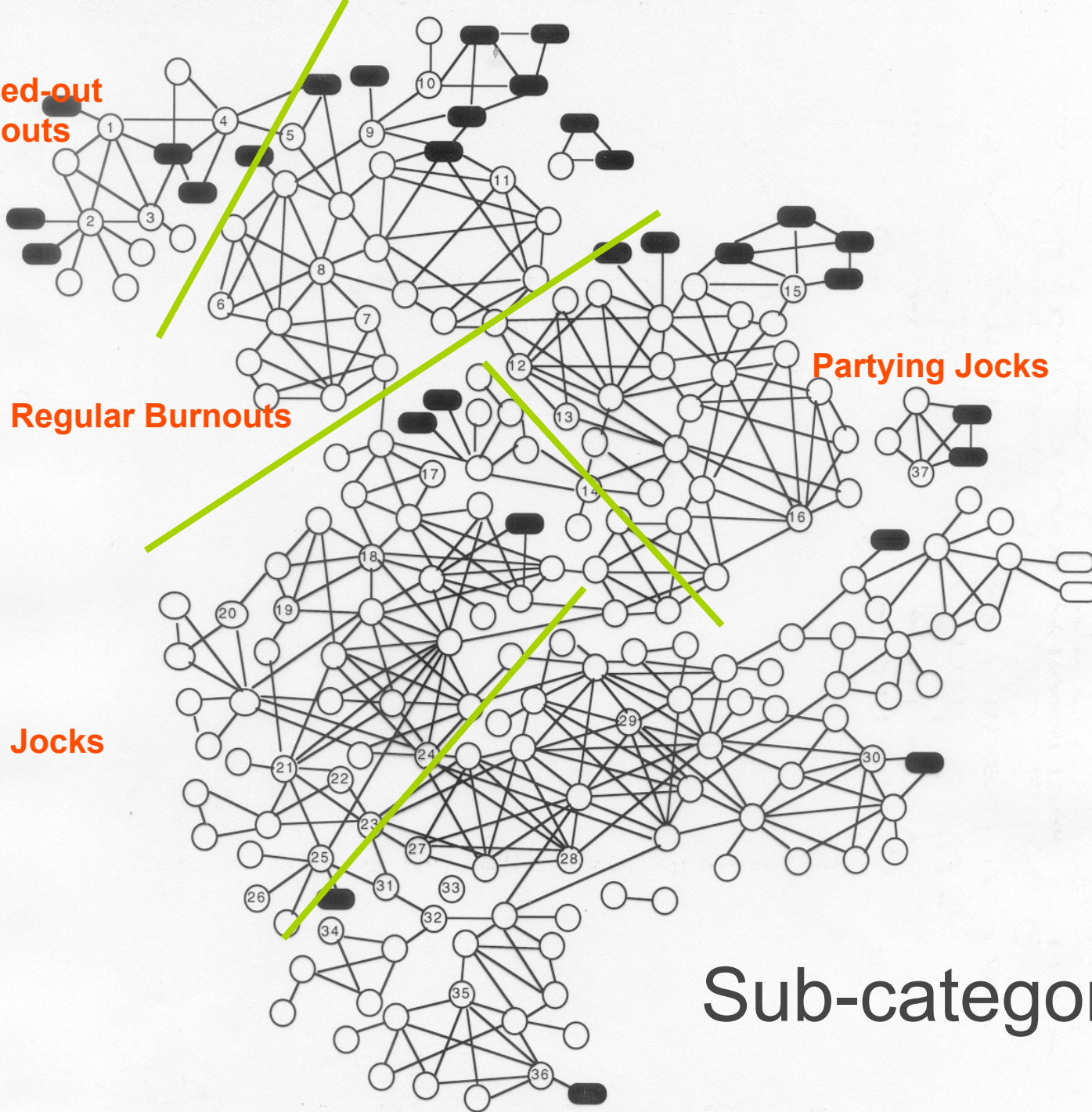


Eckert, P. (2000). Linguistic variation as social practice. Oxford, Blackwell.

Belten High extreme /ay/ raising



**Burned-out
Burnouts**



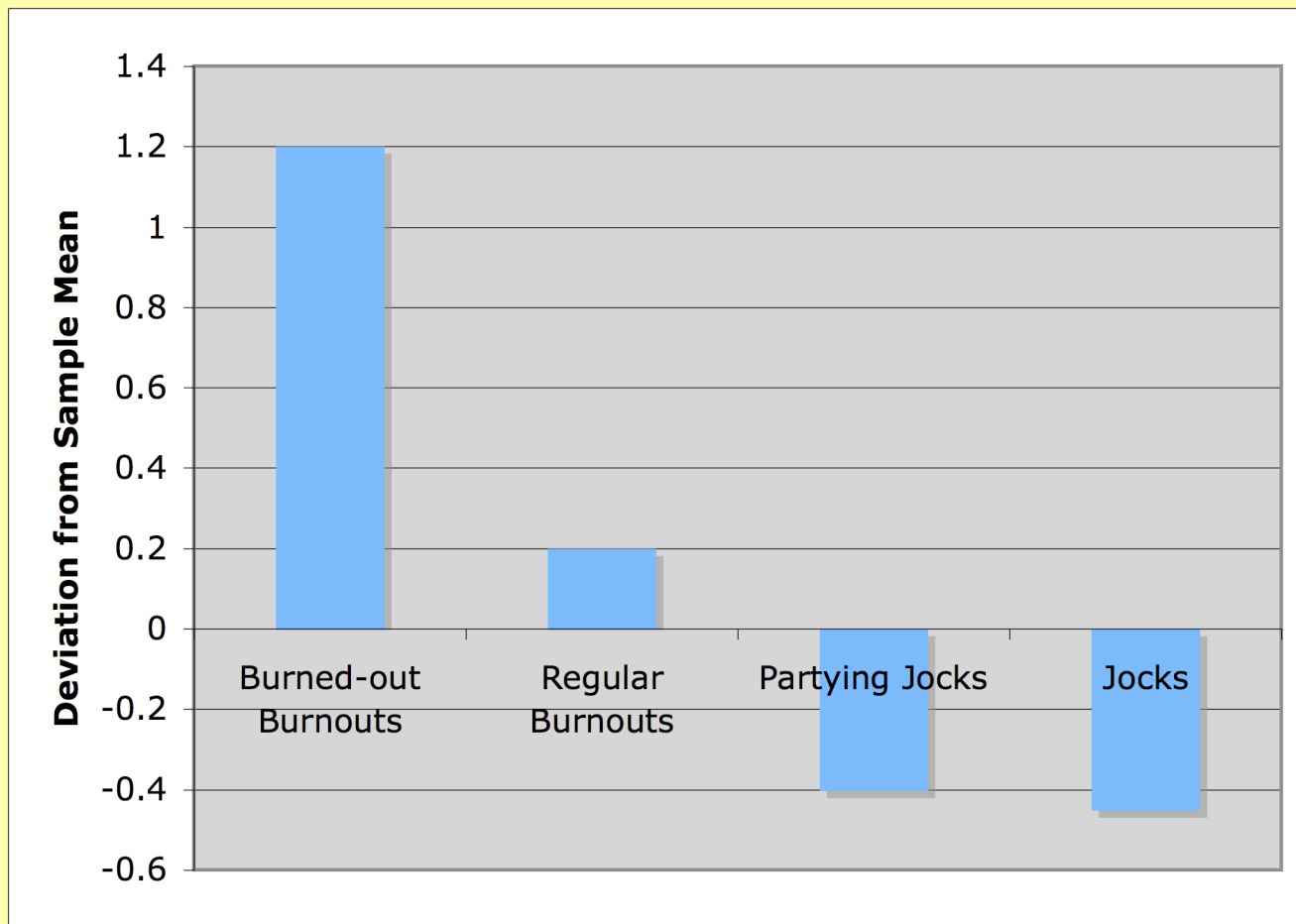
Regular Burnouts

Partying Jocks

Jocks

Sub-categories

Recursivity



Iconization and the lexicon

I I was **hyped** cause I was all stoned you know I'm just



Yeah her dad her dad was gonna make us go to juvie
for the **night** I'm eeww. My mom she woulda come
picked us up though.



discourse marker...

And I'm supposed to be uh put out in this world. How am I going to make it? I don't even know about nothing. I don't know about mortgages and shit like that. All they teach you is adjectives . oh, **right** we're gonna grow up and have to learn about (laughter) yeah.



Towards an indexical field for /ay/

white

urban-
oriented

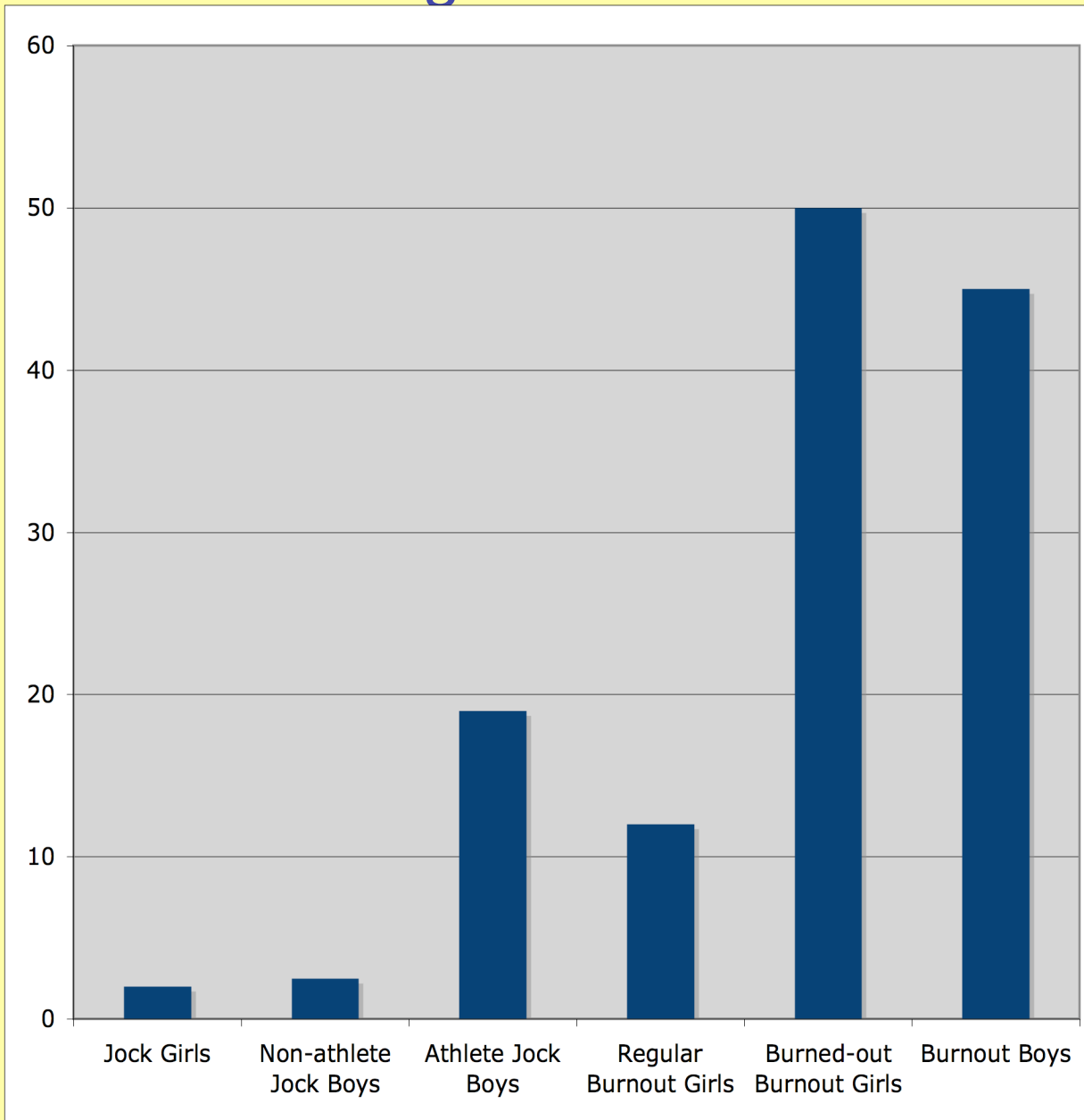
burnout

urban
whites

street
smart

tough

% Negative Concord





... to suggest that a fact is just obvious on the face of things.

an article from the *Chronicle of Higher Education* quoting a dean at a prestigious Eastern university:

“Any junior scholar who pays attention to teaching at the expense of research ain’t going to get tenure.”

Nunberg, G. (September 11, 2002). Ain't misbehavin'. Fresh Air, National Public Radio.

Things ain't what they used to be.

If it ain't broke, don't fix it.

X it ain't.

You ain't seen nothing yet.

It ain't gonna happen.

Grano, T. (2004). Linguistic Play and the Vernacular Way: The Use of Ain't on CNN.com. Unpublished ms.

Standard uses of ain't

Category	Quote	Context
Entertainment—reporter	So “Rocky” it ain’t.	Negative movie review.
Entertainment—facetious	Well, I ain’t changin’.	Actor, on his character’s role in movie remake.
Politics—reporter	Perhaps Howard Dean was hoping Recordgate would fade into the shadows in the wake of the Gore supernova. It ain’t happening.	Description of link to Washington Post article.
Politics—facetious	I’ve thought a lot about the world and how George Bush sees the world and it ain’t even close.	Quote by democratic candidate.
Law—serious	You’re lucky somebody ain’t out there to put a bullet in your head.	Overheard phone threat in murder case.
U.S.—serious	Don’t raise your hand to a child—it ain’t worth it.	Former abusive mother’s advice to other parents, in interview.
World—ambiguous	If you’re embedded, you’re one of us, and we ain’t gonna let nary one of you get hurt.	Said by doctor to journalists stationed in Kuwait.
Travel—ambiguous	Oh, the city ain’t nothing but a big rip off, man.	New Orleans swamp-tour captain in interview.

Table 1: Selected examples of the use of *ain’t* on CNN.com¹

Grano, T. (2004). Linguistic Play and the Vernacular Way: The Use of Ain't on CNN.com. Unpublished ms.