

The AAVE and Standard English contrasts which are used for ideological goals in this performance convey a range of social contrasts, to indicate rioters versus sophisticated protesters, old versus young, colonists versus British, and in the most serious passages a dense use of AAVE features and the most radical political message are joined to evoke the most applause. This was the era of *The Student as Nigger* (Farber 1969), a perspective in which being African-American was to symbolize protest against the Vietnam war as well as against civil injustices. Yet the contrast shifts meaning in each segment. What never occurs, and thus indicates a kind of erasure, is any recognition of the social class range and political variety in each generation of African-Americans.

While we think of ideology as a powerful force in the societal processes involved in language planning, school curriculum decisions, and language maintenance and shift, such rich individual cases of shifting do not just represent higher and lower status, more and less educated, White and Black, or formality and informality, but allude to different aspects of the groupings and identities of speakers and their beliefs. If such style-switching exemplifies recurrent iconization, it is not necessarily simple. Here we see that it requires realigning a complex array of potential contrasts.

3 The ethnography of genre in a Mexican market: form, function, variation¹

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1 Introduction: genre in practice

Over the past several years, the concept of genre has made a hesitant entry onto the stage of style- and language-variation studies (e.g., Biber 1988, Biber and Finegan 1989, Ferguson 1994), though it has not as yet been granted anything more than a bit part. One apparent reason why genre has not graduated to a larger role in this line of inquiry is that its use in the computerized language corpora that have carried it onto the stage has been largely *ad hoc*, deriving for the most part from lay usage and lacking in analytical rigor. Another problem, in broader scope, is that the concept of genre resists disciplinary divisions of intellectual labor, which makes it difficult to domesticate to increasingly specialized scholarly theory and practice. But there is a deeper problem as well. To bring it to the fore, let me turn to one of the charter documents for the workshop on which this volume is based, Douglas Biber and Edward Finegan's recent collection of essays on *Sociolinguistic Perspectives on Register* (1994). In one of the framing essays of that collection, Charles Ferguson sets out the following "basic working assumption implicit in sociolinguistic study of genre variation":

A message type that recurs regularly in a community (in terms of semantic content, participants, occasions of use, and so on) will tend over time to develop an identifying internal structure, differentiated from other message types in the repertoire of the community. (1994; italics in the original)

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In this formulation, genre represents a framework for discrimination among conventionalized message types on the basis of differential, mutually contrastive internal structures. But in the framing essay immediately following Ferguson's, Biber suggests that genres "are problematic in the same way that register distinctions are, in that they represent text categories at different levels of generality" (1994:52). And elsewhere, Biber observes that some genres include "well-defined sub-genres, and the variation within the genre is due in part to variation among the sub-genres" (1988:171). Biber's observations would suggest, then, that genre distinctions may not be so mutually exclusive after all, that genre discriminations operate at different levels of generality and that genres may incorporate other genres. We are faced, then, with an apparent tension: on the one hand, relatively clearcut and conventional types; on the other, categories that escape into the margins of classificatory ambiguity. What I would like to offer, based closely on a collaborative exploration that I have undertaken with Charles Briggs (Bauman and Briggs 1990, Briggs and Bauman 1992), is a perspective on genre that accommodates both possibilities within a unified frame of reference. This resolution requires a shift from the conception of genre as a framework for the classification of finished textual products with immanent formal properties to an understanding of genre as a framework for the comprehension of discursive practice.

We conceive of genre as one order of speech style, a constellation of systemically related, co-occurrent formal features and structures that contrasts with other such constellations (Ervin-Tripp 1972, Hymes 1989 [1974]) and provides a conventionalized orienting framework for the production and reception of discourse (cf. Hanks 1987). More specifically, a genre is a speech style oriented to the production and reception of particular kinds of texts. A text, as we use the term, is a bounded, formally regimented, internally cohesive stretch of discourse that may be lifted out from its immediate discursive environment and recontextualized in another. When an utterance is assimilated to a particular genre, the process by which it is produced and interpreted is mediated through its relationship with prior texts. The invocation of a generic framing device such as "Once upon a time" carries with it a set of expectations concerning the further unfolding of the discourse, indexing other texts initiated by this opening formula. These expectations constitute a textual model for creating cohesion and coherence, for producing and interpreting particular constellations of features and their formal and functional relations, that is, for generating textuality.

Now, while generic inter-textuality is a means of imbuing texts with order, unity, boundedness, and coherence, the same relational nexus also

draws attention to the *lack* of self-sufficiency and autonomy of the formal-functional configuration of the utterance at hand. This is so because the fit between a particular text and the generic model – or other tokens of the generic type – is never perfect. Generic frameworks never provide fully sufficient means and bases for discursive production and reception. Emergent elements of contextualization inevitably enter into the process, forging links to the surrounding discourse, the ongoing social interaction, broader social relations, instrumental or strategic agendas, and other factors. In a word, other pragmatic and metapragmatic frameworks in addition to genre must be brought into play in shaping production and reception. These in turn will influence the ways in which the constituent features of the generic framework – formal and pragmatic – are variably mobilized, thus opening the way to generic reconfiguration. We suggest, then, that the process of orienting particular utterances to prior discourse in terms of generic expectations necessarily produces an inter-textual *gap*. While the creation of this hiatus is inevitable, the calibration of the gap – its relative suppression or amplification – has important correlates and effects. On the one hand, certain acts of entextualization may attempt to achieve generic transparency by minimizing the distance between the text and the generic model, thus rendering the utterance maximally intelligible in terms of generic precedent. This course assimilates an utterance to conventional practices for the accomplishment of routine ends under ordinary circumstances. On the other hand, manipulation of the inter-textual gap allows for the adaptation of generic frameworks to emergent circumstances and agendas. Such adaptive calibration may involve assimilation of a text to more than one generic framework, drawing upon and blending the formal and functional capacities of each of the genres thus invoked.

To conceptualize genre in the terms I have outlined is to shift the primary focus of attention from typology or classification of message forms – the dominant concern of most genre-oriented investigation – to discursive practice: how does the generic organization of linguistic means serve as a resource for the accomplishment of social ends in the conduct of social life? The problem is one of form-function inter-relationships as realized in communicative practice. As a linguistic anthropologist, I approach the solution of the problem as an ethnographic task.

In order to exemplify how the perspective I have offered in the preceding pages might shape an empirical investigation, let me turn now to a substantive case, the generic regimentation of vendors' speech in a Mexican market. Following this brief case study, I will suggest some implications of this approach for the investigation of speech styles more generally.

2 The language of selling in a Mexican market: the generic baseline

Open-air markets are display events par excellence in Roger Abrahams' (1981:303) sense of the term, "public occasions . . . in which actions and objects are invested with meaning and values are put 'on display.'" In common with festivals, fairs, and spectacles – other display events to which they may be attached – markets are characterized by qualities of scale, heterogeneity, semiotic proliferation, abundance, and effervescence that make for a special intensification and enhancement of experience and social value. Small wonder, then, that markets have exercised an enduring attraction to literary artists from Villon and Rabelais to Thackeray and Proust, and to graphic artists as well, such as Marcellus Laroon, who included the verbal elements of market language in his enormously popular engravings of *The Criers and Hawkers of London* (Shesgreen 1990). The literary and other artistic attractions of market language point up the expressive availability of language for the intensification of experience and the enhancement of value in market settings, not only on the part of market vendors, but of other verbal performers as well, such as the religious preachers and political orators who are drawn to markets to work the crowds. Hence my own interest in market language, stimulated first by my research on seventeenth-century Quakers (Bauman 1983), for whom markets were a favored venue for preaching their religion, and carried still further by my work with hunting-dog traders in Texas, inveterate story-tellers, and truth-stretchers (Bauman 1986).

In the marketplace, the verbal creation and enhancement of value is in the service of value of a particular kind, namely, commodity value. There is a small but growing and suggestive literature on such form–function interrelationships in the language of markets and related venues, from Mitchell's pioneering article on the language of buying and selling in Cyrenaica (1957) and Bakhtin's stimulating chapter on the language of the marketplace in Rabelais (1984[1965]) to the more recent work of Dargan and Zeitlin on American commercial talkers (1983), my own writings on the discourse of dog-traders (1986), Kuiper on auctioneers (Kuiper 1992, Kuiper and Haggio 1984), Lindenfeld on the performances of French market vendors (1978, 1990), Kapchan on language, genre, and gender in Moroccan markets (1993, 1995), and – especially relevant in the present context – Flores Farfán's study of social interaction and power in Otomí markets in Mexico (1984). This paper is intended as a contribution to that line of inquiry. It is based upon a small field project I carried out in San Miguel de Allende, in the state of Guanajuato, Mexico. On occasional Tuesday mornings, I wandered through the weekly market in San Miguel with a tape recorder running, yielding a small corpus of market-

soundscape recordings from which I have drawn the materials I will discuss in this chapter.² In addition to the market tapes, I gathered further data in the form of observational field notes, interviews with vendors and shoppers, and reflexive monitoring of my own participation in the market as a regular shopper.

Sound is one of the semiotic resources that is intensified and elaborated in the construction of the market ambience of abundance. The boom-boxes of cassette vendors blare out *ranchera* and rock, an aged man plays thin music by blowing on a piece of cellophane to coax coins from passers-by, the hammer blows of carpenters selling furniture punctuate the air. And a prominent feature of this market soundscape is the cacophony of calls and spiels of market vendors crying their wares. I borrow the terms "call" and "spiel" from Lindenfeld (1990). The local term for "call" in San Miguel is *grito*; older people also use the term *pregon*. These are relatively brief, formulaic, formally economical and condensed utterances designed to attract the attention of potential customers, inform them about the commodities for sale, and induce them to buy. Spiels perform some of the same general functions and employ some of the same formal elements and devices, but are longer, continuous rather than bounded, less stereotyped, and marked by more elaborate devices and structures of argumentation. While local people recognize the distinctiveness of spiels, there does not seem to be a commonly preferred name for this genre; the terms I was offered include *propaganda comercial*, *plática comercial*, or simply *comercial*, the latter by extension from radio and television commercials.

I should make clear here at the outset that the verbal genres I will examine in this paper constitute but one part of the overall repertoire of verbal forms employed in buying and selling in the marketplace. Functionally, they are preliminaries to the more dialogic interaction of vendors and customers in the actual conduct of the sale. The calls and spiels are intended to draw customers in to the point of negotiating the sale itself. I have data on this latter phase of buying and selling as well, but reserve the treatment of those materials for another paper.

The elementary forms of independent, free-standing calls feature either of two essential kinds of information, the identity of the commodity or the price, as in examples 1–4.³

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|-----|----------------------|----------------------|
| (1) | Jícamas,
jícamas. | Jícamas,
jícamas. |
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² These data were recorded on six occasions between December, 1985 and January, 1989.

³ In transcribing the calls and spiels I have set them out into lines marked primarily by significant breath pauses, though with occasional attention as well to syntactic structures and intonation patterns.

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| (2) | Nieve, nieve.
Nieve, nieve. | Ice, ice.
Ice, ice. |
| (3) | Cien pesos,
cien pesos. | One hundred pesos,
one hundred pesos. |
| (4) | A veinte,
a veinte. | At twenty,
at twenty. |

Example 1 is an irreducible minimal form, for in calls that include only the name of the commodity for sale it is repeated at least twice. Example 2 doubles that, yielding two lines of two nominal repetitions each. Minimal calls of price only also require repetition, as in examples 3 and 4.

Note the extreme economy of these elementary forms. The goods are announced by a single noun (*jicama, nieve*; or, in more complex forms to be discussed later, article plus noun), and the prices by two-word combinations consisting either of a quantifier plus a unit of currency (e.g., *cien pesos*) or of a preposition plus a quantifier (e.g., *a veinte*). This expressive economy is characteristic of calls generally. The functional constituents of the calls – commodity, price, or the others to be identified in a moment – are all characteristically condensed, generally realized by one or two words and lean syntactic structures.

It is worth noting, however, that there is a significant non-verbal dimension to the vending of the commodities that adds a further semiotic component to the process, namely, the common resort to ostension, holding up or pointing to an example of the commodity being offered for sale. Thus, it should be borne in mind throughout that even the most condensed calls are part of a multisemiotic and multisensory process that combines verbal and visual appeal. I will come back again a bit later to the sensory dimension of market talk.

Returning, though, to the identification of verbal constituents, we may observe that both item and price may be elaborated, the former by proliferation of commodities for sale and/or syntactic extension in the form of declaratives, as in example 5, and the latter by multiple pricing of different objects, as in example 9 or again by syntactic extension as in example 6.

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| (5) | Hay aguacates,
hay las limas, aguacates,
hay aguacates. | There are avocados,
there are limes, avocados,
there are avocados. |
| (6) | A doscientos,
valen a doscientos. | At two hundred,
they cost two hundred. |

Again, the declaratives of examples 5 and 6 are consensed, syntactically lean: “there are avocados” or “they cost 200.” Nevertheless, already in these elementary forms, the calls are marked by a degree of formal elaboration

that draws the poetic function toward the foreground by means of such devices as repetition, phonological and grammatical parallelism, and prosodic patterning of pause and intonation. Such devices likewise serve as means for further expansion beyond the minimal forms, making for more complex poetic patterning, though still featuring a single factor, as in example 7.

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| (7) | A ciento cincuenta, a ciento cincuenta,
a ciento cincuenta y a ciento cincuenta le valen ‘ora.
A ciento cincuenta, a ciento cincuenta, a ciento cincuenta,
a ciento cincuenta, a ciento cincuenta. |
| | At one hundred fifty, at one hundred fifty,
at one hundred fifty and at one hundred fifty they cost now.
At one hundred fifty, at one hundred fifty, at one hundred fifty,
at one hundred fifty, at one hundred fifty. |

Here we have a parallelistic structure of

aa
a+ab
aaa
aa

The highly condensed formulaic language and poetic structuring that characterize even the simplest calls has at least three functional effects. For one thing, it enhances fluency, allowing for the rapid production and extension of calls. As the preceding example shows, it is a simple matter to extend a call building on a preposition plus a quantifier into a more extended, multiline compound by the use of relatively elementary parallel structures. Second, it endows the calls with a high degree of cohesion, an insistent tightness of textual organization. The lines are tied closely to each other in a textural web of formal and semantic inter-dependencies. In addition, as with the exploitation of the poetic function generally, its mobilization here sets up patterns of formal anticipation and fulfillment that elicit the participatory involvement of the passers-by, catching them up in the formal regimentation of the call (Burke 1968 [1931]:124).

Beyond the elementary forms, a range of other extensions is possible. For example, the two basic constituents, commodity and price, may be combined, as in example 8.

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| (8) | A cien la canela,
a cien. | Cinnamon at one hundred,
at one hundred. |
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Now, in addition to the two free constituents of commodity and price, there are a number of “bound” ones that figure as part of the basic discursive and functional vocabulary of the calls. The inventory of bound

elements includes: quality of the commodity, unit quantity in relation to price, directives, declaratives (introduced already in examples 5 and 6), questions, and terms of address. By "bound," I mean to indicate that they are not used by themselves to constitute fully free-standing calls, but occur only in combination with other constituents.

There are two ways that these constituents may be bound to others. Some can appear as complete turns in situations where more than one person is calling the same goods, but are always accompanied by other call-turns to which they are tied in these collaborations. Others lack even this degree of semi-independence, appearing only in combination with other constituents within free-standing calls or calls that constitute turns. The following examples, 9–12, illustrate combinatory possibilities in free-standing calls.

- (9) A trescientos, doscientos, y cien, mire.
A trescientos, doscientos, y cien los globos, mire.
A trescientos, doscientos, y cien los globos, mire.
- At three hundred, two hundred, and one hundred, look.
At three hundred, two hundred, and one hundred the balloons, look.
At three hundred, two hundred, and one hundred the balloons, look.
- (10) Piña fresca, Fresh pineapple,
piña fresca, fresh pineapple,
plátano maduro. ripe banana.
- (11) Hay limas, There are limes,
lleve limas. carry away limes.
- (12) A cien las bolsas, At one hundred the bags,
de a cien, at one hundred,
ciento cincuenta, señó, one hundred fifty, Mr./Mrs./Miss,
ciento cincuenta. one hundred fifty.

Example 9 introduces one of the most common directives, *mire*; I will have more to say on this in a moment. Example 10 introduces qualities of the commodities, the adjectives *fresca* and *maduro*. And example 11 features the declarative *Hay limas* "There are limes" in combination with the directive *Lleve limas*. Finally, example 12 includes a term of address, *señó*, to a potential customer and a statement of unit quantity, *la bolsa* "the bag" or "per bag" (two sizes of bag are offered). Note the use of the omnibus term *señó* here and of *bara* for *barato* in the example 14 (lines 2 and 12), which condense the language of the calls still further. The vocative form *señó* is especially useful in neutralizing the gender and marital status of *señor*, *señora*, and *señorita*, thus targeting simultaneously customers of either gender, married or unmarried. This is address to everyone and to no one in particular. It could be addressed to you.

The next example, 13, is a collaborative co-performance between two men selling sewing materials.

- (13) *Vendor 1:*
Hilos, agujas, cierres. Threads, needles, snaps.
- Vendor 2:*
Escójale, oiga. Choose, hear.
Hilos, aceite para máquina, Threads, sewing machine oil,
cintas métricas. metric measuring tape.
Escójale, oiga. Choose, hear.
- Vendor 1:*
Acérquese, conózcalo, mire. Come close, check it out, look.

Here, the first vendor cries out some of the principal commodities for sale: thread, needles, snaps. His partner continues the catalogue, tying his call to his partner's in terms of the first commodity, thread, but extending it to sewing machine oil and metric measuring tape and framing the catalogue with one-word directives. One type of directive, here represented by *oiga*, works to engage the sensory involvement of potential customers. The other directive in turn 2, *escójale*, elicits the participatory engagement of customers by inviting them to make a selection of the products in a way that suggests that the goods may become theirs. Then the first vendor comes back in the following turn with a set of additional one-word directives, *Acérquese*, *conózcalo*, *mire*, that extend the compulsive force of the calls. *Mire* is a companion directive to *oiga*, adding another dimension of sensory engagement. While *oiga* demands auditory engagement with the vendor's call, *mire* elicits visual engagement with the goods. *Mire* makes explicit what the ostensive display of commodities, mentioned earlier, leaves implicit: a demand for the gaze of the potential customer. To look ahead for a moment, *agárrele* in lines 1, 13, and 18 of the example 14 adds tactile engagement to the range of sensory modalities activated by the vendor. Finally, returning to the last turn of the current example, *acérquese* and *conózcalo* amplify *escójale* in drawing potential buyers into engaging with the commodities for sale, spatially and cognitively. Turns such as this last one, consisting only of directives, occur only in conjunction with other turns.

The following example, 14, is a stretch of call-collaboration among three vendors selling used clothing, to illustrate further how constituents may be bound up into turns that are tied to other turns.

- (14) *Vendor 1:*
1 Agárrele, agárrele, Take hold, take hold,
2 bara, bara, mire. cheap, cheap, look.
3 Le doy barato, escójale, I give it to you cheap, choose,
4 escójale si hay. choose if it's here.

5 Sueter barato,	Cheap sweater,
6 pantalón barato,	cheap pants,
7 escójale.	choose.
<i>Vendor 2:</i>	
8 Escójale, escójale,	Choose, choose,
9 todo barato, mire.	everything cheap, look.
10 De regalo y de remate,	Giving it away and finishing it up,
escójale.	choose.
11 Andele, escójale,	Go on, choose,
12 todo es bara, bara, mire.	everything is cheap, cheap, look.
<i>Vendor 3:</i>	
13 Agárrele, agárrele,	Take hold, take hold,
14 baratos, ándele.	cheap, go on.
15 Que le damos?	What shall we give you?
16 Que le damos, oiga?	What shall we give you, hear?
17 (wd.?) por estos	(?) for these
pantalones.	pants.
18 Andele, agárrele, barato.	Go on, take hold, cheap.
19 Barato, ándele.	Cheap, go on.

Here, I want to call attention especially to lines 3, 15, and 16, which add the dimension of explicit social engagement with the vendors to the directives like *escójale*, *agárrele*, *conózcalo* that elicit engagement with the commodities being offered or the insistent *ánde* in lines 11, 14, and 19 that urge the customer to action. *Le doy barato* in line 3 sets up a relationship of giving and getting, of exchange, that is at the heart of the commercial transaction. *Que le damos?* in lines 15 and 16 builds upon the same dynamic of exchange, adding the compulsive power of the question, which has the pragmatic conversational force of demanding – if only tacitly – an answer. Terms of address, for their part, are phatic gestures toward potential customers, also drawing them into interaction.

Thus, we find built into these very highly condensed, stereotyped, and formulaic utterances an impressive range of functional capacities. The constituents or building blocks allow for the economical identification of the commodities, specification of their salient qualities and unit price, and elicitation of the participatory involvement of potential customers in terms of visual, auditory, tactile, spatial, cognitive, and behavioral engagement with goods and social engagement with the vendors in a relationship of exchange. The latter devices – directives and declaratives or questions concerning exchange – have a special rhetorical power in establishing in the potential customer's mind a virtual identification with the commodities and vendors that is a crucial prerequisite for accomplishing the sale that will make the virtual identification an actual one: "They are yours, if not yet yours." "You are in an exchange relationship with me, if not yet in an

exchange relationship with me." And the poetic structuring of the calls enhances this rhetorical efficacy by building up patterns of formal expectation that again elicit the participatory energies of the customers. Note in the preceding example, for instance, the heavy use of lexical repetition, phonological parallelism (e.g., the saturation of the cries with /a/ in *agárrele*, *bara*, *barato*, *escójale*, *pantalón*, *regalo*, *remate*, *ánde*, *damos*), and syntactic parallelism. Yet all this functional business is accomplished in a highly economical way that allows for great fluency and cohesion that lends itself to smooth collaboration in the joint production of extended calls.

In fact, the production of these calls is so simple that even a child can do it. The team that produced the foregoing example, 14, was occasionally joined by a young boy of about ten who contributed calls like the one given in example 15.

- (15) Escójale doscientos lo que guste. Choose two hundred what you like.
Aquí está la barata, doscientos. Here is the bargain, two hundred.

And just to take one other example, an even younger boy of about eight produced the call given as example 16:

- (16) Cincuenta el montón de brocoli, Fifty the pile of broccoli,
cincuenta. fifty.
Cincuenta el montón de brocoli, Fifty the pile of broccoli,
cincuenta. fifty.

Acquisition of competence in the production of such calls does not require overt instruction. Children are exposed to the calls from babyhood, as they are carried through the market by parents or siblings or accompany parents who are vendors, and they pick up the formal patterns by observation and imitation.

Now, while my discussion thus far has emphasized the basic constituents, relatively elementary forms, and ease, simplicity, and fluency of production that characterizes the majority of calls in the San Miguel Tuesday market, as I suggested earlier there is a type of market cry, the *spiel*, that contrasts with these in interesting ways. *Spiels* are produced by selling specialists called *merolicos* in some areas, who, consistent with Santamaría's (1983:717–18) definition, tend to sell "artifacts of rare and marvellous properties, in loud voices and verbose language in order to call the attention of the passers-by." Unlike the general run of market vendors, who tend to stick to selling the same commodities, these *merolicos* purvey a variety of goods, principally medicine (such as *grasa de la iguana*, *sebo del coyote*, and *aceite de la vibora de cascabel* "iguana grease, coyote fat, and rattlesnake oil"), specialty items like jewelry, small appliances, or other items that require more considered purchasing decisions. They don't have to rely on the kind of aids to fluency or persuasiveness that characterize the economical calls I have described earlier, because they are practiced verbal virtuosi,

true men of words. They also often put on a bit of a show to accompany the pitch: the snake oil man has a live rattlesnake in a wire cage with a live iguana tethered to the outside, an array of pickled parasites and vermin in bottles, and a set of biological charts to which he points to illustrate the afflictions cured by his products. The following example, 17, is a stretch of a spiel by a man selling a batch of Cannon Mills panty hose, certainly a specialty, luxury item in a market that caters principally to *campesinos* and laborers. His little performance involves running a hair-rake across the stockings stretched out between him and a young boy acting as his assistant; that is what is going on in lines 31–5.

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| (17) | 1 Vale la pena. | It's worth it. |
| | 2 Ve a usted las medias de categoría. | Examine the classy stockings. |
| | 3 Cannon Mills, | Cannon Mills, |
| | 4 Cannon Mills. | Cannon Mills. |
| | 5 How many? I got it. | [How many? I got it. |
| | 6 Too much, too much. | Too much, too much. |
| | 7 Panty hose. | Panty hose.] |
| | 8 la Cannon Mills, | the Cannon Mills, |
| | 9 Cannon Mills, | Cannon Mills, |
| | 10 para la (?) Cannon, | for the (?) Cannon, |
| | 11 calidad Cannon Mills. | Cannon Mills quality. |
| | 12 Sabemos de antemano | We know to begin with |
| | 13 que una mujer sin medias | that a woman without stockings |
| | 14 es como un hombre sin calzones. | is like a man without underpants. |
| | 15 Ve a usted las medias de Cannon. | Examine the Cannon stockings. |
| | 16 [Customer]: Y esto? | And this? |
| | 17 Mil pesos, nada más, señora. | A thousand pesos, no more, ma'am. |
| | 18 Cannon Mills, | Cannon Mills, |
| | 19 la Cannon Mills. | the Cannon Mills. |
| | 20 Señora, ve a usted, | Ma'am, examine, |
| | 21 que se atoró con la canasta, | whether it got snagged by the basket, |
| | 22 con la bolsa, no importa. | by the bag, it doesn't matter. |
| | 23 Fibra de vidrio Galilei, | Galileo fiberglass, |
| | 24 la versátil magia de la nueva ola, | the versatile magic of the new wave, |
| | 25 ve a usted. | examine. |
| | 26 Más elástica y más resistente que cualquier media. | More elastic and more resistant than any stocking. |
| | 27 Vale la pena. | It's worth it. |
| | 28 Ve a usted las medias de categoría. | Examine the classy stockings. |
| | 29 Vale la pena, | It's worth it, |
| | 30 ve a usted. | examine. |

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| 31 | Jálale ahí, niño. | Pull it there, son. |
| 32 | Jala más para allá, | Pull more over there, |
| 33 | eso ahí así. | right there. |
| 36 | Cannon Mills. | Cannon Mills. |
| 37 | Señora, ve a usted. | Ma'am, examine. |
| 38 | Vale la pena. | It's worth it. |
| 39 | Ve a usted las medias de categoría, | Examine the classy stockings, |
| 40 | unas medias mucho muy diferentes a todas las medias. | some stockings very much different from all the stockings. |
| ... | | ... |
| 41 | ... arboles, | ... trees, |
| 42 | (?) unas tunas, | (?) some prickly pears, |
| 43 | y se atoraron allí con nopales, | and they got snagged there by nopales, |
| 44 | y a la media no le pasa nada. | and nothing happens to the stocking. |
| 45 | Ayer una mujer me dijo, me dice, | Yesterday a woman said to me, she says to me, |
| 46 | "Ay mire nomás que hoyote me hice ayer, | "Ay, only look at what a big puncture wound I got myself yesterday, |
| 47 | por ir al cerro, | going along the hill, |
| 48 | y me hice una llagota, | and I got a wound, |
| 49 | y a la media me quedó enterita. | and the stocking remained whole." |
| 50 | [Customer]: Sí. | Yes. |
| 51 | Nomás (?), | Only (?), |
| 52 | a ella le pasó, | it happened to her, |
| 53 | y a la media no le pasó nada. | and nothing happened to the stocking. |
| 54 | Calidad Cannon Mills. | Cannon Mills quality. |
| 55 | Señora, ve a usted las medias. | Ma'am, examine the stockings. |
| 56 | Quiere clarita o quiere oscurita, | You want light or you want dark, |
| 57 | tengo cuatrocientos cincuenta mill colores. | have four hundred fifty thousand colors. |
| 58 | Calidad Cannon Mills. | Cannon Mills quality. |
| 59 | Que se atoró con la canasta, | Whether it got snagged by the basket, |
| 60 | con la bolsa, ve a usted, | by the bag, you see, |
| 61 | a la media no la pasa nada, | nothing happens to the stocking, |
| 62 | porque está elaborada a base de acetato, rayón y nylon | because it is manufactured on a base of acetate, rayon and nylon |
| 63 | como las llantas Goodrich, Euzkadi. | like the Goodrich or Euzkadi tires. |
| 64 | Más elástica, más resistente que cualquier media. | More elastic, more resistant than any stocking. |
| 66 | Medias hay muchas, | There are many stockings, |
| 67 | cómprelas adonde usted quiera, | buy them where you like, |

68 pero medias de estas but these stockings
69 Nomás conmigo. Only from me.

What I want to emphasize in the spiel of this vendor is that his pitch is in significant ways more elaborated than the calls we have examined in terms of syntactic structures, rhetorical constituents and structures, and formal devices. Certainly, we can identify in his spiel some of the elements now familiar to us from the cries of the vendors we have already analyzed, such as terms of address to potential customers (lines 17, 20, 37, 55), descriptions of the salient qualities of his merchandise (e.g., line 26: *mas elástica y más resistente que cualquier media*), or appeals to the senses (lines 2, 15, 20, 25, 28, 30, 37, 39, 55, 60: *vea usted*). Condensed and formulaically repetitious elements are prominent in his spiel, as witness his insistent repetition of *Cannon Mills*, *calidad Cannon Mills*, *vale la pena*, and *vea usted*. Lines 25–30 are especially dense in this regard, and by themselves might approximate closely to a call of the kind we examined earlier:

vea usted.	examine.
Más elástica y más resistente que cualquier media.	More elastic and more resistant than any stocking.
Vale la pena.	It's worth it.
Vea usted las medias de categoría.	Examine the classy stockings.
Vale la pena,	It's worth it,
vea usted.	examine.

Note, however, that the repeated elements in the spiel grow longer than those of the more condensed cries, which are notably lean. Take lines 21–2 and 59–60, for example: *que se atoró con la canasta, con la bolsa, no importa* and *Que se atoró con la canasta, con la bolsa, vea usted*. But look also at the closing lines of this extract (lines 66–9):

Medias hay muchas,	There are many stockings,
cómprelas adonde usted quiera,	buy them where you like,
pero medias de estas	but these stockings
nomás conmigo.	only from me.

This is a complex sentence, with multiple clauses, spanning four lines of the spiel, in marked contrast with the two- and three-word sentences of the calls.

With regard to the rhetoric of the spiel, recall that the rhetorical efficacy of the briefer calls resides especially strongly in a combination of directives eliciting sensory and cognitive engagement with the goods (e.g., *escójale, agárrele, mire, oiga, lleve limas*) and the evocation of a social relationship, especially a relationship of exchange, between vendor and customer (*que le damos? le doy barato*), as well as in the formal appeal of the utterance residing in its poetic form (e.g., repetition, parallelism). The spiel, as we have

established, certainly depends upon a similar formal appeal, but we can see new and more complex rhetorical mechanisms at play as well. Among the rhetorical devices employed by the pantyhose pitchman is an epigrammatic statement, a *dicho*, syntactically complex and slightly risqué:

Sabemos de antemano	We know to begin with
que una mujer sin medias	that a woman without stockings
es como un hombre sin calzones.	is like a man without underpants.

This statement is framed as conventional, axiomatic knowledge, socially given, and takes the form of a parallel construction. Here, the central appeal is to identifications of class and respectability: the image of a man without underpants evokes associations of poverty, low-class status, unhygienic disrespectability. A respectable woman would want to avoid having such associations attached to her, and buying brand-name “classy” pantyhose, indices of modern bourgeois consumerism, offers the means to do so. But the *dicho* gains further efficacy from its risqué tone – pantyhose and underpants are intimate matters, all the more so by the rather prudish moral standards of the market’s general clientele. This risqué tone carries through to the double entendre of the pitchman’s admonition to the young boy assisting him in the demonstration of the stockings’ durability by stretching them out while the vendor draws a sharp hair-rake across them (lines 31–5). Warning the boy to avoid tripping over a depression in the ground, he says,

Y mucho cuidado con caerse	And be very careful about falling in
al hoyo, porque ya saben que	the hole, because we already know
caerse al hoyo es muy	that to fall into a hole is very
delicado.	delicate.

The boy’s footing takes on the overtone of sexual intercourse. Ultimately, to speak thus of intimate sexual matters is to evoke a relationship of seductive intimacy which can be consummated by making a purchase – buy my pantyhose. And, of course, the epigram derives still further weight from its purported axiomatic status and from the formal appeal of its parallel construction.

In addition to the *dicho*, the vendor also builds into his sales strategy a reported testimonial narrative, a *caso*,⁴ in lines 45–9:

Ayer una mujer me dijo,	Yesterday a woman said to me, she
me dice,	says to me,

⁴ Graham (1981:17) defines the *caso* as “a relatively brief prose narrative, focusing upon a single event, supernatural or natural, in which the protagonist or observer is the narrator or someone the narrator knows and vouches for, and which is normally used as evidence or as an example to illustrate that ‘this kind of thing happens.’”

<p>“Ay mire nomás que hoyote me hice ayer, por ir al cerro, y me hice una llagota, y a la media me quedó enterita.”</p>	<p>“Ay, only look at what a big puncture wound I got myself yesterday, going along the hill, and I got a wound, and the stocking remained whole.”</p>
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The narrative is rendered in a different stylistic mode than the other portions of the vendor's spiel. Where the majority of the spiel is characterized by a declamatory mode of delivery that is louder and more rhythmic, with marked intonation contours and stress patterns and nasalized, lengthened vowels, the narrative is delivered in a more conversational, less measured style. It is directed not to the crowd at large, but to a specific individual, though intended to be overheard by the others in attendance. Notwithstanding the difference in delivery, which makes it more accessible to verbal response on the part of a customer than the relatively less permeable declamatory sections of the spiel, its rhetorical purpose is similar to that of the epigram, that is, it is intended to elicit identification. This time, however, what is elicited is not status identification, but experiential identification, a mapping of the experience of the woman whose narrative is reported onto those of the women in the market. Note how the narrative elicits an affirmative response from a woman in the crowd. Both dimensions of identification are virtual; they call upon the women to consider that a particular status or experience might be theirs if they wear Cannon Mills stockings.

In addition to the *dicho* and the *caso*, the pitchman indexes a third genre, the radio and television commercial, first in lines 23–4 and again in lines 62–5:

<p>Fibra de vidrio Galilei, la versátil magia de la nueva ola and porque está elaborada a base de acetato, rayón y nylon como las llantas Goodrich, Euzkadi. Más elástica, más resistente que cualquier media.</p>	<p>Galileo fiberglass the versatile magic of the new wave because it is manufactured on a base of acetate, rayon and nylon like the Goodrich or Euzkadi tires. More elastic, more resistant than any stocking.</p>
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These elements are significant in their invocation of brand-name products – Galileo fiberglass and Goodrich and Euzkadi tires – which complement the brand-name identification of Cannon Mills pantyhose. Note also that all of these products offer the wonders of modern technology – “the versatile magic of the new wave” – to the public: fiberglass, acetate, rayon, nylon.

These materials render the pantyhose more elastic and more resistant than any other, introducing the trope of “new and improved” that is so characteristic of contemporary marketing. The cumulative effect of these metonyms of media commercials is to convey elements of the modern economy of bourgeois consumerism into the traditional marketplace and thus within reach of its clientele, primarily laborers and peasants.

We may observe, then, that one of the distinctive features of the *spiel*, by contrast with the *briefe* calls, is generic incorporativeness: the *spiel* is a secondary genre that incorporates other primary genres and styles within it, exploiting their particular rhetorical capacities. And the *spiel* is stylistically heterogeneous in other respects as well. Beyond the incorporation of the *dicho*, the *caso*, and the commercial, the *spiel* is marked by switches in key (Goffman 1974) and even code. The vendor engages in speech play of various kinds, for example in his hyperbolic statement that whether you want light or dark he has four hundred fifty thousand colors (lines 56–7), and in his playful bit of code-switching into English (lines 5–7), directed at me:

How many? I got it.
Too much, too much.
Panty hose.

I could go into still further detail about what this vendor is doing in this *spiel*, but this will have to suffice to establish the far greater formal and rhetorical complexity of his pitch as against the calls we have considered earlier in terms of constituent elements, formal structures, and rhetorical devices and strategies than those of the other vendors.

Now, to a significant degree, the contrast between calls and *spiels* is correlated with the kinds of commodities that are offered for sale and their cost. Calls are employed in the selling of basic necessities like food and ordinary clothing, the kinds of things for which people regularly come to the market. The customers for these commodities come with a predisposition to buy and there is little need to elaborate in the crying of these goods, as people are primarily concerned with locating the specific foodstuffs or clothing they need in a market whose spatial arrangements shift somewhat every week and with determining how much they cost in a market affected by the rapid inflation of the Mexican economy. These elements may be bolstered by a bit of poetically enhanced rhetoric to help impel people toward a purchase, but more would be unnecessary and even counterproductive. Likewise for small and inexpensive optional items like ices, a little treat to enhance the experience or to keep the kids quiet. But luxury and specialty items, like pantyhose or fitted sheets, require more persuasion. And while people are making up their minds on whether or not to splurge, it helps to

keep them around with a good show. Accordingly, spiels are more adaptive in the vending of such special and more expensive goods.

3 Bridging the generic gap

Our considerations thus far have been devoted to establishing in terms of form-function inter-relationships the conventional organization of the two standard genres of market language, calls and spiels. Though only one of the two, the call, has a commonly used label, *grito*, the contrasts between them are recognized and oriented to by vendors and customers alike. Each is regimented toward the accomplishment of a routine marketplace task, calls toward the selling of nominally priced everyday goods and other small commodities for which consumers regularly come to the Tuesday market, and spiels toward the vending of more expensive commodities, luxury goods, and other items that require more considered consumer decisions. The conventional forms we have considered up to this point are generically transparent, closely related in inter-textual terms within each generic type.

Having established the generic configuration of the routinized genres, let us turn to the consideration of a further example that cannot be fully assimilated to either type. This is an extract from a longer stretch of sales-talk produced by a vendor of kitchenware: dishes, utensils, pots and pans, and the like. Here, he is hawking dishes, by means of a pitch in which he adds plates, one after another, to the stack to emphasize just how much the buyer will get for a thousand pesos:

- | | | |
|------|--|--|
| (18) | 1 Se lleva otro, | Take another, |
| | 2 por mil. | for a thousand. |
| | 3 Tenga otro, | Have another, |
| | 4 por mil. | for a thousand. |
| | 5 Otro, | Another, |
| | 6 y otro por mil pesos. | and another for a thousand pesos. |
| | 7 Deme mil, | Give me a thousand, |
| | 8 y échales otro, | and choose another, |
| | 9 y así todo el bonche por mil. | and thus the whole bunch for a thousand. |
| | 10 Aquí está el otro como regalo de año nuevo. | Here is another as a New Year's present. |
| | 11 Así todo el paquete, | Thus the whole package, |
| | 12 mil pesos. | a thousand pesos. |
| | 13 A ver, a ver, a ver quién se los lleva, | Let's see, let's see, let's see who takes them away, |
| | 14 quién se los gana. | who gains them. |
| | 15 Nadie a la una, | No one at one, |
| | 16 nadie a las dos, | no one at two, |
| | 17 porque esto se lo está | because you are |

- | | | |
|----|--|--|
| | perdiendo este paquete de platos. | missing this package of plates. |
| 18 | Así todo por mil. | Thus all for a thousand. |
| 19 | Son diez platos, mujeres, por mil pesos. | They are ten plates, ladies, for a thousand pesos. |
| 20 | En la feria de allá de Celaya | At the fair over in Celaya, |
| 21 | se está cotizando a nada menos, | it is priced at no less |
| 22 | que a mil quinientos. | than one thousand five hundred. |
| 23 | Y allá hasta las mujeres se agarran del chongo | And there the women almost tear their hair out |
| 24 | para pagar los mil quinientos. | to pay one thousand five hundred. |
| 25 | Son mil quinientos, | They are one thousand five hundred |
| 26 | mil quinientos tienen que vender así. | one thousand five hundred they have to sell them for thus. |
| 27 | Por todo el paquete de platos, | For the whole package of plates, |
| 28 | por diez platos, | for ten plates, |
| 29 | diez platos de lujo, | ten deluxe plates, |
| 30 | diez platos decorados, | ten decorated plates, |
| 31 | por solamente mil pesos. | for only a thousand pesos. |
| 32 | Nadie a la una, nadie a las dos, | No one at one, no one at two, |
| 33 | entonces la oferta va para abajo. | then the offer is going down. |
| 34 | Todo por mil. | All for a thousand. |
| 35 | Nadie mil, nadie? | No one a thousand, no one? |
| 36 | Bueno, no ruegues, | OK, don't beg, |
| 37 | échalo para abajo este paquete de platos. | put down this package of plates. |
| 38 | Vamos a vender las cubetas. | Let's sell the buckets. |

At first glance, lines 1–19 might appear in formal terms to consist of a series of cries: condensed, formulaic, stereotyped, full of repetition and parallelism, with constituent elements that identify commodity and unit price and elicit the engagement of potential customers with directives and identificational elements such as *a ver quién se los lleva*. But note that lines 1–12 do not consist solely of a series of smaller cry units, but are in fact tied together sequentially by the cumulative device of including additional plates in the package, making for an overarching cohesive structure. Then, in lines 20–8, there is a stretch of syntactically more complex comparison pricing, reporting humorously how the women at the Celaya market would tear their hair out to buy an equivalent set of dishes for 1,500 pesos, followed by a return, in lines 29–34, to his own lower price in the manner of the earlier section. Finally, in lines 36–8, the vendor offers a nicely self-reflexive transition from pushing the dishes, for which he has attracted no immediate buyers, to hawking plastic buckets. These are all features that are more characteristic of spiels than calls: longer, more extended structures of

cohesion, syntactic complexity, comparative references to other markets, reflexivity. Thus, in formal terms, this pitch emerges as a stylistic hybrid, blending features of call and spiel.

This stylistic calibration makes sense in functional terms as well. The dishes and other kitchen goods that make up this vendor's wares are not foodstuffs for daily consumption or nominally priced items like needles and snaps; nor are they specialty items of a bourgeois cast, like brand-name pantyhose. Rather, they are relatively durable household items of a kind that are purchased only occasionally. Every household needs these things, but purchases involve considered decisions, balancing utility against relative quality and cost. I am suggesting, then, that as consumer goods, these wares fall between the low-end necessities and high-end specialty items. A simple, terse call will not suffice to capture and hold the attention of potential buyers, but a more elaborately performed spiel is not necessary either. Hence a sales pitch that falls somewhere in between. Thus, this vendor, faced with the task of selling goods that differ in nature and cost from those for which standard calls and spiels are designed, draws upon the orienting frameworks of both routine genres to bridge the gap, producing an emergent hybrid adapted to his particular task. Though he was not immediately successful in this particular instance, which occurred late in the afternoon when only a few customers were left, he did manage to sell a fair number of dishes with a similar pitch earlier in the day.

4 Conclusion: speech styles in communicative practice

For the purposes of this paper, I have approached the sales pitches of market vendors as genres, orienting frameworks for the production and reception of texts, foregrounding modes of entextualization and inter-textual relationships. In practice-centered terms, to speak of inter-textuality is to focus on the ways in which the vendors fashion their sales pitches, as texts, by reference to other texts. Note, however, that by identifying the calls and spiels as the discourse of market vendors, I have also invoked their ties to a recurrent situational context, namely, the market, and to a social category of speakers, namely, vendors. That is to say that the texts I have examined, in addition to indexing other texts, also index contexts of use and categories of users.

Nor is this simply a matter of orienting the emergent production of calls and spiels to prior calls and spiels as overall generic frameworks. Recall, for example, the point at which the pantyhose vendor switches into English (lines 5–6 of the transcript):

How many? I got it.
Too much, too much.

This bit of speech play invokes and makes fun of the style of American tourists who frequent the market and whose attempts at the bargaining that they seem to feel obliged to do in Mexican markets often includes the protest, "Too much," when a price is quoted to them. Or consider *la versatil magia de la nueva ola*, which indexes the language and form of radio and television commercials. These are smaller indexical touches, brief metonyms of more complex speech styles – keyed to texts, situations, speakers – that add a bit of coloration to the spiel, whose incorporative capacities we have already observed, and contribute to the calibration of its social meaning.

But a speech style associated with recurrent situational contexts is what we usually identify as a register (Ferguson 1994:20); by the same token, a speech style associated with a social category of speakers is what we commonly designate a dialect (Ferguson 1994:18–19). Lest it appear that I am attempting to nullify the bases on which discriminations among orders of speech style are based, let me make clear that in pointing out that the sales pitches of market vendors appear to be simultaneously genre, register, and dialect in their overall configurations, and that spiels may also incorporate touches of other genres, registers, dialects, I do not mean to suggest that the distinctions we usually draw among these orders of speech style must inevitably dissolve into a single stylistic mass. Indeed, the examples I have considered make clear the operative salience of associational links between speech styles and texts, situational contexts, and social categories. What I do argue, rather, is that to isolate a single dimension of indexicality as *the* sole criterion for designating a speech style and to reify the resultant style in the process obscures the multiple indexical resonances that accrue to ways of speaking in social life. What is important from the vantage point of communicative practice is how the indexical ties of discourse to other texts, situations, or kinds of speakers serve as resources for the production and interpretation of social meaning. In the conduct of social life, there are no texts independent of contexts or speakers. Though one or another of these constituents of discursive practice may be metapragmatically foregrounded by practitioners or analysts as a means of invoking specific, conventional associational linkages – between style and text, style and situation, style and user – they are inevitably mutually implicated in actual practice. Moreover, the assimilation of an utterance to stylistic orienting frameworks, whatever their basis, is always a matter of inter-discursive calibration, negotiating the gap between the conventional and the emergent in communicative interaction. The dynamics of this negotiation can only be discovered through ethnographic investigation of form–function inter-relationships.