Situation: Stylistic Variation in Sociolinguistic Corpora and Theory

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Abstract

Deciding what to code for in archived online corpora from sociolinguistic recordings is important, but enriching such recordings to include more variable situations is an important prerequisite if these corpora are to serve as a resource for the analysis of situational or stylistic variation, still a neglected variable in sociolinguistic theory and analysis. Accordingly, much of this paper is devoted to illustrating the value of recording speakers in different situations, using examples of Situational (primarily triggered by changes in interlocutors) and Metaphorical (primarily triggered by changes in topic) Style Shifting from the literature. Some of these are Serendipitous, while others are Orchestrated, the result of deliberate efforts by researchers to record speakers with different addressees or in different situations. The richest examples, involving Orchestrated Serendipitous Situational and Metaphorical shifting, come from recent work by Devyani Sharma and Ben Rampton, which is briefly summarized. In my conclusion, I turn to the issue of what to code for in archived sociolinguistic corpora, suggesting that we start with some of the key Hymesian components, like setting, scene, participants and perhaps purposes, key and local norms of interaction. We should of course feel free to draw on Preston's and other frameworks and more recently emphasized elements, like agency, while balancing a concern for completeness and ethnographic richness with a concern for feasibility and practicality.

1. Introduction

Half a century after Goffman (1964) wrote about 'The Neglected Situation,' and nearly two decades after Rickford and McNair-Knox (1994) reminded the field that stylistic variation was under-studied compared with social variation, situational and stylistic variables are *still* among the most neglected variables in sociolinguistic corpora and theory.[1] So discussing how to code for them uniformly in archived sociolinguistic corpora is somewhat premature. I will try to respond to the mandate of this special issue to suggest ways of coding for this variable in sociolinguistic corpora, but *variable situations* – critical for establishing the range of speaker's stylistic repertoire, and therefore almost everything that sociolinguists do – are not present in most sociolinguists' recorded corpora, so there's often little or nothing to code for. We need to make fundamental improvements in our recorded data if we want to have corpora that are rich enough to use for the analysis of situational or style shifting. Therefore, before talking about coding itself, I want to emphasize the importance of plumbing speakers' sociolinguistic competence and performance through recordings in different situations, especially in terms of varying addressees (Rickford 1987), theorize about it a little, and point to new work by Devyani Sharma and Ben Rampton (e.g. 2011) that offers promising prospects for the future.

2. Comparisons of Sociolinguistic Interviews to Fishing, and their limitations

A sociolinguistic interview is like a fisherman's net cast into a river. What you catch may be useful and useable, maybe even valuable, but you should be careful of assuming that it is an accurate or complete sample of 'what lies beneath.' As someone who lived in front of a river (actually a

forty-foot wide mud-bottomed drainage canal locally called a 'trench') for the first 14 years of his life, and who spent countless days fishing in it, I can testify that what was caught depended very much on the state of the water. Was the water level high or low? Was it early in the day or late? Was the water still or 'pulling'—draining furiously, with the *koker* (sluice) open to the low tide sea nearby? Or was it one of those rare, ecstatic occasions when the sugar estates upstream released their *bagasse*[2] into the canal and the resultant *lease water*, oxygen-deprived, forced *every* fish, big and small, prized or despised, to come to the top to breathe? (That happened twice in my young days, and I had to 'skip school' on both occasions to take advantage of the situation.) Other potential variables: whether you were fishing with a cast net or hook-and-line, using worms or other bait, and your level of skill and experience. Assessments of one's fishing success or failure on a given day, or comparisons between different rivers, between one spot and another, or between one time and another at that spot ('Oh the fish were so plentiful in the old days, but they're all gone now') might be quite unreliable if one did not take these situational variables into account.

But this is *precisely* what most sociolinguists have done, casting their sociolinguistic interview nets into the river of humanity over the past 50 years. Despite high 'theoretical' awareness of the fact that speakers vary, we have used the record of one-shot sociolinguistic interviews to claim that we (or others) have tapped into the 'vernacular' or not, or to compare the usage of individuals and groups from different social classes, genders and ethnicities to each other, or to compare speakers recorded at different times and make bold inferences about stability or change in a particular region or variety. In the next section, I will demonstrate that we should be cautious about inferences from one-shot sociolinguistic interviews, based on the evidence we have from Serendipitous Situational Switching.

3. Serendipitous Situational and Metaphorical Switching

Blom and Gumperz (1972:424–5) draw a distinction between situational and metaphorical switching that is worth recalling.

Situational switching (p. 424) assumes 'a direct relationship between language and the social situation,' and involves 'changes in participants' definition of each other's rights and obligations.' It is primarily (but not exclusively) conceptualized in terms of the interlocutors involved. As Blom and Gumperz note (Blom and Gumperz (1972:424–5)) of their experience in Hemnesberget, Norway: 'On one occasion, when we, as outsiders, stepped up to a group of locals engaged in conversation, our arrival caused a significant alteration in the casual posture of the group. Hands were removed from pockets, and looks changed. Predictably, our remarks elicited a code switch, marked simultaneously by a change in channel cues (i.e., sentence speed, rhythm, more hesitation pauses, etc.) and by a shift from R[anamål] to B[okmål].'

Metaphorical switching (p. 425) usually involves switching according to topic, in situations that remain the same in terms of setting, time and interlocutors but 'allow for the enactment of two or more different relationships among the same set of individuals.' For instance, 'in the course of a morning spent at the community administration office, we noticed that clerks used both standard and dialect phrases, depending on whether they were talking about official affairs or not.' This kind of switching is classified as metaphorical because it enacts 'two or more different relationships among the same set of individuals.'

Usually, sociolinguistic interviews provide one or more examples of *metaphorical switching* via variable *topics*, and it is no accident that Labov's primary (1972:85–94) contexts for locating casual speech in the interview were topic-based: narratives about the Danger of Death, Childhood Rhymes and Customs, Speech Not in Direct Response to Questions. *Situational switching*, often involving changes in *addressee*, tends to provide more dramatic examples of the range of a

speaker's stylistic repertoire, but it is also rarer to find this in sociolinguistic interviews. Sometimes, however, sociolinguistic interviews do yield examples of what I am calling 'Serendipitous Situational Switching.' Here are some examples:

3.1. LABOV (1972:89–90)

Discusses an interview he did with Dolly R. in New York City that was interrupted by a telephone call from a cousin. Labov left the room for 20 minutes, but the recorder continued to run and yielded a record of the speaker's spontaneous speech that was quite different from her interview style, even when she seemed to be informal and casual. For instance, here is Dolly's speech when talking about common sense with Labov: '(Laughs) So some people are pretty witty – I mean – yet they're not so intelligent.' And here is an excerpt from her telephone call with her cousin: 'So you know what Carol Ann say? Listen at what Carol Ann say, "An then when papa die, can we come back" [belly laugh] Ain't these chillun sump'n [falsetto]?' As Labov notes (ibid.):

> The contrast is so sharp that most listeners cannot believe it is the same person talking. … The contrast is so dramatic in the case of Dolly R. that we are forced to recognize the limitations of our other methods of eliciting the vernacular: for some speakers, at least, our best techniques within the interview situation will shift the speaker part of the way toward the vernacular, but there is no guarantee that we have covered the major part of the distance. We have defined a direction but not the destination.

3.2. RICKFORD (1987:153–4)

Reports on an interview done in Guyana with Mrs. P., who told a Danger of Death story about an occasion in which she got stuck in quicksand. As noted (p. 153), the story's climax, accompanied by sharp intakes of breath and other casual speech channel cues, might have been taken as representative of her 'vernacular':

> an, aam, a staat tu haala, kaa di mod de til hee! (Up to her neck.) a de
> dong in di mod! sombadii di paasin, an di heer, an dem gu n
> kaal **ii**. an ii kom wi dii boot, an ii tek mii out … ar els a wuda
> ded in de! [Note use of mesolectal creole **ii** for standard English "him."]
> "I started to holler, because the mud was till here! (Up to her neck.) I was down in the mud! Somebody was passing, and they heard, and they went to call him. And he came with the boat, and he took me out … or else I would've died in there!"

However, in the same interview, an aside was recorded in which Mrs. P. talks to her daughter about a customer who has come into their shop asking to buy a bottle of rum on 'credit,' and Mrs. P reveals a more basilectal or deep creole vernacular, one in which, among other things, the third masculine object category (standard English 'him') is marked by basilectal *am*:

> *Mrs. P.*: gu gi am. [Then, rethinking this] … a wich waan a ii bodii? … tuu daala an ii waan haaf baatl rom? tikee na meerii sen am, maan.
>
> "Go give him. [Then, rethinking this] … Which one of her friends? … Two dollars and he wants a half bottle of rum? What if Mary didn't send him, man?"

Mrs. P categorically uses *am* for 'him,' a total of six times in this interaction with her daughter. As the author notes (p. 154), 'Significantly enough, at no other point in this lengthy [three-

hour!] recording session did Mrs. P. use pronominal *am*, regardless of how involved she appeared to become as she launched into stories about ghosts (*jombii*) and floods in the area.' So here is one way in which style shifting can manifest itself: *qualitatively*, through the use of forms in one context that are never attested in other contexts.

3.3. RICKFORD AND BLAKE (1990:260–61)

Discuss a striking example in which Renee Blake interviewed a local cricket captain in Barbados, Cricketman. His speech to the interviewer (identified in this extract as coming from 'Cricketman 1') is colloquial, but quite standard, especially in terms of copula and auxiliary *is* and *are*. By contrast, his exhortations and complaints to his Barbadian team members and officials on the field are all in the Barbadian vernacular, and in these turns (identified as coming from 'Cricketman 2'), the present tense copula and auxiliary forms are almost always absent, as in this excerpt:

Cricketman 1 [to Renee] Because right now you *are* in de northern part of de island … Now some of dese guys *are* from de southern side … but de guys *are* interzonal. Ya understand?

Renee B Right, right. You're from where? St. James?

Cricketman 2 [to teamsmen] Hit de ball through de fielders, man! Marpuh, wha yuh Ø doin?!

Renee B Who's winning now?

Cricketman 1 [to Renee] Well… de game *is* not at a stage of winning …

Cricketman 2 [to team member, umpire]: Go on Marpuh! … Man, he Ø out! … He Ø out!

Over the entire recording, the variable rule (VARBRUL) factor weight for the cricket captain's zero copula usage when performing in the persona of 'Cricketman 1' (speaking to Renee, a Black expatriate non-Barbadian) in this interview is 0.14; and when performing in the persona of Cricketman 2 (yelling at his Black Barbadian country-men and team-mates) it is .88 – as striking a style or code switch as one could want! The style shift here is quantitative, expressed in the relative frequencies or probabilities/factor weights, rather than the absolute use of one feature rather than the other.

3.4. RICKFORD AND RICKFORD (2000:59)

Quote a routine from African–American comedienne Adele Givens, in which she impersonates her mom (the 'fake bitch') varying in her speech depending on who she is talking to. This is not a sociolinguistic interview, but it suggests one way in which children might come to learn about situational shifting: from serendipitous exposure to parents and peers speaking differently to different addressees:

Because everybody here, when you were little, you could tell who yo' mama—who she was talking to on the phone. … You just heard the "fake bitch" when she took over, didn't you?

'Cause when her *friends* call it's like, "Hello…? Oh, hey, how you doin', Girl? I ain't doin' nothin' … Cookin' these beans! Yeah, I know we had them yesterday, but beans taste better the second day, ya know? Girl, I can't hardly hear nothin' you sayin', these kids with all that damn noise. Yah, yah. Hold

on. Let me—"Y'all kids stop all that damn noise! People think I ain't taught you nothing."

That's how she talk to her friends. But you let the principal … or the insurance man … or somebody white [be] calling: "Hello. Oh, hi Mr. Kennedy, how are you? Gee, you haven't received it yet? I mailed it out on Tuesday. Well, don't you worry. I've got the account number. I'm gonna track it down. Can you hold on for just a second, Mr. Kennedy? I can barely hear you. "Children, Mommy's on the phone now!"

Together, these and other examples from the literature and our own experience should make us extremely cautious about assuming that the speech we record in one-shot interviews involving an interviewee and a single addressee (usually the interviewer) provides an accurate or complete indication of that interviewee's stylistic repertoire and that of the social groups (by age, gender, ethnicity, class and so on) they happen to represent.

4. Orchestrated Situational Switching

Partly driven by the evidence of Serendipitous Situation Switching, a number of sociolinguists have attempted to net a wider range of style shifting in their recordings by deliberately recording or re-recording interviewees in different situations to reveal what I will call 'Orchestrated Situational Switching.' Usually, the situation shift involves different primary interlocutors. One of the earliest examples is the study of Labov et al. (1968) of AAVE in Harlem. Others who have done similar work include Bell (1977, 1984, 2001), van den Broeck (1977), Baugh (1979), Payne (1976), Hindle (1979), Coupland (1984), Rickford and McNair-Knox (1994), Bell (2001), and Alim (2004). As before, I will give four examples.

4.1. LABOV ET AL. (1968)

Did not attempt to study style shifting among African–Americans in Harlem using the combination of interview contexts/topics and channel cues used in Labov's (1966) study of the Lower East Side, but drew instead on the contrast between individual interviews and group sessions. About the latter, they had this to say:

> The most important data upon which this study is based is the language of preadolescent and adolescent speakers … in spontaneous interaction with each other – situations in which the peer group controls language in the same manner as in everyday life, outside of the adult-dominated environments of the school and the home. (Labov et al. 1968: 57)

The data from several of their variables show the value of this strategy. Table 1, for instance, shows the statistically significant increase in the relative frequency of *is* absence between individual interviews and group recordings displayed by members of the Jets and Oscar Brothers, providing another example of quantitative style shifting:[3]

Table 1. Frequencies of *is* absence in individual interviews versus group sessions among Jets and Oscar Brothers in Harlem (based on Labov et al. 1968:192).

Style/situation	Jets	Oscar brothers
Individual interviews	27% (135/500)	31% (35/114)
Group sessions	45% (96/213)	44% (84/191)
Statistical significance (by Fisher's Exact test)	$p < 0.0001$	$p = 0.0287$

4.2. BELL (2001)

Reports on work he and his colleagues did in New Zealand in the 'audience design' framework of Bell (1984) by looking at stylistic variation involving two Maori and two Pakeha (European) informants, one male, one female, in orchestrated interaction with interviewers who also vary by ethnicity and gender. Table 2 depicts their variation in the use of *eh*, a tag that is a salient sociolinguistic marker in New Zealand.[4] As Bell notes (p. 153), the data confirm research and popular stereotype that *eh* is primarily a marker used by Maoris, especially by and to men. Note that the highest use is by the Maori male informant to the Maori male interviewer, less to the Maori female interviewer, and even less to the Pakeha male interviewer. Moreover, the Maori female uses *eh* considerably less often than her male counterpart, and the two Pakeha speakers use only one token of *eh* between them.

4.3. ALIM (2004)

Extending research by Rickford and McNair–Knox (1994) designed to test the Audience Design framework of Bell (1984) systematically varied the interlocutors with whom high school African–American students in Sunnyside, California, talked, varying them in terms of ethnicity, familiarity, gender and Hip Hop cultural knowledge. Figure 1 shows the remarkable shifts in the frequency of copula absence displayed by four teenagers in his sample when interacting with

Table 2. Variation in use of *eh* tag in New Zealand English by ethnicity and gender of informants and interviewers (from Bell 2001: 153, Table 9.2).

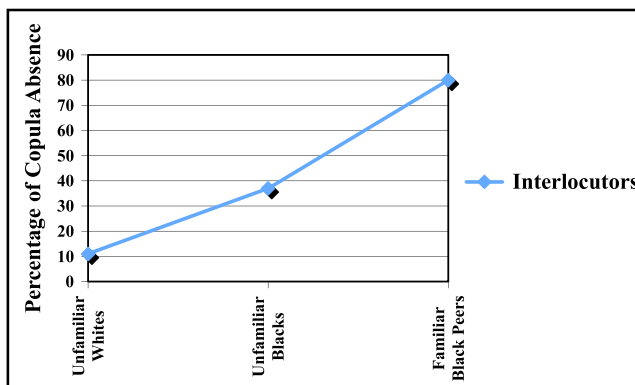| By informants	To interviewees			
	Maori male	Maori female	Pakeha male	Pakeha female
Maori male	46	26	19	—
Maori female	2	4	—	0
Pakeha male	0	—	0	1
Pakeha female	—	0	0	0

Fig. 1. Stylistic variation in copula absence, by interlocutor, among African–American youth in 'Sunnyside,' California (Alim 2004: 170).

unfamiliar Whites (11%, 84/718), unfamiliar Blacks (37%, 310/819) and familiar Black peers (80%, 190/235).

We have already seen several examples of this kind of quantitative style shifting, involving differences in the relative frequency of a sociolinguistic variable. Much rarer, and unexpected given the theoretical assumption that 'internal constraints … are normally independent of social and stylistic factors' (Labov 2010:265, and see Rickford, to appear), is the evidence in Table 3, from Alim (2004: 158), that the ordering of rule constraints or environments can vary according to interlocutor or style.

Interestingly enough, as shown in Table 4, exactly this reversal in the relative effect of a following Noun Phrase and Adjective was found when Hannah (1997) attempted to replicate Poplack and Sankoff's (1987) study of copula absence in Samaná, Dominican Republic. It is a relatively rare manifestation of style shifting, but one worth looking for, given its theoretical importance. And once again, it requires recording by different interlocutors (here, varying by ethnicity).

4.4. RICKFORD (2014)

Reports on variation in the use of Creole and English by Reefer and Ustad, two influential leaders of the Estate Class (working class) and Non-Estate Class (lower middle class) in Cane Walk, Guyana, in three situations or stylistic contexts. Peer group (PG) recordings involve interactions with family or Peer Group members in their village. Spontaneous Interviews (SI) refer to sociolinguistic interviews conducted with me, an interviewer who is also Guyanese, but from the capital city of Georgetown.. Expatriate Reinterviews are interviews done at the end of my fieldwork with three white expatriates (Derek Bickerton, John Holm and Michael Pye) who were not Guyanese and were left to interact with the Cane Walkers after a brief introduction. (See Rickford 1983:308–10, for variation in negative markers in these 3 contexts.) Table 5 displays the relative frequency of Reefer and Ustad's non-basilectal (essentially, English) morphological pronoun variants, by style, in six singular pronoun subcategories. In five of the six pronoun subcategories, the non-basilectal variant is the English or acrolectal form ('(h)is,' 'my,' 'I,' 'it,'), but in the three-variant third Masculine Object subcategory (column VII), the English or acrolectal variant is *im* '(h)im' and the intermediate creole or mesolectal variant is *ii* '(h)e.'

Table 3. African–American youth in 'Sunnyside' California also display interlocutor style shifting via alternate following grammatical constraint hierarchies for copula absence (Alim 2004:158).

With unfamiliar Blacks	__**NP (0.31)** < __ADJ (0.40) < __LOC (0.55) < __VING (0.64) < __GON (0.92)
With unfamiliar Whites	__ ADJ (0.39) < __LOC (0.45) < __**NP (0.47)** < __VING (0.59) < __GON (0.96)

Table 4. Following grammatical constraint hierarchies for copula absence with Black versus White interviewers in Samaná (Black) English, Dominican Republic (Hannah 1997:358, Table 5 and 6).

With Black interviewer (Hannah 1997)	__**NP (0.12)** < __ADJ (0.44) < __LOC (0.42) < __VING (0.89) < __GON (0.93)
With White interviewers (Poplack and Sankoff 1987)	__ADJ (0.19) < __LOC (0.23) < __**NP (0.41)** < __VING (0.46) < __GON (0.59)

Table 5. Relative frequencies of non-basilectal, English-like morphological pronoun variants for Reefer and Ustad in Cane Walk, Guyana, in three recording contexts.

Speaker	Situation or stylistic context	Means, all 6 categs.	I 3MPos Bas: *ii* Acr: *z*	II 1Pos Bas:*mii* Acr:*mai*	III 1Sub Bas:*mii* Acr: *ai*	IV 3NSub Bas: *ii* Acr: *t*	VII 3MObj Bas: *am* Mes: *ii* Acr: *m*	VIII 3NObj Bas: *am* Acr: *t*	# significant up-shifts,* cells
Reefer	ER (formal)	**0.15**	0.33	0.00	0.12*	0.26	0.47*	0.11	2/6 (33%)–
	SI (semi-formal)	0.04	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.12	0.00	0.04+	0/5 (0%)
	PG (informal)	0.04	0.00	—	0.00	0.33	0.00	0.00	
Ustad	ER (formal)	**0.95**	0.83	—	1.00*	0.85	1.00	—	1/4 (25%)–
	SI (semi-formal)	**0.84**	0.84*	0.74	0.87*	0.73	0.83	0.97	2/5 (40%)
	PG (informal)	0.65	0.45	0.88	0.61	0.71	—	0.92	

Notes:
From Rickford (2014:228-229).
—, Cells with less than five tokens each.
*Statistically significant up-shift in non-basilectal frequency from stylistic context below.
ER, Expatriate Reinterview; SI, Spontaneous Interview; PG, Peer-Group session; 1, 2, 3, First, second and third person; M, Masculine, N, Neuter; Sub, Subject, Obj, Object; Pos, Possessive.
In 'Means' column, bolded frequencies are significantly higher than frequencies in stylistic context below.
See Table 6 for corresponding Ns in each cell.

Concentrating on the means across all six pronoun categories in column 3, note that Ustad, the Hindu *pandit* ('religious leader, learned man') shows statistically significant increases in non–basilectal usage between the Peer Group and Spontaneous Interview contests *and* between the Spontaneous Interview and Expatriate Reinterview contexts. Reefer, a leader among the canecutters, does not distinguish between the Peer Group and Spontaneous Interview contexts, but only between these and the Expatriate Reinterviews. Successive columns provide further details, indicating which increases in frequency between situational contexts are statistically significant, and which are not.[5] The final column summarizes the number of significant upshifts between stylistic contexts, by speaker. Reefer, for instance, shows significant upshifts in two of his six pronoun subcategories between SI and ER, but in none of his five eligible categories (those with five tokens or more; see Table 6 for Ns) between PG and SI. Ustad, by contrast, displays statistically significant upshifting in two of five eligible pronoun subcategories between the PG and SI contexts, but in only one of his four eligible subcategories between the SI and ER contexts. Another way of interpreting this result is this: for the working class Reefer, the Expatriate Reinterview was essential for discerning his style-shifting ability, for he made two significant upward shifts while speaking to the White expatriates, but none when speaking to a fellow Guyanese from the capital versus speaking to his village peers. For the lower middle class Ustad, having access to data from all three contexts was stylistically informative, but it was the difference between speaking to his village peers and speaking to a fellow Guyanese that showed the bigger stylistic impact. This example demonstrates the value of (re–) interviewing speakers with different interlocutors or audiences (cf. Bell 1984).

Table 6. Ns for Table 5.

Speaker	Context	Total	I 3MPos	II 1Pos	III 1Sub	IV 3NSub	VII 3MObj	VIII 3NObj
Reefer	ER (formal)	213	6	24	105	23	17	38
	SI (semi-formal)	274	14	21	119	23	17	70
	PG (informal)	49	8	(1)	16	6	8	11
Ustad	ER (formal)	59	6	(2)	30	13	10	(4)
	SI (semi-formal)	692	49	99	344	83	23	94
	PG (informal)	113	11	8	74	7	(4)	13

Parenthesized cells have less than five tokens each, and their corresponding relative frequencies are not included in Table 5.

5. Orchestrated Serendipitous Situational and Metaphorical Switching: Recent work by Devyani Sharma and Ben Rampton

The most innovative and interesting research currently being done on stylistic variation, and the one with the richest implications for the focus of this special issue, is the work being done by Devyani Sharma (Queen Mary University of London) and Ben Rampton (King's College London,) with British-born speakers from the Punjabi London community (Sharma 2011a,2011b; Sharma and Rampton 2011). Each of the 74 speakers was interviewed twice, and ten of them were also given tape recorders and invited to record themselves with diverse interlocutors in diverse settings. The result is a rich set of data that reveals both situational and metaphorical style shifting, partly orchestrated and partly serendipitous − hence my awkward moniker: Orchestrated Serendipitious Situational and Metaphorical Switching.

Figure 2 (from Sharma 2011a) tracks the repertoire of an older man (Anwar, a middle-aged, middle-class British Asian Muslim businessman) with six different interlocutors, as reflected in his use of Indian versus British variants of four variables: retroflex versus alveolar /t/, monophthongal versus diphthongal /e/ and /o/ and clear versus dark coda /l/. The use of multiple variables (versus the single variable approach of much sociolinguistic work on style) allows a more nuanced analysis. And in this case, the speaker shows dramatic shifting from the contexts on the left, in which he primarily employs Indian variants, to the contexts on the right in which he almost exclusively employs British variants. Not all speakers behaved similarly.[6] One value of
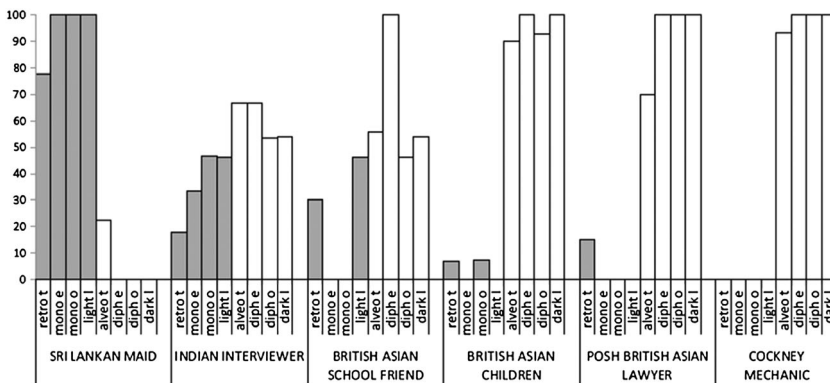

Fig. 2. Use by older man (Anwar) of Indian and British variants across speaking situations. (Shaded bars = Indian variants; clear bars = British variants.) Source: Sharma (2011a), Figure 3.

this individualized approach is that it does not assume that everyone follows the same patterns of style shifting.

Even more interesting is Sharma and Rampton's (2011) new metric for measuring 'Lectal Focusing in Interaction' (LFI), which tracks individuals' stylistic variation at a finer-grained level, that of major clauses, or turn constructional units, usually between 5 to 10 words. Figure 3, for instance, tracks Anwar's variation between Standard British English, Vernacular British English and Indian English variants across six utterances when speaking to Ronni, an old school friend who is a British Asian Sikh. As the authors note (p. 7), 'this extract involves a varied mix of ethnic and class markers, with an emphasis on Vernacular BrE and IndE forms.' This is, as they say, a durable, enregistered style (Agha 2007) that Anwar himself describes as 'Southallian' − based on the name of the area in which he and many Punjabis live. Figure 4, by contrast, tracks Anwar's stylistic variation, utterance by utterance, in the same kind of speech
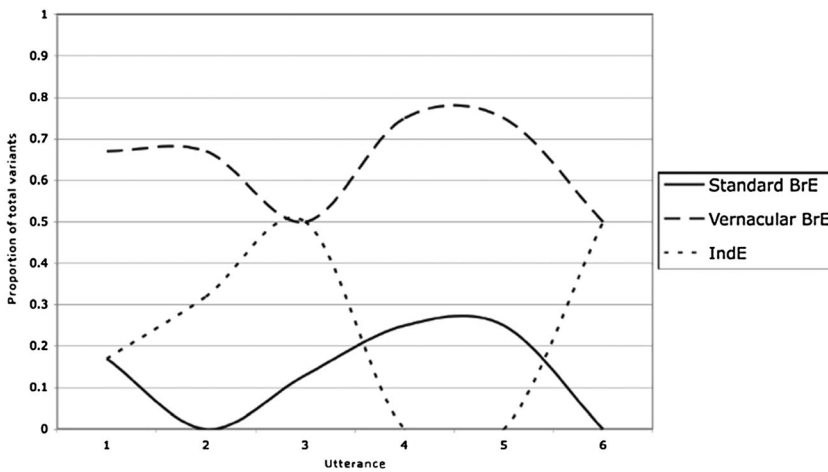

Fig. 3. Lectal Focusing in Interaction in Anwar to Ronni, 'asking after family'.
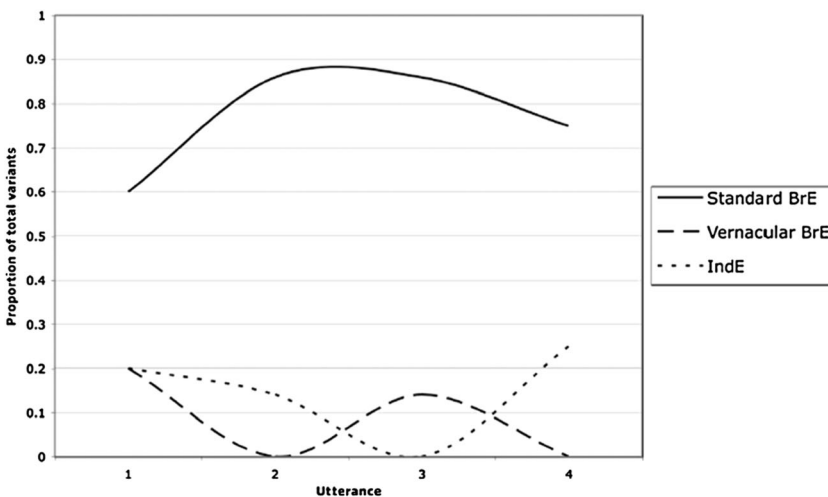

Fig. 4. Lectal Focusing in Interaction in Anwar to Bilal, 'asking after family'.

event ('asking after family'), but with a different interlocutor, Bilal, 'an upper-middle class Brit-ish Asian Muslim barrister who uses a predominantly standard/posh phonetic range' (p. 8) Note how Anwar's variants now cluster primarily in the realm of Standard British English.[7]

Other examples that we do not have space to replicate and discuss here show that Anwar's stylistic variation is not just automatic, or accommodation driven, but also displays shifts in his footing or stance to various topics while talking with the same interlocutor. The LFI metric is sensitive and fine-grained enough to distinguish between shifts that involve accommodation and agency, which is welcome news for sociolinguistics, both methodologically and theoreti-cally, since it allows us to study style shifting that is both 'responsive' to addressees and other interlocutors, and 'initiative' (Bell 1984), representing speakers' agency about how they wish to project themselves

6. Conclusion. What to Code for in Archived Sociolinguistic Corpora

Given the data and discussions in Sections 1 to 5, primarily aimed at improving the richness and range of sociolinguistic corpora with respect to stylistic repertoires, I would like to suggest now what aspects of the situation we should code for in archived sociolinguistic data sets to allow us to study such repertoires. For this purpose, consider the 11 etic 'components' of verbal interac-tions identified by Hymes (1972), as listed in Table 7 below. These can be supplemented by Preston's longer and more comprehensive (1986) list as needed. To communicate enough about the situation so that users of a corpus can interpret situational and stylistic variation therein, we should at least code for items 3 to 8, the basic elements of the setting, scene and par-ticipants. Items 2, and 9–12 are admittedly harder to code in a brief and relatively consistent way, but ideally, some annotations about content, purposes, key, and cultural norms should ac-company sociolinguistic corpora, especially if the linguist who recorded the data considers them striking or exceptional, for example, Reisman's (1974) 'contrapuntal' conversations in Antigua, where conventional Western turn-taking rules seem to be abrogated.

About speakers, and especially their hearers/addressees, we might also want to know their na-tiveness to the community in question (cf. 4.4 above), and their relation to the speaker in terms of age, sex, status, ethnicity and familiarity (cf. 3.3, 3.4, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4, 5).[8] It would also be helpful to know whether the portion of the recording in focus represents an aside to a family member or friend (cf. 3.1, 3.2), or represents a regular section of a sociolinguistic interview, addressed to the interviewer. For instance, the 'Interview Report Forms' that I fill out after doing a sociolinguis-tic interview or recording include a section for information about who else is present in the re-cording situation besides the interviewer, where they are seated or standing in relation to the interviewer and interviewee (I draw little maps of the recording scene), their relation to the pri-mary person being recorded, and their role. And it would be useful for all corpus owners/managers to include a section of this type.

To better evaluate the effect of agency (cf. section), we should ideally make some attempt to code the speaker's varying stances or footings (cf. Johnstone 2009; Sharma and Rampton 2011) during the recording. Finally, we should of course indicate the presence of serendipitous versus orchestrated situational and metaphorical shifting in our recordings, and where (in terms of time stamps or broad sections) these may be located. This list may seem somewhat ambitious, but not every component on it will be relevant to every situation, and some components not on it will be locally relevant and have to be added.

In conclusion, I have tried to indicate in this paper that situational/style shifting is an impor-tant element of sociolinguistic variation, but one that remains under-represented in sociolin-guistic data sets and corpora. This special issue is focused on how to code linguistic corpora for maximum analytical utility, but before we can code situational/style shifting, we have to

do a better job of netting it (to use my metaphor of sociolinguistic interviewing and recording being akin to casting a net into a speech community). Style shifting might manifest itself via *qualitative*, categorical shifts in the use of linguistic features, but perhaps more often as *quantitative increases (or decreases) in the relative frequencies of features*, and least often by *quantitative shifts in the ordering of constraints on features*. Regardless of their manifestations, style shifts can be classified as *situational* (primarily reflecting differences in interlocutors and 'situations') or *metaphorical* (primarily reflecting shifts in topic and other local dimensions of verbal interaction), and as *serendipitous* (occurring by chance, without the interviewer's control) or *orchestrated* (as set up by the interviewer, e.g. asking about childhood games or danger or death experiences to elicit a more informal or excited register). I reviewed a number of sociolinguistic studies to demonstrate these various types, ending with the most complicated type – *Orchestrated Serendipitous Situational and Metaphorical Switching*, as manifested in recent work by Sharma and Rampton. Ultimately, if we pursue these and other strategies for netting greater stylistic variation in our interviews, we will have richer corpora for stylistic analysis. We cannot realistically code *all* the potentially relevant dimensions in a standard format, but drawing on general frameworks like Hymes' (1972) components, we can agree on what features are most essential to code. For me, these include basic aspects of the setting, scene, participants and perhaps purposes, key and local norms of interaction. Although the latter are admittedly harder to report in a conventionalized way, they represent some of the rich motivators of stylistic variation that a sensitive, ethnographically-oriented sociolinguist may have understood, and passing on this knowledge to future users of a sociolinguistic corpus can only enhance its utility and value.

Short Biography

John R. Rickford (PhD, U. of Pennsylvania, 1979) is the J.E. Wallace Sterling Professor of Linguistics and the Humanities at Stanford University. He is also a courtesy professor in Education and Pritzker Fellow in Undergraduate Studies, and Vice-President/President Elect of the Linguistic Society of America. His primary specialization is sociolinguistics, including the relation between language variation and ethnicity, social class and style; language change; pidgins and creoles, especially Caribbean English creoles and Gullah, spoken on the South Carolina and Georgia Sea Islands; African–American Vernacular English; and the application of linguistics to educational problems. He is the author of numerous articles and several books, including *Dimensions of a Creole Continuum*, *African American Vernacular English*, *Spoken Soul: The Story of Black English* (co-authored with Russell J. Rickford, winner of an American Book Award), *Style and Sociolinguistic Variation* (coedited with Penny Eckert), *Language in the USA: Themes for the Twenty-First Century* (co-edited with Ed Finegan), *Language, Culture and Caribbean Identity* (co-edited with Jeannette Allsopp), and *African American, Creole, and Other Vernacular Englishes in Education* (co-authored with Julie Sweetland, Angela Rickford, and Tom Grano). For additional information, visit www.johnrickford.com

Notes

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[1] There are, however, some encouraging signs of change in work since the turn of the century, including, but not limited to, Eckert and Rickford (2001), Coupland (2007), Podesva (2007), Hernandez-Campoy and Cutillas-Espinosa (2012).

[2] 'The mass of dry pith of sugar canes, after all the juice has been mechanically extracted…' (Allsopp 2003:69).

[3] Not *all* of the increases in *is*-absence frequency between the individual and group sessions were statistically significant (e.g. the 36% to 41% increase displayed by the T–Birds in these two contexts was not significant), and in other cases, the two situations showed no difference or a slight decline (e.g. the 44% to 42% frequencies displayed by the Cobras in individual vs. group recordings, respectively).

[4] Table 2, following the original table in Bell (2001), gives absolute frequencies, rather than the relative frequencies usually found in sociolinguistic studies when it is possible to identify and count occurrences of alternate variants, defining the envelope of variation

[5] Note that the only significant internal or linguistic constraint on morphological or morpholexical variation between continuum levels found to date (Bickerton 1973; Rickford 1979) is the particular pronoun subcategory involved. For instance, the third person masculine and first person possessive subcategories tend to show the lowest frequencies of the acrolectal or English variant, for reasons discussed in Rickford (1979:356 ff). However, because the stylistic variation depicted in Table 5 is within pronoun subcategories, there are no (known) intersecting internal constraints to be taken into account.

[6] For instance, a younger man, Ravinder, showed less differentiated usage with different interlocutors, deploying what Sharma describes (p. 478) as 'a relatively invariant hybrid style … across communicative contexts.'

[7] As Sharma and Rampton (2011:5) note, the variables tracked (via relative frequencies of each lectal variant per utterance) are primarily those 'that show clear contrasts among the three lects … For example, coda /l/, with IndE, Standard BrE, and Vernacular BrE variants [l], [ɫ], [w] respectively; inter-vocalic and final /t/, with variants [t], [t], [ʔ] respectively; and the GOAT diphthong, with variants [o], [əʊ], [ʌʊ] respectively.'

[8] These are some of the elements of 'Participant' specified in Preston (1986:34).

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