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LEVELS OF STYLE-SHIFTING

Exemplified in the Interaction Strategies of a Moderator in a Listener Participation Programme

Margret SELTING *

This paper investigates speech styles and style-shifting in the speech of the moderator of a German radio participation programme. Style-shifting is shown to affect several distinct linguistic levels: phonetic, morphophonemic, syntactic, and lexical. The functions of style-shifting are related both to the discourse context and the broader institutional context.

Relying on listeners' co-occurrence expectations with respect to language use in contexts and exploiting listeners' evaluations of processes of speech convergence and divergence, the moderator uses stereotypic markers at different style levels in locally strategic functions in discourse. On the one hand, thematic development is controlled by reinforcing obligations on the addressee. On the other hand, global social reciprocity patterns are constituted and secured. Patterns of reciprocity vary with different types of addressees.

The conversational analysis of language variation shows that variation is not only a quantitative correlate of regional, social and contextual parameters as predominantly conceived of in sociolinguistics. Language variation is furthermore used as a means to signal social and interactive meaning in conversations.

1. Introduction

In sociolinguistics, the analysis of language variation has largely been concerned with correlations of varieties and contexts or larger socio-cultural population groups, taking different socio-economic status groups, sex or age groupings, ethnicity etc. into account (Labov (1972), Klein (1974), a.o.). Recently, newer concepts centering around the notion of 'social networks' (Milroy (1980)) hint at the importance of the interactional dimension. The more abstract analysis of homogeneous systems of varieties is perhaps giving way to an analysis of actual language use in social contexts, thus taking heterogeneity to be the leading hypothesis.

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On the other hand, conversational analysis, while concentrating on the process of interaction, has largely neglected language variation. In some areas of research such as the study of interethnic communication, where code-switching between different languages is a very obvious phenomenon, the role of this in interactional contexts has been the focus of analysis (Gumperz (1982), Auer (1980), Auer and di Luzio (1981)). But in areas where the linguistic differences are more subtle, research is largely absent (but cf. Leodolter (1975), Coupland (1980, 1984), Bell (1982, 1984), Selting (1983, 1985)).

In this paper I want to analyze the strategic value of shifts from a baseline colloquial to a marked colloquial speech style. The speaker is the moderator of a German radio programme with listener participation. The choice of a particular speech style as opposed to other possible speech styles in a given 'language' and in a given context is conceived of as carrying social meaning. These social meanings result from 'rules of co-occurrence' and 'rules of alternation' (Ervin-Tripp (1972), Hymes (1974)). These correspond to expectancy structures within the speech system of a speech community. Style-shifting is defined as the alternation of one speech style with another in the context of the same communicative event, towards the same or another addressee (Selting (1983)). In the present context, style-shifting occurs in strategically important turns in conversation, i.e., in turns where the moderator anticipates a co-participant's reluctance or unwillingness to conform to her action plans and tries to reinforce the co-participant's obligation to respond. Strategic interaction is the attempt of an interactant to overcome a co-interactant's reluctance to conform to his expectations by using special devices (cf. Rehbein (1977), Kallmeyer and Schütze (1976: 20 ff.)).

In order to describe the strategic function of speech style variation in conversation, it is necessary to take the conversational context as well as the broader institutional context of this particular programme into account.

The discourse tokens analyzed here are taken from a German radio series, 'Hallo-Ü-Wagen'. The series has been produced since 1974 and is transmitted in the second programme of the 'Westdeutscher Rundfunk' every Thursday 9.20 to 12.00 a.m. The production is carried out live in an open studio located in an outside-broadcast vehicle ('Ü-Wagen'), each time in a different town in Northrhine-Westphalia. As a listener participation programme, the programme's goal is to encourage ordinary citizens, in particular its own listeners, to participate actively and spontaneously in the production of the programme by joining the audience in front of the open studio and participating in the discussion.

The programme is hosted by Carmen Thomas (CT), who organizes face-to-face discussion around a specific topic. Active face-to-face participants are a small group of experts (scientists, politicians and other personalities of public interest), one or two listeners who originally suggested the topic, and other

listeners who come up to front to give their opinions, ask questions, etc. These voluntary participants are the ones which the programme relies on, but at the same time the ones who constitute the most unpredictable factor with respect to the outcome of the discussion.

As mass-media communication is a public process subject to institutional restrictions and control, which has to be functionally organized in terms of the institution's objectives and the moderator's action plans, specific communicative strategies are needed to overcome the partial contradiction of having listeners participate spontaneously and of simultaneously having to subject them to institutionally defined action schemata. With respect to the listeners, therefore, a pattern of cooperative reciprocity (cf. Cicourel (1973) for the term reciprocity) has to be constituted and maintained; this also has the function of encouraging the cooperation of future active participants. With the experts the situation is more complex. They were previously invited and have accepted the invitation; no specific discourse strategies are necessary to secure their cooperation. On the contrary, they are often incorporated into the strategy of securing the listeners' willingness to cooperate.

Among these strategies of securing listeners' cooperation, the baseline speech style which the moderator uses, and the style-shifts from this to more marked speech styles fulfil important functions.

In the following section, two transcripts are presented in which CT uses the different speech styles. (See the appendix for transcription symbols.) In sections 3 and 4, the speech styles will be identified as patterns resulting from choices on distinct levels, from lexical and semantic choices to syntactic, morphophonemic and phonetic marking.¹ In section 5, the style-shifts will be interpreted within the discourse organization of the programme, and in section 6, conclusions will be drawn from the analysis.

2. Some examples

In the first transcript (A), the moderator interviews a listener participant; in the second one (B), she interviews an expert. The topic to be discussed in this programme is: 'Warum stehen Häuser leer?' ('Why are houses left empty?', i.e., not let to tenants to live in).

¹ The analysis of intonation contours in another passage from the same series showed that the moderator distinguished between talking to an expert and to a listener participant by using different intonation contours (Gibbon and Selting (1983)). In both cases, CT converged to the respective addressee by using roughly the same contours as the addressee used. In this sense, intonation also seems to be an important alternative discourse strategy for the moderator.

TRANSCRIPT A:

CT interviews listener participants about their opinion why houses are being left empty. H1, a female listener, is continuing her answer here. Later, H2, a male listener, is addressed by the moderator CT.

- 1 H1: die Wohnungen solln nich léerstehn bleibm₁ sie solln se préisgünstig vermieten₁ só/
the flats shouldn't be left empty they should let them at reduced rents so/
2 äh die Wohnungen sind ja méistens nich in gutem Zustand₁ die solln die dann
the flats are mostly not in a good condition they should then
3 vermieten zu nem gánz geringen Mietsatz₁ so daß jünge Léute₁ und Studénten und die
let them at a very low rent so that young people and students and
those
4 nun wirklich auf der Straße stehn₁ auch eine Únterkunft habm₁ würde ich sag₁
who now really are out on the streets also have a lodging place would I say
5 CT: ,mhmm^v
6 H1: das is-
that's
7 CT: ↑ja aber aber ich meine-* das is ja eingtlich was ganz Éinleuchtendes was Sie da so
yes but but I mean that's in principle quite evident what you are there
8 sag₁ . ↑was dénk₁/ . was/*
saying what do you think/ what/
9 H1: (..) ich hab Sie nich verstánd₁(? entschul/ ?)
I didn't understand you (? sorry ?)
10 CT: ↑das is ja einglich was ganz
that's in principle quite
11 Éinleuchtendes was Sie da sag₁ * aber was dénk₁ Sie denn was dänn- die Behórd₁ oder
evident what you are saying there but what do you think what then is preventing
12 die Besitzer davon ábhált₁
the authorities or the owners from doing it
13 H1: i/ ja₁ die Besitzer₁ ich vermúte die Besitzer die wolln äh wirklich äh Géld
I/ well the owners I suspect the owners want to really make money
14 rausschlaren₁ indem sie die Häuser gúntig verkáufen₁ und das- und dänn werdn
wieder
by selling the houses cheap and that and then again
15 große Báut₁ gésetzt- un dänn werden wieder Miet₁ gefracht- die die jünge Leute
sich
large buildings are set and then again rents are asked which the young
people
16 nicht leist₁ könn₁ . nálich in únserm Álter schon sind die Miet₁ ja só horrend hóch₁
cannot afford that is in our age already the rents are so horribly high
17 CT: ,mhmm^v
18 H1: daß se téilweise sehr viel áhm- . spáren müssen₁ um diese Miet₁ zu zähl₁
that you partly must very much save to pay these rents
19 CT: ,mhmmⁿ vérstehn Sie das₁ aso m-↑find das immer ganz schwierig éinzusehn₁ * dann-
stéht₁
do you understand that find this always quite hard to understand then there
20 da son Háus leer₁ und vielleicht will da jemand ja au was mit₁ . daß der also nich
is an empty house and perhaps wants someone to do something with it that he doesn't

- 21 wenigstens léihweise da jemand reinziehn läßt₁ ↑ statt es léer stehn zu lassen₁ *
- 22 H2: ja ich stéh auf dem Stánpunkt-wenn ein Haus léer steht₁ und es finden sich
well I take the position if a house is empty and there are people
- 23 Interessént₁ die das selbst in Órdnung bringen möcht₁, daß man dás denen auch
lassen₁
interested who themselves want to put it in order that one should let it to
- 24 sollte₁ . und äh natürlich gibt es äh äh sch/méines Eracht₁ nach Spekulant₁ die
äh
them then and naturally there are in my opinion speculators who
- 25 sáren wir lassen das léer stehn₁ und wárten der Zéit entsprechend ab₁ . dáß äh ich
say we leave it empty and wait according to time that I
- 26 da äh- . mehr Profit raushole aber- . äh wenn die Verträge gemacht werden₁ . die-
make more profit with it but when the contracts are made which
- 27 auf äh Zéit sind₁ so kámma doch jed₁ das überlass₁ das is méin Stánpunkt₁
are on time so one can let it to anybody that is my opinion
- 28 CT: mhm^v . ähm- aber selbst mit dem- (clears throat) selbst wenn die darauf wárt₁ daß es
aso
but even with the even if they wait that it
- 29 irendwie- . ähm- . sich irgéndwann ma rentiern soll₁ selbs in der Zwischenzeit₁ ↑selbs
somehow some time should bring profit even in th meantime even
- 30 wenn die bloß weiß ich zwanzig Márk für die Wohnung neh₁ würd₁ würdn se d₁
if they only what do I now asked twenty marks for the flat they would
- 31 wenigstens zwanzig Márk dran verdien₁ *
at least earn twenty marks with it
- 32 H2: nein₁ se bráuchen ja nix dran verdien₁ ↑ wénn se s
no they need not earn anything with it if they
- 33 léer stehn bringt es ja núr Kósten₁ *und wenn sich jemand dafür beréit erklärt-
leave it empty it only brings costs and if someone is willing to
- 34 da wird/
it will
- 35 CT: ↑ja deshalb méin ich ja₁ deshalb verstéh ich das ja gar nich₁ *
yes that's why I mean that's why I don't understand that at all
- 36 H2: ja₁
yes
- 37 H2: . äh- äh jaa^v das ↑bringt Kósten₁ * ja₁ darum sóllten se s vermiet₁
yes it brings costs yes therefore they should let it
- 38 CT: ↑já₁ * (clears throat) ↑und wárum tún die das nich₁ *
yes and why don't they do it
- 39 H2: jách₁ (? äh ?) vielleicht aus Egoismus-
yeah perhaps out of selfishness
- 40 CT: . mhm^v . já₁ . ähm is das denn son b/ Problem das Sie bescháftigt oder ham Sie da
yes is that then a problem that you are concerned about or do you
- 41 normalerweise nie wat mit zu tún₁
normally never have anything to do with it
- 42 H2: na es stórt mich schon₁wenn ich durch die Stádt gehe und ichsehe léer stehende
Háuser
well I do mind it when I walk through the city and I see empty houses

TRANSCRIPT B:

After experts have claimed that responsibility for a specific empty house is not with themselves but with any one of the other experts respectively.

- 1 CT: ah ich mein das is sone Säche die natürlich- . dem Bürger vóllig únglaubwürdig
 I mean that's such a thing which naturally to the citizen seems to be completely
 2 erscheint . also der Regierungspräsident- . sächt er hätte Ihñ vor zwei Jahrñ gesacht
 untrustworthy so the president of government says he told you two years ago
 3 dénkn Se sich ma was für aus' und Sie ↑hoffen immer noch daß der Kelch an Ihñ
 think about something for it and you hope still that you can avoid
 4 vorübergeht* so hört Ihñ sich das an
 the task that's how it sounds
 5 HH: (laughter in the background)
 6 E: . nee man darf nur immer nich die Problème verschiebm . ich kann do nur einfach
 no one must only not always shift the problem I can only simply
 7 féststelln- wir sind nicht Eigentümer¹ . und wir können nich einfach mit den Häusern
 state we are not the owners and we cannot just with the houses
 8 machen was wir wóllen¹ sondern (..)
 do what we want but
 9 CT: aber sich scho ma wat áusdenken₁
 but already think about something
 10 E: ja mit dénkn is kein Problém gelöst Frau Thomas₁
 well by thinking no problem is solved Mrs. Thomas
 11 CT: ja ↑aber ich mein dann géhts doch etwas flóttér als wemman da immer drauf wártet daß
 well but I mean then it is a bit quicker as if one always waits that
 12 E: nee₁
no
 13 CT: jemand was tút * ich/ (faster) ↑es hört sich wirklich so án als ób Sie die léeren- . áh
 someone does something I/ it really sounds as if you the empty
 14 g/ dje dje da stéht ja offenbar schon was léer¹ ** als ob das so hín und hér geschobm
 the the there is apparently already empty space as if this were moved about and
 15 würde¹ . s is gánz kómisch₁
 about it's quite funny
 16 E: nee₁ das is kein hin und hércschieben¹
 no that's no moving about and about

3. The baseline speech style

The speech styles used are marked on different linguistic levels.

Within the present context, a baseline speech style has already by convention become the 'normal form', i.e., the one expected to be used by the moderator. She uses this speech style intentionally in order to converge (cf. Giles and Smith (1979)) towards the every-day speech style used by the

majority of listeners to the programme. Conventional rules of co-occurrence associate it with rather informal situations or contexts.

The baseline speech style is used (a) in turns addressed to the programme's audience, when no face-to-face participant is directly addressed (e.g., in introductions to the programme or situational commentaries about non-verbal activities going on in the studio or in the audience), and (b) in non-strategic turns in conversation with face-to-face participants.

In transcript A, CT uses the baseline speech style in lines 7–12, 28–31, 35 and 38; in transcript B, the baseline speech style is not used at all. The following list of general types of markers of this baseline speech style on the *morphophonemic level* is largely adopted from earlier analyses (Selting (1983)); not all the markers are to be found in the transcripts under analysis. Types (5) and (6) are added here. The realization of these phenomena is always optional and their frequency varies in the analyzed discourses. In this list, first the standard form is given, then the baseline form in an orthographic notation as used in the transcripts. The phonetic transcription indicates how the orthographic notation is to be read.

- (1) Reduction, assimilation or deletion of suffixes in nouns, verbs and auxiliaries: following both vowels and consonants, the suffix [ən] may be phonetically reduced to [n] or [ŋ]² (*denken* → 'denkn' = [dɛŋkn], *rentieren* → 'rentiern' = [Rɛntiən], *sagen* → 'sagn' = [zɑ:gŋ], *Behörden* → 'Behördn' = [bəhørdŋ], etc.; following a nasal consonant, it may be deleted (no example in the transcripts here, but cf. *genommen* → 'genomm' = [gənɔm]). Following the labial consonant [b], the suffix [ən] may be assimilated: *haben* → 'habm' → 'ham' = [ham]. The suffix [ə] may be deleted. In second person singular suffixes, the final [t] may be deleted, resulting in forms like *du hast* → 'du has' = [dʰ has].
- (2) Reduction of the unstressed indefinite article in both inflected and uninflected forms: deletion of the initial diphthong results in realizations like

² The present transcription is based purely on auditive criteria, although the use of standard orthography for the representation of phonetic realizations results in inconsistencies and does not allow a clear separation of phonetic and orthographic criteria. These problems were put up with to facilitate readability of the transcripts. The following conventions are used:

- for the notation of the suffix '-en', a differentiation between a full form, a syllabic realization and a non-syllabic realization is introduced. The differentiation between syllabic and non-syllabic does not follow theoretical criteria of phonology, but auditive criteria. These correlate with length and sonority of the sound. Thus,
 - 'en' is noted when [ən] is realized,
 - 'ŋ' is noted when [n] has 'syllabic quality', i.e., is realized with a slight lengthening of the sound,
 - 'n' is noted when [n] does not have 'syllabic quality', i.e., is realized as a short sound.
- The suffix [ɪç], which is noted as 'ig' in standard orthography, is transcribed as 'ig'.

- 'n' ([n]) or 'ŋ' ([ŋ]) for *ein*, 'ne' ([nə]) for *eine*, 'ner' ([nɐ]) for *einer*, 'nem' ([nəm]) for *einem*, etc. The form *[nəs] for *eines* does not seem to be a possible realization.
- (3) Weakening and cliticization of pronouns in unstressed positions: The pronouns of address *Sie* and *Du* may be reduced to 'Se' ([zə]) and 'De' ([dɐ]) respectively; *wir* may be realized as 'wa' ([vɐ]) or 'we' ([və]).
- (4) Deletion of final consonants in monosyllabic modal particles: e.g., the items *nicht*, *noch*, *doch*, *auch*, *mal*, *selbst* may be realized as 'nich', 'no', 'do', 'au', 'ma', 'selbs' ([nɪç, nɔ, dɔ, aʊ, ma, zɛlbs]), respectively.

Another type of marker is on the *phonetic level*:

- (5) Certain sounds can be omitted or assimilated in the middle of words: e.g., *eigentlich* ([aɪg(ə)ntlɪç] → 'einglich' ([aɪŋtlɪç]) → 'einglich' ([aɪŋlɪç]); *gefragt* ([gəfrɑ:kt]) → 'gefracht' ([gəfrɑ:xt]); *sagt* ([zɑ:kt]) → 'sacht' ([zaxt]).³

A further characteristic of the baseline speech style can be identified on the *semantic level* of analysis:

- (6) High frequency of modal and vagueness particles: e.g., (particles are underlined in the examples) 'ja einglich was ganz *Einleuchtendes*', 'was Sie da so sagn', 'immer ganz *schwierig*', 'vielleicht *will da jemand* ja au *was mit*', 'deshalb *versteh ich das* ja gar *nich*', etc.

Different types of particles are involved which serve different functions in discourse. These can not be dealt with in detail here (cf. Bublitz (1978), Weydt and Hentschel (1983)). CT uses these particles very frequently and often in combination.

According to Müller (1979), the use of particles like these and especially their frequent use and combination can be interpreted as having a predominantly interactive or phatic function with respect to the level of the constitution of social relationships between the interactants.

The features and markers (1)–(6) are used by CT, the listeners H1 and H2, and by the expert E. H1 and H2 both use a dialectal feature as well: the

³ Although the realization of [gəfrɑ:xt] and [zɑ:xt] may also be classified as standard varieties in e.g., pronunciation handbooks, its classification here is solely motivated by the systematic opposition in which speakers seem to make use of it in different speech styles. Thus, although the assimilations of e.g. [zɑ:gən] to [zɑ:kt] and of the further down noted dialectal [zɑ:ʝən] to [zɑ:xt] may be historically and phonologically related (standard voiced [g] as in [zɑ:gən] results in its unvoiced counterpart [k] as in [zɑ:kt], dialectal voiced [ʝ] as in [zɑ:ʝən] results in its unvoiced counterpart [x] as in [zɑ:xt]), this is of little relevance to the way speakers use these pronunciations as speech style signalling forms in conversation.

pronunciation of *sagen* ([zɑ:gən]) as 'saren' ([zɑ:yən]) or *rausschlagen* ([raʊsʃlɑ:gən]) as 'rausschlaren' ([raʊsʃlɑ:yən]), i.e., velar fricative [ɣ] for the standard velar plosive [g] sound in these words. All speakers predominantly use markers on the morphophonemic level; CT also uses a large number of modal and vagueness particles.

4. Shifting towards the marked colloquial speech style

Some markers occurring in the transcribed speech of CT have been excluded from analysis so far because they seem to indicate a shift to a different style. These remaining markers can be described on the same levels of analysis as those postulated above; the syntactic level, which did not occur above, is added here. Comparison with research on social and regional speech variation and especially research on the evaluation of speech styles and on normal co-occurrence expectations suggests that CT is shifting towards a marked colloquial speech style by using the following indicators:

On the *morphophonemic or phonetic level*, the item *was* ([vas]) is realized as 'wat' ([vat]) in A, line 41 and B, line 9; the words *wenn man* ([vɛn man]) are realized as the contraction 'wemman' ([vɛman]) in B, line 11 by CT: the forms 'wat' and 'wemman' belong to the socially stigmatized markers of speech in the Ruhr area which have been analyzed by Steinig (1976:75ff.), using experiments to elicit evaluations of social and regional dialect features. The form 'wat' results from the 't/s-substitution' which most frequently applies to the words *was* → 'wat' and *das* → 'dat'; the contraction 'wemman' results from a word boundary deletion and a consonant assimilation in the words *wenn man*. Similar contractions are e.g., 'inne' ([ɪnə]) instead of *in die* ([ɪn di:] i.e., 'into the' (+N_{fem,acc})) and 'vonne' ([fɔnə]) instead of *von der* ([fɔn dɛə] i.e., 'of the' (+N_{fem,acc})).

Other socially stigmatized markers in the Ruhr area are the reductions, deletions and assimilations listed above with the baseline speech style. In relation to the latter classes of markers, however, the degree of stigmatization of the 't/d-substitution' and of contractions is higher and more clear-cut. This would suggest that their use by the moderator might indicate a shift from the baseline speech style to a colloquial speech style incorporating strong markers of regional and/or social class varieties which are normally associated with very informal and/or in-group contexts. Further evidence results from the fact that CT only uses these markers in turns which can be interpreted as 'strategic interaction' as explained above. They seem to have a specific strategic signalling function.

A further type of speech style signalling occurs at the *syntactic level*. In the utterance 'vielleicht will da jemand ja au was mit' (A, line 20), the pronominal adverb *damit* is separated into 'da...mit' and placed discontinuously as a sort

of frame around the subject and part of the verb phrase. In a more standard style one would rather say: 'Vielleicht will jemand ja auch was damit (anfangen)'. The same phenomenon occurs in lines 40–41 (A): the phrase 'oder ham Sie da normalerweise nie wat mit zu tún', would in a more standard style rather be formulated as *oder ham Sie normalerweise nie was damit zu tún*. In line 11 of transcript B, the realization of *darauf* ([daraʊf]) as 'drauf' ([draʊf]) can be seen: 'als wemman da immer drauf wärtet'. In this case, it is not clear whether the lexical item 'da' is a particle or a first part of the pronomial adverb *darauf*. If it is the latter, one would have to classify the occurrence as an instance of the discontinuous use of the pronomial adverb, where additionally the *da* is reincorporated into the second part in a phonetically reduced form. An occurrence where the first part *da* seems to be completely deleted from the form *dafür* is to be found in line 3 (B): 'dénkŋ Se sich ma was für aus' instead of *dénkŋ Se sich mal was dafür aus*. In (A) line 21, a similar phenomenon occurs: The 'normally expected', standard word order *daß der nich ((...)) jemand da reinziehn läßt* is reversed to 'daß der nich ((...)) da jemand reinziehn läßt'.

The discontinuous use of the pronomial adverb is a typical feature of Low German (cf. Saltveit (1983: 32ff.), who gives a systematic account of this feature).⁴ Saltveit treats it as a proform for a prepositional phrase, but also talks of a borderline case between adverbs and prepositions.

There is no literature on the evaluation of this usage in colloquial or standard speech styles. In this case, however, internal co-occurrence restrictions in the moderator's speech with respect to discourse contexts is helpful. An examination of the whole corpus of four programmes showed that these features are indeed exclusively used in turns which are interpretable as instances of 'strategic interaction'. This restricted use might be an indicator of its style-shift signalling status.

The last marker to be treated here is on the *lexical level*. The comparative adjective 'flotter' in line 11 (B) or its simple form *flott* can be seen in contrast to the adjective *schnell*. Their basic meaning is the same, namely 'fast' or 'quick', though *flott* is used predominantly in positive evaluative and rather informal contexts; the difference between *schnell* and *flott* thus seems to be in the stylistic dimension.

Even if the markers may be used individually as stereotypes to signal particular speech styles or style-shifts, systematic analysis still requires comprehensive studies of stylistic co-occurrence rules and restrictions involved. In particular, it may be argued that only a combination of features on different linguistic levels might justify the term 'speech style', although in certain circumstances few features may be involved. Speech styles appear to have some internal systematicity, though perhaps not complete homogeneity. But an

⁴ I am grateful to Jan Wirrer (U Bielefeld) for advice on this feature.

additional dimension is introduced by the dynamics of the social situations in which these styles are used; in particular, style markers may only be used for strategic purposes at specific points in discourse development. Single markers seem to function as indicators or even triggers which serve definite purposes with respect to 'convergence' and 'divergence' as defined by Giles and Smith (1979) and Thakerar, Giles and Cheshire (1982); this leads to a different conception of style-shift from the quantitative contextual style-shifts of earlier work by Labov (1972) and others.

If the phenomena discussed so far are combined and listed with the moderator's turns in which they occur, it becomes evident that there are turns in which only one marked feature is realized and turns in which features on different levels co-occur. In the following list, the markers of the baseline style, which occur in every turn and are therefore not the important ones here, are not listed separately.

Transcript A:

lines 7–12: markers of the baseline speech style

lines 19–21: markers of the baseline speech style +
marker of the marked colloquial speech style:
syntactic: 'da... mit'

lines 28–31: markers of the baseline speech style

line 35: markers of the baseline speech style

line 38: markers of the baseline speech style

lines 40–41: markers of the baseline speech style +
markers of the marked colloquial speech style:
phonetic: 'wat'
syntactic: 'da... mit'

Transcript B:

lines 1–4: markers of the baseline speech style +
marker of the marked colloquial speech style:
syntactic: 'Ø... für'

line 9: markers of the baseline speech style +
marker of the marked colloquial speech style:
phonetic: 'wat'

lines 11–13: markers of the baseline speech style +
markers of the marked colloquial speech style:
morphophonemic: 'wemman'
syntactic: '(? da ?)...drauf'
lexical: 'flotter'

lines 13–15: standard speech style

In lines 19–21 and 40–41 of transcript A and in all turns except lines 13–15 of transcript B the moderator shifts her style from the baseline speech style to a

more marked colloquial one. In both cases, turns with co-occurring markers on different levels are preceded by turns with only a single marker of the marked colloquial style. In transcript A, however, unmarked turns in which alternative strategies to style-shifting are possibly used (cf. section 4) occur between the marked turns. Tentatively, the use of an increasing number of markers in style-shifting could be interpreted as a gradual transition from the baseline to the marked colloquial speech style (cf. Auer and di Luzio's (1982) category of 'code-shifting'), in which the degree of marking is dependent upon the speaker's success in making his addressee respond to his strategies in previous turns.

In lines 13–15 of transcript B, CT seems to shift to a more standard speech style. This case cannot be dealt with here for lack of space (for similar cases see Selting (1983)).

In order to analyze the interactive function of style-shifting, the conversational context has to be taken into account.

5. The function of style-shifting in conversational context

An outline of the conversational structure of the two transcripts is given in the figures 1 and 2 preceding the respective analyses. The theoretical concept underlying this systematization is the approach to conversational analysis as developed by Kallmeyer and Schütze (1976, 1977). I shall only give the minimum of conversational structure here that one needs to explain style-shifting.

In transcript A, CT intended to elicit a narrative or a description about the listener's thoughts, emotions, or personal reaction to the problem of empty houses. After CT's additional move does not lead to a description or narrative on personal reactions, she changes her addressee, re-initiating or refocussing on the description/narrative. This refocussing is a first instance, where she presumably shifts her style (for an analysis of focussing and refocussing activities cf. Kallmeyer (1978)).

H2 does not react with a description/narrative on personal reactions either. In her following reaction, CT pinpoints a previously mentioned contradiction between the need for flats and the owners' reluctance to let empty flats. This utterance (line 28–31) is remarkable for its structure: An antecedent is split up into three parts, each part introduced by the particle *selbst* which gives additional emphasis to the sequence in its scope, and a conclusion in which the particles *doch wenigstens* are used. A fourth instance of *selbst* results if one counts the self-interrupted initial fragment as well. All the particles used here serve to emphasize the postulated contradiction and thereby to highlight the personal reaction which is expressed. A further effect might result from the high overall tone-level used in the last two intonation contours of the turn.

The pattern of H2 continuing his statement of opinion and CT refocussing

Lines	CT	Addressee
<i>Transcript A</i>		
1-6	Intended action from the previous turn: initiation of a narrative/ description on <i>thoughts, emotions, personal reactions</i> to the focussed problem	Initiation of a description and <i>evaluation of the focussed problem</i> , not of personal reactions
7-12	Pointing out of a contradiction in the problem + change of focus: reasons for this contradiction	
13-18		Hypothesis on reasons + change of focus: consequences and background to the problem
19	<i>Change of addressee</i>	
19-21	Reinitiation of a narrative/ description of <i>personal reactions</i> + display of own personal reactions	
22-27		Change of focus: <i>general statement of opinion</i> on the problem, no reference to personal reactions
28-31	Refocussing on <i>personal reactions</i> by display of own reactions to the contradiction	
32-34		Change of focus: continuation of <i>statement of opinion</i>
35	Confirmation + refocussing on <i>personal reactions</i>	
37		Confirmation + conclusion
38	Refocussing on reasons for the contradiction	
39		Tentative suggestion of an explanation for the contradiction
40-41	Refocussing: direct request for display of <i>personal reactions</i>	
42 ff.		Narrative on <i>personal reactions</i>

Figure. 1. Outline of conversational structure of transcript A.

on personal reactions using high level tone is repeated twice; and H2 makes a tentative suggestion concerning the reasons for the contradiction. Then CT directly focusses on the problem she wants to be discussed: she directly asks

H2 whether the problem is one that he is concerned about or not (line 40–41). This is the second instance where she shifts her style. H2 now reacts with the narrative intended by the moderator.

Both cases where style-shifting is signalled are thus turns in which the moderator refocusses a topic which has been avoided previously by the addressee. In Selting (1983), style-shifts, which occurred at similar points in conversation, were analyzed as a strategy of convergence of speech styles (see above) in speech addressed at listener participants as addressees. This convergence towards listeners was claimed to fulfil strategic functions by reinforcing obligations which the addressee had avoided or been unable to fulfil for some reasons. In the transcripts there, however, CT had actually moved her style towards that of a listener who himself used those markers which CT used in her strategic moves. Convergence was thus interpreted as the reinforcement of a general strategy of reciprocity manifestation by ‘speaking the same language’. The strategic function resulted from the listener’s obligation not to disturb a cooperative or quasi-cooperative reciprocity basis for communication which the moderator had repeatedly manifested and secured. This obligation included the fulfilment of the conditionally relevant activity which the moderator had established by initiating an action sequence.

In the example analyzed here, the same sort of reciprocity manifestation can be observed. CT always establishes topical coherence with the previous speaker’s turn before trying to refocus the argument in the direction of her own intended activity. Even before changing addressee in line 19, she clearly acknowledges and confirms the previous listener’s contribution by using the reception signal ‘mhm’ with a complex rising-falling-rising instead of the usual falling-rising intonation contour.⁵ In no instance does she disturb the cooperative reciprocity basis of communication.

The markers used in the moderator’s strategic moves here cannot be interpreted as a simple form of convergence, though. The listener participants do not use the same forms themselves. They are not dialect speakers of the Ruhr area, but use features typical of the dialect area of Aachen: e.g., the substitution of intervocalic velar plosive [g] by uvular fricative [ɣ] (cf. the end of section 3).

Thus, the simple convergence hypothesis must be modified: the speech of the moderator does not necessarily converge towards the forms of the dialect or other variety actually spoken by her listener participant addressee but towards his speaking a marked colloquial variety of speech of any kind. His general status as a (potential) dialect or colloquial style speaker seems to be

⁵ The falling-rising contour on the signal “mhm” corresponds to Ehlich’s (1979) ‘hřm’ which he claims has the function of signalling agreement with the (previous) speaker’s turn. The more complex contour noted here was not included in Ehlich’s account.

more important for the style-shift than the actual variety used, i.e., convergence towards his status rather than to his actual speech.

With this background, the stereotype hypothesis mentioned in Selting (1983) seems to be reinforced. The markers used by CT, rather obvious stereotypic markers of the Ruhr area dialects, seem to function for her as stereotypic signalling of a style-shift no matter which variety the actual addressee in fact speaks. This result seems to confirm the revised version of accommodation theory as presented by Thakerar, Giles and Cheshire (1982).

If style-shifting thus occurs in turns where CT refocusses on a topic previously avoided by her addressee, the question arises why she does not shift her style in lines 28–31, 35, and 38 (A), which are also refocussing turns in discourse development. Here perhaps the structure of the turn 28–31, which was described above as an emphatic one resulting from the repeated use of the particle *selbst*, might be important as a strategy to highlight personal reactions. If this is true, the listener might be put under an obligation to react personally as well. Another strategy might be the use of high level tone intonation as an uptake securing device in cases where CT anticipates uptake problems, i.e., problems resulting from the fact that the listener might try again to refocus the topic in his reaction. Signalling of emphasis and high level tone intonation might thus be used as alternative and/or additional strategies to style-shifting in this context (cf. also lines 7–8, 10–11, 19 and 21 (A)).

Transcript B gives an example of the moderator's use of the marked colloquial speech style in an interview with an expert. Before the transcript begins, E and other experts had claimed that responsibility in the case of one particular empty house was not with themselves but with another one of them. When CT does not receive a concrete answer to a concrete question, she

Lines	CT	Addressee
<i>Transcript B</i>		
	Intended action before: concrete answer to a concrete problem	Avoiding of a concrete answer to the concrete problem
1–4	Initiation of an argumentation: pointing out of a <i>contradiction</i>	
6–8		<i>Rejection of the contradiction + counter argument</i>
9	<i>Suggestion</i> as to the expected initiative/action of E	
10		<i>Rejection of the suggested action</i>
11–16	<i>Reinforcement of the suggestion + accusation of inactivity + conclusion about the experts' foregoing arguments</i>	

Figure 2. Outline of conversational structure of transcript B.

initiates a line of argumentation in lines 1–4 by pointing out the contradiction inherent in the experts' previous answers. Her speech style is broadly the baseline one, in lines 3–4 using an idiom to ridicule the experts' positions. This is acclaimed by the audience with laughter.

After the expert E has rejected the contradiction and tries to put forward a counterargument in lines 6–8, he is interrupted by CT: she suggests an expected initiative which the experts have obviously failed to take, thereby accusing E of inactivity and irresponsibility; the reciprocity basis of communication is clearly defined as 'being in dispute'. This is the first instance in this transcript where CT uses the signal 'wat' as an indicator of a marked colloquial style.

The expert, however, tries again to reject CT's argument, and immediately CT reinforces her suggestion by giving an argument in favour of it (lines 11–13) and by making her accusation of inactivity explicit. In this move the reciprocity basis is still defined as 'being in dispute'. CT again uses some features indicating a style-shift and uses high level tone intonation. In line 13, however, when she explains the background to her accusation and thus redefines the reciprocity basis of communication towards a more cooperative one, she seems to shift her style towards the standard.

In both cases, style-shifts towards the marked colloquial style occur in moves where the reciprocity basis of communication is defined as 'being in dispute' and where the expert is under a strong obligation to respond to her accusations. If the accusations are interpreted as aggressions upon the image of both the individual expert E and his colleagues in the administration responsible for housing problems (cf. Holly (1979) for 'image aggressions' and Goffman (1967) for the social rules of face-saving), the obligation to save face which the expert is left with is even stronger.

The function of the moderator's style-shifts in the turns addressed to the expert can be interpreted as follows. By using the same type of marker as in establishing reciprocity with listeners, CT demonstrates that she takes the role or perspective of the listeners. With respect to the expert, however, this is not convergence but, on the contrary, divergence. CT shifts her style away from the one used by E and thus, according to accommodation theory (Giles and Smith (1979), Thakerar et al. (1982)), signals social and communicative distance. By diverging from the speech style which the experts normally use (usually more or less standard, sometimes including some of the markers of CT's baseline speech style on the morphophonemic level), CT signals solidarity with the listeners' positions and opinions, thereby establishing a sort of insider-solidarity-group opposing the experts. By excluding E from the large group of listeners (listening on the radio, in the audience, and participating in the face-to-face situation) and herself, his obligation to acknowledge CT's argument and to respond to it adequately are reinforced.

6. Conclusion

Analysis showed that speech styles and style-shifting can be identified by taking various levels of linguistic organization into account. Definite style markers were identified on the morphophonemic, syntactic and lexical/semantic levels of analysis.

Style-shifting as an interactive activity was understood as fulfilling locally strategic functions in institutional discourse. By shifting her style by means of stereotypic indicators towards a level attributed to the majority of her listeners in informal contexts, the moderator signals solidarity, in-group sympathy (if not membership) and adoption of the listeners' perspective. In the sense of rules of alternation, the shift from one style to another in the same situation is thus an indication of the production of interactive social meanings. These derive from the violation of normal co-occurrence expectations, thus exploiting listeners' and participants' every-day knowledge of social evaluations and speech styles for the strategic control of thematic development. The more global strategic role of these activities within the institutional organization for securing an active listenership to the programme should also be pointed out.

Extensive analysis was done on the role of particles and other special forms of speech. Detailed study of the role of language variation within conversation has only just begun (cf. section 1). From some of these studies it is evident that language variation is not only a quantitative correlate of social, regional, or contextual parameters but is used by conversationalists as a device to signal social and interactive meaning locally in conversation. A combination of variation analysis and conversational analysis can lead to a deeper understanding both of the factors determining variation as well as of the means used in signalling indexically important meanings in conversation.⁶

Appendix

In the transcription of the German speech conventional transcription symbols of conversational analysis are used. Standard orthography is changed (often rather ad hoc as I must admit) to indicate speech style variation on the morphophonemic and phonetic levels. For some phonetic representations see sections 3 and 4 and footnotes 2 and 3. The symbols used are:

⁶ In the conversation of a client and a social worker in the institutional context of a social security office analyzed in Selting (1985), style-shifting is one indicator of the social worker's shifting whole levels of interaction from a formal institutional level to an informal every-day level. It is this shifting of levels which leads to severe interaction and cooperation problems in that kind of situation.

x^1	rising intonation	} noted at the end of a unit
x_1	falling intonation	
x^-	level intonation	
dá kam	accentuated syllable indicated by ‘ $\acute{}$ ’	
dá kam	very strong accent	
dá kam	fast tempo	
(louder) *	transcriber’s commentary, end of qualification is indicated by ‘**’	
↑ *	high level tone intonation in the following passage, end is indicated by ‘**’	
/	speaker’s self-interruption	
.	very short pause, ca. 1–2 secs.	
..	short pause, ca. 2–5 secs.	
(..)	unintelligible short passage	
(? da ?)	uncertain transcription passage	
mhm ^v	} reception or hearer signal, with falling–rising intonation	
jaa ^v		
äh, ähm		filled pause, hesitation signal
[passage inside the bracket are to be read simultaneously	

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