Acknowledgments

Introduction

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1   The place of style in the study of variation

Style is a pivotal construct in the study of sociolinguistic variation. Stylistic variability in speech affords us the possibility of observing linguistic change in progress (Labov 1966). Moreover, since all individuals and social groups have stylistic repertoires, the styles in which they are recorded must be taken into account when comparing them (Rickford and McNair-Knox 1994:265). Finally, style is the locus of the individual's internalization of broader social distributions of variation (Eckert 2000).

In spite of the centrality of style, the concerted attention that has been paid to the relation of variation to social categorizations and configurations has not been equaled by any continuous focus on style. In other words, we have focused on the relation between variation and the speaker's place in the world, at the expense of the speaker's strategies with respect to this place. But as social theories of variation develop greater depth, they require a more sophisticated, integrative treatment of style that places variation within the wider range of linguistic practices with which speakers make social meaning. For this reason, the editors of this volume organized a two-day workshop on style at Stanford University in February 1996, funded by the National Science Foundation (no. SBR-9511724). Bringing together scholars who have worked on style in language from a variety of theoretical and methodological perspectives, the workshop had the goal of stimulating discussions that would set new directions for future work on style in variation. This volume is a product of that workshop.

2   The history of the study of style in variation

The study of sociolinguistic variation is commonly characterized (Bell 1984:145, Finegan and Biber 1994:316) as involving three principal components: *linguistic* or internal constraints, *social* or inter-speaker constraints, and *stylistic* or intra-speaker constraints.

The study of *linguistic* constraints is the area in which the concerns of

variationists articulate the most clearly with linguistic research in other areas, adding use data to intuited or experimental data, and bringing quantitative insights to an otherwise exclusively qualitative enterprise. The examination of linguistic constraints, both qualitative and quantitative, has been an active component of variationist work from the 1960s to the present. The quantitative study of large corpora of variable speech data has yielded detailed insights into several aspects of language, including constraints on variable speech output, sound change and syntactic change, the mechanisms of vowel shifts, and structural relations among regional dialects.

The study of *social* variation has also been continuous and productive over this period. The past thirty-five years have seen a flourishing of empirical studies of variation: studies not only in urban settings, but also in suburban and rural settings, in a range of societies outside the USA, and drawing on both survey and ethnographic methods. In these studies researchers have refined their understanding of the relation between variation and social parameters, including class, gender, ethnicity, social networks, identity, local categories, and ideology.

The study of *stylistic* variation, however, has been more uneven. The traditional delimitation of style in the variationist paradigm has been any intra-speaker variation that is not directly attributable to performance factors (in the strict sense) or to factors within the linguistic system. We will begin with this definition, partially to show that the next phase of stylistic studies will have to focus on the highly permeable boundaries among linguistic, social, and stylistic constraints.

William Labov's (1966) New York City study, which launched the current quantitative study of variation, gave central theoretical and methodological importance to style. This study established that stylistic variation constitutes a crucial nexus between the individual and the community – between the linguistic, the cognitive, and the social. Labov demonstrated that the use of sociolinguistic variables is socioeconomically stratified, and that each speaker's stylistic range covers a continuous subset of use within the socioeconomic matrix. Placing global prestige at the upper end of the socioeconomic hierarchy and global stigma at the lower, Labov characterized each speaker's stylistic continuum in relation to these two poles. He viewed the "prestigious" end of the speaker's range as the result of more formal, careful, speech, and the "stigmatized" end as the result of more casual, unmonitored speech. The speaker's stylistic activity, therefore, was directly connected to the speaker's place in, and strategies with respect to, the socioeconomic hierarchy.

While the notion of prestige plays an important role in Labov's work on style (e.g. 1972), it is attention paid to speech that he puts at the center of the theory, presumably because attention is the cognitive mechanism that

links social to linguistic factors. Fundamental to his work, then, is the notion of the speaker's vernacular – that speech that is most natural, that is prior to an overlay of correction, and that emerges when the speaker is not monitoring their speech. And it is in the vernacular that Labov expects to find the most natural speech and the best evidence of the processes of change. With this theorizing of style came a focus on field methods, making the manipulation of informants' style central to the process of data extraction. Labov designed the sociolinguistic interview to elicit as wide a range of a speaker's style as possible, from the most careful to the most casual speech. Fundamental to the interview is what Labov called the "observer's paradox" (Labov 1975) – that the vernacular the linguist wishes to observe is unlikely to be produced in the relatively formal context in which speakers interact with interviewers who are strangers. Labov sought to elicit a broader range of interviewees' styles primarily by manipulating the topic, on the assumption that some topics will focus interviewees on their speech while others will focus them away from it. While topic is the parameter that Labov most consciously controls in the interview, the need for such a strategy, the observer's paradox, stems from the fact that audience is a fundamental influence in stylistic production. Labov showed some early recognition of this (1966:101–4) insofar as he defined speech to family members and friends rather than the interviewer as potential casual speech contexts within the interview.

Stylistic variation emerged from the New York City study as among the most important constructs in the field. Yet despite its importance, style became less of a focus of empirical research from the 1970s onward, at least in the influential American quantitative tradition. This was partly because people questioned Labov's focus on attention paid to speech (Milroy 1987:172–83), partly because of the operational difficulty of separating casual speech from careful speech via interview contexts and channel cues (Wolfram 1969:58–9), and partly because researchers became absorbed in the study of the linguistic and social constraints on variation. (See Rickford and McNair-Knox 1994:238–9 for further discussion.)

Social psychological work in accommodation theory (Giles and Powesland 1975, Giles 1984, Giles, Coupland, and Coupland 1991) ran parallel for some time to efforts in variation, showing among other things the important influence on language style of the speaker's orientation and attitude to addressees. Some early variation studies explicitly explored the effect on variation of the addressee (Van den Broeck 1977, Baugh 1979, Hindle 1979, Rickford 1979, Coupland 1980) and of audience more generally (Bell 1977). Bell (1984) followed up these early studies with focused research that put audience at the center of stylistic production. Specifically, he argued that stylistic variation can be explained as a response to the

present audience: primarily the actual addressee, but also third persons (i.e. auditors and overhearers). He argued that the apparent influence of topic shift is actually due to the association of topics with audience types. Recognizing that not all stylistic shifts are obvious responses to present participants, he posited the effect of "referees" – absent reference groups – whose presence in the mind of the speaker could influence variability. This paper not only introduced a coherent view of style-shifting, it also integrated a wide range of previously disparate sociolinguistic findings, and posited a number of novel theoretical generalizations and testable predictions about the relation between social and stylistic variation.

In their (1994) paper on the relation between register and social dialect variation (first circulated in draft in 1990) Finegan and Biber credited Bell with explaining the parallel relation between stylistic and social variation, but not the internal systematicity of each category (why consonant cluster simplification *decreases* as formality *increases*, for instance). Their own explanation for this systematicity was a functional one, which argued (p. 339) that "Social dialect variation . . . depends upon register variation, and register variation is largely shaped by communicative constraints inherent in particular situations." Where Bell focused on audience, Finegan and Biber focused on the broader *situation*, and sought to establish a link from the variables themselves to the situations in which they are used and finally to the socioeconomic hierarchy. They began with the argument that socially stratified variables tend to involve some kind of reduction or simplification, and that complexity of linguistic form correlates with socioeconomic status. They argue that more complex linguistic forms are called for in more "literate" situations, as a function both of the tasks being undertaken in these situations and of a relative lack of shared context. They then attribute the social stratification of language use to the stratification of access to these situation types.

With Coupland (1980), we come full circle, with a focus on the speakers themselves. Introducing an emphasis on the "identity dimensions" of style, Coupland treats stylistic variation as a dynamic presentation of the self. For this reason, rather than focusing on the cumulative use of variables by speakers or groups of speakers, he focuses on the strategic use of variables in discourse. This emphasis also led him to approach the selection of variables differently. Because of the structural focus in the field of variation, variables have been customarily selected not so much on the basis of their apparent social significance as on the basis of their interest to the study of linguistic structure and change. Coupland's focus on the speaker's identity led him to take seriously the participants' perceptions of style, and to argue that the tendency to focus on individual variables abstracts away from what speakers themselves perceive as style.

This emphasis on style as a set of co-occurring variables that are associated with the speaker's own persona was a major departure from the studies of style that preceded, and is becoming increasingly important in the study of variation. Rickford and McNair-Knox (1994:263–5) and Rickford and Rickford (2000:128) have raised the issue of performativity in style, suggesting that variability can play a role in the performance of the speaker's own social affiliations and identity. The California Style Collective (1993) and Eckert (2000) have explored the role of variation in the active construction of personal and group styles, viewing individual variables as resources that can be put to work in constructing new personae.

Some of these explorations are part of a movement in the field of variation away from the purely structural models of society that formed the original basis of variation theory, into a view of variation as social practice. An emerging focus on agency is bringing researchers to examine variation as part of a process of construction of identities and social meaning (California Style Collective 1993, Bucholtz 1996, Eckert 2000), and to view variation in terms of relations of linguistic production (Bourdieu 1982) rather than simply in terms of appropriateness to "social address" (Eckert and McConnell-Ginet 1992).

These explorations remain in the early stages, and are bringing variation studies into synch with work in anthropology. Roughly the same decades that have seen the development of modern variation theory have also seen the development of the anthropological study of communicative competence and the ethnography of speaking (e.g. Hymes 1964, 1972, Bauman and Sherzer 1974, Heath 1983, Briggs 1988). Researchers working on these topics, focusing on verbal performance, have developed perspectives on linguistic practice that are quite crucial and complementary to the explorations of style that have been developing in the field of variation. While in earlier years there was considerable interaction between people studying variation and people studying the ethnography of speaking, as variation emerged as a field in itself, this interaction dwindled. As a result, there has been little integration between the study of variation and the study of verbal genres as pursued in folklore and the ethnography of speaking.

The models of style discussed above that have arisen in the study of variation are not contradictory or mutually exclusive. One might think that, for example, Labov's view of style as a function of attention paid to speech is irreconcilable with the view of the use of variables in terms of "identity performances." A resolution between the views, however, may well lie in an examination of differences among variables, and also of the interaction among variants of a single variable, and of the situated use of variation.

As this volume will show, the very definition of style must expand. While the division into internal, social, and stylistic constraints has been heuristically important, as work progresses in the field, the areas of overlap are becoming increasingly interesting. It will become apparent in this volume that the division between social and stylistic constraints is a fine and highly permeable one indeed. Specifically, earlier models have viewed social categories and identities as given, and stylistic variation as the speaker's way of navigating with respect to the social. As we move toward viewing social life as a continual process of constructing these very categories and identities, style becomes in addition a resource for the process of constructing these very categories and identities, reflecting the social. The view of variation is expanding, therefore, from marking categories to constituting a more fluid landscape of meaning; from a view of language as reflecting the social to a view of language as also creating the social.

We begin this volume with papers by the anthropologists Judith Irvine and Richard Bauman, with the purpose of setting a broader context for the study of stylistic variation. The variation papers follow, in roughly the chronological order of the development of the frameworks that they represent. The featured papers are followed by commentaries by people who have been engaged in related stylistic work.

3   Anthropological approaches to style

Judith Irvine's cross-cultural, ethnographic work on formality (1979) and status and style (1985) has directly addressed issues relevant to variationists, although the variationist literature has rarely taken it into consideration. Her chapter in this volume, "Style as distinctiveness: the culture and ideology of linguistic differentiation" (chapter 1), continues to bring the anthropological perspective to the study of variation. She begins by reminding us that style in language, as in other areas of everyday life, is essentially about *distinctiveness* within a system of possibilities, and that we need to explore the contrasts and boundaries among alternatives to appreciate their full significance.

Irvine's conception of style as a "social semiosis of distinctiveness" crucially involves attention to the language ideologies of native speakers and the principles of differentiation which "link language differences with social meanings." In particular, she identifies three semiotic processes – *iconization, recursivity,* and *erasure* – which have emerged from her joint work with Susan Gal (e.g. Gal and Irvine 1997), and she goes on to define and exemplify them with analyses of stylistic variation in a rural Wolof community in Senegal and a Hungarian/German speaking community in Southern Hungary. Although she is careful to emphasize that "language ideologies are to be investigated independently of the distribution of

observable sociolinguistic facts, not as a substitute for them," it is clear that understanding them allows us to appreciate the workings of style in ways that might otherwise escape us.

Finally, Irvine's paper includes a useful discussion of the distinctions between *register, dialect,* and *style*. She suggests that although register (variety defined according to use) might in theory imply differentiation within a set more readily than dialect, the distinction is not as useful in practice, since speakers are often aware of a range of user-differentiated varieties, and dialects and registers are closely connected. (Indeed, awareness of social distinctions is a fundamental part of Bell's 1984 model of how styles come to be differentiated and deployed according to audience.) For Irvine, style is essentially a superordinate category which emphasizes processes of linguistic (as well as non-linguistic) distinction in general, while register is restricted more to relatively stable, often named, varieties like "sports announcer talk" within the larger category.

Susan Ervin-Tripp, well known in the study of style for her (1972) extension of the linguistic notions of "alternation" and "co-occurrence," to include different "ways of speaking," provides a commentary on Irvine's paper which extends its framework to include monolingual as well as multilingual situations (chapter 2). She suggests that Irvine's appeal to language ideologies is relevant to the acquisition of more than one language variety as well as its display in switching between codes or styles. She likens style-shifting within a single language using dialect features to code-switching between different languages insofar as both can be affected by changes in addressee and speech conditions, and both can be used to effect rhetorical shifts, to get attention, persuade, elaborate, personalize, mark identity, and perform a variety of other functions. One difference is that dialectal style-shifts are potentially accessible to a larger audience, since intelligibility is not usually an issue. Another is that co-occurrence restrictions are laxer, although speakers are very sensitive to shifts in the probabilities or frequencies of occurrence of specific features.

Most of Ervin-Tripp's paper is taken up with a detailed analysis of rhetorical shifting in recordings of two Black political leaders: Stokely Carmichael and Dick Gregory. The analysis of Carmichael is briefer, focusing on the use of one prosodic, one vowel height/length, and one lexical feature to rouse the audience at a Black Power rally in Oakland. The analysis of Gregory's speech is longer and more detailed, revealing the comedian/writer/politician's strategic use of phonological and morphosyntactic features of AAVE (African-American Vernacular English) and Standard English to incite, parody, amuse, and/or provoke serious political reflection. Her larger point is that Gregory's deft code-shifting exploits socially established ideologies about the relationship between speech styles and different

social groups: Whites versus Blacks, old versus young, rioters versus sophisticated consumers and protesters, American colonists versus the British, and so on. The recurrent iconization of which Irvine speaks is not simple, but complex, revealed in the successive realigning of potential contrasts in Gregory's unfolding talk.

Richard Bauman's chapter (3) brings new insights from his work on genre and poetics (Bauman 1977, Briggs and Bauman 1992) to the understanding of how variation takes on social meaning. The papers that follow Bauman's in this volume focus on style as a function of situation, of speaker, of hearer, of text type—but always one at a time. As Bauman presents his analysis of market calls in San Miguel de Allende, he foregrounds the inseparability of speech styles, texts, situational contexts, and social categories. Bauman's analysis of market sales genres focuses on "calls" and "spiels," genres that one could say have become thoroughly reified in the community. These have clear formal properties, and are used for the hawking of everyday items. Within the landscape of calls, Bauman argues, there is emerging a new genre called the "pitch," which builds on and elaborates properties of the simpler genre to produce a more elaborate genre appropriate to the hawking of luxury items. In other words, the currently existing genres present a discursive landscape within which new genres can develop and take on meaning.

Variationists have looked to discourse as a way to contextualize variation. An obvious relation between work on genre and work on variation lies in the potential for genre to define the situations within which variables are deployed, to circumscribe style and to establish stylistic equivalence. Labov's paper in this volume seeks to establish some kind of situational/interactional equivalence within which the differential use of variants can be said to reflect speaker differences. Genre, thus, is viewed as isolable and stable. Bauman's paper, however, focuses on genre as emerging, varying, and changing in practice. Rather than viewing genre as imposing constraint, he presents genre as the result of strategy, a reification to which community members can orient themselves in making meaning. Some genres are more reified than others, and the degree and nature of this reification leaves room for speaker and audience both to use convention and to change it. Bauman's paper thus embodies a shift of perspective from schema for the categorization of text to framework for the production and interpretation of text. He defines genre in terms of its affordances for change in discursive practice.

Most importantly for the variationist, this discursive practice is not abstracted from the day-to-day use of variation, but is a key element in the construction of social meaning in variation. Bauman points out that these texts are tied to a recurrent context, the market, to a category or categories of speakers, the hawkers. The subgenres, furthermore, are associated with

different classes of wares, weaving ever more subtle social meaning into the styles. Bauman argues that as children grow up, hearing these calls must be an integral part of their sociolinguistic development. These calls foreground linguistic form, providing a stage for the performance of unusual linguistic variants, which is in turn enhanced by the poetic structuring of the calls – the lexical repetition and the phonological parallelism.

Ronald Macaulay's commentary on Bauman's chapter points out early on a theme that emerges in several of the papers in this volume, and that is at the heart of the problem of style (chapter 4). That is, while studies of variation focus on those variables that are relatively easy to define, measure and quantify, these variables exist in a much broader stylistic landscape that so far has not been subject to compatible treatment. Macaulay observes that the wider field of variables that characterize registers and genres may well be more interesting than classic sociolinguistic variables "... if we can find a way to deal with them." For this reason, much of Macaulay's commentary focuses on problems with the operationalization of the notion of genre, and particularly on problems of identifying genres and assigning linguistic features to them.

Observing that the market genres in Bauman's analysis form a continuum from categories that are clearly shared by analysts and speakers alike (calls) to those that may at this point only be an analyst's category (salestalks), he raises the issue of whether the speakers of San Miguel de Allende actually share Bauman's view of the discursive landscape, and how far the analyst can go in breaking genres down into subgenres, or grouping them into macro-genres. He goes on to point out similar problems elsewhere, most notably in the case of narrative, which is a fundamental genre for the analysis of variation yet quite variably defined across the literature.

4   Attention paid to speech

The first four sections of **William Labov's** chapter (5) emphasize the importance of stylistic variation to the understanding of language change, opposing the study of style-shifting in naturalistic contexts to its study within the sociolinguistic interview, and defending the value of the latter. Labov argues that both audience design and audio-monitoring (attention paid to speech) are factors in style-shifting, and recaps key findings in the study of style over the past two decades. For him, the central problem in stylistic analysis is separating casual and careful speech within the spontaneous sections of the sociolinguistic interview, and the mechanism that he and his students have found most useful for doing so is the "decision tree" and its eight contextual branches: Response, Narrative, Language, Group, Soapbox, Kids, Tangents, and Residual.

All of this is important groundwork by the sociolinguist most respon-sible for the attention paid to speech model. But it is with the fifth section that we really get down to new developments. Here Labov draws on a large data pool (184 speakers from the Language Variation and Change corpus at the University of Pennsylvania) to examine the nature of style-shifting in three stable sociolinguistic variables: (ING), (DH), and (NEG). The main point of this section is that although the various subgroups of the speech community (social classes, age-groups, and genders) are differentiated by their absolute uses of the variable, they are NOT differentiated by their rel-ative use in casual and careful contexts. As Labov has noted earlier, shared patterns of style-shifting are one of the defining characteristics of member-ship in a speech community.

In the sixth and seventh sections, Labov explores the issue of whether the decision tree might be refined by eliminating individual subcategories which are less objectively identifiable and/or which contribute less to the differentiation of careful and casual styles. His overall conclusion is that the eight subcategories all contribute to the differentiation of styles and there is no motivation for discarding any of them, even when differentiation by social class and gender is considered.

While Labov skilfully deploys quantitative methodology to refine our understanding of the role of the various subcategories of the decision tree, his research raises a number of questions for future research. For instance, the style-shifting effects of the different variables Labov considered (DH, ING, NEG) were not uniform, and were we to consider others, the range of variation would undoubtedly increase. Bearing in mind that speech is an amalgam of variables, how do their differential effects contribute to the overall "styles" that speakers create and audiences interpret? Another ques-tion is whether style-shifting for variables undergoing change is different than it is for stable sociolinguistic variables. From other findings (for instance, the cross-over pattern for (r) in New York City, and the fact that the Philadelphia variables in change showed little style-shifting), this appears to be the case. But this makes the study of style-shifting through variables undergoing change even more compelling, especially given the centrality of style to the study of language change.

In his commentary on Labov's chapter, **John Baugh** emphasizes the development of Labov's approaches to the study of style between the 1960s and the present, isolating four areas in which improvement has already occurred or still seems necessary (chapter 6). The first is the use of reading passages and word lists, a central strategy for eliciting more careful styles in the framework of Labov's early New York City study. As Baugh points out, this strategy is inappropriate with illiterate subjects, a group which can include children and many adults in metropolitan societies, and

virtually the entire population in oral, non-metropolitan communities, so other creative strategies for increasing attention to formal speech need to be explored. Secondly, the role of fieldworkers – their social attributes in relation to their interviewees, and their social accommodation to their interviewees' speech – deserves further study, as a factor that could signif-icantly affect the nature and range of styles elicited in an interview. Thirdly, the interviewer needs to maintain ethnographic sensitivity in trying to extend the interviewee's speech towards the formal or informal end of the stylistic continuum. Finally, in the analytical phase, it might be useful to classify speech within each branch of the decision tree as "formal/careful" or "informal/casual," in recognition of the fact that each cut invariably leaves on one side of the tree speech that really belongs on the other. To some extent, this final proposal runs counter to the decision tree, whose purpose is to provide a clear-cut formal procedure for classifying interview speech as careful or casual, but to the extent that clear-cut procedures can be developed for the additional classifications at the end of each branch, it is worth exploring.

Penelope Eckert, noting the centrality to Labov's analytic practice of the sociolinguistic interview as a constructed speech event, begins her commen-tary on Labov's chapter by critically considering the subevents in the inter-view, that represent branches on his decision tree and their relation to the larger stylistic world in which interviews occur (chapter 7). *Response* versus *Tangent* speech, she suggests, might be defined more generally in terms of topic control, the latter bringing out the vernacular for a variety of reasons, including the interviewee's greater sense of enjoyment and comfort with self-selected topics. *Language* and *Kids* relate to topic and possibly genre; *Soapbox* and *Narrative* are definitely related to genre, the latter perhaps to an overarching category of reminiscence. *Group* speech is related to audi-ence, but also involves topic control and other factors. Each of these sub-events needs to be considered too in relation to the kind of population being interviewed, for instance, adolescents versus adults, whose style-shifting norms can be quite different, as Labov's paper shows.

Different variables might also have very different social-stylistic mean-ings in relation to specific subevents in the interview, Eckert notes. For instance, *-ing* is not stigmatized in itself, but negative concord is, associated with limited education and working- and under-class membership. The rela-tion of attention-paid-to-speech to "ethnographic" and socially meaning-ful motives for style-shifting also requires further consideration. Like Bell and others, Eckert observes that the use of vernacular speech in an inter-view might result from *more* rather than less attention paid to speech and that the role of style in social meaning, particularly in the social construc-tion of self, deserves closer attention. Named group styles – e.g. "Valley

Girl" or "New York Jew" – are very salient, and these provide part of the resources on which individuals draw to construct their personal styles.

Eckert suggests that not only do certain group styles and genres (e.g. market calls) provide "stages" for the construction of social meaning and personal style, but that certain individuals and groups of individuals do so too. She gives two examples. One is the high school "burned-out burnouts" she studied in a Detroit suburban high school, who represented the most extreme exemplars of the burnout style in dress, demeanor, and attitude, and also in the use of specific variants, like the raising of (ay) and the backing of (uh). The other is Trudy and her primarily Mexican American "home girls" in a San Jose, California, sixth grade. They are clear leaders in the heterosexual scene and in the construction of style; anything that Trudy does has "highlighted meaning because of her position in the age cohort as a cultural icon." Eckert urges us to study these larger processes of meaning and style construction to enrich and inform our collection and analysis of stylistically variable data in interviews.

Elizabeth Traugott notes the contributions that Labovian sociolinguistics has already made to our understanding of language change, and explores in her commentary on Labov's chapter the potential for contributions in the opposite direction – from research on grammaticalization to the sociolinguistic study of stylistic variation (chapter 8).

In grammaticalization, the transition of variants from open- to closed-class items is central, and studying it often involves attending carefully to the grammatical, semantic, and pragmatic functions of each form. Might a similar perspective advance the attention-paid-to-speech approach to style that Labov champions? Traugott's answer is yes, and she offers several illustrative examples. For instance, building on observations by Ellen Prince on variation in the Yiddish of Sarah Gorby, she suggests that open-class items might play a more significant role in conscious style-shift than closed-class items and morphophonemic variants. Even the latter might involve grammatical function – for instance, the (dh) variable that is so central in Labov's analysis might be more significant than other phonological variables because of its connection with definiteness and deixis (in words like *the*, *this*, *that*, and *there*).

More generally, Traugott suggests that "style can and should be related to different linguistic functions as well as to the different purposes of speakers using them" – a point she supports by noting semantic and pragmatic differences in the use of words like *obviously*, *in fact*, *actually*, and *anyway*. Many of these involve the speaker's subjective attitude to discourse, which she calls "*self-design*" ("I," paralleling Bell's *audience design* (*you*) and *referee design* (*they*, *we*). Her remarks focus on variables above the level of phonology, recalling but extending Lavandera's two-decades-old observa-

tion that morphosyntactic and lexical variants are polysemic while phonological variants are not, and pointing to one direction that the study of style as attention paid to speech might fruitfully pursue.

5 Audience design and self-identification

Allan Bell, already well known in the variationist study of style for his (1984) audience design model (conveniently summarized in his chapter of this volume, chapter 9), proposes some theoretical and methodological refinements and describes a new research project he has started in New Zealand to test some of its key components. A key innovation is that the referee design component of the model, involving initiative shift, is no longer thought of as applying only after audience design, or only in occasional or exceptional cases. On the contrary, the two aspects of style-shift are now conceptualized as potentially "concurrent, pervasive processes." Bell believes that quantitative methods are likely to be most useful in the analysis of audience design style-shift, and qualitative methods for referee design style-shift, but the distinction is (thankfully) not absolute. Additionally, Bell notes that the analysis of co-occurrence (and presumably covariation) is important for understanding style-shift, but little is said about this aspect of the model.

The new research project that Bell designed and conducted in New Zealand – discussed in sections 3 and 4 of the chapter – represents a clever attempt to control some of the key variables. Four interviewees – one male and one female Maori, one male and one female Pakeha (white) – are interviewed on different occasions over a three-week period, under similar conditions and on similar topics, by three different interviewers who vary in gender and/or ethnicity. We see clear evidence of stylistic variation by audience in the male Maori interviewee's use of (eh), but interviewers' use of this variable is harder to interpret in terms of audience design. More of the paper is devoted to the analysis of how speakers' ethnic identities and attitudes are revealed through their pronunciation of doublets (like *pane*) which can be read either as English monosyllables or Maori disyllables, and of Maori place names which can be given English or Maori pronunciations. The male Pakeha interviewee, least aware of and sympathetic to Maori issues, read all the Maori/English doublets as English words, while the male Maori interviewee appeared to mark his pride in his ethnic heritage by providing the most consistently "Maori" pronunciations of the Maori place names. Both quantitative and qualitative data are presented.

Bell's paper represents a welcome extension to the audience design framework, but we will have to await later reports for fuller discussion of

audience design effects and for elaboration on how co-occurrence and cova-riation are to be integrated into the analysis. One other question that remains relevant to the audience design framework, as to virtually all the frameworks in this volume, is whether and how we can be sure that speakers do have productive access to the full range of variants under discussion. This is of course necessary for interpreting use or non-use as stylistically significant.

Malcah Yaeger-Dror, in commenting on Bell's chapter, addresses a larger concern about what are to be the primitives or basic units for the analysis of style and how they should be studied (chapter 10). Finding little agreement among the leading figures in the study of stylistic variation, including those represented in this volume, she sets out to provide clarification as a basis for future convergence. She agrees with Bell, for instance, that audience design and referee design are worthy primitives for the study of style (see Bell's paper for definitions), and notes their respective parallels with Coupland's relational and identity variables. But she vigorously rejects the suggestion that quantitative methods apply only to audience design, pointing to several studies from the 1970s to the 1990s in which referee or identity vari-ables were quantitatively measured. At the same time, she reminds us that the determination of whether a shift is the former or the latter "can only be made by careful qualitative analysis."

Yaeger-Dror also reminds us of a whole series of other parameters whose effects on stylistic variation have been repeatedly demonstrated, but whose status as stand-alone primitives or metaphorical subprimitives remains to be determined. The list includes topic, purpose, setting, planning (=atten-tion to speech/message), frame (=genre/key), footing, and stance (e.g. con-frontational/supportive), and relatedness to informational versus interactional parameters (nicely illustrated with her own analysis of negation). In her conclusion, she urges us to consider a wider range of variables and cultural and social situations as we try to determine the optimal primitives for the analysis of style.

Like Judith Irvine, **Nikolas Coupland** focuses on style as distinctiveness (chapter 11). While Irvine concentrates on community processes that create distinctiveness, reifying particular personae and the relation between those personae and semiotic resources, Coupland concentrates on the individual speaker's use of linguistic resources to evoke these personae. To illustrate his approach to style, Coupland provides the example of a Cardiff DJ who is popularly known for his promotion of local Cardiff culture, and for his use of non-standard dialect in so doing. Coupland shows how the DJ uses standard and non-standard Cardiff features, as well as features from non-local dialects such as Cockney and American English, to invoke a variety of social meanings. These meanings are based in social characterizations asso-

ciated with stereotypic speakers of the source dialects, but they interact also, Coupland emphasizes, with specific content and contextual factors to produce all kinds of other meanings. He points out that these dynamics cannot be taken into consideration in correlational approaches, since they involve moment-to-moment expressive strategies that signal changes in such things as attitude or key. Coupland argues that because traditional analytic practice focuses on the relation between language use and social structural configurations, it does not engage with the social and interactive function of language variation.

Coupland emphasizes speaker agency, focusing on the speaker as per-former, and viewing style as a situational achievement rather than simply conditioned by situational factors. The speaker thus is not simply a respon-der to context but a maker of context, defining situations and relationships. Thus he argues against analyses of variation that focus on one aspect of identity, or that begin with context as a condition for variation, arguing that style must be theorized within the realm of discursive social action.

Coupland's chapter argues against unidimensional models of style that predominate in the study of variation, arguing that any one of these dimen-sions (such as attention-paid-to-speech or formality) interacts with any number of other semiotic processes. He views the features that preoccupy the study of variation as a subset of stylistic features. These "dialect style" features, which tend to constitute regional dialect differentiation, are related in stylistic strategies primarily to identity and relational goals. As such, they constitute a subset of a wide range of stylistic features that serve not only identity and relational goals, but expressive and attitudinal roles as well.

In response to Coupland's claim that communication accommodation theory does not address issues of self-presentation, **Howard Giles** (chapter 12) brings recent research in social psychology to bear on a number of issues raised in Coupland's chapter. Supporting Coupland's general call for a multidimensional view of style, he provides a caution to what he views as an extreme deconstructive position, and argues for a focus on speakers' and hearers' intuitions to temper the analyst's constructs. He argues that inas-much as people accommodate to "where they *believe* target others are," research needs to explore speakers' and hearers' own definitions of situa-tions, identities, and styles. On the one hand, he suggests that participants may not perceive all of the style-shifts that Coupland identifies in the DJ's speech – that some of them may in fact be components of a larger style – and on the other hand, he points to findings that hearers may perceive style-shifts when in fact there has been no change in linguistic output, on the basis of non-linguistic factors. He concludes his commentary with a set of funda-mental and challenging questions that he would pose to a study of style.

John Rickford's commentary on Coupland's chapter agrees with many of Coupland's critiques of unidimensional studies of style, but emphasizes the importance of expanding rather than replacing approaches to style (chapter 13). He argues that sociolinguistics has a multiplicity of goals, and that different approaches to style will suit different goals. Particularly, he notes that the goals and assumptions that underlie the "socially constituted sociolinguistics" of Hymes, make non-dialectal aspects of style (e.g. lexical variation, address terms, and types of speech events) of central concern, while these aspects of style are peripheral given the goals and assumptions that underlie the "socially realistic sociolinguistics" of Labov. While Rickford agrees that the study of style must recognize that style is an "active, motivated, symbolic process," he cautions against rejecting the more predictable, often automatic, aspects of stylistic variation that are the focus of quantitative studies of variation. He also cautions against discarding the empirical advantages of unidimensional models of style, and against discarding the social group or category in favor of focusing on individuals and their strategies, arguing that an understanding of style requires a multiplicity of approaches. Rickford embraces Coupland's focus on goals, but questions his distinction between dialect style and other ways of speaking. He argues that not only are features of dialect style capable of distinguishing ideational meanings, but that ways of speaking often figure in dialect differentiation.

In part 3 of his commentary, Rickford presents an example of a Guyanese radio personality, showing how he uses a variety of resources in ways similar to Coupland's DJ, reinforcing Coupland's observation of the moment-by-moment complexity of stylistic variation. But he then raises the question of whether the extent of this stylizing is not specific to public performances – whether the possibilities for the use of extreme stylization do not increase with the size of the audience. He speculates that these may be quite distinct kinds of performances, and questions the extent to which we can generalize from broadcast styles such as these to everyday spoken styles.

6   Functionally motivated situational variation

A fundamental fact of stylistic variation is that social and stylistic variation mirror each other, and **Edward Finegan** and **Douglas Biber's** chapter (14) offers an explanation for this fact that differs fundamentally from most work on variation. Bell has made explicit what has been taken for granted in variation studies, that is, that social variation is fundamental, and that stylistic variation is derivative. (Preston adopts this view, but subordinates both social and stylistic variation to linguistic constraints.) Finegan and Biber,

however, offer a view in which situations are fundamental. They propose a "Register Axiom" that unites variables by their co-occurrence in registers, tying registers to the kinds of situations in which they are used, and explaining social groups' differential use of variants in terms of differential access to the situations in which their registers are used. This model extends to account for linguistic constraints on variation as well, and it is the interaction between linguistic constraint and situation that is at its heart.

Following a number of other analysts (Bernstein 1971, Kroch 1978, Heath 1983), Finegan and Biber argue that social and stylistic variables commonly fall along a continuum between simplification and elaboration. They tie these to a taxonomy of situations as more or less literate, hence more or less planned, more informational or more affective in purpose, and involving less or more shared context between interlocutors. More literate situations, then, require more elaborated language, while less literate situations call for greater economy. Against a background of previous analyses of corpus data that confirm this hypothesis, they go on to examine three socioeconomic groups of speakers from the British National Corpus, finding that much of the situational variation they have found is not mirrored in social differences.

Lesley Milroy's commentary on Finegan and Biber's paper presents several arguments against a single model that encompasses such a vast array of types and aspects of situational variability (chapter 15). She points to the heterogeneity of the variables that Finegan and Biber seek to account for, and the breadth and heterogeneity of the scholarship that must be brought to bear, questioning both the feasibility and the desirability of such an overarching account.

The core of Milroy's discussion lies in the distinction between literate and non-literate styles – a distinction that Finegan and Biber treat as somewhat continuous, and as spanning written and spoken genres. While Milroy agrees with Finegan and Biber that differential access to literary practice is central to an account of differentiated linguistic repertoires, she takes quite a different approach to the significance of literacy in this variability. Where Finegan and Biber focus on depersonalization, lack of shared context, and informational priority in literary genres, Milroy proposes that the key issue in the literate–non-literate distinction is collaborativity. Specifically, she points out the importance of distinguishing between conversation, which is fundamentally interactive, and monologic discourse, which is not. She argues that economy and elaboration are a collaborative enterprise in interactive discourse, and hence not to be found in the use of particular structures by individual speakers. In other words, the actual locus of the features that Finegan and Biber are concerned with is different in the two kinds of discourse.

Milroy also challenges more generally their claim that it is economy that characterizes social differences in speech, providing evidence of instances in which vernaculars are more "elaborate" than their standard equivalents, and suggesting that on the contrary, standard varieties in fact often exhibit the simplified characteristics of contact languages. Milroy also questions the grouping of heterogeneous variables, underscoring the importance of drawing a clear distinction between variables that are referentially equivalent and primarily indicators of identity (i.e. classic sociolinguistic variables), and those that have a non-social communicative function.

Dennis Preston's commentary (chapter 16) treats this latter point at length, drawing a contrast between Finegan and Biber's approach to variability and the approach taken by quantitative studies of variation. Preston focuses on Finegan and Biber's claim that it is situational factors that structure stylistic variation (and hence social variation), a direct contradiction of Bell's (1984:151) argument that stylistic variation is parasitic on social variation. He argues that this is an incorrect conclusion stemming from Finegan and Biber's failure to distinguish among types of variable. The classic sociolinguistic variable, which has been found to vary systematically according to style and socioeconomic status, consists of variants that are equivalent in every way except socially. Variants of classic sociolinguistic variables are interchangeable in the same discourse context, potentially yielding social inappropriateness but not awkward constructions. Preston argues that the few variables that Finegan and Biber found to show social as well as registral variation were of this type. The rest of Finegan and Biber's variables, Preston argues, are not of this type. Rather, in these cases, the choice of variants is constrained by the information structures characteristic of the texts in question rather than by the social situations themselves.

Part I

Anthropological approaches