



Universität Potsdam

Margret Selting

Speech style in conversation as an interactive achievement

first published in:
The pragmatics of style / ed. by Leo Hickey. - London [u.a.] : Routledge,
1989, ISBN 0-415-02617-2, S. 106-132

Postprint published at the Institutional Repository of the Potsdam University:
In: Postprints der Universität Potsdam
Philosophische Reihe ; 67
<http://opus.kobv.de/ubp/volltexte/2010/4318/>
<http://nbn-resolving.de/urn:nbn:de:kobv:517-opus-43189>

Postprints der Universität Potsdam
Philosophische Reihe ; 67

Speech styles in conversation as an interactive achievement

Margret Selting

1. Introduction

Although the study of language variation has quite a long tradition in linguistics, the study of speech styles in conversation has only recently begun to attract attention. So far, the analysis of language variation and the analysis of conversational interaction have been following largely independent lines.

Both in sociolinguistics and in stylistics variation in spoken language has been primarily analysed as a dependent variable. The speaker is assumed to adapt his speech style to the extralinguistic context. This view has become most influential in linguistics and still underlies recent approaches which tend to think of the speaker as actively choosing his or her speech style. Context and speech styles still tend to be viewed as static and homogeneous entities. The interactive constitution and negotiation of speech style variation within conversational interaction is only seldom analysed.

In this paper, I shall analyse the constitution of language variation in conversation as the choice and constitution of interactively meaningful speech styles. I want to argue that the choice of speech styles in conversation and the alter(n)ation of speech styles in style shifting and switching should not be seen as the juxtaposition of preconceived linguistic varieties dependent upon or a product of extralinguistic or contextual factors but as the constitution of dynamic interactively-achieved ways of speaking by which participants signal and achieve the constitution of global and local dynamic conversational contexts interactively. The relation between context and speech styles is an interdependent and reflexive one. Choice and alter(n)ation of speech styles are to be interpreted as contextualization cues which speakers use to achieve a (new) contextualization, and which are interpreted by the recipient relying on conventional and/or interactively negotiated co-

occurrence expectations on different levels. Speech styles themselves are signalled and constituted by the use and alternation of speech style signalling cues in relation to previously used speech styles as a locally established 'norm', instance of comparison, or *tertium comparationis*. In short, I want to show that:

- (1) an empirical *tertium comparationis* is negotiated and constituted within conversations,
- (2) speech styles are locally negotiated and constituted in conversation, and
- (3) speech styles are used as one device in conversation to achieve a specific contextualization and interpretation of turns.

In consequence, all the categories of *tertium comparationis*, speech style and context have to be conceived of as dynamic and interactively accomplished ones to account for the choice and alter(n)ation of speech styles in conversation.

In section 2 of this paper, some broad developments in the concept and analysis of styles in stylistics and sociolinguistics are discussed. The view taken here is related to recent research in pragmatylytics and interpretive sociolinguistics.

In section 3, transcripts of selected sequences of a conversation between a client and a social worker in a German *Sozialamt* are presented and speech style variation is analysed in conversational context. The items used as speech style-constituting cues suggest that at least in some cases, where the alternating varieties are not very different from each other, the notion of speech style in conversation might not be definable with respect to its boundaries, internal homogeneity and frequency of selected variables, but rather with respect to prototypical kernel cues and/or increasing or decreasing density of co-occurring more peripheral cues on different linguistic levels. Boundaries between speech styles are variable and flexible. This suggests that not only contexts but speech styles too are dynamic constructs which are constituted in interactions and not just realizations of preconceived varieties of language. Furthermore, participants' orientation to the speech styles used in prior turns in their activities of negotiating and alter(n)ating speech styles is interpreted as evidence for their interpretation of previously used speech style as a *tertium comparationis* for successive choices and alter(n)ations of speech styles. This suggests that the *tertium comparationis* for the analysis of stylistic variation in conversations should also be conceived of as a dynamic and interactively accomplished construct.

In section 4, finally, the analysis is summarized and conclusions are drawn.

2. The notion of speech style: from a dependent variable to contextualization cue

In sociolinguistics, the systematic empirical investigation of speech styles began with Labov's (cf. 1972) famous studies of stylistic and social stratification of speech variables. Speech styles were defined quantitatively with reference to the probability of the occurrence of selected linguistic variables dependent upon extralinguistic context and linguistic environment. Extralinguistic context as the product of the constellation of extralinguistic parameters, such as setting, region, social class, age, sex, and social networks in interaction with speakers' self-monitoring, is thought to affect style in a unidirectional way, with changes of contextual parameters being able to cause changes of style (cf. also Auer 1986: 23). The linguistic variables constituting style were conceived of as derived from common underlying deep structure forms as a theoretically reconstructable stable *tertium comparationis*; frequency measures of linguistic variables were taken of a speaker's linguistic output in whole episodes, regardless of internal differences within episodes. Speakers were thought to adapt their speech styles according to the extralinguistic context.

Similar assumptions seem to underly the earlier research in registers in British research (cf. Gregory 1967; Ellis/Ure 1969) or in the so-called context-stylistics (cf. Enkvist 1973; Crystal/Davy 1969). More explicitly than in sociolinguistics, the assumption of homogeneity led to problems of delineation of varieties from each other and of defining the *tertium comparationis*. However, a more active and context-constituting use of style has already been considered by, e.g., Enkvist (1973: 63f.) when he points to the use of style in literature to achieve certain effects or to the choice of style to define or manipulate context. But still a kind of conventional norm or expectation, pre-existent to situations of language-use, is assumed to function as a *tertium comparationis*.

Quite a different view was taken by Riffaterre (1973, original 1971). He rejected both the postulation of a linguistic or other static *tertium comparationis* preconceived to situations or texts and the separate level analysis mostly applied in e.g., quantitative stylistic analyses. Riffaterre suggested that in each text a new pattern is constituted which functions as the linguistic context for succeeding deviations from this pattern to create stylistic effects; established expectations *within* the text thus function as the *tertium comparationis* for successive unexpected structures. According to this view, therefore, Riffaterre seems to conceive of language-use as always being the result of constituting choices. Language-users are

thought of as actively constituting their textual context as a *tertium comparationis* from which they deviate in order to create stylistic effects at particular points in the text; styles themselves are viewed as basically dynamic and actively constituted entities.

A dynamic and interpretive view of speech styles and contexts as interactively negotiated and constituted constructs is relied on for the analysis later in this paper. Participants are taken actively to use differing frequencies of linguistic variables in successive turns, or even to alternate between cues on different linguistic levels, to signal different typified speech styles and thereby indexically to constitute and negotiate context.

An approach like this also underlies more recent research in stylistics such as, for instance, Sandig's (1986) conception of a pragmatic and ethnomethodological approach to stylistics (cf. also Franck 1984) or to some extent also Tannen's (1984) analysis of conversational styles. Yet, although both Sandig (1986) and Tannen (1984) believe that style is involved in all interactions and that all sorts of interactive activities can be analysed with respect to style, and although both mention the stylistic use of language variation, neither of them develops this aspect of conversational style.

Yet, if language variation is used as a means and as a resource in conversational interaction to signal and constitute social and interactive meanings, this can clearly be seen as stylistic (cf. Sandig 1986: 164). In this view, language variation will not be analysed as a subsystem or as a variety of language, but as a resource for interacting members of a speech community to constitute social and interactive meanings in discourse on the basis of shared interpretations of established syntagmatic and paradigmatic relations and contrasts within conversational situations or episodes (cf. Hymes 1974).

According to this perspective, Gumperz (1982) analysed conversational code-switching and stylistic alternations of codes in bilingual as well as other language varieties taken from 'monolingual' situations, as devices constituting conversational meanings and contexts, calling them 'contextualization cues' (idem). More or less following an interpretive sociolinguistic conception like that of Gumperz, the role of speech styles in the constitution of dynamic contexts in interaction has also been recognized by other researchers (for the German research scene in this respect compare, for instance, the analyses in Auer/di Luzio 1983; Auer 1986a; Gülich/Paul 1983; Hinnenkamp 1987; Selting 1983, 1985). Some recent analyses suggest that the choice of speech styles and different types of alternation of speech styles, i.e. abrupt switching and gradual

shifting between varieties, are used by speakers to produce global and local indexical meanings in conversations. The choice and/or negotiation of an unmarked speech style in conversation, mostly at the beginning of an interaction or conversation or after a major change in, e.g., participant relations, seems to be more related to the constitution of global contexts and interpretive frames, whereas the alter(n)ation of styles seems to be more related to the constitution of local interactive functions in, e.g., reinforcing local interactive obligations for the recipient (cf. Selting 1983, 1985). Although in these studies context has been conceived of as a dynamic construct, speech styles are generally taken to be more or less preconceived varieties of languages which participants use.

Yet if speech in conversation is looked at more closely, the question of the definition of speech styles arises again. For it is often not entire varieties which are juxtaposed; rather features attributable to different preconceived varieties are used side by side. In some cases, single cues are systematically differentiated in a conversation (cf. also Selting 1985a).

The traditional definition of speech styles with respect to the frequency of selected variables does not allow for the analysis of single or scarcely used, perhaps stereotypical, features of a marked speech style within an otherwise unmarked speech style. These seem only to be explainable with respect to a speaker's idiosyncrasy, interference, etc., and not as systematic variation of speech styles.

If, however, these features are systematically differentiated and only occur in restricted conversational contexts, they may be used as single strong contextualization cues to constitute and signal these conversational contexts. The concept of contextualization cue (Gumperz 1982, cf. above) thus offers an explanation: some marked and perhaps stereotypical indicators of speech styles can be used as single contextualization cues. This in turn suggests that in the perception and interpretation of talk, at least some speech styles are conceived of as communicative idealizations constituted by some prototypical kernel features strong enough to be usable as single contextualization cues, together with other more peripheral features which tend to (but need not?) co-occur with such kernel features.¹ With respect to peripheral features, it is not always the frequency of selected variables or of features on one linguistic level, but the density of co-occurring cues on different linguistic levels, which seem to be important in many cases (cf. below).

Thus, participants' use of variation in conversational interaction suggests that they conceive of speech styles as dynamic, internally structured phenomena to be constituted in speech, not as homo-

geneous entities, as usually perceived in linguistic research. This is reinforced when participants in choosing and adopting styles orient the styles used in prior turns as an empirical, interactively-constituted *tertium comparationis* in conversation, rather than to any theoretical norm. This conception of styles as basically dynamic and interactively accomplished is compatible with recent developments both in cognitive science, where the notions of dynamic systems and of prototypes are well established (cf. Rosch 1973), and in ethnomethodology, where the interactive achievement of categories is a major concern (cf. e.g. Sacks/Schegloff/Jefferson 1974, Levinson 1983: chapter 6).

3. Speech styles in conversation from a German *Sozialamt*

In this section I analyse data from a conversation in a German *Sozialamt* (social security office) in the western part of the Ruhr area.² First, the extracts are presented and situated in a global setting. Then, formal features of speech used by the participants are analysed with respect to their use as speech style-constituting cues. Finally, I shall analyse the constitution and alter(n)ation of speech styles as signalling cues to constitute the 'global institutional' and the 'local conversational' context.

3.1 Extracts from conversation

The following extracts are taken from a conversation between an official and a client in a German *Sozialamt*, an institution where citizens in need can ask for financial and other help. A basically formal framing of these conversations is associated with their setting and the interlocutors' participant roles: the conversations take place in the office of a social worker or other official and during official consultation times. The participants take the roles of social worker/official ('Beamter'), as a member of the institution, and client, as a person in need who seeks support or who has been invited to the office to give further information concerning his or her application for support.

In spite of the basic framing of conversations as formal, different sequences are dealt with on different conversational levels, i.e. more formal or less formal, and with different forms of reciprocity, co-operative or antagonistic. Accordingly, there is no one homogeneous speech style used throughout, e.g. a 'standard' speech style that might be associated with 'formal' contexts. Rather, a baseline speech style and alterations towards opposing poles of speakers' repertoires are used to constitute and negotiate conversational levels and forms of reciprocity.

Style in Speech and Situation

The participants in the conversation from which the following extracts have been taken have known each other from the client K's previous visits to the *Sozialamt*. K is a middle-aged woman dependent on social security. She was supposed to move into a new flat which she rented more than a month before the present conversation. Although the rent has been paid by the *Sozialamt*, K has not yet moved in, and although the *Sozialamt* offered her the money to buy furniture, she has not yet bought any. The official, B, now suspects that K is living with a close friend and that she is not interested in moving into her new flat. If this is true, it might have certain consequences since, according to official regulations, if a couple are living together, one has to support the other, regardless of legal status. In this case, it might mean that K's friend would have to support her and the *Sozialamt* might be able to reduce her support.

In the initial part of the conversation from which the first extract is taken, B enquires about K's ways of living, to find out with whom she is staying at the moment. This enquiry on the formal institutional level is his most important objective in the conversation.³ (An outline of conversational development and ratios between cues are given in the margins. These will be explained in detail in the following sections.)

Extract (1)

- 1 B: ja Frau-K., der Herr A war vorhin hier
well Mrs K a little while ago Mr A was here
- 2 K: ja, der is grad da und ich bin mit m Bus sofort
yes he is just there and I have by bus immediately
- 3 B: ja-
yes
- 4 K: zurückgekommen, er sagt ich soll herkommen,
come back he says I shall come here
- 5 B: ja, (?hörn Se
yes listen
- 6 B: ma án hier, ?) er hat mir ja gesácht daß Sie bei
to this here he said to me that you with
- 7 B: ihm warn,
him were
- 8 K: (kurz) hja,
(short) yes
- 9 B: . mir is immer no nich klár wo Sie- sich- áufhalten,
to me it is still not clear where you are staying
- 10 K: ((atmet hörbar)) ((etwas langsamer)) na ich
((audible breathing)) ((slower)) well I
- 11 war auch bei- (? Herrn ?) A dann war ich bei B
was also with (? Mr ?) A then was I with B
- 12 B: Sie sólltn sich do in Ihrer Wóhnung ma aufhalten,
you should after all in your flat stay
- 13 K: na wie denn. . ságn Se mir bitte wie, ((atmet))
but how then tell me please how ((breathes))
- 14 B: (? is do nich schwér ?)
(? is after all not difficult ?)

Outline of conversational development; ratios between standard, unmarked and marked colloquial cues

Conversational opening

Ratios: B: 2:5:0

K: 3:4:0

Initiation of formal conversational level

Topic: K's ways of living (antagonistic)

Ratio: B: 1:4:0 (line 9)

Ratio: B: 2:3:0 (line 12)

Speech styles in conversation

- 15 B: . seit éinmónat, oder gút eim Monat zahn wir
since one month or quite one month have we been
- 16 K: ich kánn do/
but I can/
- 17 B: für Sie schon ne Miete,
paying for you a rent
- 18 K: ich háb lhñ doch gesacht daß
but I have told you that
- 19 K: ich im vorigen Monat ↓ kránk war, und da
I in the last month was ill and then
- 20 war ich auch bei Herrn A wie ich wie ich gelégn
was I also with Mr A when I/ when I was stay-
- 21 hab-* ich wéiß ja sons nich wohin, ((atmet))
ing in bed after all I don't know where else
- 22 und héute vormittach war ich auch beim Árzt' ich múß
and this morning was I also to the doctor I must
- 23 mich ↓ wáschn* . a is ja wohl klár, ne'
myself wash that is no doubt clear, isn't it
- 24 B: jaa' éinverstandñ,
yes accepted
- 25 K: ((lachend)) ja- also- . un deshalb ↓ kám das,*
((laughingly)) well so and therefore came that
- 26 ich weiß nur wirklich- ich wóllt auch nich mehr
I know just really I wanted also not again
- 27 herkomñ, also ich war! ((schnupft)) . . nich' un wenn
come here thus I was ((sniffs)) and when
- 28 K: alles ↑ drin is' ↑ fértig* ich háb doch meine Wohnung,
everything is in ready I do have my flat
- 29 B: äh-
- 30 B: ja, die ham Se schon só lange' ohne sie zu bewóhnñ
well you have it for so long now without living in
- 31 auf unsere Kostñ,
it at our expense
- 32 K: ↑ ja wenn was drin is' un un un is jetzt* und
well when something is in it and and and is now and
- 33 K: ((schnell)) jétz hab ich auch Angst weil die Miete no
(fast) now am I also afraid because the rent
- 34 B: (kurz) ja'
(short) yes
- 35 K: nich bezahlt is, aßo ich tráu mich da áu ni mehr hin,*
has not been paid so I don't dare to go there now
- 36 B: . wann warn Se denn zulézt mal in Ihrer Wohnung,
when were you the last time in your flat
- 37 K: . solln die Leute-
shall the people
- 38 B: in der neugemietetñ die no léer is,
in the newly rented one which is still empty

Self-defence against B's
accusation
Ratio: K: 3:2:0

Side remark
Ratio: K: 0:2:0

Side remark
Ratio: K: 0:2:0

Ratio: K: 4:3:0

Side-remark
Ratio: 2:3:1

In later parts of the conversation, when informal topics, like K's family and an incident at a wedding party are discussed on a more informal conversational level, B tends to return to his enquiry and in these sequences switches from an informal, co-operative, to a formal, antagonistic, way of communicating. This is signalled and constituted by his choice and alter(n)ation of speech styles:

Extract (2)

- 347 B: (relativ laut) also írgndwie mússñ wa doch mal
(relatively loud) now somehow must we after all
- 348 allmählich Nägel mit Kópfñ machen, entwéder Sie
now make nails with heads either you
- 349 B: beziehn hier Ihre Wóhnung'. äh-
move here into your flat
- 350 K: ↑ ich háb lhñ doch
but I told you

Conclusion from previous
enquiry
Formal level
Topic: K's movement into
new flat (co-operative)
Ratio: B: 7:3:0

Style in Speech and Situation

| | | | |
|-----|----|---|---|
| 351 | K: | letzmal schon gesacht wenn se so weit is ich zieh <i>last time already when it is ready I move</i> | Ratio: K: 3:6:0 |
| 352 | K: | lie: bend gern da ein- <i>gladly in there</i> | |
| 353 | B: | jää. . da müßn S sich aber <i>well there must you care</i> | Ratio: B: 1:2:1 |
| 354 | B: | ganz klein wenig drum kümmern, <i>a little bit for</i> | |
| 355 | K: | . na ich hab mi auch gehn lassn- un da/ dāmals wars <i>well I did let myself also go and th/then was it</i> | |
| 356 | K: | mit Herrn G, er hat Ihn ja jesächt wenn die- . aber <i>with Mr G he did say to you if the but</i> | Ratio: K: 2:7:0 |
| 357 | B: | jaa. <i>yes</i> | |
| 358 | K: | dann- . dann hattn se am drittn Jubiläum- die hattn <i>then then had they on the third a jubilee (or</i> <i>celebration) they had</i> | |
| 359 | | am siebensten Jubiläum- die hattn am zéhntn jubiläum <i>on the seventeenth a jubilee they had on the tenth a jubilee</i> | |
| 360 | K: | und Inge wärte mal' Inge wärte mal, <i>and Inge wait a bit Inge wait a bit</i> | |
| 361 | B: | (? aha ?) wat war denn mit der Hóchzeit, <i>what was then at the wedding</i> | Change to informal level and everyday frame Topic: Wedding incident |
| 362 | B: | wo die Frau G mitm- . Brótmesser angeblich- irgndwo <i>where Mrs G with a bread knife allegedly somewhere</i> | |
| 363 | B: | los gegangn sein soll, ja, ich hab das (? so ?) gehórt, <i>at went yeah I heard that so</i> | Ratio: B: 0:4:1 |
| 364 | K: | angeblich' a sə . çh- . also <i>allegedly so I so</i> | |
| 365 | K: | ich sa: ch da nix zu, aber- . äh wir wissen von unsern <i>I say nothing about it but we know it from our</i> | Ratio: K: 2:9:2 |
| 366 | K: | Háuswirt' von Herrn E'. ne' un dér muß es ja wíßn, <i>landlord from Mr E don't we and he must know it</i> | |
| 367 | B: | ja, <i>yeah</i> | |
| 368 | K: | da war Poltera: md von seiner Tóchter' . un da hat ihr <i>there was eve-of-the-wedding party and there has her</i> <i>of his daughter</i> | |
| 369 | | Mánn wohl mit ner Ándern getanzt, ich weiß es nich, <i>husband with an other danced I don't know it</i> | |
| 370 | K: | war damals nich béi da- . ging se lós un dann háts <i>was then not with them then she flew at and then she</i> | Ratio: K: 1:7:1 |
| 371 | B: | jaa, richtig, hab ich gehórt, <i>yes right I heard about it</i> | |
| 372 | K: | sich mit- ihrm Mánn wohl áuch gehabt, un dann m äh- <i>had herself too with her husband and then</i> | |
| 373 | | is die Polizéi gerufn worn' . un da- wíßn Se' is son <i>the police were called and then you know is such</i> | |
| 374 | | kléines Haus, da geht die Tréppe so steil hoch, un da <i>a small house there the stairs are so steep and</i> | |
| 375 | | hat se wohl gestandn nur, un kéin Schritt weíter, <i>there she stood and no step further</i> | |
| 376 | | un dann ham se se nahher mitgenomm, paar Mal zur <i>and then they took her later with them few times for</i> | |
| 377 | K: | Áusnüchterung, ((schnupft)) <i>sobering up ((sniffs))</i> | |
| 378 | B: | ja, die s/ . die soll áuch sehr <i>yes she s/ she is also said to</i> | Change back to formal level |
| 379 | B: | eifersüchtig auf Sie sein, ne', die Frau G, ne' <i>be very jealous of you isn't she the Mrs G isn't she</i> | Topic: K's ways of living (antagonistic) |
| 380 | K: | das kann (laut) séin, <i>that can (loudly) be</i> | Ratio: B: 3:0:0 |
| 381 | K: | aber ich hab- ich hab éhrlich nix, (lachend) also- <i>but I have I have really nothing (laughing) so</i> | |

Before analysing these extracts in detail, the speech style signalling cues are dealt with.

3.2 Speech style constituting cues

The term 'speech style' is used here to refer to the use of prototypical kernel and/or co-occurring peripheral cues on different linguistic levels to signal, induce and constitute typified linguistic varieties which are paradigmatically opposed to other typified varieties in a speaker's or a community's repertoire of varieties. The relation between style constituting cues and typified speech styles is an interdependent and reflexive one: as speakers and recipients can rely on everyday knowledge of cues for certain typified styles, these cues may be used to constitute and induce such a typified style. The styles thus constituted are not necessarily clear-cut entities; they are rather taken to be interlocutors' communicative idealizations and interpretive constructs, hence their labelling as 'typified'.

Alter(n)ation of kernel and/or co-occurring peripheral cues of different typified styles in the same conversational setting is referred to here as 'style-shifting', i.e. alteration, or 'style-switching', i.e. alternation. In style-shifting, there is a gradual style alteration, in general an increase or decrease of cues for a previously used style to signal a gradual shift towards another. In style-switching, there is a sudden alternation between cues for a previously used style and cues for another, often more distant, style to signal the sudden switch from one style to another (cf. esp. Auer/di Luzio 1983 for a very similar distinction with respect to code alternations among bilingual speakers in conversations).

In the extracts, speakers B and K construct speech-styles which range between the poles of so-called typified 'standard' (Northern High German) and a typified 'marked colloquial', incorporating stigmatized cues of the Ruhr area dialect, with a so-called 'unmarked colloquial' being used as the baseline speech style by both. Yet the boundaries between these styles are not clear-cut. In most utterances, speakers use cues of more than one typified style side by side. They seem to use kernel cues and/or the density of co-occurring peripheral cues to signal their baseline style and style shifting and switching.

Prototypical kernel cues are conceived of here as the most characteristic cues of a speech style which can be used by speakers to signal and construct a particular style most clearly, and these are often looked upon (and talked about) as the most typical features of that style (cf. also Sandig 1986: 258ff.). If they are systematically differentiated by speakers, i.e. if their use is restricted to specific conversational environments or activities, kernel cues can be used by themselves as key symbols in utterances to constitute a specific

Style in Speech and Situation

style and a specific contextualization of that utterance in the conversation.

In contrast to kernel cues, more peripheral cues do not by themselves induce a particular style but seem to belong to a range of cues between, and perhaps common to, neighbouring styles. Their isolated allocation to one style is often a difficult and vague decision; it is only their density which allows the identification of styles. Density can be defined as the relative number of co-occurring peripheral cues for one style in relation to the cues for others in an utterance. If, then, the number of cues for an unmarked colloquial speech style is high and the number of cues for the standard style in the same utterance is low, the style can be typified as an unmarked colloquial one. (For examples, see section 3.2.4.)

The most important difference between kernel and peripheral cues is thus their required density to constitute a speech style: while kernel cues can be used by themselves or in low number, more peripheral cues have to be more numerous.

The difference between kernel and peripheral cues is most relevant at the poles of the continuum. In the extracts presented here, kernel cues are used to distinguish the marked colloquial style from the unmarked colloquial. Kernel cues for the standard style, which might in general be expected at the syntactic, lexical, and semantic levels, are not differentiated by the speakers here. A possible explanation could be that these speakers generally tend towards the unmarked colloquial style and shift more freely towards the marked colloquial, whereas the standard seems to be generally dispreferred.

In the analysis proposed here, speech styles can only be identified and allocated to typified styles by considering formal linguistic *and* sequential conversational criteria. In the following, three criteria are used for the analysis of styles in conversations:

- (1) the systematic differentiation of kernel cues in the constitution of conversational contexts resulting in internal co-occurrence tendencies and restrictions between kernel style constituting cues, conversational levels and activities, and the form of reciprocity established or aimed at;
- (2) co-occurrence tendencies between kernel cues and/or more peripheral cues on different linguistic levels, resulting in increasing or decreasing densities of style constituting cues;
- (3) recipients' reactions to the choice and alter(n)ations of styles as manifestations of their interpretations of them.

In a first step, predominantly using criteria (1) and (2), the typified

styles used and signalled by the speakers will be broadly identified. Following this, a more detailed analysis predominantly using criterion (3) will focus on the interactive functions of the use and alter(n)ation of styles in conversation.

3.2.1 The unmarked colloquial style

In most sequences, standard and colloquial cues are used side by side to signal an unmarked colloquial style intermediate between the poles. This style seems to be used in antagonistic and co-operative sequences on both formal and informal conversational levels. Yet the delineation of this style is most difficult as it is not the absolute, but the relative density of cues in relation to surrounding utterances which is important and which is used to signal the unmarked colloquial style versus style-shifting towards the poles. The boundaries of the unmarked colloquial itself are rather fuzzy and variable.

Speakers in the conversation analysed here use the following cues⁴ in relatively low density to signal an unmarked colloquial speech style side by side with standard cues in relatively low density. (Standard orthographic forms are given in parenthesis here to ensure identification.)

- (1) On the *phonological level*:
 - (a) spirantization of [k]: *gesacht* [gəzaxɪ] ('gesagt'), *gefracht* [gəfɛɑ:xɪ] ('gefragt'), *vormittach* [fœmɪtax] ('vormittag'), *gekricht* [gəkriçt] ('gekriegt');
 - (b) word-internal omission or assimilation of sounds: *meintwegn* [maentvɛŋ] ('meinetwegen'), *wenistens* [venɪstəns] ('wenigstens'), *Poltera:md* [pɔltɛɑ:mt] ('Polterabend'), *nahher* [nɑʰhɛɐ] ('nachher'), *sonswɔ* [zɔnsvɔ] ('sonstwo'), *aso* [azɔ] ('also');
 - (c) dropped final consonants in monosyllabic particles, etc: *nich* [nɪç] or *ni* [nɪ] ('nicht'), *no* [nɔ] ('noch'), *do* [dɔ] ('doch'), *au* [aʊ] ('auch'), *un* [ʊn] ('und'), *jetz* [jets] ('jetzt'), *ma* [ma] ('mal');
 - (d) substitution of [j] for [g] by K as in *Jeld* [jɛlt] ('Geld') and *jesacht* [jɛzaxɪ] ('gesagt').
- (2) On the *morphophonemic level*:
 - (a) reduced, assimilated or deleted [ən] suffixes: *aufhaltn* [aʊfhaltn] ('aufhalten'), *warn* [va:n]

- (‘waren’), *gegangen* [gəgəŋ] (‘gegangen’), *Angaben* [ʊŋgə:bəm] (‘Angaben’), *sagen* [zəŋ] (‘sagen’), *haben* [hə:bəm] or *ham* [həm] (‘haben’);
- (b) dropped suffixes in first person singular verbs: *ich hab* [ɪçhəp] (‘ich habe’), *ich brauch* [ɪçbrʌʊx] (‘ich brauche’);
- (c) dropped final consonant in third person singular verbforms of the verb *sein*: *is* [ɪs] (‘ist’) or further reduction to [ʃ] or [s] and cliticization with a preceding word: *daʃ* [dʌʃ] (‘das ist’);
- (d) reduced unstressed indefinite articles: *n* [n] or *n* [n] (‘ein’), *ne* [nə] (‘eine’), *nen* [nən] or *ein* [œŋ] (‘einen’), *nem* [nəm] or *eim* [œm] (‘einem’); or further reduction and cliticization to preceding words: *son* [zɔn] (‘so ein’), *mim* [mim] (‘mit einem’);
- (e) weakened and cliticized unstressed pronouns: *Se* [zə] or *s* [s] (‘sie’), *wa* [və] (‘wir’), *wars* [və:s] (‘war es’), *hadder* [hadɐ] (‘hat er’).
- (3) On the *syntactic level*:
- (a) dropped articles as in *komm Se nächste Mal* (line 601) instead of *das nächste Mal* or further reduction as in *letzmal* (line 351) instead of *letztes Mal* or *das letzte Mal*;
- (b) use of *wo* as a generalized embedding pronoun as in *auf der Hochzeit wo die Frau G* instead of *auf der* or *als*.
- (4) On the *lexical level* the following idioms and expressions seem to be used as cues for a colloquial style: *Nägel mit Köpfen machen* (line 348), *sich mit jemandem haben* (line 370f.).
- (5) On the *semantic level* a high frequency of modal and vagueness particles seems to be characteristic of a colloquial style. The particles used in this conversation are: *ja, immer, noch, doch, mal, schon, denn, auch, also, sonst, wohl*. In some cases, the particle *so* seems to be used as an intensifier: *so lange* (line 30), *so steil hoch* (line 374): this contrasts with the more standard form of intensifying as in *sehr eifersüchtig* (line 378f.).

A variety of structural features may be used as cues constituting the unmarked colloquial style. Among these cues, some assimilations especially can be intuitively graded according to their distance from

the standard realizations in terms of the processes involved in deriving them from the standard (cf. also Auer 1986a on style shifting in Southern German speech):

e.g.:

| | | | | |
|------------------------|---|---------------------------|---|--------|
| haben | → | habm | → | ham |
| [həbən] | | [həbm] | | [həm] |
| nichts | → | nichs | → | nix |
| [niçts] | | [niçs] | | [niks] |
| mit dem | → | mit m | → | mim |
| [mit dem] | | [mitm, mi ² m] | | [mim] |
| hat er | → | hatter | → | hadder |
| [hat ² ɛɐ̯] | | [hate] | | [hade] |

Yet, *habm* and *ham* are both used in utterances in which the co-occurring cues suggest standard, unmarked colloquial, or marked colloquial style by B. On the other hand, K seems to restrict the use of *ham* to unmarked and marked colloquial styles. *Nix* is used by K in unmarked and marked colloquial utterances, whereas B only uses this realization once in a marked colloquial utterance. *hadder* is only twice used by B in a marked colloquial environment. Likewise, the realizations *mim* and *mit m* and other assimilations like *anne*, *inne*, etc., are used too scarcely to provide a meaningful contrast with respect to alternative realizations. As a consequence, these different realizations and assimilations have to be taken as free variants here; in some cases their choice seems to be motivated by accent and rhythm patterns rather than by stylistic choices.⁵

3.2.2 The marked colloquial pole

Throughout the entire conversation B's use of the items *dat* [dat] and *wat* [vat] is systematically restricted to co-operative sequences or to utterances where he seemingly wants to establish reciprocity as co-operative (cf. extract (2): line 361). In all other sequences, especially in antagonistic ones, the cues *das* [das] and *was* [vas] are used. K, however, almost always uses *das/was*; her few uses of *dat* are also restricted to very informal co-operative sequences.

Another cue which both B and K seem to restrict to co-operative sequences is the use of non-standard case⁵, e.g.,

- (a) use of accusative for standard dative: *von unsern Hauswirt* (extract (2): line 365); and
- (b) use of nominative for standard accusative: *kéin Schritt wéiter* (extract (2): line 375).

The use of the t/d substitution and of non-standard case is thus systematically restricted in the entire conversation, with all utterances in which they occur being interpretable as establishing, or

negotiating a co-operative form of reciprocity on a rather informal conversational level. The hypothesis is justified that B and K use these cues as kernel cues for the marked colloquial style.

A third cue, the separated use of pronominal adverbs like *dabei*, *darum*, *damit*, *danach*, *dazu*, etc. as in, e.g., *da müssen S sich aber ganz klein wenig drum kümmern* (line 353) and *sa:ch da nix zu* (line 365) seems to come quite near to a kernel cue for the marked colloquial style. Nevertheless two occurrences of this cue out of fifteen in the entire conversation are used in utterances in which the density of co-occurring cues in one case suggests an unmarked colloquial and in the other a rather standard style. On the other hand, the four uses of a non-separated pronominal adverb in the entire conversation always occur in utterances in which the speaker otherwise signals an unmarked colloquial style which still carries quite a high number of standard cues. This suggests that the non-separation of pronominal adverbs rather tends towards the standard pole, whereas the separation is in general use as a cue of the marked colloquial style. In this case, at least one occurrence of the marked colloquial cue occurring in a standard environment would have to be treated as either an exception or as a single cue compensated for or neutralized by its environment. In view of the single occurrence of this, however, the separated use of the pronominal adverb will be treated as a third kernel cue for the marked colloquial style here.⁶

Apart from the use of kernel cues, the signalling of marked colloquial speech is achieved by the use of a high density of co-occurring peripheral cues which – albeit with lower density – are also used to signal the unmarked colloquial style. For an example see lines 361–77 in extract (2).

3.2.2 The standard pole

The opposite pole to the marked colloquial seems to be the standard, especially Northern High German pronunciation. This style is almost exclusively signalled in antagonistic sequences by using the full, unreduced and unassimilated or at least syllabic, forms of lexemes and suffixes as in *auch* [aʊx], *nicht* [niçt], *vorigen* [fʊriɡən], *müssen* [mʏsən], *machen* [mɑxən], *wissen* [visən], *Kosten* [kɔstən], *herkommen* [hɛəkɔm]. An example here is extract (2): lines 378–9.

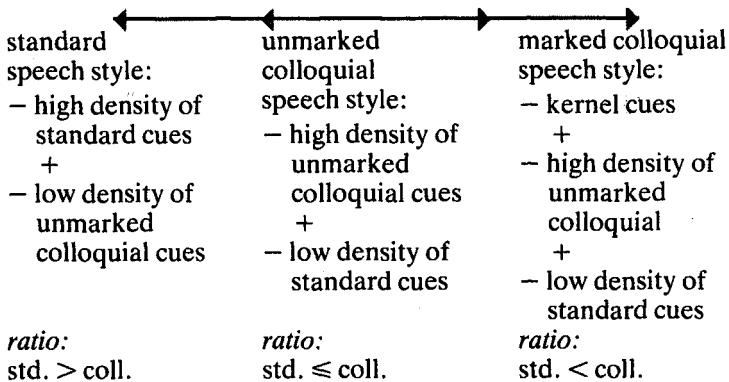
As these cues are also used in other conversational contexts, in low density, they cannot be used as kernel cues. In fact, the standard pole at which only standard cues are used is seldom reached. In most cases, speakers move towards this pole by increasing the density of standard cues in relation to prior utter-

ances, while still using some reduced or assimilated forms. Examples of a high density of standard cues can be seen in extract (1): lines 18–19 and 36.

3.2.4 Density of cues

In signalling and constituting speech styles on the continuum between the standard and the marked colloquial poles, speakers use the density of co-occurring cues on different linguistic levels as style constituting devices. That is, the relative number of co-occurring cues for one style in relation to the cues for others in an utterance shifts along the continuum of styles.

Consequently, the continuum of styles can be represented as follows. Typified styles are constituted either by kernel cues plus a high density of peripheral cues or by a high density of peripheral cues only. Boundaries between typified speech styles are not clear-cut.



The measurement of density thus presupposes the allocation of single cues to one style along the continuum. This is, however, in some cases an extremely *ad hoc* procedure. For instance, the difference between the variants of the pronouns of address *Sie* in its full and *Se* in its reduced form is not only one of style but also of stress. If, however, it is assumed that an isolated occurrence of the full form *Sie* can be quasi-neutralized as a stylistic cue by the use of a high density of co-occurring cues for another style, it can nevertheless be allocated as a single cue to the standard.

To exemplify the density of cues, some intuitively clear examples will be listed. Because of the above mentioned problems of allocation, the quantitative ratio of cues for one style can only be given as a sometimes quite *ad hoc* decision, leaving problems of allocation largely aside. Thus, in some examples intuitively recog-

Style in Speech and Situation

nizable as belonging to the standard pole, speakers use a higher number of cues for the standard than for the unmarked colloquial and no cues for the marked colloquial at all; density of standard cues is higher than in the surrounding utterances, e.g.:

| <i>example</i> | <i>standard cues</i> | <i>unmarked coll. cues</i> | <i>marked coll. cues</i> |
|----------------|-------------------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|
| (2): 378f. | <i>auch, Sie, sehr eifersüchtig</i> | – | – |
| ratio: | 3 | : 0 | : 0 |
| (1): 25–7 | <i>also, auch, herkommen, also</i> | <i>un, wollt, nich</i> | – |
| ratio: | 4 | : 3 | : 0 |

Along the continuum, we find the highest number of cues slowly moving towards the colloquial and the marked colloquial cues. In signalling the unmarked colloquial, speakers still do not use the kernel cues for the marked colloquial style:

| <i>example</i> | <i>standard cues</i> | <i>unmarked coll. cues</i> | <i>marked coll. cues</i> |
|----------------|-----------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------|
| (1): 9 | <i>Sie</i> | <i>is, no, nich, aufhalten</i> | – |
| ratio: | 1 | : 4 | : 0 |
| (1): 12 | <i>Sie, aufhalten</i> | <i>solltn, do, ma</i> | – |
| ratio: | 2 | : 3 | : 0 |

In utterances intuitively recognizable as marked colloquial, the density is highest among the cues for the unmarked and marked colloquial styles:⁷

| <i>example</i> | <i>standard cues</i> | <i>unmarked coll. cues</i> | <i>marked coll. cues</i> |
|----------------|----------------------|---|---|
| (2): 365–9 | <i>wissen, wir</i> | <i>sa:ch, nix, un, wissn, Poltera:md, un, ner, Andern, nich</i> | <i>da . . . zu, von unsern Hauswirt</i> |
| ratio: | 2 | : 9 | : 2 |
| (2): 361–3 | – | <i>mim, irgndwo, los gegangn, wo (rel.)</i> | <i>wat</i> |
| ratio: | 0 | : 4 | : 1 |

Nevertheless, even if these cases are intuitively allocatable, no absolute points seem to be definable where one style can be separated from a neighbouring one. For this reason, a higher density of cues for a specific style, especially the poles of the continuum, in relation to preceding utterances, will be analysed as shifting towards a typified style.

3.3 *Choice and alter(n)ation of speech styles in conversation*

The constitution and alter(n)ation of speech styles by both speakers in the extracts is now analyzed in detail with respect to their context constituting functions.

Extract (1): Extract (1), see p. 112–3, represents the beginning of the conversation. In the opening (lines 1–8), both B and K start with speech in which standard and unmarked colloquial cues are used side by side. The ratio between cues in B's utterances is 2:5:0 (*daß, Sie : hörn, Se, ma, gesacht, warn : -*). K's ratio is 3:4:0 (*und, zurückgekomm, herkomm: is, grad, mit n, sacht : -*). In comparison with the styles used later in the conversation, both B and K start with the so-called unmarked colloquial.

A high density of unmarked colloquial cues is also used by B in line 9, where he initiates the enquiry about K's ways of living. The topic initiated here clearly constitutes a formal conversational level. B's ratio of style constituting cues is 1:4:0 (*Sie : is, no, nich, aufhalt: n : -*).

In his first question on this topic in line 9, B seems to refer back to previous conversations and states his lack of knowledge with respect to K's ways of living, which seems to be implicitly opposed to his official right and obligation to know. In his further contributions, B points out the contradiction between the *Sozialamt's* paying the rent for K's new flat and K's not yet having moved in. B's contributions all take the form of statements of facts which K interprets as accusations against which she has to defend herself. The form of reciprocity is clearly antagonistic here.

First in this enquiry, B uses predominantly colloquial cues on the phonological and morphophonemic levels, suggesting the unmarked colloquial as the basic style used. Following line 9, compare especially line 12 (*Sie, aufhalt: n : sollt, do, ma : -*) and line 15 (*einm, wir, Sie : eim, zahl, ne : -*). In lines 30–1 and 36–8, however, the density of standard cues may be slightly higher (*sie, bewohn, unsere, Kost: n : ham, Se : -* and *zuletzt, mal, neugemietet: n : warn, Se, no, is : -*).

K, on the other hand, tends to use more cues of a standard speech

style; she tends to pronounce the final consonants in words like *auch* (lines 11, 20, 22, 26, 33), *doch* (lines 18, 28), *und* (lines 2, 19, 22, 32) and *jetzt* (line 32). She furthermore tends to use at least a syllabic [ŋ] when reducing [ən] in suffixes: *zurückkommŋ*, *herkommŋ* (lines 4, 27), *Ihŋ* (line 18), *vorigen* (line 19), *gelégn* (line 20) and *waschn* (line 23). Her use of predominantly unmarked colloquial cues is restricted to the utterances in lines 13 (*sagn*, *Se*), 21 (*sons*, *nich*), 23 (*a*, *is*) and 32–5 (*jetz*, *hab*, *no*, *nich*, *is*, *trau*, *au*, *ni*). In the last-mentioned utterance, she also uses the marked colloquial cue *da . . . hin* (line 35). K's tendency towards a more standard style is found in utterances in which she defends herself against B's implicit and explicit accusations. As she too uses the unmarked colloquial as basic in the conversational opening and in other more co-operative sequences like those in extract (2), K's use of a rather standard style in her self-defence might be interpretable here as her reaction against B's definition of reciprocity as antagonistic.

In contrast, the utterances in which K signals a shift towards an unmarked or even a marked colloquial style are all side remarks in her arguments to defend herself. In these side remarks, K seems to induce and set up points of shared assumptions between herself and B. In these side-remarks K, then, tries to establish or negotiate points of non-antagonistic or even co-operative reciprocity, and her style shifts towards a more colloquial signal and reinforces these attempts.

Extract (2) Later in the conversation, see p. 113–4, B alternates between the formal and the informal conversational level, sometimes trying to exploit seemingly informal topics for a continuation of his formal enquiry of K. Extract (2) represents one such occurrence in which B seems to adopt an informal conversational level for strategic purposes.

In lines 347–9, B here initiates a new phase in the conversation by explicating his conclusion from the previous enquiry: something definite now has to be done, otherwise K will have to face negative consequences. By stating this issue and his warning plainly, B defocuses his enquiry about K's ways of living and focuses on future action which K has to take in order to move into her new flat.

In contrast with the speech of extract (1), B adopts a rather mixed style in his initiation of this new phase in lines 347–9: his ratio between cues on the phonological and morphophonemic level is 7:3:0 (*also*, *müssŋ*, *doch*, *mal*, *Köpfŋ*, *machen*, *Sie* : *irgndwie*, *wa*, *beziehn* : –). In addition, however, the idiom *Nägel mit Köpfŋ*

machen could be counted as a cue signalling a colloquial style, although the morphophonemic cues used in it are standard ones.

If B's speech here can be located somewhere between the standard and the unmarked colloquial, K in her following assertion that she is willing to move into her new flat as soon as possible clearly tends towards the unmarked colloquial. Her ratio between cues is 3:6:0 (*Ihr, doch, liebend : hab, letztmal, gesacht, se, is, zieh : -*). This suggests that K interprets B's utterance as the initiation of a more co-operative phase, which she herself welcomes on the level of styles by shifting away from the more standard as predominantly used in extract (1).

B in line 353-4 now clearly shifts towards the marked colloquial; this he signals by the use of the separated pronominal adverb *darum* as *da . . . drum*. His ratio between cues here is 1:2:1 (*müssen : S* as a reduced pronoun of address, *ganz klein wenig* without a preceding indefinite article : *da . . . drum*). Although B here points out K's lack of initiative, he signals a more co-operative form of reciprocity by shifting his style towards the marked colloquial.

This interpretation is confirmed by K's reaction in lines 355-6, where she admits some fault and explains her lack of initiative by reference to delay in receiving help from a friend called G. She again signals an unmarked colloquial style with a ratio between cues of 2:7:0 (*auch, Ihr : hab, mi, gehn, lassn, un, wars, jesacht : -*). Immediately following, however, in lines 358-60, K uses a higher number of standard cues again (*hattn* and all ordinal numerals are realized with at least a syllabic suffix, the only colloquial cue being *se*), but here the repeated utterance structure indicates the formulaic character of these utterances in a seemingly colloquial way.

Next, B's shift towards the marked colloquial is carried further in lines 361-2. The ratio between cues is 0:4:1 with no standard cues used at all (cf. section 3.2.4). This shift towards the marked colloquial pole of his repertoire co-occurs with his shift of topic from K's friend's jubilees or celebrations to a specific wedding party at which G's wife was involved in a particular incident. B's shift seems to signal and achieve a change of conversational level or even framing, from the institutional to an everyday one: he seems to initiate a chat rather than pursue his former topic. K adjusts to B's speech style in her reaction. In lines 364-9 she starts her story about the wedding incident in a style in which the density of unmarked and marked colloquial cues is highest compared to other utterances in the extracts given here: 2:9:2 (cf. section 3.2.4). In her next utterance, in lines 370-2, her ratio is still 1:7:1 (*auch : dropped pronoun ich* before the verb *war, nich, se, un, s, ihrn*, the idiom *hát*

s sich mit-ihm Mánn wohl auch gehabt : the pronominal adverb *dabei* in either a separated and reversed order *bei da* or without the first part of it; in the latter case *da* would have to be interpreted as belonging to the next utterance *da ging se los*; both possible interpretations possibly pointing to a marked colloquial cue). Until the end of this turn, the number of unmarked colloquial cues, namely 22, remains high, standard cues not being used at all. One marked colloquial cue is used: *kéin Schritt wéiter* (line 375) with non-standard nominative case. Both K's adoption of a marked colloquial style as well as her talkativeness on this point manifest that she interprets these sequences as a sort of co-operative chat in an everyday frame which she is glad to join in.

Yet, immediately following, B shifts topic and frame again. This time he exploits talk about G's wife to point out that G's wife is said to be very jealous of K, thereby implying that K might be on too close terms with G (line 378–9). Compared to both B's and K's shifting towards the marked colloquial poles of their repertoires, B's utterance here represents a sudden switch to the standard pole of his repertoire: he only uses standard cues on the phonological and morphophonemic levels (*auch, Sie*) and the rather standard intensifier *sehr*. In a more colloquial style, the intensifier *ganz schön* might have been used instead. The entire utterance is very precisely articulated and rhythmically accentuated. This, too, contributes to the impression of a sudden switch to the standard.

This switch towards the standard signals and achieves B's return to the formal institutional framing of conversation with, once again, an antagonistic form of reciprocity. Retrospectively, his initiation of an informal everyday framing might now be reinterpreted as a strategy to make K give away facts about her way of life which she might not want to tell B. This time, however, K does not follow B's style-switch, but tries to ridicule his implicit accusation.

In this extract, B's shifting and switching and K's reactions highlight the context constituting use of style. The signalling and constitution of a co-operative form of reciprocity in lines 353–4 and the change of frames in lines 361–3 and 378–9 is achieved by alter(n)ating styles. The same content with other styles would have constituted quite different local conversational contexts: unmarked colloquial style in lines 353–4 might have constituted an accusation against which K might have had to defend herself as in extract (1); unmarked colloquial style in lines 361–3 might not have constituted a change of frame but might have suggested a direct relation between the wedding incident and K's way of life as pointed out by B in lines 378–9; marked colloquial style in lines 378–9 might have signalled a continuation of the chat in an informal everyday

framing, perhaps with B teasing K. These alternative possibilities would have been interpreted quite differently by K and would have evoked different reactions.

It becomes evident here that the use and constitution of styles by each speaker is done with respect to the speech used in prior turns. In extract (1), B suggests the unmarked colloquial as the baseline. Yet K only uses this style in her side remarks; in all other sequences, she tends towards a more standard style. In extract (2), as long as the form of reciprocity is seemingly co-operative, she first uses the unmarked colloquial and then follows B in his shifting towards the marked colloquial. At the same time, B's shifting towards the marked colloquial is also a progressive process. As soon as K has signalled ratification and shifted in the same direction as B does, B carries his shifting further by increasing the density of colloquial and marked colloquial cues. The same is true of K's shifting. This suggests that in co-operative or seemingly co-operative sequences speakers choose and alter their style in relation to the previously used style as a *tertium comparationis*. Style in conversation is thus treated by participants as the result of an interactively accomplished development; convergence or a continuation of the style alteration in the next turn is used to signal ratification of a prior speaker's initiation of talk on a specific conversational level or topic. Only in antagonistic sequences is the sudden switch from one style to another used to signal the sudden divergence from a mutually achieved development. Here, too, the previously used style is looked upon as the *tertium comparationis*: switching requires some distance between styles.

4. Summary and conclusions

Speech styles have been analysed as dynamic and interactively accomplished ways of speaking and as a means of signalling and constituting dynamic interactive contexts in conversation. The analysis of the choice and alter(n)ation of styles and their functions in conversation presupposes an utterance-by-utterance and turn-by-turn analysis of co-occurring phenomena on different descriptive levels.

- (1) The co-occurrence and density of formal speech style constituting cues to analyse the choice and alter(n)ation of speech styles: participants in the extracts analysed here use prototypical kernel style constituting cues and/or the density of co-occurring peripheral cues on different linguistic levels to signal and achieve their choice and alter(n)ations of styles along a continuum between the standard and the marked colloquial

poles of their repertoires. Although kernel cues and co-occurrence tendencies of peripheral cues in some cases suggest the identification of one specific typified style, boundaries between neighbouring styles cannot be drawn. In most cases, speakers use style shifting towards a typified style rather than switching between typified styles, thus suggesting a dynamic conception of the continuum with dynamic boundaries between styles. The further fact that recipients of talk design their own styles in relation to the style of prior talk in the same style, successive style alter(n)ation and style negotiation suggests that the constitution of speech styles in conversation is an interactive achievement with each prior style functioning as an empirical and interactively constituted *tertium comparationis* for successive style constitution.

- (2) The co-occurrence of styles and style alter(n)ations and the sequential negotiation and constitution of global and local conversational contexts to reconstruct the context constituting functions of speech styles: the choice and alter(n)ation of styles in co-occurrence with different levels of conversation and forms of reciprocity have been analyzed as contextualization cues, as means to signal, constitute and negotiate dynamic local conversational contexts. The choice and constitution of a baseline style seems to be used to signal the global institutional framing of conversation in sequences in which formal topics are dealt with. Local style alter(n)ation, i.e. style-shifting and switching towards the poles, is used to signal and constitute local conversational levels on which topics are dealt with and on which specific forms of reciprocity are negotiated and established.

The relation between the constitution of styles and the constitution of context is a reflexive one. This is manifested by participants' interpretations of, and reactions to, talk in a specific style. In co-operative or seemingly co-operative sequences, speakers tend to converge their styles to the one constituted by a prior speaker and thus signal ratification of that speaker's activities. In more antagonistic sequences, divergence of speech style from the one used by a prior speaker seems to be used to constitute or to negotiate a redefinition of some aspect of prior activities.

If, however, formal and functional categories and criteria are interdependent and reflexive, none of them can be used as an independent variable in analysis. A separation of independent and dependent variables or factors would presuppose an independent analysis of context, context-changes, and psychological or interactive states of participants and of speech styles as discrete precon-

ceived entities. This would not permit a description of the dynamic and reflexive relations between both sides.

Notes

I wish to thank my colleagues at the University of Oldenburg for discussing a former version of this paper in the context of our Forschungscolloquium 'Sprachvariation'

- 1 A differentiation between marked primary versus unmarked secondary dialectal features was also made by Schirmunski (1930) and Reiffenstein (e.g. 1976). (I am grateful to Peter Auer for these references)
- 2 I am grateful to the Institut für deutsche Sprache, Mannheim, for their permission to use and publish extracts from their 'Sonderkorpus Sozialamtsgespräche'
- 3 In the transcription of German speech conventional transcription symbols of conversational analysis are used. Standard orthography is changed (often in rather an *ad hoc* way, I must admit) to indicate speech style variation on the phonological and morphophonemic levels. For some phonetic representations see sections 3.3.1 to 3.3.3. Transcription is based on purely auditive criteria. Especially the notation of *-en* suffixes as non-syllabic [ŋ] or syllabic [ŋ̥] is based on criteria like sonority and length of sound, and not on theoretical criteria.

The following symbols are used:

| | | |
|--------------------|--|--|
| x_i | = falling intonation | } noted at the end of a unit; direction from last accented syllable |
| x' | = rising intonation | |
| x- | = level intonation | |
| aber dá kam | = primary accented syllable(s) of a unit | |
| aber <i>dá</i> kam | = extra strong accent | |
| sí: cher | = lengthening of a sound | |
| <u>sicher</u> | = lengthening of a whole word | |
| <u>sicher</u> | = fast tempo in short passages | } characterization of way of speaking, end of qualification is indicated by '*' |
| (fast) * | } | |
| (quiet) * | | |
| ↑, ↓ * | = pitch jumps to higher or lower global tone level until '*' | |
| ., ., ., . | = speech pauses according to length, i.e. ca 1-2, 2-4 and 5 seconds respectively | |
| (..) | = unintelligible short passage | |
| (? er hat ?) | = uncertain transcription passage | |
| al(s)o | = uncertain identification of a sound | |

Style in Speech and Situation

| | | |
|------------|---|---|
| hm | } | reception signals with simple falling (i), rising (') or level (-) intonation |
| ja | | |
| nein | | |
| nee | | |
| mhm | } | reception signals with complex falling-rising (') or rising-falling (i) intonation |
| jaa | | |
| neiin | | |
| neee | | |
| ne' | | = dialogue signal to call for a reception signal |
| äh, öhm | | = hesitation signal according to realization |
| ((laughs)) | | = characterization of non-verbal activity |
| / | | = speaker's self-interruption |
| [B: | | simultaneous speaking or turn taking inside the |
| K: | | brackets; commentaries are placed <i>before</i> points of overlap and do not indicate the beginning of overlap |

- The labelling of categories of cues as 'non-standard' or as variants of standard cues here and in the following sections is partly contradictory to the claim that the *tertium comparationis* is to be analysed as an empirical one. However, for reasons of space and simplicity, I here choose to present the style constituting cues in relation to the standard cues as the *tertium comparationis*. More adequately, however, each typified style and each cue would have to be analysed and presented as a variant in its own right in relation to paradigmatic alternatives
- In contrast to an approach like Ammon's (1985), in which the degree of dialectality is measured by allocating each single feature to a definite level of dialectality between standard and broad dialect as established by the linguist's (re)construction of the system or grammar underlying each variety, the approach adopted here aims less at the reconstruction of homogeneous systems and more at the reconstruction of speakers' conceptions of these systems as it is revealed in their language-use in conversations
- In speech evaluation and recognition experiments, both Mihm (1985) and Steinig (1976) found the [s]/[t] substitution and the use of non-standard cases to range among the most easily recognized and most stigmatized features of the Ruhr area dialect (cf. also Mihm 1985a). This explains why these features can also be most effectively used as kernel cues. According to Mihm (1985a), however, the separate use of pronominal adverbs is less stigmatized (cf. *idem.*: 187)
- As, for example, kernel cues co-occur with a high density of unmarked colloquial cues but a high density of unmarked colloquial cues does not by itself increase the probability of a kernel cue co-occurring, a kernel cue could be defined as a cue hierarchically superposed on unmarked colloquial cues for the constitution of the marked colloquial style and implicating the occurrence of such cues. This reasoning would amount to postulating implicational scales like those suggested by DeCamp (1971) and Bickerton (1973), albeit on the level of styles within a speaker's continuum of styles. Yet the relation between kernel and peripheral cues here is not taken to be an automatically triggering one.

References

- Ulrich Ammon, 'Möglichkeiten der Messung von Dialektalität', in W. Besch and K.-J. Mattheier (eds) *Ortsprachenforschung* (Berlin: E. Schmidt), 1985, pp. 259–82
- Peter Auer, 'Kontextualisierung', in *Studium Linguistik* 19, 1986, 22–47
- J. C. P. Auer, 'Konversationelle Standard/Dialekt-Kontinua (Code-Shifting)', in *Deutsche Sprache* 2, 1986a, 97–124
- J. C. P. Auer and Aldo di Luzio, 'Three types of variation and their meaning', in L. Dabène, M. Flasaquier and J. Lyons (eds), *Status of Migrants' Mother Tongues* (Strasbourg: ESF), 1983, pp. 67–100
- Derek Bickerton, 'The nature of a creole continuum', in *Language* 49, 3, 1973, 640–69
- David Crystal and Derek Davy, *Investigating English Style* (London: Longman), 1969
- Nikolas Coupland, 'Accommodation at work: Some phonological data and their implications', in *International Journal of the Sociology of Language* 46, 1984, 49–70
- David DeCamp, 'Toward a generative analysis of a post-creole speech continuum', in D. Hymes (ed.) *Pidginization and Creolization of Languages* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), 1971, pp. 349–70
- Geoffrey Ellis and Jean Ure, 'Language varieties: Register', in A. R. Meetham (ed.), *Encyclopedia of Linguistics, Information and Control* (London: Pergamon), 1969, pp. 251–9
- Nils Erik Enkvist, *Linguistic Stylistics* (The Hague: Mouton), 1973
- Dorothea Franck, 'Stil und Interaktion', in B. Spillner (ed.): *Methoden der Stilanalyse* (Tübingen: Narr), 1984, pp. 121–35
- Michael Gregory, 'Aspects of varieties differentiation', in *Journal of Linguistics* 3, 1967, 177–98
- John J. Gumperz, *Discourse Strategies* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), 1982
- Elisabeth Gülich and Ingwer Paul, 'Gottesdienst: Kommunikation-Institution-Ritual. Linguistische Überlegungen zum Problem von horizontaler und vertikaler Kommunikation und zur institutionellen Vermittlung des Rituals', in K. Ermert (ed.) *Gottesdienst als 'Mitteilung'*. *Loccumer Protokolle* 24, 1983, 84–141
- Volker Hinnenkamp, 'Foreigner talk, code-switching and the concept of trouble,' in K. Knapp, W. Enninger and A. Knapp-Potthoff (eds), *Analyzing Intercultural Communication* (Berlin: Mouton/de Gruyter), 1987, pp. 137–80
- Dell H. Hymes, 'Ways of speaking', in R. Bauman and J. Sherzer (eds) *Explorations in the Ethnography of Speaking* (London: Cambridge University Press), 1974, pp. 433–51
- William Labov, *Sociolinguistic Patterns* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press), 1972
- Stephen C. Levinson, *Pragmatics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), 1983
- Arend Mihm, 'Prestige und Stigma des Substandards. Zur Bewertung des Ruhrdeutschen im Ruhrgebiet', in A. Mihm (ed.): *Sprache an Rhein*

Style in Speech and Situation

- und Ruhr: dialektologische und soziolinguistische Studien zur sprachlichen Situation im Rhein-Ruhr-Gebiet und ihrer Geschichte* (Stuttgart: Steiner-Verlag-Wiesbaden-GmbH), 1985, pp. 163–93
- Arend Mihm, 'Zur Entstehung neuer Sprachvarietäten. Ruhrdeutscher Kasusgebrauch und seine Erklärung', in A. Mihm (ed.) *Sprache an Rhein und Ruhr: dialektologische und soziolinguistische Studien zur sprachlichen Situation im Rhein-Ruhr-Gebiet und ihrer Geschichte* (Stuttgart: Steiner-Verlag-Wiesbaden-GmbH), 1985a, pp. 245–76
- Ingo Reiffenstein, 'Primäre und sekundäre Unterschiede zwischen Hochsprache und Mundarten', in *Opuscula slavica et linguistica. Festschrift für Alexander Issatschenko* (Klagenfurt), 1976, pp. 337–47
- Michael Riffaterre, *Strukturelle Stilistik* (München: List), 1973
- E. H. Rosch, 'On the internal structure of perceptual and semantic categories', in T. E. Moore (ed.) *Cognitive Development and the Acquisition of Language* (New York: Academic Press), 1973, pp. 111–44
- Harvey Sacks, Emanuel Schegloff and Gail Jefferson, 'A simplest systematics for the organization of turn-taking in conversation', in *Language* 50, 1974, 696–735
- Barbara Sandig, *Stilistik der deutschen Sprache* (Berlin: de Gruyter), 1986
- Viktor Schirmunski, 'Sprachgeschichte und Siedlungsmundarten', in *Germanisch-romanische Monatschrift* 18, 1930, pp. 113–22 and 171–88
- Margret Selting, 'Institutionelle Kommunikation: Stilwechsel als Mittel strategischer Interaktion', in *Linguistische Berichte* 86, 1983, 29–48
- Margret Selting, 'Levels of style-shifting. Exemplified in the interaction strategies of a moderator in a listener participation programme', in *Journal of Pragmatics* 9, 1985, 179–97
- Margret Selting, 'Ebenenwechsel und Kooperationsprobleme in einem Sozialamtsgespräch', in *Zeitschrift für Sprachwissenschaft* 4, 1, 1985a, 68–89
- Margret Selting, *Verständigungsprobleme. Eine empirische Analyse am Beispiel der Bürger-Verwaltungs-Kommunikation* (Tübingen: Niemeyer), 1987
- Wolfgang, Steinig, *Soziolekt und soziale Rolle* (Düsseldorf: Schwann), 1976
- Deborah Tannen, *Conversational Style. Analyzing Talk Among Friends* (Norwood, NJ: Ablex), 1984